



Thou see'st not whom, thou see'st, then doe not say
 That this is GHEE who calls a lump of clay
 Without it's soule a man; thou see'st not more,
 Nay, but the SHADOW of that lumpe: What shew
 Of wits and waxes, what perfections rare,
 Among ten thousand persons scatt'ed are:
 Gather in one, Imagine it to bee
 This SHADOWES substance and then say 'tis GHEE. D.T.
 J.J. sat.

The Divine Authority
 OF THE
SCRIPTURES
 ASSERTED,

OR THE
Great Charter of the worlds Blessednes vindicated.

BEING
 A Discourse of Sovereigne use and service in these times;
 not only againt that King of Errours, and Heresies Anti-
 scripturisme, who hath already destroyed the faith of ma-
 ny, and hath all the faith in the World yet remaining,
 in chafe, but also againt all such inward suggesti-
 ons and secreet underminings of Satan, by
 which he privily attempteth the ruine of
 the precious faith and hope, wnerewith the
 Saints have built up themselves with much
 spirituall Industry and Care.

Together with two tables annexed; the former, of the contents,
 and severall arguments more largely profecuted in the Treatise;
 the later, of such texts of Scripture unto which some light is given therein.

By JOHN GOODWIN a servant unto God and men in
 the Gospel of Iesus Christ.

But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world, hath blinded the eyes of them who beleeve not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor 4 34. O ye foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Iesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified amongst you? Gal. 3.1.

Illis, qui divinas scrutantur Scripturas, nihil potest illudere. Theophrast.
 In quibuscunque eorum (sc. aliorum Scriptorum) invenitur eadem veritas,
 longe tamen est impar autoritas. Aug.

LONDON,

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 into Popes-head-Ailey out of Lumber-Street. 1648.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
The LORDS and COMMONS
assembled in PARLIAMENT.

Right Honourable;

His is a memorable saying of an ancient Heathen; He is the bravest man, that knowes best how to be injured ^a. The lightest Working of the Spirit towards a revenge, though upon the sharpest provocation, being discovered, suffereth not a man to be seen in his glory. In the mean time it is a crown of glory upon the head of men in place, and of Divine parallel, to suffer such men to be least injured, who best know how to suffer; that is, to suffer alone, and without the least damage, or danger, of any other man. The Anointed ones of God, especially his Prophets, know how to suffer far above the rate, either of the wisdom or patience, of other men: and yet, of all others these must not be touch'd, or put to suffer: Touch not mine Anointed, and doe my Prophets no harm ^b.

This my most humble addresse unto you, rejoyleth in this; that it is altogether ignorant, at least in point of affection, of any wrong done to the Authour: and yet presenteth you with an opportunity of being seen in the best of your glory. For upon a late conjunction of the Providence of God, with the improvidence of men, there hath issued from the Pulpit (as I hear from many hands) an undue representation of me and my pen, into your ears, and that upon the day of your late solemn humiliation for the prevailing of Heresies and Blasphemies in the Land, (besides what of this ill air I have cause in abundance to suspect, hath been breathed upon many of you at other times.)

To me (I speak the Truth, and lie not to your Honour) it is more easie to suffer, then complain: and had not my desire to make all



^a Oly. upon
sic. per. ante
Pop. 12. 675. a.
Sicut. cu. mas.
Siquis. Cey.
rely. Aluani.
det.

^b Psal. 105. 15.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

your apprehensions (with other mens) thoughts of Honour and Truth, as farre as lieth in me, been stronger, then either of any reparations for myself, or of any disparaging reflection upon the offenders, I had not lift up so much as a thought towards this Apology, or explication rather of my self. Yea so tender am I of the reputations of those who have mistaken me (to qualifie an hard action with a soft expression) that I am scarce free in my self to desire of your Honours so much as a perusal of the ensuing Explication, lest hereby they also may possibly suffer. Only herein (I must confesse) sorrow fills my heart, and I look upon the thing as little lesse then requiring another day of humiliation by way of atonement; viz. that in a day of so solemn a fast amongst professed Christians, Barrabbas should again be released, and Christ crucified; I mean, that many Errors and heresies, which reaily are such, and reign to the great damage and danger of the Truth, (yea and some of them to the disturbance of the peace) amongst us, should be dissembled, and passed by; sound assertions, and harmlesse expressions being in the mean time spread and arraigned before God, and men, and your Honours particularly, as the great Incentives of the displeasure of God against the Nation, and so destructive to the peace and happinesse of it.

I am not conscious to my self of the least wrong I have ever done, either to man, woman, or child, in Word or deed; nor of any refusal of subjection to any just Law or imposition of men: if either my memory, or conscience, herein deceiveth me, I here stand forth, and humbly offer my self before your Honours, and all the world, to make satisfaction with the best of my substance, or otherwise, as farre as I am, or ever shall be able, upon any reasonable evidence or conviction of the fact. If I have, either in any of my writings, or Sermons, or Discourses otherwise, uttered or asserted any thing erroneous and unsound; I here offer and submit my self in like manner, to sit at the feet of those, whom either of your Honourable Houses shall appoint to instruct me in the truth; being a thousand times more willing to offer sacrifice to the Truth, then to be a servant to any supposition under Heaven. For I know that it is Truth which sanctifieth, whereas error defileth. Only I crave leave to make it my humble request unto you, that I may not be compelled to seek the living among the dead, Truth (I mean) amongst the presumptions, and infirm suppositions of men; but in the Scriptures, which are living, and where

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where others say they both seek, and finde it. Strong Conclusions coming forth into the world leaning upon weak premises, have in all ages breav'd the world of the use and benefit of the one halfe (at least) of that reason and understanding, which God with a liberal hand bestowed upon it for its own advancement in happinesse and peace. I call God for a record upon my soul, that I have not the least touch of a desire to be wise (in the things of God) either above, or besides, what is written [in the book of God] nor have I the least hope of rising up in wisdom to the due height of what is written herein, whilest the incumbrance of flesh and blood hargeth on me: only my desires are, that in my conscientious endeavours to ascend this mountain, I may neither be thrust down by those that are above me, nor pull'd backward by those that are beneath. It would be (I conceive) an entrance in abundance into a better world, if men generally could be content to possess their souls in patience, when they meet with others either weaker, or wiser, then themselves. Augustin speaking of the sense of a difficult place of Scripture, saith thus: It may seem one thing to me, and another to another: but neither doe I impose upon him what I shall say upon it, for the better sence; nor he upon me. Scultetus also reports it for a saying much esteemed by Luther, and which he professeth that he first heard from Judocus (sometimes his Master.) Solis Canonici libris deberi fidem; cæteris omnibus judicium. i. that present belief is a debt due only to the Canonick books of Scripture, but judgement or consideration, to all others.

I make no question but that your Honours know, that not only mens manners, but their judgements and Doctrines also are apt in time, to warp, and to degenerate, unless God should ever and anon be stirring up some, who by dealing faithfully with them, should necessitate them to a recollection and survey of themselves in both. When the Priests complain'd of Luther to the Emperour Charles the first; he plainly told them, that if they had been good, they should have stood in no need of such a Cenfor, or Corrector of manners, as Luther was. And it was the ingenious confession of an Abbot living in these times, that if Luther had not come amongst them, they should have perfwaded the people to have fed upon helix. I wish the observation taken up long since by Minutus Felix; received not so large a testimony as it doth, from our present times:

d 2 Cor. 1. 23.
Potest mihi
aliquid videri
alteri aliud.
Sed neq; ego
quod dixero,
prescribo al-
teri ad melio-
rem intelle-
ctum, neq; ille
mihi. Aug in
Enar. Mat. 36.
f V. to Religio-
forum ita ta-
tebat ad vul-
gus, ut Carolus
V. Imperator,
Ecclesiasticis
de Lutero con-
querentibus
in Comitibus
Auzifiani ve-
spondit: Si
vos sacrifici-
pij essetis, non
indignifficus
Censore, &
morum Corre-
ctore Lutherus,
Scultet. Ann
nal Dec. 1. p. 15.
Jam superflit-
tationibus ita e-
rant omnia
oppleta, ut ce-
lebris Mona-
sterij Neuhu-
sani in Vangi-
onibus Abbas
dixit (vera
narro) Si Lu-
therus non ve-
nisset, se per-
suasuros fuisse

• Δει μὴ δοῦν
τῷ ἀλλοτρίῳ
δύναμιν, ἢ δόξαν, ἢ
τὴν κοινότητα.
• Joh. 17.
• Nec quis er-
ror turpitudi-
ne caret. Aug.
Labi autem,
errare, nescire
decepi & tur-
pe, & inhone-
stum ducimus;
vic. Offic.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

populo, ut se-
no latrone:m
flomachum
placissent.
Ibid.

Multi ex hio
investigant
veritatis, ad
proximos di-
vertunt erro-
res Min. Felix.

Many (*sith he*) out of a loathnesse to weary themselves in seek-
ing out the Truth, turn in to the errors next at hand. *For my self,*
my love is such to the precious souls of men, that i cannot knowingly
suffer any s^usticious Doctrine, or loose opinion in the things of God, to
pass thorow the world neer unto me, unexamined, especially when any
considerable numbers of men are like to suffer: which, though it be
a thanklesse engagement, and very obnoxious to those, who love either
ease, or honour, more then cleannesse of judgement, and purenesse of
minds and understanding; yet is it a proper and effectual course to
preserve the Doctrine of the Gospel, if not absolutely free from all,
yet from that intermixture of error, which commonly issueth from
between the sect of a s^upine incogitancy and stob in those, who are
intrusted with the ministry of it.

But I reverence the Great concernsments of the Kingdom in your
hands: wherein, as from the beginning I have served you with all
faiithfullnesse and simplicity of heart hitherto, so am i unwilling now
to make my self a Trespasser, so much as by an impertinent diversion
of your Honours from your attendance thereon. The great and
blessed God, whose is the Kingdom, power, and glory, fill your
Assemblies from day to day with the presence of his glory; by keep-
ing your judgements in a due distance of precedencie to your afflictions;
and both judgements and afflictions in a due proximitye and nearnesse
to himself, that so the whole Nation may yet rise up before you as
one man, and call you blessed and your Name be, The repairers of
the great breach, and the restorers of paths to dwell in, thorough
many generations. Such is the prayer of

Your Honours most humbly and

Martij 26.
1647.

really devoted to serve you,

in your Interests in both worlds,

JOHN GOODWIN.



TO MY
BELOVED FLOCK,
The Sons and Daughters of GOD,
who first gave up themselves unto the Lord,
and then unto Us by the will of GOD.

Dear Christian Brethren,



HE daies of mine abiding with
you in the flesh, neither you,
nor my self can expect should
be many. The Law of mortali-
ty established in Heaven, and
daily put in vigorous execution
on Earth, cutteth off this hope
and expectance, both from you

and me. But the comfort is, the hole of this pit is
not onely levelled and fill'd up, but a mount also rais-
ed upon it, by the Law of life which is in Christ Jesus
our Lord. If our forlorn of ministeriall accommo-
dations be scattered and defeated, by the hand of
death, or otherwise, our reserve in Heaven will ad-
vance, and bring us off from the world with honour
and peace howsoever. The great and precious pro-
mises

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mises of life and salvation unto those who beleeve, for the making good whereof Jesus Christ himself with all his glory, are given in pawn and pledge unto the world, are not suspended upon the presence of a mortall man, one or other, but glory in the truth, faithfullnesse, and power, of him who hath made them, and are ready to swallow up into victory, whatsoever shall threaten, or oppose their performance.

Notwithstanding, as the great Apostle, though (as he saith) he knew how to be hungry, as well as to be full, and to suffer want as well as to abound, yet acknowledged to his *Philippians*, that they had done well in communicating with his afflictions^a. In like manner however the great and glorious God, knows as well how to want, as to abound, in respect of ministerial dispensations, and is able without his *earthen vessels*, to convey his *vessels of honour*, into their blessednesse and glory, yet there is little question to be made, but that he graciously accepteth the diligent and faithfull service even of these his *earthen vessels*, in making one shoulder with him to advance and carry on this great and blessed design. And for you though I am upon grounds of sobernesse and truth abundantly confident (at least of n any of you) that yo^r anointing is such, that you stand in as little need of any mans teaching^b, as any other people, yet I know also, that no people whatsoever will more thankfully relish and accept of the labour and travell of any mans soul, either for their edification, or establishment, then you.

Upon these two considerations in conjunction with the great and longing desire of my soul, that your whole spirit and soul, and body, may be preserved blame-
lesse,

^a Phil. 4. 13,
14.

^b 1. Joh. 2. 27.

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lesse, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ^c. I shall endeavour, whilst I yet remain with you, to prevent as much as may be, any supposed or feared inexpediency in my departure from you. And this (I judge) I shall attempt upon the best terms of likelyhood of successe, by seeking to leave as much of my spirit with you, as I know how, when my bodily presence shall be disposed of otherwise. In order hereunto, not knowing how near the laying aside of this earthly tabernacle may be at hand, I have thought it meet not only to leave the ensuing treatise, for your perusal after that generall manner, wherein it is left for other men, but to incorporate with it, the expresse mention, and that dear remembrance of you, which I have in my soul; that so in one and the same monument, the whole and intire spirit of your Pastor, as well for morals, as intellectuals, may be preserved for your converse, and to make company for your mindes and spirits, when you please.

You are my present joy; and will be (I hope) my future crown: for neither hath your faith hitherto, through any bewitchings of the flesh, presumed to ascend into Heaven, to bring down some other *Jesus*, beside him whom *Paul* preached, nor have you suffered your mindes to be corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel: nor your selves to be baptized into any other spirit, then that which speaketh *inwardly*, i. expressly in the Scriptures. You have neither presumed to be wile above, nor yet been satisfied to be ignorant beneath, what is written. Whilst many professors have compared themselves with sparks of their own kindling, you have warmed your hearts with faith and love at that fire, which Jesus
Christ

c 1. Incl. 5. 23

* 2

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Christ himself came from Heaven to kindle on the earth, and so have kept your selves out of the dint of the fore judgement of God, which the Scripture calls *a delivering up unto an injudicious minde.*

Thus I recommend you to God, and to that word of his grace which he speaketh in the Scriptures, both unto you, and to the world, and which is able (so you pervert it not with mysticall and forged interpretations, thus making it to become your own, in stead of his) *to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified,* and implore with all humble and unfained ardency of soul, that *great Shepherd of the Sheep,* so to prosper you in the hand of that poor under-Shepherd whom he hath set over you, that you may be found of him at the great day.

Yours according to all Pastorall

From my Study in
Coleman Street,
Dec. 9. 1647.

affections and engagements in the Lord,

John Goodwin.



To the Reader.

GOOD Reader, The observation cannot lightly but do good service in these times; That as God hath his times to try the world, with his rare and unexpected mercies, so hath he his seasons also, to make a further and different trial of it likewise, by his strange and unexpected judgements. *Who would have said unto Abraham (said Sarah, when time was) that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in mine old age.* *The Kings of the earth (said Jeremy at another time) and all the inhabitants of the world would not have beleev'd, that the adversary and the enemy should have entred into the gates of Ierusalem.* When England lay covered with the shadow of death, with that profound ignorance of God, and of *Iesus Christ,* which, under the reign of the Romish interest amongst us, was little lesse then fast bound with the iron bands both of Church and State laws and decrees, upon the faces of the mindes, understandings, and consciences of the generality of the nation; who would now have said unto England, yet a little while, and life and immortality shall be brought to light in the midst of thee? and thou shalt be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Notwithstanding the zeal of the Lord of Hosts for the good of this nation, did (as we all know) perform it: the people which sat in darknesse have seen a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

^a Gen. 21.7.

^b Lam. 4. 18.

^c Isa. 11.

^d Mat 4. 16.

This hath been the great and unexpected application of Heaven unto this nation, for the triall of it on the right hand. And on the other hand, when we were full, when we were rich, when we reigned as Kings in the knowledge of *Iesus Christ,* when we had the powers of the world to come, attending upon us daily, as a life-guard to our souls, who would have said, that ever such men should be found in the midst of us, who should call the Sun, a sackcloth, and say to the Oracles of God, you are deceivers: and to the Scriptures, prophecy no more your vain things unto us: for ye are *fables devised by men?* And yet we know that the righteous God hath said unto the spirit of this most dreadfull abomination, *goe forth into the land, prevail, and persuade many;* yea it is somewhat more then to be feared, that the *cloud arising out of the sea,* which is yet little, and but like a man's hand, will in a short time cover the Heavens with blacknesse. For how great is the generation amongst us, who deny the divine authority of the Scriptures, in their works: and if in their works, then in their hearts also; And they who deny it in both these, want but a slender opportunity to deny it even with their lips. This is a strange and unlook'd for judgement come upon the nation for the triall of it on the left hand: and let *Capernaum which hath been lifted up unto Heaven,* take heed, that she be not suddenly

To the Reader.

suddenly brought down to hell. For doubtlesse God having thus tryed the nation, first on the one hand, and then on the other, will, upon the behaviour of it after both, soon determine, and know what to do with it.

That which hath been the mare of death to those lost men (if yet they be lost) who have not only themselves lost the sight of God in the Scriptures, but endeavour to persuade all those, who say they see God here, that they have lost their senses, and call *darknesse, a vision*, is (doubtlesse) this: they sometimes pretended a sound believe of the Divinity of the Scriptures, and put forth their hand to the plough of a Christian profession, but have looked back; and hereby are become *δυσήθεροι, unmeet*, or illdisposed for the kingdom of God, being set off at a further distance in their affections from God, and grown into a secret dislike and distast of the waies of religion. And the consciences of those who distast the waies of holinesse and religion, have no other Sanctuary to flee unto for security and peace, but an exauthorization of the Scriptures, or a deniall of their descent from God. A competent, yea or tolerable belief of their divinity, in conjunction with a like proportion of knowledge in them, must needs make an irreligious heart and life, burthens intolerable. So that men who suffer, either the wisdom of the flesh, or the pleasures, or profits of the world, to disengage their hearts from the love of religion, and waies of holinesse, wherein sometimes they walked, put the iron yoke of this sad necessity upon their own necks, even to indulge and favour their consciences to the uttermost they are able, or know how, with a supposal, that the words of the Scriptures, are but winds, and God only the pretended, not the naturall, or reall Authour, and Father of them. Now feeling this iron yoke we speak of, ever and anon galling, and wringing, and praining them, for their ease, they are constrained to travail far and neer with their mindes, and understandings to enquire after, and gather up, all and all manner of grounds, reasons, arguments, colours, intimations, insinuations, preences, how superficiall, light, empty and unconcluding soever, which doe but shadow in the least that divine lustre of the Scriptures, and overture but so much as a possibility of their non-origination from God. And as Solomon takes notice (Prov. 27.7.) that to the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet; so when men are labouring and toiling under that sad and hard engagement of proving the Sun to be a sackcloth, and the Scriptures, not from God, the shadows of the mountains seem armed men unto them; stubble and rotten wood, are turned into iron, and steel unto them: yea that which is weak, and sometimes that which is not, is mighty in their imaginations to throw down the foundations of the Scriptures, and to confound the strong and mighty things of God.

Nor is it only that hard necessity, which lies upon these men, to make something of every thing, yea and of nothing, for their purpose, that makes them so credulous, yea and confident in their way; the hand of heaven is stretched out against them, and takes from them even that naturall force or spirit of discerning (in respect of spirituall things) which sometimes they had, delivering them up into an injudicious minde, and

sending

1. Luce. 9. 62.

δ Mat. 5. 29.
ε His δδδδδδδδδδδ
ζωω.
η cm. 1. 26.

To the Reader.

senting them strong delusions, that they should believe lies. d He that is the true light, enlightens every man *εγγελοῦσι τοῖς τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς* i. coming, or as he cometh, into the world; meaning, that Christ out of the treasury of his grace and merit, furnisheth every man whatsoever, who liveth in the world to years of discretion, with a stock of light, reason, judgement, conscience, memory, understanding, &c. whereby to make him capable of those terms, of that great and blessed treaty, about the things of his eternal peace and well-being, wherein God addresseth himself unto the world. Now whilst men move, and act according to the true duction, and commonstrations of this light, without any palpable or wilfull deviation, or habituall neglect of them, God (in the Scripture phrase) takes a kinde of pleasure in them, blesteth and increaseth their store, according to the import of what our Saviour promiseth, and asserteth in the Gospel: viz. that unto every one that hath (i. that by a regular course, and tenour of actions, declareth that he hath light given him by Christ: for a man in law, is then reputed to have a thing, when it come waies or other, appeareth, that he hath it) shall be given, and he shall have abundance* (i. by means of the blessing of God upon his regular and conscientious walkings, the eye of his reason, judgement, and understanding, shall be more opened and cleared, and fortified from day to day) But when men shall turn their backs upon that candle of the Lord (as Solomon calls it) which by the hand of Christ is lighted up in every mans soul; (especially after the light and shining of it, have been augmented and enriched by the additionall light of the Gospel; and shall follow the irregular and crooked dictates and leadings of their lusts and sinfull propensions; God now ordinarily doth not only suspend the influence of his former blessing, by which those soul-abilities we speak of, had flourished and prospered untill now; but also in proceesse of his most just severity and indignation, curseth that tree of light within them, saying to it (as Christ to the fig-tree, finding no fruit on it) never fruit grow on thee more. Nor is this any thing, but what the Lord Christ informeth the world of before hand, in the words immediately subjoynd to those lately mentioned, But from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath, i. (according to the lixe of the interpretation given of the former words) when men shall cease to give a reasonable account, or proof, of those impressions of light and knowledge which Christ had planted in them, by waies and praides answerable to the nature and guidance of them, God usually blaisteth them with the breath of his displeasure; so that afterwards the place of the former abilities in these men in reference unto spirituall things, is nowhere to be found; nor shall any man, duly comparing the after engagements and actions of their judgements about matters of Religion, with the former, be able to say, These are the men. This also is but that, which the Apostle expresseth in the name of God, Heb. 10. 38. But if he (i. the just man, spoken of in the former part of the verse, not any, or any man, as our translators give it us) shall draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him; meaning, (according to the emphasis and force of the expression c) that his soul shall be highly dis-

d 2. Thes. 2. 11.
e Joh. 1. 9.

f Conesse. for non
apparet, equipa-
ratur in iure,
a Mat. 23. 29.

g O δε δδδδδδδδδδδ
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To the Reader.

pleas'd with him: and that such a person must expect to receive from him in judgement accordingly Thus I have shew'd thee (good reader) the dangerous and corrupt seed, of which the generation of Anti-Scripturists amongst us, is immediately begotten; a declining in religious affections and virtues.

Give me leave to teach this foar nearer to the bottom, and (in a few lines more) shew thee, what is the onely, or at least, the predominant cause, of this declining in men. This I conceive to be, the embracing of a dead, in stead of a living Faith, of the Divine Authority and heavenly Original, of the Scriptures. It is the saying (as I remember) of *Quintilian*, that *many might in time have attained unto wisdom, had they not thought they had attained it already.* In like manner it may be truly said, that many might have attained a solid and found belief of the Scriptures, and of their Relation unto God, had they not anticipated, the belief it self, with a loose supposition, or imagination of it. Now there had been no place in them for such a supposition or imagination as this, had not something in them like unto such a belief, prepared it. Similitude is a Great Deceiver in the world; and the same in colour, frequently intertain'd, for the same in substance. And to a solid and found belief of the Scriptures, there is no semblance, but an ill-grounded and superficial belief onely. Such a belief as this, though it be good for little, but to afford men an opportunity to dally and play fait and loose with God, and to turn hell and Heaven into a pastime, yet strange is the contentment of men and women, who sit under the shadow of it. A dead faith makes them beleve they are alive, even whilst they are *dead in sins and trespasses*: yea sometimes it inticeth and draweth men on to so much sin and wickedness, that God in an holy and just revenge takes even it also out of the hearts of men, and so leaves them faithlesse altogether. And let this be carefully remembered; that to be *faithlesse altogether* after a dead faith, is a condition a thousand times more hopelesse, then before it. God no where saith, If a man hath not *drawn ncer* unto me, *my soul shall have no pleasure in him*: many times *his soul hath* so farre pleasure in such a man, as to bestow the unvaluable gift of a found Faith and repentance on him. But what faith he? we have already heard it: *If the just man (any man, say our Translators) shall draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

We are not yet at the coar of the ulcer: is the spring-head of the great Sin and misery proportionable, of our Anti-Scripturist, lieth yet lower in the ground. If there be a reason or cause assigneable of his dead Faith, this is like to be the root that beareth it. What the reason or cause is of a dead faith in any man, will easily be conceived, if the nature of this Faith be but taken a little into consideration, and understood. A dead Faith is not therefore so called (I mean, dead) onely because it acteth not, or bringeth forth no fruit, at all: there is no Faith at all, *dead* in such a sense: the Faith of *Judas, Simon Magus, Demas*, of the second, and third ground, &c brought forth fruit, and this like unto the fruit of a living Faith (as farre as men were able positively to judge of it) yea, probably, in as great plenty, as a living Faith it self is wont to bear. And yet the respective Faiths of all these,

were

To the Reader.

were dead, in that sense and signification of the word, *Dead*, wherein we now use it. Indeed the Apostle *James* concludeth that *Faith* to be dead, which is *without works*: but he speaketh emphatically, viz. of such works, which are essentiall unto, and universally found to accompany a Faith, that is living: and doth not suppose a possibility of any Faith whatsoever, without works in one kinde or other,utable to it. Therefore by a *dead Faith*, I mean (with the Scripture) such a Faith or credulity, which *Solomon* ascribes to the *simple or foolis*, Prov. 14. 15 *The simple beleeveth every word,* viz. that he heareth, or that it is spoken to him, without any act of adjudication between word and word, without any rationall and substantiall inquiry, whether there be any competent and sufficient ground to judge that word, or saying, true, which he beleeveth. So by a *dead Faith*, the Scripture (doublelesse) meaneth such a Faith or consent unto supernaturall Truths, which is hastily, and without due consideration rais'd in the soul; and which is able to give no substantiall, rationall, or solid account of it self, either to it self, or unto others. Of this kinde, is that Faith, which is meerly built either 1. upon the credit, authority, or good opinion of our Teachers: or 2. upon some great and plausible concurrence of the judgements of men supposed learned and Orthodox: or 3. upon the perswasion and profession of our Ancestors and fore-fathers: or 4. upon the determinations, injunctions, of the State, where we live: or 5. upon the generall profession and practise of that Nation, or commonalty of persons, amongst whom we live: or 6. upon light and undigested apprehensions of grounds, though in themselves never so demonstrative, weighty and substantiall: or 7. and lastly, upon whatsoever is not sufficient in a rationall way to poyle or balasse the judgement and conscience with such an assurance of truth, in what is in this case beleved, or assented unto, but that they shall still remain obnoxious and liable to be removed, and taken off, from their present belief, by the gusts and blasts of contrary apprehensions, in case they come in their way. The reason why such a Faith, which is built only upon some, or more, or all, of these foundations, may well be called a *dead faith*, is because it hath no other root, but what *is rottennesse*: it lives by no other principle of life, but what may be quenched, or taken from it, every hour, and consequently may properly enough be said to be *dead, even whilst it liveth.*

So then the Reason why the Faith of the Anti-Scripturists amongst us, which now *is* nor, was *dead* (in the sense declared) even whilst it was, is clearly this; their negligence and unfaithfullnesse unto their own souls, either in not inquiring after, or in not seriously and studiously digelling, such considerations and grounds, which are proper and potent, against all oppositions of contrary reasonings, arguments, and inducements whatsoever, to establish, root, ground, and build the judgements, souls, and consciences of men, in assurance of the truth of the Gospel, and of the issuings of the Scriptures from God. I well know that *faith* *is* (in Gods sense) *the gift of God*; but know withall, that the reason why *the seed, which fell in the stony ground, was scorched with the heat of the sun, was, because it had not mosh earth*, i. the main reason, why the doctrine of the

1 Jam. 2. 16.

Mat. 13. 5, 6

Multis ad sapientiam pervenire possunt, nisi se jam pervenisse putent.

To the Reader.

Gospel, in the belief of it, in the persons represented by this ground, miscarried, and came to nothing upon inducements halting and pulling a contrary way, was, because neither upon, nor after the hearing of it, they ever bestowed any labour of minde, any competent consideration upon it; nor ever took care or thought, to inquire so farre after the truth and certainty of it until they came to such grounds and reasons, by which they might be insured, and secured hereof. By reason of this carelesse and neglect, they never came to *have root in themselves* (as our Saviours expression is, in his interpretation of this part of the parable) ; they never came to be established or built upon any solid foundations or proofs of the Truth of the Gospel, which they had heard: and so when the argument or motive of declining persecution, did but encounter and attempt their Faith, it soon yielded, and gave up the ghost. The *Germans* have somewhat an unhand-some Proverb, which yet carrieth a savoury and pertinent truth in it: *God* (say they) *giveth every good thing, but not by the horns of bulks*. Their meaning is, that though God be the bountifull and blessed Authour and giver of all manner of blessings and good things unto men, yet he doth not ordinarily give them, at least many of them, but upon suitable applications and addressments of men themselves, for the attainment of them respectively. *Solomon* affirmeth it to be *the blessing of the Lord, that maketh rich*: and yet had said a little before, that *the hand of the diligent maketh rich* also. The pacification of the one saying towards the other, is as obvious, as the reconciling of the masters eye (in the proverb) with the servants hand, in making an horse fat. It is true, God sometimes by an hand of Providence not much used, casteth riches upon men, without the diligence of their own hand: nor is it to be denied, but that semblably he giveth Faith also, without, or at least upon very slender engagements or applications of men, for the obtaining of it. But as the *diligent hand* is the way of his Providence most occupied, for his enriching of men with the silver and gold of this world; so is the thoughtfull, studiously bent, and inquiring soul about the things of eternity, his standing method, for his enriching of men with the *true treasure*, and making them *great* through a sound Faith, in the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And he that will not *strive to enter in by the strait gate*, is never like to be forced or thrust into it by God. But here is neither place, nor opportunity for a just or through debate of these things.

Thus (good Reader) I have briefly drawn up for thy perusal, the sad History, of the original, progresse, and catastrophe or end of that generation, or vein of men amongst us, who are fallen from a *dead faith*, to a *lively deniall* of the divine authority of the Scriptures. The ensuing discourse will (I trust) prove like *Aaron* when with his censer, having *incense and fire from off the altar* in it, he *stood between the living and the dead, and staid the plague from spreading further*; though he could doe nothing for the raising again from the dead, any of those that were already fallen by it. Yet if God be a debtor to any gracious purpose or intention in himself, of the recovery of any of these men, *out of that snare of death, wherein their foot is taken*, and fast held (for the present) I make no question but the present

Treatise,

To the Reader.

Treatise, notwithstanding the image and superscription of the Authour too fully stamped upon it in deficiencies and infirmities, may be a commodious instrument in his hand for such a purpose.

Concerning the subject it self of the Treatise, the Demonstration of the finger of God in the Scriptures, I shall not need either to commend, or to demonstrate, the necessity of it, nor in respect of those also, whose foot hath not as yet so much as begun to slide into the way of that abomination, which giveth away the glory of the *only* infinitely *wise* and *holy* God in the composition of them, to sinfull, weak, and contemptible men. As there is much counterfeit and clip'd coin abroad in the world; so is there much Faith and belief of the Authority of the Scriptures in the hearts of men, which being touch'd, will be found base, and weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary, light. *The heart* of a man is so dangerously, yea and desperately *deceitfull*, that, to save it self a labour, and the sweat of the brow in being constrained to beleave indeed, by strength of argument, and evidence of demonstration, it will with much heat of confidence and importunity, violently persuade him that he beleaveth already: and angrily demand of him (in *Judas* his dialect) *what needeth this waste of time*, in writing, and reading long discourses, to prove that, which thou approvest already, and belevest abundantly? Reader, it may be thou hast heard of the *Latine* proverb, which tells thee that *profered ware sinketh*. Doubtlesse that belief of supernaturall and Divine things, which thy heart, unconstrained, un-compelled, unconvinced, and this by an high hand of argument and solid demonstration, in one kinde or other, profereth and commendeth unto thee for good, for want of salt, can hardly be savoury, or sound, or such, wherein either God, or men, will much delight. But (reader) I would not have thee have *sorrow upon sorrow*, a long Discourse upon a long Preface, or Epistle.

I have now but only a little *mint and anise to tith*, two or three particulars of lighter consequence to impart further unto thee, and so thou shalt no longer suffer in the bands of an Epistle.

I desire to give thee notice, that according to the tenour of my first thoughts, onely four or five of the first sheets of the Treatise (wherein being thereunto compelled by the importune and un-man-like clamours of some, I attempt that otherwise needlesse piece of curiosity, *ἡ δὲ ἐξ ἐμῆς καὶ ἐξ ἄλλων*, as the Greek proverb well expresseth it, *to make somewhat straiter, then that which is strait*) together with the Epistle Dedicatory, were intended for the presse. In which respect, there are some passages, both in the said Epistle, and within the compass of these sheets, which, being calculated according to the exigencie and posture of things amongst us so many months since, as the coming of them forth was projected, and expected, may now, by occasion of the disadvantage of so long-delaied a publication, seem somewhat incongruous, and lesse seasonable. In this behalf, I desire the Readers courtesie for my accommodation; and that he will please for my relief herein, to borrow of his memory, if that be able to supply him herewith, the state and tenour of his thoughts and apprehensions

ἄνεξ ὑλονομία παρ
ἰσ.

Mat 13 25.

Ἐὰν δὲν ὄντι
βουλήσῃ ἄνθρωπος
σοφίαν ἑαυτοῦ.

Prov. 10. 12.

1 vet. 4.

Numb. 16. 48.

To the Reader.

preceptions about the latter end of March last, as farre as they related to the contents of those papers, when he reads them.

2. When upon the persuasion of some friends, I had taken up this additional purpose, of enlarging the forementioned proportion of the discourse only with a summary and brief proposall of the heads of those considerations, which I had more largely insifted upon in the course of my Ministry, in order to the Vindication of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; yea and had satisfied my self accordingly, in the proposall and sitting down of one or two of the first of these considerations; yet going on to the rest, I clearly perceived, that their strength and efficacie for the great service intended, would have suffered much losse and disadvantage in reference thereunto, if they had been confined to any narrower compass of explication, then that which is now assigned unto them. In which respect, I was necessitated, to print them (at least the greatest part of them) as largely, as I Preached them; they who heard them Preached, and shall read them Printed, will bear witness, that very little alteration hath been made.

3. (And lastly) my desire to thee (and that more for thy own interest and benefit then for mine) is, that since the main body of the treatise, consists of many arguments, and demonstrations, to evince one and the same great conclusion and truth, viz. that the Scriptures are from God, though thou readest them singly one by one, and every one apart from his fellows, yet in order to thy satisfaction about their strength and sufficiency to evince the said conclusion, thou wilt look upon them all together, as one and the same intire demonstration, and not consult thine own dissatisfaction or discontent, where there is no just ground, or occasion of either, as viz. by finding weaknesse and unsatisfactorinesse (possibly) in any one or more of them, taken out of their conjunction, which indeed is their strength. *Solomon* gives this reason, why *two are better then one, because* (saith he) *if they all, the one will lift up his fellow: but wote him that is alone, when he shall be &c.* There is the like advantage in variety of arguments, for proofe of one and the same conclusion; if one be weak, or doubtfull in some particular belonging to it, and so lesse satisfying, one or other of its fellows may very possibly relieve and supply the defect; and then it becom's valid and serviceable, notwithstanding. A cable may be strong and sufficient to hold a good ship down laden against the stiffest gult, and strongest tempest of weather that can blow; and yet some one or two of the smallest threads or twists of it, may be brittle and half rotten. In like manner a discourse, or body of arguments, raised for the demonstration and proof of some important truth, may perform the engagement with power and authority, and be sufficient to establish the doubtfull, yea and to convince the gainsayer; though every thing delivered and asserted herein be not greater then exception, yea though some thing be obnoxious, and lieth open to the disputes and contradictions of some men. To reject an author, or book, because not every waies approveable, is, being interpreted, to presume himself to be a God. The Heathen Poet had more of a
Christian

a. Eccles. 4.9.

To the Reader.

Christia temper in bron then to, when he said,
*Ferum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria judit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura—*

i. Where much doth shine, a little not so bright
Shall not offend me, which some oversight,
Or humane frailty, well occasion might.

But (Reader) whether I have quitted my self, like a workman that need not be ashamed, or no, in my undertaking, and whether the divinity of the Scriptures, be yet in the dark, or no, notwithstanding all that I have done to bring it forth into the light centre, and determine thou if thou pleas't. Certain I am, that he that is about to come as a thiefe in the night, will bring a day with him, which shall open the eyes that are now shut, and astonish the world with the brightnesse of the demonstration of this truth, which with strength of affection and desire (I am certain) with what weaknesse soever in performance, I have in the ensuing discourse laboured to evince and assert. The Heavens which have been faithfull keepers of that great treasure of the world, ever since it was committed unto their custody, *Jesus Christ*, will shew themselves as faithfull in delivering it back again unto the world, in the time appointed. In that day the mouth of that ungodlinesse which is now opened against the glory of the Scriptures, will be shut, yea and sealed up, never more to be opened to the daies of eternity. The great Lord of this day, make thee and me worthy to stand before him thereon, by a real believe, and fervent expectation of it, according to the Scriptures.

Thing to serve thee with whatsoever is his,

in the things of Jesus Christ,

From my Study in Coleman-
Street London, Decemb. 1647.

John Goodwin.

b



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THE



THE
 Divine Authority
 OF THE
 SCRIPTURES
 Re-asserted.

Brethren (saith the Apostle) be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding, be men^a. If the voice of this exhortation were in both the branches conscientiously remembered by those, who are most concern'd in it, it would be as a tree of love and peace in the midst of the

Paradise of the Churches of God. There is scarce any offence either given, or taken, but proceeds, either from strength in malice, or weakness in understanding, or both. When our Saviour, being adjured by the High Priest, to tell him whether he was the Son of God, or no, made this answer; Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven; did he give the least occasion of offence unto him? and yet this High Priest rent his cloaths, saying, he hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now ye have heard his blasphemy. And that of the Prophet Hosea then taking place, And there shall be like people, like Priest^b, the people also voted with their Priest, He is guilty of death^c. If the High Priest, and his fellow-Priests, had justified our Saviour in his words and actions, which, had they not been men in malice, instead of understanding, and children in understanding, instead of malice, they would

^a 1 Cor. 14. 10.

^b Hos. 4. 9.
^c Mat. 26. 66.

would (according to their duty) have done, doubtlesse the common people also had joyned with them in a concurrent suffrage for his justification. But the observation taken up by *Augustina* long since, is nothing but the experience of all ages. *Some men* (saith he) *of competent understandings, had rather quarrell with what they understand not, then seek out the true understanding of it: and so instead of modest inquirers, shew themselves proud slanderers.* He himself was so hotly pursued by the clamours and outcries of some of the *understanding ones* of his age, that he was a man infected with errors, and poisoned the world with false Doctrines, that he was constrained to flee for refuge, to a publike declaration of himself in the particulars, which were to his disparagement charged upon him: and upon this occasion wrote that Tract, which is found in the 7th Tome of his Works, intituled, *Augustins Answer to certain Articles falsely fathered, or charged upon him*; beginning thus: *Some men out of a forgetfulness of Christian and brotherly love, are so importunately bent, by all wiles and means whatsoever, to mischief my reputation, that being blinded by a desire of doing harm, they perceive not how they overthrow their own. For they frame, and gather together, and make up, in such sayings or sentences as they can, prodigious untruths of certain most fond and foolish blasphemies: and these they carry about, to shew and inculcate into many, both publickly and privately, affirming, they are the same, in my sense and meaning, as they are expressed in their diabolically catalogue: which opinions or Tenets, we might readily and sufficiently prove to be thus carried and tossed up and down, for no other end, but to stirre up a spirit of envy against us, by anathematizing them all at once; would not the malignity of those, to whom it is a burthen that we should be thought well of, make it matter of suspicion, if we should take so brief a course for our vindication?* I see the common saying is not yet like to fail: *Sicut nunc sic & olim*, As it is to day, so was it yesterday: and (as *Solomon* saith) *there is no new thing under the Sunne.*

d Nonnulli intelligentes citius volunt exagitare, quod non intelligunt, quam a querere ut intelligant: & non sicut inimici inquisitores, sed sapienter clamatores, Aug. de temp. Sermon.

72.
Ad articulos aliquot ubi falso impostos, Augustini Responso.

Quidam Christiane astringentis obliuiscuntur, in tantum anathematizant, ut suam se evictore nocendi cupiditate non videant. & quibus

passant sententias comprehendunt, ineptissimi narum quarundam blasphemiarum prodigiola mendacia, eaq; offendenda & ingerenda multis publicè privatimq; circumferant, asserentes talia in nostro esse sensu, qualia diabolico indiculo continentur. Quae talis in nos ad excitandam invidiam pertinet, facile & sufficienter subscriptione unius probaremus anathematizati, nisi malignitas eorum, qui se gravari putant, si de nobis bene sentiat, ipsam subscriptionis nostrae brevitate suspectam esset habitura.

Most

Most certain I am, if I understand what plain English words signifie, that there was no more cause given by me in the 28th Section of my late Discourse, intituled, *Hagiomastix displayed &c.* why any man should either think, or say, that I deny the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; then was given by our Saviour in the words lately cited from *Matth. 26. 63.* why either the High Priest, or people should accuse him of *blasphemy*; or in these, *Destroy this Temple, and in three daies I will raise it up*^a, why the *false witnesses*, spoken of *Matth. 26. 60. 61.* should charge him with saying, *I can destroy the Temple of God, and build it in three daies.* Somewhat indeed there was in what our Saviour spake, of what these witnesses informed against him; but because they quite altered the nature and import of what he intended in his words, the Holy Ghost himself brands them with the infamous character of *false witnesses*; which brand of infamie will never be gotten out of their fore-heads to the worlds end. But he that hath commanded me to *recompence unto no man evil*^b, hath graciously opened the ear of my heart and soul to hearken unto my charge in that behalf, and hath made me strong to bear the burthens, whether of the weakness, or wickedness of men. Therefore I shall without the least reflection in way of disparagement upon any the persons of those, who have unworthily fought to make my favour stink in the sight of men, with a composed spirit addressè my self to render an account, as well of my judgement touching the Authority of the Scriptures, as of my intent in the said 28. Section of my Book. When that saying of Christ to *Peter*, concerning his beloved Disciple, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* was generally misunderstood by the Disciples themselves, who by a common misprision, made them to import, that *that Disciple should not die*^c, the holy Ghost himself thought it good, by the pen of the Evangelist, to rectifie the error, only by setting down the words, in opposition to the interpretation, or mistake; *Yet Jesus said not unto him, he shall not die: but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* sometimes, not only a spirit of enmity and envy, but of love it self, may through an inadvertencie, and neglect to ingage second thoughts, misapprehend the genuine intent of what is spoken; yea and this in such cases, wherein the very repetition of the

^a Joh. 2. 19.

^b Rom. 12. 17.
Immensè virtutis est, non sentire te esse percussum Sen.

^c Joh. 11. 13.

B

word

word spoken, is sufficient to evict the misapprehension. But

1. To clear the said Section of any thing, either intended, or said, against the Authority of the Scriptures; evident it is,

1. That it was no part of my intent in the said Section, nor any waies relating to the businesse I had in hand, to declare mine own judgement, either in the affirmative or negative, concerning the Authority of the Scriptures; nor yet to put my Antagonists upon it to declare theirs in this; but only to ingage them, to declare plainly and distinctly, what they mean by the word, *Scriptures*, when they affirm and maintain *the deniall of them to be the word of God, to be an error justly punishable with death*. The Reason why I desired to draw my adverstaries to this Explication of themselves, was, because I apprehended (and doe apprehend still) that when they shall give a fair and reasonable account of what is herein demanded, the unreasonableness of their assertion, wherein they maintain it as a matter worthy of death, to deny the *Scriptures to be the Word of God*, will thereby more manifestly appear.

2. Because I desired that their explication in this kinde might be pertinent and proper, not frivolous, I judged it not amisse to attempt by argument, to put them by, or take them off from two explications, which I conceived they were most likely to pitch upon, either one, or both; both of them being impertinent to their occasion. The former of the two from which I desired to take them off, was; that by *Scriptures*, they meant the English Translation; the later, the Originall Hebrew and Greek copies. From the former of these, I conceived I should take them off upon this ground or consideration; *viz.* because I suppose it is no foundation of *Christian Religions*, to beleve that the *Scriptures in this sense* or consideration, are the *Word of God*, i. (as I presently explain my self) that *God spake to his Prophets or Apostles in English*; I now adde, much lesse that he spake unto either, in those very words, phrases, and sentences in the English tongue, of which the systeme or body of our English Translation is made up. Who could have imagined, that such an expression, especially in conjunction with such an explication as this, would ever have been obnoxious to a sinister interpretation? much lesse be forced into any such sence, which should imply a deniall

cf

of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures? Have not men of the most eminent learning and worth amongst Protestants, expressed themselves upon the like occasion in termes farre more liable to exception, then mine, and yet are blamelesse? We (saith learned Doctor *Whitaker*) *acknowledge no edition* [of the Scriptures] *authentique*, [i. of Divine Authority,] *but the Hebrew, in the old, and the Greek in the new Testament. As for Translations, if they agree* (*viz.* with the Originalls) *We approve them: if they disagree, We reject them*. Now most certain it is, that our English Translations (for they are many) take the very best of them (as suppose the last, or any of the former) doe in very many things *disagree* from the Originall; and therefore, according to the judgement of this Grave and Orthodox Writer, (at least if his words be rigorously dealt with) ought to be rejected: which is a saying 7 times more commodious for left-handed Interpreters to work upon, then any of mine. And yet this Author hath this testimonie from the pen of Presbyterie, *that he never held any opinion that was counted erroneous: nor any private peculiar opinion, but what was commonly held in the Church of God*.

Chamier, a learned and faithfull Advocate of the Protestant cause against the Papists, and *Bellarmino* in particular, concerning Scripture Translations, writeth thus: *We* (saith he) *though We approve of other* [Editions or Translations] *more or lesse, yet We acknowledge them to be made but by a private spirit, as farre as every mans judgement, skilfullnesse in Languages, diligence and sincerity, were able to reach and attain.* Therefore there is none, whether in our own tongue, or in any other, unto which We think meet to subject either our selves, or other men. And a little after: *As for Translations; the sense of Protestants is this: that all of them, of what standing, name, or credit soever they be, with what diligence, sincerity, learning soever they were made, are only so farre certain, as they agree with the first context, I mean, as farre as they expresse that sence, which is certainly manifest to be the sence of the Hebrew and Greek words. But if they vary or swerve never so little from hence, that sence which they give or expresse, We judge, neither to be Divine, nor authentique, nor canonicall, but meerly*

^a Nullam nos editionem, nisi Hebraicam in veteri, & Græcam in novo Testamento, authenticam facimus. Translationes, si convenient, probamus: si discrepant, rejicimus. *Whitaker* in *Contr. de Scrip. Qu. 2. cap. 7.*

^b *M. Edm. Ane. tapol p. 40.*

¶ Nos verò, et-
 si alias alijs
 plus, minùve probemus, tamen non negamus confectas esse omnes privato spiritu, quan-
 tum contendere potuit cuiusq; & iudicij acumen, & linguarum peritia, & cum sinceritate di-
 ligentia, &c. & paulò post: Itaq; nulla est, sive nostrorum, sive aliorum hominum, cui vel
 nos ipsos, vel alios, addicere velimus. Et rursus paulò post. Quod attinet ad versiones, Ca-
 tholici sic sentiunt, eas omnes, cuiuscunq; sint aut temporis, aut nominis aut dignitatis, quan-
 taliter diligentia, sinceritate, doctrinà factæ sine, eò tantum certas esse, quòd cum primo
 contextu conveniant, quatenus, inquam, eum sensum expriment, quem certo constat esse
 Hebraeorum & Græcorum vocabulorum. Quod si inde discedant vel tantillum, tum quem
 ille sensum reddunt, non esse divinam, non Authenticum, non canonicum, sed merè huma-
 num, Chamier. *Panfr. Tom. 1. l. 2. c. 2. § 3. 5.*

the sense of this Authour clearly is, that no translation can be any further certain unto any man (*viz.* that it is, or, that it contains in it, the word of God) then as farre as the sense which is therein exprest is **certainly manifest** unto him, to be the sense of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* words; and consequently can be no foundation of Religion unto him. Which, whether it be not a saying 10. degrees harder then any of mine, let men, who have not sacrificed their judgements upon the service of their affections, judge. Certain I am, that there is not one of many thousands amongst us, to whom it is **certainly manifest**, that any sense at all exprest in the *English Translation*, is the sense of the Hebrew and Greek words: and consequently to whom it can be **certainly manifest**, that the said Translation is the word of God: and how then should it be a foundation of Christian Religion unto him? *The ancient Christians* (saith *Calvin*) *though they wanted the knowledge of tongues, especially the Hebrew, yet they alwaies ingenuously acknowledged it best to have recourse therunto, that from thence the true and genuine sense of things might be had.* From whence it evidently appears, 1. that these ancient Christians, made use of Scripture-Translations; 2. that notwithstanding, they did not judge them to be the word of God, or the foundation of Religion; because then they had had no need of making recourse to any other word of God, or writing whatsoever, for their regulation. *Doctor Featly*, in his late treatise, intituled *the Dippers dip't*, pag. 1. & 2. hath these words. *For no Translation is simply Authenticall, or the undoubted word of God. In the undoubted word of God there can be no error: But in Translations there may be, and are errors. The bible translated therefore is not the undoubted*

¶ *Veteres*,
 quamvis lin-
 guarum cog-
 nitione, ac pre-
 sertim Hebra-
 icæ, destitue-
 rentur, inge-
 nue tamen
 semper agnos-
 cunt, nihil esse
 melius
 quam ipsam
 consulere, ut
 inde verus ger-
 manusq; sensus
 hauriatur.
Calvin. in 2.
Decretum 4.
Self. Syn. Triid.

word of God, but so farre onely as it agreeth with the original. And how few are there amongst us, that are able to say, how farre the *English Translation* agreeth with the *Originall*? This Treatise was lately published by Authority, and hath been printed and reprinted, 5. or 6. times, no man, that ever I heard of, making the least exception against, or taking the least offence at the said passage. *Hierome* of old, called Translations of the Bible, *cænos rivulos*, *b muddy streams* or rivolets, in comparison of the *Originals*. And *Augustine* affirmeth, *that men skilfull in the Latine tongue, have yet need of two tongues more, namely the Hebrew and the Greek to attain the knowledge of the Divine Scriptures.* ¶ But if Translations were these *Divine Scriptures*, men need no more tongues for the understanding of them, then that onely wherein they are translated. It were easie to adde many more testimonies from the pens of learned and Orthodox men, wherein they expresse themselves concerning Translations, in words by many degrees more obnoxious to an obelisque, then any us'd by me. But it is one part of my present designe, to plead my cause with as much brevity, as the long furrows, which the ploughers have made upon my back, will any waies admit.

Therefore having thus the bush of Authority at our backs (in the next place) let us try it out with our Accusers by the dint of a few compendious arguments whether the *English Translation* of the Scriptures, be in every sense, yea or in a proper sense, the word of God, or any sufficient foundation of Religion unto men. If upon clearnesse of debate it shall appear, that there is a sense, and that obvious and plain enough, especially if proper also, and most precisely corresponding with the term, wherein the *English Translation* of the Scriptures, is not *the word of God*; then have those men quitted themselves most unworthy of men, and much more of Christians, who having put an adulterate sense of their own upon the said Assertion, have laid the bastard at my door; attempting with both their hands to build up their own Interests and honours, with the ruines and scattered stones of my reputation; and have abused the ears both of Magistrates and people, with shamelesse outcries and suggestions against me, as if I were a man of strange opinions, an Assertour of dangerous Doctrines, a spreader of I know not what absurd errors and heresies, and in

It seems that is good Divinity against the Anabaptists, which is blasphemie against the Presbyterians.

¶ Quibus si dis-
 plect unda
 fontis purissi-
 mi, conolos
 rivulos bibant
Hieronymus.
Epist. 102. ad
Marcellam.
 ¶ Latine lin-
 guæ homines
 duabus alijs
 ad Scriptura-
 rum divinarum
 cognitionem
 habent opus,
 Hebræâ scilicet, &
 Græcâ. *August.*
2. de Trinitate.
 l. 2. c. 11.

Job 19, 28.

every point like unto themselves; when as in deed and in truth (I speak as in the presence of God) the whole *root of the matter*, and intire cause of all this dust, is nothing else but the turbulent and irregular motions of their own fancies, working and beating and tearing themselves this way and that, to catch some live fly or other in my writings, which they may kill, and so put it, being dead, into my oymntment; that that favour of truth which it sends forth, being a favour of death to their unworthy opinions and practises, may be made to stink in the nostrills of men. I never denied, but have a thousand times over affirmed, and by many Arguments and demonstrations evinced the Scriptures to be the word of God; nay, I never denied, but now affirm, that in a sense (which I shall afterwards explain) even the *English Scriptures*, or *English Translation* it self (and much more *the Originals*) may be called *the Word of God*. But that in strictnesse and exactnesse of speaking (which is the dialect I speak in the said controverted Section) the English Translation is not *the Word of God*, I presume will be made as clear in truth, as the Sun is in light at noon day, by these ensuing demonstrations.

First, If our English Translation be the *Scriptures* or *Word of God*, or the *foundation of Christian Religion*, I desire to know, whether our last and newest Translation, or that which was made at *Geneva*, or that of our old Church-Bibles, or that, set forth long since by M^r Tyndall, or any other particular Translation in the English tongue (for there are severall others, especially of diverse pieces of the Bible, besides these) be these *Scriptures*, this *Word of God*, this *foundation of Christian Religion*? To affirm that they are all and every one of them *the Word of God*, and *foundation of Christian Religion*, is to make the word of God to differ from it self, yea to make it incoherent, and in some things inconsistent with it self. For that every one of these Translations respectively, differ from other, yea and in some places very materially; is a thing so well and generally known, to those who have compared them; and so easie to be known unto others also, who will please but to take a little pains to inquire, that I judge it needlesse to insist upon any proof of it. To single out any one of these Translations, as suppose the last, and to set this

crown

crown of glory upon the head of it (with the rejection of it's fellows) *this is the Scripture, the Word of God, the foundation of Christian Religion, and none other*, is of dangerous consequence many waies; and (I presume) will not be justified by any considering man.

Secondly, If the *English Translation be the Word of God, the foundation of Christian Religion* &c. then was there no *Word of God, no foundation of Christian Religion*, before the *Scriptures* were *Translated into English*: for certain it is, that nothing is, or can be, before it self or it's own being.

Thirdly, If the *English Translation be the Word of God, and so the foundation of Religion*; then all professours of Christianity thorowout the world, who are ignorant of the English tongue, and do not build their Faith upon the *English Translation*, build besides the true *foundation, the Word of God*.

Fourthly, If the *English Translation be the Word of God, and foundation of Religion*, why not the *Dutch, French, and Spanish Translation*, as well as it (with all others?) If every of these *Translations be the Scriptures, the Word of God, &c.* as well as the English, then do the *Scriptures and the Word of God* really differ from themselves: for there is nothing more evident, then that these *Translations* really differ one from another, the respective languages wherein they are framed, really differing one from another.

Fifthly, If the *English Translation be the Word of God, the foundation, &c.* then may there be, yea and are, many errors in the *Word of God, and in the foundation of Religion*. For that there are many errors and mistakes in all and every our *English Translations*, is a thing undeniable.

Sixthly, If our *English Translation be the Word of God, the foundation, &c.* then the *Original Hebrew and Greek copies*, especially wherein they differ in sense and import of matter from our *English Translation* (as in many places they do) are not *the Word of God, nor foundation of Religion*. For *the Word of God* admits no difference in it self, nor are *the foundations of Religion* divided in themselves.

Seventhly, The word of God, which the Apostle command's *Times* to hold forth in his preaching, is called *ἀποστολὴν, ἀνακλύειν*.

v. 9.

was Θ . i. a sound word, which cannot be condemned or reproved, Tit. 2. 8. But our English Translation, is not $\upsilon\pi\omicron\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ Θ , every way found, or irrevocable, or so found that it cannot be reproved. Therefore it is not the word of God.

Eightly, *The word of God* (properly taken) is that word, which all Ministers of the Gospel ought to preach; and to be instant (viz. in preaching it) in season and out of season (as the Apostle injoines *Timothy*) But all Ministers of the Gospel, are not bound to preach the *English Translation* (nor indeed any Minister at all, at least by any order, or injunction by God) Therefore the *English Translation* certainly is not the word of God in a proper sense.

Ninthly, *The word of God, is that word of Truth* (as *James* calleth it ^a) and *that incorruptible seed* (as *Peter* ^b,) of which the whole generation of the Saints are begotten again, and new born. But the whole generation of the Saints are not begotten again or new born of the *English Translation*. Ergo.

Lastly, If no Translation whatsoever, nor any, either written, or printed copie whatsoever, be the word of God, or foundation of Religion, certainly our *English Translation* cannot challenge this honour; but rather those *Hebrew* and *Greek* copies, whether written, or printed, which are called, Originall. Now that these are not properly the word of God, nor foundation of Religion, is evident, 1. Because the word of God had a being, and was extant in the world, viz. in the hearts and consciences of men, before there was any copie of this word extant in writing, either in the one language, or the other. Now that which is in being, or hath a being before another, cannot be said to be that other thing which followeth after. *Moses* is generally acknowledged by us to be the first penman of the *Scriptures, or word of God*; and that the world had continued more then 2000. years before he was born. But to affirm that there was no word of God, in the world, no foundation of Religion, for the space of 2000. years and upwards, is to contradict that which is plainly, and in many places asserted, in the written word of God. Besides, the Gospel it self was in the world, and beleaved on in the world, before any of the Evangelists put forth their hand to that blessed work, of putting into writing the summe and substance of it. Therefore

^a Jam. 1. 18.
^b 1 Peter. 1. 23.

fore their writings cannot properly be called the Gospel, because the Gospel had a compleat being and existence in the world, whilst as yet they were not. 2. Because there are many differences, and might possibly have been, and yet may be, many more, in, and between those *Hebrew*, and *Greek* copies themselves, which yet are indifferently and with equall reverence on all hands, all termed, the *Originalls*; yea the best, and truest, and most genuine of them, may in time, either thorough the ignorance, or negligence, or malice, whether of Scribes, or Printers, or over-seers of presses, or all, be corrupted: but the word of God, properly so called, is alwaies pure, univervally true, and incorruptible. 3. And lastly, because no man can have any assurance, that either the Scribe, or Printer, of any of the Originall copies, now extant in the world, whether *Hebrew*, or *Greek*, was either infallibly directed, or extraordinarily assisted from Heaven, either in the transcribing, or in the printing of them. Now no writing, or systeme of words and sentences whatsoever, which a man cannot reasonably, and upon good grounds judge and conclude, to have been committed to paper by speciall direction and warrant from God, can or ought to be a foundation of Religion unto him, or looked upon as the indubitable word of God. And this (I trust) will abundantly serve to clear and justify, that expression (so much quarrelled at) wherein I deny the *English Scriptures* or *Translation*, to be the foundation of *Christian Religion*, or the word of God: which was the former explication of the two, from which my desire was, in the fore-mentioned Section, to divert my Antagonists (as before was signified.)

2. For the latter explication, which I also conceiv'd they might very possibly have chopt upon, the tenour of it was this, That by the word *Scriptures*, in the said opinion made punishable by the Ordinance with death, they mean the *Originall Hebrew* and *Greek* copies, out of which (it is said, and I believe) our *English Scriptures* or *Translations*, have been taken and made. From this explication of themselves, I thought I might readily, and with abundance of conviction, take them off, by this consideration; viz. that there are very few men in the Kingdom, not one of a thousand, that understand either of these languages; I now adde, no,

nor yet know so much as whether there be any such languages or no, but onely by hear-say, and upon the credit of men; and consequently, cannot know, but upon the same terms, or ground of belief, whether there be any such *Originall Copies* or no; much lesse can they know, but still upon the same fallible grounds, that the matter, or substance of things expressed in the *English Translation*, was taken out of, or is contained in, the said copies. Now to make it a crime punishable with death, for men to deny such writings or books to be *the Word of God*, which they have no more reason or ground to judge to be so, but only common report, or the bare assertions of men, will (I beleeve) upon due consideration be found altogether inconsistent with those principles of equity, which ought to rule in all legislation, or making of Laws. For very possible it is, that he may truly, and cordially, and savingly beleeve the Scriptures, that is, that which indeed is *the word of God*, to be *the Word of God*, who yet shall deny any Originall copie, whether *Hebrew*, or *Greek*, now extant in the world, to be *the Word of God*, at least, properly and emphatically, that is, so to be *the Word of God*, as to have no mixture of corruption, or of that which is not *the Word of God*, in it. Yea the truth is, that in this sense, they, who both have the greatest skill, and insight into the Original languages, yea and who beleeve the Scriptures unto salvation, cannot upon any sufficient, at least not upon any infallible ground beleeve any Original copie whatsoever under heaven, whether *Hebrew*, or *Greek*, to be *the Word of God*: yea, I have yet to add, that which is more then all this; Suppose the very *αυθεντικα*, the very same copies, which were written with the hand of the holy penmen of the Scriptures themselves, were yet extant; yea and were infallibly known, to be so; yet except it were infallibly known also, that they were no waies corrupted, rased, or interlin'd, since they came from the hands of the said Pen-men, no person whatsoever were able infallibly to say and conclude, that these (in the sense specified) are *the Word of God*. The reason is, because *the Word of God* (in the said proper sense) is intirely, and universally, in all, and in every part of it, pure, and incorrupt, like God himself; therefore such copies or Transcripts, which are in any part corrupt, are not *the Word of God* (in this sense) and

and such which are not infallibly known to be universally incorrupt, cannot (in the said sense) be infallibly known to be *the Word of God*. Yea *the Word of God* (in the sense now argued) being not only intirely, universally, and in every part of it incorrupt, but also proportionably incapable of corruption, simply incorruptible; evident it is, that no writing or transcript whatsoever, though infallibly known to contain nothing in it for the present, but *the Word of God*, can yet (in the said sense) be truly called *the Word of God*, because though it be uncorrupt, yet it is not incorruptible. And this (I trust) is sufficient, yea and super-sufficient, to stop the mouth of that weaknesse (that I say not, wickednesse) which hath been so wide opened in proclaiming an inoffensive and most innocent passage, speaking nothing but words of sobernesse and of truth, as guilty of a most foul and horrid crime.

But secondly, to wipe off that importune asperson of denying the Authority of the Scriptures to be Divine, which the enemies of my peace (yet not so much of mine, as of their own) are still in a restless manner casting upon me; I shall plainly and briefly here give an account unto the world of my judgement, as well in the negative, as affirmative, concerning the Scriptures, and their Authority; as likewise concerning Translations of Scripture (in the generall) and shall further declare my sense (though very briefly also) touching the originalles. I shall deliver my self as touching all these particulars, in certain brief positions, or conclusions.

First, if by *Scriptures*, be meant the matter and substance of things contained and held forth in the books of the old and new Testament, commonly known amongst Protestants by the name of *Canonical*, I fully and with all my heart and all my soul beleeve them to be of *Divine Authority*, and none other then *the Word of God*; and (God assisting) shall rather expose myself to a thousand deaths, then deny them so to be. As for example; I fully and absolutely beleeve, that these assertions (with the like expressed in the same writing with them) 1. That Jesus Christ is God. 2. That he is the Son of God. 3. He was made man. 4. That he died for the salvation of the world, that he rose again from the dead, that whosoever beleeves on him shall

shall be saved; that whosoever beleeves not on him, shall be condemned (with a thousand more besides) all these assertions (I say) I fully and absolutely beleeve, not only to be Truths, but Truths of speciall revelation from God unto the world. I have lately imparted unto many others, and that at large, the grounds of my belief and confidence in this kinde: the brief heads of which grounds, I have annexed to this present discourse, in the close of it.

Secondly, if by *Scriptures* be meant, all the letters, syllables, words, phrases, sentences, and periods of speech, expressed in the said books, called *Canonically*, whether Translated, or in these Originals (I mean in such, either Hebrew or Greek copies, as are commonly extant, and used amongst us) I know no ground why I should beleeve them to be *the Word of God*; that is, why I should beleeve, that all, and every the said syllables, words, phrases, &c. were in any speciall or extraordinary way given, or appointed by God, to convey those spirituall truths and mysteries unto the understandings and mindes of men, which he hath been graciously pleased to reveal from heaven, for their salvation. Concerning Translations, the case is more clear; there being none of these, but which carry the manifest marks of humane ositancie and weaknesse in them. Concerning such Originals, as were mentioned; first, though for the Hebrew copies, it is more probable (of the two) that all the syllables, words, and phrases in these, are the same, unto which the Original Pen-men of these writings, were in speciall manner directed by God; yet I know no law, either of Reason, or Religion, that binds me to beleeve, that no Transcriber of them out of their first Originals, no Printer of them out of these Transcripts, ever failed, or miscarried after the manner of men, in these negotiations. So that as on the one hand, I dare not say, but that in some of these copies, there may be all things, even to words, syllables, and letters, of divine inspiration; so on the other I cannot be confident, that they are. As for the Original Greek copies, it is generally known to those, who have compared severall editions of them together, that there are many differences and varieties of readings, and some of them somewhat considerable, between copie and copie, edition and edition. Now certain it is that

that God, who is *the Authour of peace, and not of confusion*, did not order or direct his first pen-men of this part of the Scriptures, to publish different copies of those things, which they were respectively stirred up and appointed by him to impart by writing unto the world. Nor is it any matter of Faith, perhaps not of prudence, where editions and copies varie, and are at odds amongst themselves, to interpose by way of positive umpirage between them, upon any such terms, as to determine and conclude, that this, or that, or any other determinately, runs parallell in all things, and without the least variation, with the prototype, or first copie it self.

Thirdly, though I do not beleeve, that any Original exemplar or copie of the Scriptures, now extant amongst us, is so purely *the Word of God*, but that it may very possibly, have a mixture, or at least a tincture, of the word of men in it, yet I confidently beleeve, that the Providence of God, and the love which he bears to his own glory, as well in the condemnation of the wicked and unbelievers, as in the salvation of his chosen, have so far interposed and watched over the great and gracious discovery and Revelation which he made of himself by Jesus Christ unto the world, that those books or writings, wherein it was in all the branches and particularities at first imparted unto the world, neither as yet have suffered, nor ever shall suffer, any such violation, mutilation, or falsification in any kinde, either thorough the ignorance, negligence, or malice of men, but that they will be able, sufficiently, yea abundantly to furnish the world, men of all sorts and conditions, with the knowledge of all things, necessary to be known, either for their honourable and Christian deportment in this present world, or for their everlasting salvation, and exaltation in that which is to come.

Fourthly, concerning Translations, though I judge none of them to be *the Word of God* (in the sense lately argued against) that is, the pure *Word of God*, without any imbasement at all by that which is humane; nor yet in such a sense, as the Original copies may be called *the Word of God*, which do not only expresse and hold forth the revealed will, or minde of God, as Translations (at least in part) do, but hold them forth in that very language, and for the most part (if not altogether) in the self same

individuall words and phraſes, wherein God himſelf directed the publication of them by writing, unto the world, which Tranſlations do not; yet I judge them one of the greateſt bleſſings that God ever vouchſafed unto the nations, and Gentile part of the world; and conceive, that though they do not (even the beſt of them) expreſſe the will and minde of God, in that language or ſameneſſe of words, wherein God ordered the juſt publication of them by writing; no nor yet ſo intirely, thorowly, purely, or emphatically, as the Originalls do; yet they generally (even the worſt and moſt imperfect of them, that I know) expreſſe and hold forth ſo much of the minde, counſell, and will of God, by the true knowledge and underſtanding whereof, men may be brought to *live godly, anarighteouſly, and ſoberly* in this preſent world, and conſequently, to *that immortal and undefiled inheritance which is reſerved in the Heavens* for thoſe that beleve.

Fifthly, though I judge no Tranſlation whatſoever, either for gracefullneſſe of language, ſignificancie of terms, majeſty of expreſſion (with the like) to be equall to the Originall Hebrew and Greek; yet I conceive that there is no Tranſlation ſo farre degenerate or ſo diſadvantageouſly compil'd, but that carrieth *the ſpirit*, ſomewhat differing by way of excellencie from the manner of men, in the phraſe and language thereof; yea that which is ſufficient, by the ordinary bleſſing of God upon a conſciencious and intent reading, or conſideration of it, to evince the deſcent of the matter contained in it, to be from God, as a ſeal of armes upon the outside of a letter, is ſufficient to diſcover from what perſon of honour the matter or contents of the letter come. Yet

Sixthly, I conceive the matter of the Scriptures, I mean thoſe glorious and Divine Truths, thoſe holy and righteous commands, thoſe great and precious promiſes, thoſe aſtoniſhing and dreadful threatenings, contained and expreſſed, as well in Tranſlations, as in the Originalls to be of greateſt pregnancie and power both to diſcover and aſſert their royall Parentage, and deſcent from God. *If our Goſpel (ſaith the Apoſtle) be hid (1. undiſcern'd, or not apprehended to come from God) it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes of them,*
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which beleve not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them^a. In which words he clearly implies, that there is ſuch a glorious and heavenly luſtre, or brightneſſe of divine excellencie, ſitting (as it were) upon, and ſhining from, the face of the Goſpel, that men, who are not bewitched by the devil, that is, who are not through the juſt judgement of God upon them for former ſins deprived by the devil even of the naturall uſe or actings of their reaſons, judgements, and underſtandings, about ſpiritual things, cannot but ſee and acknowledge, manifeſt characters and impreſſions of the grace, holineſſe, love, and wiſedome of God in it; and conſequently be hereby drawn to imbrace it. Therefore

Seventhly and laſtly, the true and proper foundation of Chriſtian Religion, is not inke and paper, nor any book, or books, nor any writing, or writings whatſoever, whether Tranſlations, or Originalls; but that ſubſtance of matter, thoſe gracious counſells of God concerning the ſalvation of the world by Jeſus Chriſt, which indeed are repreſented, and declared, both in Tranſlations, and Originalls, but are eſſentially and really diſtinct from both, and no waies, for their natures and beings, depending on either of them. A bargain agreed upon, and concluded, in point of tranſaction, between two men, whether the tenour or particular of it be ever drawn up in writing, or ſubſcribed by the parties, or no, is yet for the nature of it, and matter of tranſaction, a compleat and true bargain; the writing, if any be made in reference to it, onely declarcth the nature or tenour of the bargain, which was in reality, and compleatneſſe of being, before the writing; and conſequently the writing can be no part of it: In like manner, the gracious and good pleaſure of God concerning the ſalvation of the world, had in all the particulars of it, compleatneſſe of being, viz. in God himſelf, long before any branch or part of it was imparted unto the world by any writing whatſoever; yea and was ſavingly imparted, and revealed unto the world, 1. By immediate inſpiration from God unto ſome men, 2. by word of mouth, from theſe, unto many others, long before any part of it was ordered by God to be ſet down in writing. So that no book, or writing whatſoever, is either in whole, or in part, this word, or will of God; and conſequently

^a 1 Cor 4 3, 4

ly, *no foundation of Christian Religion*; unless we shall suppose and make some other *foundation of this Religion*, besides *the word of God*.

This conclusion is further evidenced by this consideration. The *foundation of true Religion*, is not changed, varieth not from it self, by any intervalls, or distances of times, but like Christ himself, is one *and the same, yesterday, and to day, and for ever*. Now certain it is, that there was a time, where neither Originals, nor Translations of Scripture, were *the foundation of Religion*, but somewhat besides; therefore as certain it is, that neither are they the *foundation of Religion*, at this day. That there was a time, when neither of them was any *foundation of Religion*, is evident from what hath been already said, and is generally acknowledged. There was a true *Religion* in the world, all along that great space or tract of time (two thousands years and more) which had gone over the head of the world, before *Moses* was called and imployed by God, to lay the corner stone of that Divine fabrique of Scripture, which is now (and so hath been of a long time) perfected; unless we will deny, *Abel, Enoch, Noab, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to have been *truly Religious*, with many others, who lived within that compass of time, and have testimony from the Scriptures themselves, that they were godly and faithfull. Yea the Gospel it self, and those further and rich discoveries of himself, which God reserved for a glorious gift to be presented (as it were) by Jesus Christ himself unto the world at his coming into it, were effectually preached, and beleevd by many unto salvation, and Christian Religion fully established in the world, before any part of the new Testament was written. The Evangelist *Matthew* is generally conceived (especially by ancient writers) to have been the first pen-man, that God was pleas'd to use in penning the new Testament; and that it was about eight years after *Christ's* ascension, before he put forth his hand to this work. And yet who doubts but that *the foundation of Christian Religion* was laid before this in the world; yea and much of this *Religion* built upon it? Therefore (questionlesse) no writing whatsoever whether *Translations*, or *Originals*, are the *foundation of Christian Religion*.

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There are other reasons, and these in abundance, very obvious, and near at hand, of an undeniable eviction of truth in this conclusion; but the considering Reader cannot lightly by this, stand in need of any thing more to be said for his satisfaction in the point.

If it be objected and said; but what ground or *foundation* can a weak and unlearned man have, to build his Faith or *Religion* upon, if he may not safely build it upon such a *Translation* of the Scriptures, as he understands? And of what use and benefit are *Translations*, yea or *Originals* themselves, if men may not build their *Religion* on them, as upon a sure and safe *foundation*?

To the former part of the Question, I answer, 1. That if he who is able to read and understand the Scriptures onely in his own native tongue, hath no *foundation* to build his Faith or *Religion* upon, but onely that *Translation* of Scripture, which he is able to read and understand; then he that is altogether book-lesse and illiterate, and not able to read the Scriptures, though translated into his own language, hath no *foundation* at all, for his. The reason of the consequence is clear; because to him that cannot read English, an English Bible is as much a *sealed*, or uselesse book, in respect of his personall reading it, as a Bible Translated into a strange language, is to him, who is able to read the English tongue, and none other. But certain it is, that many English, both men and women, who cannot read English, and consequently not an English Bible, finde notwithstanding a sufficient *foundation* whereon to build their Faith and Religion, being sound Beleevers, and truly *Religious*. Therefore they also, who are able both to read and understand the English Translation, and no other, either have, or may have, I am sure ought to have, another *foundation*, on which to build their Religion, besides their English Translation; viz. that Truth of God, which is indifferently contained and expressed both in Originals, and other Translations also, besides the English; and on which many build their Religion, and that safely, who neither know, nor depend upon, either the one, or the other, I mean neither upon *Originals*, nor *Translations*, either in one language or other.

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Secondly,

Secondly, If unlearned men amongst us have no foundation to build their *Religion* upon, but onely the *English Translation*; then the *foundation of their Religion* must unavoidably, and of necessity be, that which is the product and fruit of the wisdom, learning, and understanding of men. For certain it is that all Translations of Scriptures in what language soever, are none other; the Holy Ghost never interressing himself, at least in a way of infallibility, or any other wise, then according to the line and measure of his usuall assistance of faithfull ministers in the course of their preaching, about any *Translation of the Scriptures*. Therefore certainly such men (I mean, that are unlearned) have another foundation, besides the English Translation, whereon to build themselves in point of Religion, even the infallible and unquestionable Truth of God; which was a foundation of like import to many unlearned ones, before the English Translation was brought forth, or heard of in the world.

If it be yet urged; yea but is not this Truth of God, which you acknowledge to be so just and sure a *foundation of Religion*, somewhat at least, or a part of the *English Translation*; inas much as you grant, that it is contained and expressed in it. And if so, then is this *Translation*, at least in respect of a part of it, or of somewhat in it, a sure and safe *foundation of Religion*. To this I answer,

First, By concession; that that Truth of God, which I assert for the true *foundation of Religion*, is contained and expressed (though it be with some disadvantage) in the *English Translation*. But

Secondly, I answer further (by way of exception) though that truth of God, is indeed the true *foundation of Religion*, which is contained and expressed in the *English Translation*, yet it follows not from hence, that therefore it is any part of it. Wine or other liquor may be contain'd, presented, or held forth in a cup; yet hereby it never the more becomes any part of the cup, which contain's and hold's it forth.

If it be yet said; yea but is not the sense, meaning and import, of a writing, or book, a part, yea the most materiall part, of either? And is not the *Truth of God* you speak of, the true and genuine sense, meaning, and import of the *English Translation*?

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and so by consequence, a part of it? I answer:

1. There is not altogether the same reason or consideration of Translations of books, or writings in any kinde, wherein onely the sense and meaning of another is expressed (or at least intended so to be) which there is of books containing onely the judgement, sense, and apprehensions of him, who is the Authour. The union between the words, and sense or meaning in the later kinde of books, is more formall and entire, then in the former: and consequently the sense or meaning contained in them, may more properly be called a *part* of them, then in the other. There is a kinde of union between the cup, and the wine that is put into it, and contained in it, as well as there is between the body and soul, in the person of a man; but yet the former union doth not, of the two things united, constitute any thing so intirely one, as the later doth. The body and soul, by means of their union, constitute a third thing differing from them both, which is naturally, compleatly, and essentially one (*viz.* the person of a man) of which, as well the body, as the soul, and again, the soul, as well as the body, may properly be called, *parts*. But no such third thing, *viz.* which is naturally and intirely one, is raised by the other union, which is between the wine and the cup: nor can the wine be called properly a part of any third thing, constituted or made of it, and the cup, in conjunction with it. The reason of the difference is, because this later union, between the wine and the cup, is of a lower nature, more extrinsecall and loose, then to combine the two things whereunto it relateth, into one and the same intire body, or substance. In like manner, when a man inditeth and frameth a book of his own, wherein he onely expresseth his own sense, conceptions, or notions of things; there is a more genuine, naturall, and intire union, between the sense and the words, then is between the sense, and the words of a book Translated. The words, and sense in the former kinde of writing, proceed joyntly and with an intirenesse of union, out of one and the same understanding, much after the same manner, wherein the soul and the body come in personall union out of the womb. But in the Translation of a book it is otherwise; the sense, matter, and import of this, is professedly taken or borrowed from another book or writing,

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writing, which came from another understanding, not his, who is the translatour; and consequently, is but a stranger (comparatively) to those words, or that language, into which it is translated. From which difference it cometh to passe, that the sense of a Translation, or book translated out of another, cannot so properly be called a part of this book, as the sense of a book, wholly rais'd, words, and matter, out of the same judgement and understanding, may. But

2. Suppose it be granted, that a part, or somewhat of our *English Translation*, is a just and safe *foundation of Religion*, as *viz.* the sense and meaning of it (as hath been said) yet in a formall consideration, that is, as it is a part of this *Translation*, it is not, it ought not so to be. For if it be in this respect a *foundation of Religion*, *viz.* because it is a part of the *English Translation*, then the reason, judgement, faithfullnesse and skill in languages in the Translatour, are the principall ingredients into the *foundation of Religion*. For that sense, matter, and import of things expressed in this Translation, though they be (for the most part) the Truth, or Truths of God, yet were they not brought hither (I mean, put into, or made part of this Translation) simply as they are the Truth, or Truths of God, but onely as they were conceived and apprehended for such, by the Translatour, and supposed to be the true and genuine sense of the Originalls, from whence they were conveyed by him, and put into the English tongue. So that whosoever shall build or *fund his Religion* upon the *English Translation*, simply as such, as a Translation (which properly import's onely the work, or atchievement of a man) builds this important fabrique upon the sandy foundations, of the knowledge, skill, wisdom, and faithfullnesse of men. But he that builds upon the Truth and counsells of God concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, whether expressed in the said *Translation*, or in the *Originalls*, or whosoever, builds his *Religion* (like the *wise builder*) upon the *Rock*, and upon such a *foundation* which shall not be shaken; whether the English Translation stand, or fall. And this for Answer, to the former part of the Question propounded.

To the later, which questioneth the use of *Translations*, in case unlearned

unlearned men may not safely make them the *foundation* of their *Religion*, I answer; first (in the generall) that the use and benefit of them is exceeding great, and that severall waies, though that use (which is indeed an abuse of them, and which makes them of equall authority with the incorruptible word of God it self) be denied unto them. Yea I conceive that that miraculous and glorious gift of tongues, given to the Apostles in the day of Pentecost, (*Acts 2.*) though of a most gracious and very high concernment unto the world, yet was not of that rich and blessed accomodation to the generality of man-kinde, which Translations of Scripture are. For (to descend to particulars in the second place) there are these ensuing considerations (amongst others,) wherein Translations of Scripture, are great benefactors unto the world.

1. They exhibit, and represent the great things of God and of Jesus Christ concerning the salvation of men, unto the mindes and consciences of weak and unlearned men, whose education, condition, and course of life, have not afforded unto them so much clerk-ship, or scholar-like learning, as to be able to reade with understanding, any more tongues or languages, then that wherein they were born. By means of which representation by Translations, they have opportunity, as oft as they shall desire, to exercise themselves with more advantage and facilitie, either in the meditation, or further study of them.

2. Men who have been bowed down so neer unto the earth in their education, that they are not able to read so much as their own native language, may yet have more, and more frequent communion and converse with the great things of their peace, being brought into a language which they understand, then they could have had opportunity to enjoy, had they still been confined to the Originalls. Many can reade the Scriptures unto them in their mother tongue, who are not able to reade, much lesse to interpret, the Originall languages.

3. A Translation, if it suffers not, either through the unskillfullnesse, or unfaithfullnesse, of the Translators, doth not only convey the precise sense and import of the originall text to the Readers understanding, but serve instead of a brief Commentary or explanation upon it.

4. When there is a *famine of the Word of God*, in respect of the publike teaching and ministry of it, or when men are deprived of liberty or opportunity to partake of it in that ordinance, the company of a faithfull Translation of the Scriptures, may be improved to a comfortable supply of these spirituall inconveniences and defects, by the generality of men, who are not capable of the originals.

5. A good and approved Translation in the hand of a plain, and yet considering man (a frequent conjunction in these daies) serves him instead of a touchstone to try the Doctrine of his Teacher, whether it be *gold and silver*, or hey and stubble: and so may be a means (through the blessing of God) to deliver his precious soul, out of the snare of those, who corrupt and make merchandise of the word of God; a seed of men, which Satan of late hath sowne very thick in the field of God.

6. Many Ministers and Teachers themselves stand in awe of Translations in the hand of their hearers, and people committed unto them, lest they should be reprov'd and censur'd by them, in case they approve not themselves such *workmen, who need not be ashamed*. The Bereans searched the Scriptures daily, whether things were so, or no, as Paul and Silas had taught them: which they could not have done, had they not had that precious advantage of the Scriptures in a language which they understood.

7. (And lastly,) Many thousands of souls, who cannot fetch the waters of life from the fountains themselves (I mean the Originals) nor drink here: may yet drink freely of them, and quench their thirst, when they are derived and brought from hence to their hearts and understandings, by the pipes and conveyances of sound Translations. Yea and by acquainting themselves with the Scriptures privately, and in their own houses, they may be more apprehensive and capable of the publike administration of them, in the house of God.

These particulars might easily have been enlarged, and the great weight and importance of them all respectively, more fully opened, urged, and insisted upon; yea many more of equal concernment with these, might readily have been added; but these I judge abundantly sufficient, to vindicate the necessity, use, benefit, and blessing of Translations unto the world, though
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• Acts 17. 11.

no foundation of Religion be made of them.

By this time I trust the Reader will acknowledge, that labour enough (if not complain, that more then enough) hath been expended, in washing that, which was clean before; and in making strait, that which was no waies crooked. But it is no rarity amongst the stories and passages of the world, to hear, or see, justice put upon her justification. If I did not know *Satan* to be an *Ethiopian*, one that *cannot change his skin*, I should not fear the *returning of the clouds after the rain*; I mean, the bearing of the reproach of a man denying the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, any more.

I cannot but here take notice, of some other lying and calumniating spirits abroad in the world against me, before the date of the Commission, which this last and foulest of the brood, obtained, to enter the mouthes and tongues of men. Yet I perceive that that great Father, of whom we spake before (*Augustine* by name) in whom the *grace of God wrought mightily*, for the advancement of the Name and Kingdom of *Christ*, in the world, was haunted and molested with many more of these unclean spirits, then yet I have been. For he, in the forementioned Tract, found himself *necessitated, partly to mollifie his accusers and traducers, partly to rectifie the apprehensions of those, in whose ears it of a misrepresentations of him had sounded*, to vindicate and purge himself, about no fewer then *sixteen* severall points, wherein he had suffered disparagement and disgrace by the tongues of some, as an erroneous man. But *Hell* it self, though *broke loose*, can (it seems) out of all my own writings, and other mens, concerning me and my Doctrine, finde and forge together but four particulars, for which I must be made to *take up my crosse, and follow Christ*, as an evil doer: and two of the four, have been already in the precedent part of these papers, either fully justified for truth, or else evicted of falshood, in point of charge.

ritizandos, sive ad eos, quorum auribus tale quid insonuit instruendos, quantum adjuvante domino fieri potuit, plene lucideq; pandamus, quid de peccatis de finitionibus judicem. Propositus ergo singularitatem sexdecim articulis, sub unoquoq; eorum sensus nostri & fidei, quam contra Pelagianos ex Apostolicæ sedis Autoritate defendimus, verba ponamus, &c. Aug. ad Artic. sibi falso impostor. Tom 7. An idle Pamphlet lately published under the title of Hell broke loose.

• Unde ne hujus querele interveniret occasio, necessarium convenientiq; creditur, ut, si five ad calumniantium animos

The first of the four is, that I hold, *that naturall men may do such things, as whereunto God hath by way of promise annexed Grace, and acceptation.* A most dangerous errour! and of as sad a consequence, as that which was charged upon *Paul*, when his adversaries accused him for teaching, *That they were no gods, which were made with hands.* This *Paul* (say they) *hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands.* For (doubtlesse) men, are naturall men, before they are spirituall, or supernaturall; and spirituall or supernaturall they cannot be made, but by beleeving; and unto beleeving, we all confesse, that *God hath promised grace and acceptation.* Therefore unlesse it be possible, that naturall men may beleeve; it is impossible that ever they should become spirituall: And if it be possible that they may beleeve, then may they doe such things, whereunto God hath by way of promise, annexed grace and acceptation. And if this be an errour, *That naturall men may doe such things as whereunto God hath by way of promise annexed Grace and Acceptation,* Presbytery her self, in many of her most Orthodox children (as she counteth Orthodox) as well in the present Assembly, as without, is partakresse of the infection; as I have expressly shewed from their own pens, and under their own names subscribed, elsewhere. But where did *Hell* meet with this opinion? or from what hand did he receive it, as held, or taught by me? Doubtlesse there is no such Doctrine as this (to my best remembrance) asserted by me in any of my writings: nor is it any where to be found upon my skore that I know of, but in the retinue of many more notorious untruths, I mean in a Pamphlet, set forth some-while since by a young man, one *Sa. Lane*: unlesse (haply) *Gangrena* also in some or other of her *diabolicall indices* (as *Austin* calls them) spit this poison too. But unto the said Pamphlet, an Answer had been given long since, had I not judged the engagement farre beneath the consequence of those other employments, which have taken up my time, since that occasion. But till I shall have an opportunity, to give a more full account unto the world, of my sense and judgement about the freedom, or bondage rather, of the will, and power of nature, in order to salvation; I desire to declare and publish this in brief, as my cleer judgement and belief in the point: That no man since the fall,

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* Acts 19. 26.

* Greenfis.
§ 16. p. 20, 21,
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ever yet did, or ever will beleeve unto salvation, but only by the assistance of the speciall Grace of God. If this be an opinion heterodox, I confesse I am not Orthodox in the point.

The second Errour or Heresie, which the said *Hell*, (being broke loose) foolishly forgeth, and fallily fathereth upon me, is, That *to credere, Faith in a proper sense, is imputed to justification, and not Christs Righteousnesse.* First, If *Hell* can finde any such expression, as *to credere*, in any of my writings, or can prove, that I ever us'd any such expression in any of my Sermons, or in any conference with any man upon the point of justification, or otherwise, to expresse mine own judgement herein, I will say that *Hell* can doe more then *Heaven*: for certain I am, that neither God, nor his holy Angels, can either finde in the one, or prove in the other any such thing. Secondly, Whether I hold, *that Christs righteousness is not imputed in justification,* (except haply in some uncoutch and Apocryphall sense) let the 8th Section of the third Chapter of the second part of my Treatise concerning Justification, answer for me. Here I expresse my self thus: *In this sense likewise, as well the habituall holinesse of Christs person, as the morall righteousness of his life, may be said to be imputed to those that beleeve in him.* To say, that I deny the imputation of *Christs* righteousness in justification, because I deny it in a barbarous, heterodox, irrational, incongruous sense, whenas I affirm it in a sense regular, and consistent; is a fruit, either of simplicity, or malignitie in the highest. Thirdly (and lastly) as Orthodox and learned Divines, as any Presbytery numbred amongst all her children, are so farre from making it, either hereticall or erroneous, to affirm, that *Faith is in a proper sense imputed in justification,* that they doe not only make it equally Orthodox, and of the same import with the other expression, I mean of a metonymicall or improper sense, and that by evidence of demonstration, but plainly declare their judgements for it.

* Yes even those of us who maintain Faith to be taken in a pro-

pre sense, and not by a metonymicall trope, as well in any one of those phrases, as in another, doe not say any more then may well be justified; nor doe they differ at all in Doctrine, so farre as I am able to conceive (and I love not to make differences where I apprehend none) that say the one, or the other. *At Tbo Saraker*, Shadows without substance. p 54.

So here in the fore-mentioned propositions [we are justified by Faith, we are saved by Faith, Faith is imputed to righteousness] the word Faith is taken for Faith, as the word hope, for hope, in the like, &c. Item ibid. p 56

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As for the reports of some others, who defile their tongues and consciences together, by charging me behinde my back, that I make Faith without an object to justify, that I make Faith to justify as it is an act, that I make a bare belief of the Gospel to justify, that I desire not to be found in Christs righteousness; with many such ridiculous forgeries as these, I look upon them onely as the essaies of Satan, or that small game which he had rather play (as the proverb is) then sit out. For my belief and hope in the most important businesse of my Justification before God, I cannot expresse it either with more satisfaction to my self, or (as I conceive) unto others, then in the tenour of the Apostles own words: I desire, and hope, *to be found in him [Christ] not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*

Phil. 3. 9.

The third and fourth errors (very simply and erroneously so called) which Hell chargeth me with, have been already atoned, and perfectly reconciled unto the Truth, in the former passages of this discourse. However, let us have the sound of them, that so we may perceive with what fidelitie, and skill, he that is the Collectour for Hell, hath performed his Office, in making the Extraction of them out of my pen.

The former of the two, tenoueth thus: *That as it is no foundation of Christian Religion, to believe that the English Scriptures, or that volume, or volume of books called the Bible, are the Word of God: so neither those that are learned, nor those that are unlearned, can know that the Originall Hebrew or Greek copies are the Word of God, upon any better terms of assurance, then the testimonie, common reports, or Authority of men.* Doth the man represent it as an error, to hold, that the act of a man, as viz. his believing the English Scriptures to be the Word of God, is no foundation of Christian Religion? The Lord in mercy send his Church better Tutours and Teachers then these.

The later, is but another of the same, being this: *That the holding the Scripture, i. either the Originall or Greek copies (one of which the English Bible is translated) or the English Bible to be the Word of God, can with no tollerable pretext, or colour, be called a foundation of Christian Religion.* Miserable is the Religi-

on of these men, whose foundation is, either their own, or the act of some other man. But by the way, neither of these positions are mine, nor can they by any regular consequence or deduction, be infer'd from that discourse of mine, to which the Collectour pretends in his margent. Howsoever, I presume I have given a fair and satisfactory account, how, and how farre, and in what sense, I both hold, and denie, as well the English Scriptures, as the Originals, to be the word of God.

Concerning the power of the civill Magistrate, I have in my Epistle, before my late discourse, intituled *Hagiomastix* displaid, &c. not onely argued and asserted the lawfullness of it, but the necessity also; yea and shewed the benefit and blessing of it unto the world; yea and further have endeavoured with all my might to convince the error and sin of those, who shall refuse subjection to it.

I know nothing more, for matter of opinion, wherein I suffer from the world as an erroneous and unsound man, except it be concerning the estate and condition of the soul, between the time of death and the Resurrection. My judgement herein hath been unduly represented from a Sermon of mine (the principal engagement whereof was to demonstrate the immortality of the soul) as if I held, that the soul sleeps untill the Resurrection: Whereas, as to this particular, I onely taught (with some little enlargement of my self in the proof and prosecution of them.) 1. That the Scriptures very frequently represent the state and condition of *the person of a man*, between the time of his death and resurrection, by the *metaphor*, or similitude of sleep, and 2. That the Scriptures are very silent concerning the particular estate or employments of the soul, during this space: and that onely in the generall, they speak them *blessed* (if the souls of those who *dye in the Lord*.) If there be either error or Heresie, in either of these assertions; I shall upon conviction, either retract, or contentedly suffer, whether in name, or otherwise, as an Erroneous or Hereticall person.

Thus, Reader, I have given thee a sincere and cordiall account, and that with as much cleerness and perspicuity, as my intended brevity would admit, of what I hold in point of judgement, about those Doctrines, or particular subjects in Di-

• Phil. 4. 17.

vinitie, wherein the tongues of many have magnified themselves so much against me, as a man holding rotten tenets, and in that respect, dangerous to be heard, dangerous to be conversed with. And as Paul did not so much desire a gift from the *Philippians*, as fruit that might abound to their account²; so neither have I drawn up this brief vindication or explication of my self in matters objected against me, so much to free my self from the clamours, hard sayings, and thoughts of men, as to free and deliver them from such a course and practise, which I am certain will, without repentance, be matter of sad account unto them in that day. For I am able, *through Christ strengthening me, to be abased in name and credit, as well as otherwise*. Dishonour, disparagements, defamations, &c. are the element wherein I have liv'd and my soul prospered (through the goodnesse of God) these many years. The yoke is little or no offence unto me, my neck having been so long accustomed to it. Yea I look upon my sufferings for righteousness sake (and sufferings from men upon any other terms, I fear none) as the best earnings I can make of mortality. So that did I not conceive it as a duty lying upon me, or were it not otherwise a practice very suitable to my spirit, to seek the everlasting peace and comforts of men by every good way and means, and consequently by removing, as far as I am able, every stumblingstone out of their way; I should have been very faintly drawn into this engagement of a vindication; my name being better able to bear the burden of my reproches, then my soul to want the benefit and blessing of them. *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets that were before you.* Matth. 5. 11. 12.

For a close of this present discourse, I shall make a brief presentment of the substance or heads of those Demonstrations, by the full explication and discussion wherof of late, in the standing course of my Ministry, I fully, and (as I suppose) above all contradiction, evinced the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, their Parentage and descent from God.

The arguments or demonstrations, by which I asserted that Blessed conclusion we speak of, were first, and in the generally divided

divided into two kinds. The first, we called, *Intrinsicall*; the later, *Extrinsicall*. By the former, we meant such considerations or arguments, which are found in, or (as it were) inhering in, the body of the Scriptures themselves. By the later, such, which, though found out of the Scriptures, yet have a potent tendency and import to advance the same Truth with the former, in the judgements and consciences of men. Those which we called *Intrinsicall*, we subdivided; 1. Into such, which respect the penning, phrase, language, and manner of indighting, or framing the Scriptures. 2. Into such, which respect the matter, or substance of them: both which kinds of argument, we looked upon, as so many divine characters printed and stamped (as it were) upon the body or face of the Scriptures, be-vearing their Originall and descent from God. The later sort of arguments, which we called *Extrinsicall*, we likewise subdivided, 1. Into such remarkable passages or acts of Divine Providence, whereby God plainly own's the Scriptures as his, and from himself. 2. Into such either doings, or sayings of men, which are so far confederate with those Providences of God, as to joyn in testimonial with them on the behalf of the Scriptures.

The Arguments drawn from the penning, phrase, frame, and manner of inditing the Scriptures (which were the first kinde of those we called *Intrinsicall*) were these following (in number, eight.)

First, The nature, qualitic, and manner of the stile or phrase, wherein the Scriptures are written, being so emphatically and signally different from the tenour of all humane writings whatsoever, that have yet come to light in the world, give a clear and pregnant testimony unto them, that they come from God. The Apostle Paul attesteth this testimony, withall assigning the ground or reason of such a difference, when he saith; *which things* (speaking of the matter or substance of things contained in the Scriptures, and particularly the Gospel) *we also speak* (1. utter, and publish unto the world, whether by writing, or word of mouth) *not in the words, which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing* [or rather, fitting, or fitting, *συγκρίνας*, adaptantes, or, coaptantes] *spirituals with spirituals* (for so it is in the originally, *πνευμαλικά μετ' πνευμαλικά*)

μᾶλλον οὐκ ἐπίνοῦται) I. matter, or things which for their nature and substance are *spirituall*, with words and phrases which are *spirituall* also, and so suitable to them. It is (I confesse) very difficult and hard, or rather indeed impossible, for a man fully to explicate the differences between the Scripture phrase and expression, and the language and phrase used in other writings. But as the palate or sense of tasting in men, clearly tastes and discerns the difference of taste between meats and meats, of which difference notwithstanding (at least in many particulars) they are not able to give an account in words: in like manner the intellectuall διάνησις or principle of relishing in the soul, is capable of a discerning and distinguishing such differences between words and words, expression and expression, which the tongue of a mans understanding is not able to describe to the apprehension of another. And as the fruit of the vine, the grape, is easie to be discerned from the fruit of the thorn; and the fruit of the figtree, from any thing that comes from the thistle; so in reason, those words, that stile, and manner of speech, which are extraordinarily and in reference to a very particular and speciall occasion, taught by that great master, the holy Ghost, must needs be conceived, as easily distinguishable, from the best and most refined phrase or stile that can proceed from the wisdom of men. The difference we prosecuted and opened so far, as to reader intelligent men fully sensible and apprehensive of some particularities in it: but we judge the discourse too long to be here inserted.

Secondly, The spirituality, the admirable workmanship, appearing upon a narrow and close inspection, in the joints of the Scriptures, I mean in the connexions and dependencies, which one passage hath with, and upon another; and one sentence and period, upon another; leadeth us beyond all that is called *man*, to finde the Authour and workman of them. There is no such aspect between the conjoin'd sentences in other Authours or writings, which is in this. It is somewhat hard to expresse this difference also (as was said in the former point) to weak apprehensions; especially to such, as are not in some good measure acquainted with other writers, and have not taken knowledge, how, or after what manner their sayings and sentences hang up-

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on another. The Apostle himself was at a like losse upon a like occasion or concurrence of circumstances; I mean, how well to expresse himself in matters of a spirituall, and somewhat unusuall importance, to capacities unacquainted with such things. *Of whom* (saith he, speaking of *Christ*) *We have many things to say, and hard to be uttered*; ὅτι πολλὰ εἶπα καὶ σκληρὰ, ἵ. hard to be interpreted, meaning, to be fitted in the utterance or expression of them to your capacities, or understandings, *seeing ye are dull of hearing*: or rather slow, or sloathfull [*vobesi*] ἵ. backward and aversè from taking pains that you may be able to hear with understanding. But this by the way. To the point in hand I say, that there is no such contexture or complication of sentences in other writings, as those that are found from place to place in the Scriptures; I mean of such an exquisite, close, and profound contrivance; or which strike and affect the apprehensions and understandings of men with that strength and delight of contentment, when they are clearly seen and apprehended. As there is a great difference or variety in the skill and play of wrastlers, some close with, and fasten upon their adversaries one way, take hold of one limb, and some on another: So the sayings and sentences of the Scriptures take hold of their fellows, and fasten one upon another by an art or method peculiar to themselves, and which other writings know not. Look what manner of difference may reasonably be supposed to have been between the workmanship of *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, whom God fill'd with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brasse, in stones, and in timber; (as

^a Exod. 31. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Heb. 5. 1. 2.

deration of things, so much contention and streyning of the powers of the minde and understanding to come at it, nor yet the knowledge of so many things besides to reach and comprehend it, as that which lieth in the Scripture dependencies doth. Nor are they so comprehensive of wisdom as these: *i.* the content or proportion of matter in them is nothing so great and large, as it is in these; they are nothing so laden with treasure as these; yea they are light and empty (in comparison :) You have many times great secrets, and much mysteriousnesse of wisdom laid very cloie, and artificially couch'd in the joints of the Scriptures; whereas in other Authours there is no such thing. It were easie to instance in particulars: but how then should our designe of brevity stand?

Thirdly, Another particular relating to the manner and carriage of the Scriptures, which also evinceth their royall descent with an high hand, is a certain Authoritativenesse, or God-like speaking unto the creature from place to place: a short, sharp, and severe turning off of things and persons; characters and forms of speech not to be parallell'd in other Writers, and which cannot reasonably be looked upon but as the prints or footsteps of a Divine Majesty. Of this kinde of expression is that of our Saviour, *Matth.* 13. 9. repeated again *ver.* 43. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear:* and again, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear:* and elsewhere again and again: *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.* It is as a warning Peece from Heaven let off in thunder, to awaken and rouse the world out of their security, even Kings and Princes, and the greatest Monarchs and Potentates of the earth, to attend with all their might and all their strength to the great things of the Gospel. The saying of *Austin* is memorable: *The scripture so speaketh, that with the height of it, it laughs proud and listy-spirited men to scorn, with the depth of it, it terrifies those who with attention look into it: with the truth of it, it feeds men of greatest knowledge and understanding; and with the affability and sweetnesse of it, it nourisheth babes and sucklings.* It is said, that the people were astonished at *Christis* doctrine: the reason is given thus: *For he taught with authority [or, as one having authority,] and not as the Scribes.* So the Scriptures teach the world with a majestick authority, which many times strikes the

Scriptura sic loquitur, ut i. raudine superbes irideat, profunditate accentos terreat, veritate magnos pascat, affabilitate parvos nutriet.

Mat. 7. 28.

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hearts of men with fear and astonishment, and not like unto the writings of other men. And indeed such *αποστροφικα*, the laying of such high charges and deep engagements upon the world to hearken and to attend, as those lately mentioned, from the Scriptures, would be in other writings, but like *new pieces put upon old garments* (in our Saviours Parable) they would be ridiculous and importune, altogether unfitable to the arguments or subjects handled in them. For let the tenour, weight, and importance of such awakenings and addressments unto the world, as this, *Let him that hath ears to hear, hear,* be but seriously considered, and they will be found to hold a due and full proportion with things of the most glorious and transcendent importance, such as is the subject matter handled in the Scriptures: he that shall engage the world to hearken and attend at such a rate, as this Trumpet, *Let him that hath ears to hear, hear,* sounds distinctly in his ears, had need have matters of everlasting concernment and import to speak unto the world; and such (we know) he speaketh, whoever he be that speaketh in, or out of, the Scriptures, unto the children of men. But the arguments and things handled and managed in other Authours, who pretend not to build upon the Scriptures, being but either *le Grosse*, things appertaining to this present life, and so of inferiour consequence; or if they pretend reference to another life, being but fabulous and irracionall, and not beleev'd by the authours themselves (as some of them have confessed) if the Authours should summon in all the world to hearken upon terms of that deep and soleme engagement, which the Scriptures do from place to place, they would render themselves, and that which they have to say, but as ridiculous and weak to all knowing, and considering men. If a great King or Monarch should send forth his Herald at armes, or other Officer of state, to summon in his Princes and nobles, and persons of quality from all parts of his dominions, with delegates from all his subjects, to attend his pleasure at his Court against such a day; and having thus drawn them together, and rais'd their expectation concerning what he had to say, and impart unto them, should onely discourse to them of mint, anise, and cummin, or some such inconsiderable subject, would not this

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render him very unfavourie, and contemptibly weak in the eyes of all men? whereas in this case, if he had had any thing to communicate unto them, which neerly concern'd the peace and safety of the whole State and Kingdome, the solemnity of the preparations hereunto mentioned, had been comely enough, and no waies disparaging. In like manner for God to amuse, and alarm the world with the dreadfull sound of such a Trumpet as this, *Let him that hath an ear to hear, hear*, having the great things of *Jesus Christ*, and of eternity to entertain their attentions and expectations with, when he hath thus rais'd them, is nothing but what becomes the wisdome and goodnesse of a God: but for men to make such an *O yes* in the midst of the world, having nothing to say to men, and to inform them of, but onely matters of light consequence, as how to live a few daies on earth with some carnall contentment, or the like, would be of an apparant inconsistencie with all rules of reason and common understanding. And upon this ground it is probable, that no man hath ever attempted to ingage the world at any such rate.

There is another vein of expression in the Scriptures, which, by the sharpnesse and piercingnesse of it, differing from any thing that is found in other writers, declares them to be a writing by themselves, and that fram'd by such an Authour, who is God, and not man. Of this kinde are these sayings: *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy let him be filthy still*^a. To which we may add that of the Apostle; *If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant*^b. And that of the Prophet: *Ephraim is joynd unto Idols: let him alone*^c. And that of our Saviour also: *Let them alone: they are blinde leaders of the blinde*^d. These and such like, are terrible and high sayings, vials full of the wrath and indignation of a God: sayings, which as they are not fit for, so neither are they lightly to be found in the mouths or writings of men, who have not spake, or wrot, in the Name of God, and as from his mouth.

Fourthly, The strange composition, or constitution of the Scriptures, being made up of depths and shallows, of things near at hand, and things as farre of, of things mysterious and profound, and things obvious and plain. That this is the true com-

^a Rev. 22. 11.

^b 1 Cor. 13. 43.

^c Hos. 4. 17.

^d Mat. 15. 14.

position and frame of the body of the Scriptures, needs little proof or clearing, it being nothing (I conceive) but what we all acknowledge, and that upon sufficient evidence of Truth. There are some things in them, which the strongest are not able to understand: and some things again, whereof the weakest cannot lightly be ignorant. God may be said to dwell in the Scriptures themselves, as in the Scriptures he is said to dwell. Sometimes he is said to dwell in light, as *1 Tim. 6. 16.* and *1 Job. 1. 7.* Elsewhere he is said to dwell in darknesse. *The Lord said he would dwell in the thicke darknesse*, *1 King. 8. 12.* And *Psal 18. 11.* *He hath made darknesse his secret place.* So in some places and passages of Scripture, God comes forth, and shews himself in clear and perfect beauty unto the world, as in a vision of the noon day: otherwhere he retires and hides himself behinde the dark clouds of obscure and difficult expressions, where we may seek him long, and not be able to finde him; as *Christ* said unto the Jews; *ye shall seek me, and not finde me: and where I am can ye not come*^a. The minde of God in many places of the Scripture, hath been in seeking, and that by diligent and able Inquisitours, now for many generations: and yet no man can say, so as to give any reasonable account thereof unto others, if to himself, that he hath found it. *There is a path* (saith *Job*) *which no fowl hath known: neither hath the vulture or kites eye seen it*. So there is a path of reason and understanding which leadeth to the discovery of God, and of the minde of God, even where it is most retired, and hid at the greatest distance from the thoughts and apprehensions of men. But (as the same Authour speaks) *it is* (as yet) *hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowles of the aire*^c. 1. Even from men that fie the highest pitch of reason, wisdome and labour, to discover it. On the other hand, in many other places, God sits (as it were) on the very superficies and face of the letter; where even he that runs may discern him; he *speaks plainly* unto men, and *speakes no parable* at all.

Now such a composition and frame of the Scriptures as this, the ingredients and parts whereof, being mountains and vallies, high things and low things, things obvious, and things inaccessible, things earthly, and things heavenly (as our Saviour distingui-

^a Joh. 7. 34.

^b Job 28. 7.

^c Verf. 2. 1.

* Job. 3. 12.

sheth them ^a) so exactly answer the temper, and modell of the universe, or great body of the creature, is a great argument, that one and the same workman was the Architect, and contriver of them both. If we look into the constitution and frame of the universe, we shall see the like checker-work (as we may call it) here, *i.* things of different, yea of opposite natures and properties, set (as it were) one against the other, yet all sweetly, peaceably, and beautifully conspiring to render this great Fabrique one entire piece, worthy the great workman that made it, and suitable to his wisdom. Here first we have the heavens, a lucid, shining, and active piece, eminent in situation and place: again we have the earth, a sad, dark, and heavy element, answering the heavens by way of opposition, both in nature, propertie, and place. We have the element of fire, hot and dry, on the one hand: and the element of water, cold and moist, one the other. In the body of the earth, we have high mountains in one place, and vallies and plains in another: and again, hard rocks and stony grounds in one place, and soft and fruitfull soyle in another. In the sea, we have flats and shallows, as well as great depths; yea, in this element, we have as well small, as great, and great, as well as small, bealts; a disposition of divine Providence which *David* taketh notice of; *Therein* (saith he, speaking of the Sea) *are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.* The like composition we have on earth also: gnatts as well as camels; flies, as well as Elephants or Lions. It were easie to instance in more particulars, in the frame of the universe, thus match'd and pair'd (as it were) by way of opposition and contrariety the one with the other.

The like constitution is observable in the Providence of God, and tenour of his Administrations in the world. These consist likewise, of dispositions, dispensations, passages and events, one answering another by way of opposition and contrariety. Consider the work of God (saith the wise man) *for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?* ^a) implying, that God in his Providence (for he speaks of his work in this) makes some things crooked, *i.* crosse, or contrary to mens desires, as well as other things straight, *i.* Commensurable thereunto, and complying

* Eccles. 7. 13.

plying with them. *Job* gives another instance of the like contexture in the same work. *One* (saith he) *dieth in his full strength, being in all ease and prosperity: his breasts are full of milk, and his bones runne full of marrow. And another dieth in his bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.* ^a. And *Solomon* yet another: *The rich and the poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all* ^b. *i.* in his providence disposeth of riches and poverty, as he pleaseth; and so is the maker both of all the rich and ^c of all the poor in the world, not materially only, as they are men, but formally also, *viz.* as they are either rich or poor.

* Job 21, 23, 24, &c.

* Pro. 13. 2.

Again, If we look upon the naturall part of his Providence (as we may call it) here we shall see the same contexture and composition also. The naturall day (so called) is compounded of light and darknesse, according to the wise pleasure of God in a regular tempering and disposal of them. It is he likewise that *makes both the summer and the winter* (as *David* takes, and gives knowledge ^c) and the yeer is compounded of these. ^c *Psal. 74. 17.* So he makes rain and fair weather, storms and calmes, and intermixeth them, as he pleaseth.

Now then inasmuch as the structure, frame, and constitution of the Scriptures, being such as hath been declared, resemble (as ye see) to the life, the respective tempers, constitutions, and complexions of those other great pieces, which are confessedly, and without all controversie God's, (I mean, the workmanship of his hands) the one answering the other, *as face answereth face in the waters*, they cannot in reason but be look'd upon as arguments of much conviction and strength, to prove, that they also come from the hand of the same workman with the other.

Besides this correspondency which the Scriptures hold with those other great works of God we spake of, in their constitution and frame, which amounts (as hath been said) to a testimony of much value, that the one is his, as well as the other, the Scriptures his, as well as the Creation or Government of the world, his; the composition we described, doth yet in another consideration and respect, plead their originall and descent from God. Height of majesty, and depth of condescension found in conjunction, make as perfect a character or lineament

• Pl. 113, 5, 6.

of the face of God, as well can be imagined. *Who is like unto the Lord God* (said David) *who dwelleth on high* (or, as the Originall, and your larger Bibles have it in the margent, *who exalteth himself to dwell on high*) *who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth*; i. condescendeth to interpose graciously, not only in the affairs of the Angels, who in the order and rank of creatures are high, and next unto himself and his Sonne Jesus Christ, in honour and excellency of being, to maintain and better their condition unto them, which notwithstanding is a great condescension unto him; but also in the affairs of the poorest, and most contemptible, and weak amongst men, who are farre beneath the Angels, to help, and comfort, and advance them (as appears in the following verses.) Now this Interrogation, *Who is like unto the Lord our God?* who being so high, looks so low, seems to imply, that this is a composition proper and peculiar unto God, and that there is little or nothing of it to be found amongst those that are *exalted*, and *dwell on high* upon the earth. They seldom or never *humble themselves* to look beneath them; doe not interesse themselves in the affairs of poor and mean men, to make their conditions better or more comfortable: no, they commonly behold the poore, as God doth the proud, a farre off: they despise them, and look upon their sorrows, and troubles, and necessities, as impertinencies unto them. And as it is thus with men great in place and power in the world, in respect of those who are beneath them in both; so it is commonly also with men that are great in parts, learning and understanding, in respect of those who are but low and weak in their abilities: they seldom *humble* themselves to treat with them, according to that which they are able to conceive, or understand, for their increase in wisdom: if they can come up to their line of knowledge and understanding, and keep pace with them in their notions and expressions, they may receive benefit by them: but otherwise the men we speak of, have no inclination to come down from the throne of their excellency, to minister to the necessities of weak and ignorant men. Thus then we see, how the very *spious* and temperature of the Scriptures, plead their relation of descent from God.

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A fift particular, relating to the penning of the Scriptures, of like tendency and import with the former, is their Antiquity, especially in those parts of them, which bear the most ancient date, and were first laid as a foundation of that intire fabrique, which hath since been raised, and built to it. The gray haire which are upon the head of the Scriptures, shew them to be the off-spring of the Ancient of daies. The writing we speak of, hath the preeminency of all other writings in this point; it is the first-born amongst all its brethren, I mean amongst all other books and writings in the world; and may without boasting compare with them all in the honour of ancientry, as the Lord Christ did with *Abraham*, when he said, *Before Abraham was, I am*. So may the Scriptures say, before the writings of *Hesiod*, or *Homer*, or *Orpheus*, or *Linus*, *Trismegistus*, or *Berosus*, or any other Authour that is named under the heavens, *we are*; and that not only in respect of our originall copy, which was written without hands, and that from eternity in the minde and counsell of God, but in respect of such a materiall writing also, as that wherein we now passe up and down the world, and are seen, and handled, and read, and understood by men. It is true, the body of the Scriptures, as now it is compleated, is not in all the parts of it, so full of daies as we speak of: there are many books and writings to be found that bear a farre more ancient date, then that part of the Scripture which we call the new Testament; yea (possibly) then any the writings of the other Prophets (though this be denied by *Justin Martyr*, *Eusebius* and others) but in their head quarters, I mean, in the books and writings of *Moses*, wherein the summe and substance of all the rest is comprised, they lye many years neerer the foundations of the world, and the building of the Sunns Tabernacle in the heavens, then all their fellows. *That which was from the beginning* (saith *John* to those unto whom he writes) *do we declare unto you*. This is more then any other writer in all the world can affirm, I do not say, with any sufficient ground, but, with so much as any colourable ground of Truth, but only those who draw from the fountains of the Scripture, what they declare in this kinde, and speak the same things with them. The Gospel, as touching the matter and substance of it, came from the mouth of God himself

* Joh. 8. 58.

b 1 Joh. 1. 1.

himself unto our first parents, presently upon the fall; which, according to the best computation, was within lesse then a daies space of their creation. It came infolded and wrapt up in that Oracle: *the seed of the woman shall break the serpens head*. And though for many generations together, it was no where written, but in *the fleshy tables of the hearts* of men, and preserved only in living monuments; yet did it get the start of all other subjects whatsoever, in the accommodation of writing; and had a Tabernacle of Ink and Paper, or some like materiall equivalent unto these, built for it, whilst all other learning and knowledge lay yet in the open field, and had no other shelter or means of preservation, but only the memories and tongues of men. *Justin Martyr* an ancient writer, who lived within 130. years after Christ, in his Parænetique to the Greeks, proves, by comparing the times of all humane writers, Poets, Philosophers, Historians, Lawgivers, esteemed most ancient, that *Moses* and his writings were extant in the world, before any of them had brought forth: yea and cleerly shews, that whatsoever *Orpheus, Homer, Solon, Pythagoras, Plato*, or any other of those Ancient writers of the Heathen, wrote concerning God, or divine matters with any favour or relish of Truth, they were debtours unto *Moses* for it, and borrowed their light in such things, from the lamp of his writings. *Eusebius* also, who followed *Justin Martyr* about 200. years distance, in the second and third Chapters of the tenth book of his *Evangelicall Preparation*, prosecutes the same argument at large, and from abundance of places, passages, and confessions out of the best, and most Authentique Heathen Authours themselves, cleerly demonstrates, that *Moses* was the most ancient of all the Writers, that were known, or named amongst them. Yea and concludes thus (assertively) *therefore Moses is found to be much more ancient, then all the Gods and Heroës of the Greeks*; ^b adorning withall, that *it is much more reasonable to give credit unto the elder and more ancient, from Whom the juniors*, and those that came after in time, received their grounds. And (to passe by many other Testimonies in this kinde) *Tertullian*, who lived between the two mentioned Authours, in the 19. chapter of his *Apologetique*, (though arguing the point with more brevity then the former)

^b Quare omnibus Dicitur, quod Hebraei G. eorum, multo vetustior Moses invenitur.

* Et oportet, seniori, à quo juniores auferunt, multo magis credere.

former) yet triumphs over the Gentiles in this Argument and proof for the truth of the Gospel and Christian Religion, the *Antiquity* of it.

If it be here demanded, but what if it be granted, that the Scriptures, and the Doctrine therein contained, be the most ancient of all Books or Doctrines in the world, will it therefore follow, that they must needs be true, and the originall of them from God? May not the Doctrine, which hath the most gray haire upon it, and hath had the greatest number of years gone over the head of it, be of a carnall and unworthy descent notwithstanding, and not necessarily from God? *Gray haire* are not alwaies found in a way of righteousness; I answer

1. There is a naturall propension in most men (which seems by Gods Commandment in the Law, *to rise up before the hoary head, and to honour the face of the old man*, Lev. 19. 32. to be a relique of *Adams* Tabernacle, whilst it was yet standing) to ascribe much to that which is ancient, especially to Authours, and writings, and monuments, religious usages and observations. We know that the antiquity of the Popish Religion, such as it is, is one thing which mainly intoxicates and bewitcheth both the heads and the hearts of those, who bow down their backs unto it: there is a Gibeonitish mouldiness upon it; and therefore they think it hath travailed a long journey before it came to them in their daies. And *Tertullian* long since (in the fore-mentioned place) insiting upon the Argument in hand (the Antiquity of Christian Religion) to demonstrate the truth of it against the Heathen, tells them that they themselves were great observers and admirers of things that were ancient: *It is little lesse* (saith he) *then Religion with you, to give credit or belief unto things according to their time*. But

2. The more Ancient a Religion, or Doctrine is, it hath been so much the longer upon trial; the world hath had so much the more time, opportunity and means to inquire into the state and condition of it; and so to discover the nakedness, falshood, or vanity of it, if it be unfound. Silver or gold, the oftner they have been cast into the fire, and the longer they have continued in it, before they be taken out, are like to be so much the better and more pure metalls in their kinde. Now time, as (according to

Apud vos quod Religionis est instar, quod dem de temporibus asserere.

the common saying) it is *edax rerum*, a consumer of things, so it is *index rerum* too, a touchstone or trier of things. Time will try any Doctrine, or opinion, whether it be sound, or unsound: and so it will every kinde of action, custome, or the like, whether they be lawfull and good, or no. And in this respect, the Apostle (I conceive) compares it unto fire, which is the most severe touchstone and trier of whatsoever is apt to be tried by it, as some minerals, and metall, and all such things are, whose nature is to abide the fire without damage, when they are right, and perfect in their kinds. *Every mans Work* (saith he, speaking particularly of Doctrines taught by Ministers) *shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every mans Work of whatsoever it is*; meaning, that time (which he calls, *the day*) in the course and progresse of it, hath a like searching, piercing, and separating nature and property, in respect of Doctrines and opinions, which fire hath in respect of *silver and gold, hay stubble and timber*; so that as these being cast into the *fire*, will easily be distinguished and discerned the one from the other, *silver and gold* abiding it without damage, whereas *hay, and stubble, and timber*, will be consum'd by it; in like manner for Doctrines and opinions which are sound and substantiall truths, though they may for some ages together endure contradiction and censure, as if they were erroneous and false, yet *the day* will, in the processe of it, restore them to their native dignity and honour without disparagement; yea and will discover error and vanity in many others, which for a season have rejoiced in the undue applause and approbation of men. The reason of this fiery property in time, which the Apostle speaks of, the Prophet *David* clearly assigns, where he saith, that *day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge*; meaning, that there is not any day, or any night, that passeth over the head of the world, but that as well the one, as the other, bring with them a blessing of new light, some further knowledge and instruction in one kinde or other, unto the world. By means whereof, things that were *covered*, come in time, to be *revealed*; and things hid, to be made *known* (according to our Saviours prediction, *Luk. 12.2.*) The same discerning or discovering property of the *day*, is supposed also by the same Apostle,

• 1 Cor. 3. 13.

• Psa. 19. 2.

Quicquid sub
terrá est, in a
pricum profe-
sus est. Hor.

2 Tim.

2 *Tim. 3.9.* where speaking of corrupt Teachers, who resist the truth, as *Jannes* and *Jambres* did *Moses*, But (saith he) *they shall prevail no longer: for their madnesse shall be evident unto all men, as theirs also was.* From whence (by the way) it may be worthy observation, that men may resist the truth, and that like *mad men*, after a furious, violent, and importune manner, and yet for a time be thought well of, and carry the approbation of the greatest part of Christians. This property of the *day* also our Saviour himselfe supposed, *Mat. 15. 13.* But our purpose is abbreviation, not enlargement. Yet

3. This Argument drawn from the Antiquity, to evince the truth and goodnesse of a Religion, is then very forcible, and little lesse then demonstrative indeed, when the Religion, which hath for a long time, from generation to generation, been continued, professed, and held up in the world, hath withall from time to time, from the first rise and spring of the profession of it, been still opposed and persecuted in the world; and the professors of it, by this their profession, rendred obnoxious to the hatred, malice, rage and fury of the world; if such a thing as this notwithstanding, this Religion shall be still loved, embrac'd, profess'd in the world; and live, and be like still to live, and prosper in the midst of the stormy and tempestuous proceedings of the world against it, though there be little hope of the ceasing of these storms for a long time; in such a case (I say) as this, the Antiquity of a Religion, is a mighty confirmation of the truth, and revelation of it from God. The reason is, because that property in it, to eat up it's Professours, to expose them to troubles, sorrows, afflictions from the world, hath alwaies been a temptation, a kinde of prudentiall engagement upon men, to inquire and search so much the more narrowly into the estate and condition of it, and fully to satisfie themselves whether it be a Religion worth the suffering for, or no, before they should own it, or engage themselves in the profession of it, it being a most irrationall act, and unworthy of men, to sell their precious comforts, peace, and accommodations in the world, for such a thing, which they know not, whether it will benefit them in the least, or no. And when men are to judge or give sentence with relation to themselves, in matters which so neerely concern them, in matters

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appertaining to the flesh, there is little fear they should be brib'd by the spirit, but much that they should be led away with partiality on the fleshes side. So that (doubtlesse) did not men see somewhat like God, I mean somewhat that commands and overawes their consciences in such a Religion, which threatens their flesh so soar, they would never have to doe with it upon any such termes of danger, as thousands have had to doe with the Religion contained in the Scriptures, thorowout all ages.

Fourthly, The longer any Religion hath continued or stood in the world upon the terms expressed, it hath tasted the spirits and judgements not only of so many the more men, but of generations of men. Now as *Solomon* gives this reason, *Why two are better then one*, viz. because *if one fall, his fellow will helpe him up*; in like manner, when a matter or business of so much concernment, as such a Religion, as was mentioned, is, hath passed thorow the hands, not of one, nor of two, nor of a few, but of many generations, it is not lightly possible, but that, in case one or two of these generations had had so little of men in them, as to look no better to themselves, then to suffer their feet to be taken in such snare, to go on with the profession of such a Religion, which threatned them with apparant losse in the world, and promised them nothing in compensation thereof upon any hopefull or likely grounds, yet first or last, some one or other of these generations would have corrected the error of those that went before them, and so have quite abandoned, and thrown that Religion out of the world, which had so abused their forefathers.

Now we know that the *Antiquity* of Christian Religion (and consequently of the Scriptures, wherein it is contained, and held forth) and Profession thereof, hath that great advantage we speak of in conjunction with it, to render it full of Authority, and excellent in power, to demonstrate the goodnesse and truth of this Religion, and consequently the Relation which it bears unto God, as the Author and Revealer of it. The Profession hereof, ever since it was taken up in the world, from the daies of *Adam* and *Abel*, even untill now, hath exposed the Professors to all manner of sorrows, troubles, and evil intreaties from the world. This the stories of all ages successively from the blood of *Abel*, unto the last sufferer for it (whoever he is, or was)

doe

doe abundantly testifie: and (indeed) is nothing but what is generally granted on all hands. And yet we see, though it hath waded thorow so many deep waters, yea oceans of blood; though it hath passed thorow so many fires, and the flames from time to time have kindled sorely upon it, yea though there be yet more flames of fire, and seas of blood before it in the way thereof, yet it lives, and lifts up its head in the world, and hath those in abundance, who are ready still to suffer for it. Whereas all other Religions in the world, are but punies, and as of yesterday, in comparison of it: and besides that Antiquity which they have, is not seconded with any such collaterall advantage to make it argumentative, wherewith the Religion of Christians, who profess the Gospel and Doctrine of the Scriptures, is accompanied (as hath been shewed) and so hath little force in it to prove any truth or soundnesse in them. It was a true observation of one, *that the gods of the heathen were good fellows*, and liked the company of one another well enough: it was only the God of *Israel*, whose Name was *Jealous*, and must be worshipped alone. It was never said (not yet verified by any experience) that whosoever should be strict, or live conscientiously, in the profession of any other Religion, should *suffer persecution*; but that *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, should suffer persecution*, is affirmed by the Apostle, and confirmed by the experience of all ages and places, when, and where any thorow-profession of the Doctrine of Christ, and of the Scriptures, hath taken place.

Fifthly and lastly (to this) when the Antiquity of a Religion is such, that it is able to calculate and prove the day of its nativity in the world, to have had the precedencie in time, before all other Religions whatsoever, in this case the gray haire that are upon the head of it, doe fully evince it to be a way of righteousness, a religion that is from God. The reason is, because as God had a being before Satan, so had he a worship and Religion before him: nor is error or falshood in any kinde, any thing else, but a mistake, or corruption of, or deviation from, the truth. Therefore that Religion which is most ancient, must needs be from God; and all subsequent Religions, so farre as they dissent from that, or are contrary to it, are from some base Author, and of a delusive inspiration. Now that the Religion

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complete

comprehended in the Scriptures, was brought forth, and had a being in the world, when all other Religions were yet beneath in the earth, is (as hath been already argued and proved) the acknowledgement of some of the greatest Prophets and Patrons themselves of all, or of most, and of the most considerable, of all other Religions.

Sixtly, The manner of the bringing and coming in of the Gospel into the world by the Scriptures, I mean in respect of the growth, or graduall discovery and manifestation of it, the body of the Scriptures still waxing and increasing with further light, unto the just compleature of them, which now they have attained, and wherein they rest, and have rested, these 1500. years and upwards, is another argument or consideration effectually perswading the descent and parentage both of the one and the other, from God. The Gospel came not at once in the fullness of the beauty, strength and perfection of it into the world: in the first spring and dawning of it, it was only a kind of brief and obscure Oracle, like the first dawning of the day, when there is a little mixture of light, with a greater quantity or proportion of darkness in the air. It was no more but this; *The seed of the woman shall break the serpents head* ^b; a saying which glimmered indeed with some light of good intended towards mankind: but there was no distinct form or shape of that good, which was intended, nor of the means or Authour by whom it was to be effected. It was but like the corn, when it first sprouts and peers above ground, which hath nothing that shape or body, which it comes to afterwards. Being thus in the bud and tender shoot of it, it was watered by those precepts and directions which were graciously given by God unto *Adam* and his family, concerning such a worship, and such services, as he required, especially by his command for offering sacrifices, together with his acceptation of these sacrifices duly offered, some waies or other signified unto those, who offered them. As oft as men offered upon such terms as these, God accepted them; and so they had from time to time renewed acts of confirmation from God, that his heart was with them, and that he fully intended them good; and so were more and more established in the love and goodness of God towards them. As a Charter, or act of Grace

from

^a Gen. 3.

from a Prince, whether to a Corporation, or person, the oftner it is renewed by him, affords the more security unto those that are concern'd in it, of a full enjoyment of all priviledges therein granted and intended.

When the Gospel had been in the world upon these terms, and under this first degree of discovery, about 1660. years, immediately after the destruction of the world by the flood, God publisheth a new edition of it unto *Noah* and his family, which was then the whole world of mankind. And though in this second edition, the Gospel came forth in somewhat more plain and distinct words, (I mean, in words more easie to be understood) then in the former, yet the great particularities of the mystery of it, wherein the glory and strength of it consist, and which were afterwards, though a long time after, brought forth into a cleer light, were not a whit more opened or discovered, then in that. The Gospel, in this second impression we speak of, was published, partly in the renewing of that Benediction and Charter, wherein the Lordship of the world had been by God conferr'd upon man in his creation ^a; partly also in certain promises concerning the continuance and standing of the world, and that upon terms of Grace and comfort unto the inhabitants of it, for many generations ^b. Both these plainly shew, that God is in a reconciled posture towards the world (and consequently have somewhat of the Gospel in them) as by a larger consideration, as well of the one, as of the other, we made to appear, when time was: but for the present we only recapitulate.

The Gospel, under this edition of it, continued in the world untill the daies of *Abraham*, for the space of more then 360. years. And now God was pleased to think of a new Edition of it, and (as it were) to dedicate it unto *Abraham* his friend. In this Edition, it came forth with some further light and discovery of some of the particularities of it, beyond what was to be found in either of the former; as *viz.* 1. Of what family he should come, that should break the serpents head; *In thy seed* ^a (saith God to *Abraham*) *shall all the nations of the earth be blessed* ^a. 2. Unto what the breaking of the Serpents head, being interpreted, doth amount unto, *viz.* the blessedness of men. *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* 3. Of what

extent

^a Gen. 9. 1.

^b ver. 10, 11.

^a Gen 22. 18.

extent the *blessedness*, which *Abrahams* seed should bring upon the world, by *breaking the serpents head*, should be, how farre it should extend and reach: this is, to all the nations of the earth. *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.* 4. Here was a discovery made of that particular act or qualification in men, by which they are brought into part and fellowship, and come to partake of that blessedness, which was brought unto the world by the seed of *Abraham*, viz. Faith, or believing God, or, in God. *And he* (saith *Moses*, speaking of *Abraham*) *believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*. 5. In this Edition of the Gospel, here was a picture, a lively portraiture or type of *that seed of the Woman*, that should doe this blessed service for the world, *break the serpents head*, both in respect of some personal properties or relations, as likewise of the means by which he should doe it. Here was *Isaak*, an *only sonne* (as he is called, *Gen. 22. 2.* viz. by a lawfull wife) and a *beloved sonne* (in the same place) offered up in sacrifice unto God, by his father. For so the Scripture speaks: *By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten Sonne*. *Abraham* is said to have offered up his sonne *Isaak*, either because he presented him unto God upon the Altar, which was an *offring* of him up; or rather because he had fully purposed to have perfected the offering by his sonnes death, had not God himself interposed from heaven to restrain him. And as God *accepts the will for the deed*, so doth he usually call the *will*, or settled purpose of doing, by the name of the deed. 6. And lastly, He finished this Edition of the Gospel, by adding his *seal* for the confirmation of it, *the signe of Circumcision*; which, according to the holy Ghosts own interpretation, was *a seal of the righteousness of faith*, i. a pledge, or confirmation, that whosoever believed in God, should be hereby justified, or made *righteous*, and consequently be saved, and made everlastingly blessed.

The world enjoyed the Gospel in this Edition of it, only with some typical additions, as in *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, and some extraordinary discoveries from heaven relating unto it, now and then, to revive and quicken the remembrance of it in the hearts and mindes of men, as in the ladder which *Jacob* saw, which

reach'd

reach'd from Earth to Heaven, and the Angel that wrestled with him, &c. The world (I say) enjoyed the Gospel in that edition of it, which was published in the daies of *Abraham* untill the daies of *Moses*, and the giving of the Law upon mount *Sinai*, which was about the space of 430. years more. And now God made a fourth edition of it, enlarging the former with a great multitude and varietie of typical resemblances, wherein all, or the greatest part of those mysterious and substantiall particularities of it, were darkly shadowed, and portraited out, as by the *Tabernacle* and *Priest-hood*, by washings, and sprinklings, and feasts, and by Sacrifices especially of many kinds, with a great variety of rites and observations accompanying them. This edition of the Gospel, onely with some post-scripts of types and figures ever and anon appearing, as in the *brassen Serpent*, *Manna*, *Josua*, *Sampson*, *David*, *Solomon*, and some dawns and glimerings of somewhat a clearer light shining from some of the Prophets, continued untill the daies of the promised *seed of the Woman*, untill he came in the flesh, who was to doe that great charge and service for the world, viz. by *breaking the Serpents head* to make the world whole. This was about the space of 1517 yeeres more. Now he being the *Lord from Heaven*, and coming out of the *bosom of the Father*, where the Gospel was form'd and fashioned in all the parts and members of it, and had been (comparatively) *hid* and *kept secret* from the foundation of the world untill then, brought with him a perfect copie or extract of it, as a present from God his Father, sent by his hand unto the world; which he in speciall manner recommended unto his Apostles, to be by them published and preached thorowout the world, after that upon his Ascension into Heaven, they had been *endued with strength from on High* for that purpose, and had received the holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner, both to be a remembrancer unto them of what in the *daies of his flesh* he had imparted unto them concerning the Gospel, as likewise an Interpreter of the more mysterious sence and meaning of many of these things. Being now ascended, and in full possession of glory, to lethe Servants and Saints in all generations know, that neither his love unto them, nor care for their good, were

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either

* Gen. 22. 6.

* Heb. 11. 17.

* Rom. 4. 11.

* Joh. 14. 26.

* Joh. 15. 13.
14.

e Revel. 1. 3.

either swallowed up in his exaltation, or impaired in the least by the Greatnesse of his glory, he obtained from his Father the blessing of that *Revelation* or *Prophecie* (as it is called) for them, which he imparted unto his Beloved Disciple and Apostle *John*, with a speciall charge and order given him, to commit the same unto writing, that so it might be a light of consolation unto his Saints, shining in the midst of the darknesse of their tribulations and sufferings, to the worlds end. And with this Revelation, he hath taken his leave of his Churches, untill his personall returne againe unto them. So that this last and compleate edition of the Gospel, containeth (beyond all the former, and with the rasure and dis-authorization of many things contained in them, in reference unto practice) those passages of Evangelicall Doctrine and Heavenly wisdome, which the Lord *Christ* himself uttered on Earth in the daies of his flesh, together with that Revelation which he gave down from Heaven, after his exaltation; as also those Historiicall and Doctrinall Informations and instructions, which are comprehended in the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, together with those two new seals, Baptisme, and the Supper of the Lord, for the confirmation of the Truth of things asserted in both. This edition being perfect, the world is to expect no more additions or post-scripts, to the end of it. Now if you please to compute the severall spaces of time mentioned in this argument, and draw them together in one account or summe, allowing about 66 yeeres more, for the space between the time that our Saviour preached the Gospel on Earth, and gave unto *John* the Revelation mentioned, from Heaven (which is the complement, and as it were the last page of this new and last edition of the Gospel) you will finde the whole distance or space, from the first entrance of the Gospel into the world, in that oracle we spake of, *The seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents head*, untill the last edition of it completed, to amount to about 4043 yeeres.

Let us now briefly consider, what there is in this graduall manifestation; and growth of the Gospel, and of the Scriptures, for so great a space of time as 4000 yeeres and upward, before they came to perfection, to demonstrate the pedegree and descent of them to be from God.

We

We know it is Gods usuall method in things sublunarie, and endued with life, to raise and build them up to their respective perfections, upon the groundworke and foundations of imperfection. The corne is brought forth out of the Earth by those degrees, which our Saviour himself takes knowledge of: *first the blade, then the ear, and after this, the full corne in the ear*^a. *Paul* was first a child, and all this while, *spake as a child, thought as a child*, did as a child: but afterwards, in pro-^a Mar. 4. 28.
cesse of time, he *became a man* (as he saith) and *then he put away childish things*^b. It is said of the Lord *Jesus Christ* himself, that he *increased in wisdome and stature, and in favour with God and man*. You will find it thus in plants, and trees, and fruits, and all things that have life in them: they increase by degrees and grow to their maturitie and perfection, from much weaknesse and imperfection at the first: and any considerable growth or increase in what is good, is emphatically called, *the increase of God: increaseth with the increase of God* (saith *Paul*, speaking of that *increase*, which the Church, or body of *Christ* maketh in Knowledge, Faith, Holinesse, and Love, by being knit together, and having nourishment ministred from the head, by the joints and bands in the body^d.) So then this having been the expresse manner (as you have heard) method, and course, wherein the Gospel hath advanc'd, and grown to that fullnesse and height of perfection, whereat it now stands, doth it not carry a strength of inducement in it, to conceive and judge, that it is a plant of *Paradise*, planted by the hand of God himself, in as much as it doth so *δυναμιζέτω* (as the Scripture word is in another case) *i*. holds such a correspondencie with, and resemble's so perfectly the method and disposition of God in other things?

Nor can it reasonably be objected to the prejudice of this argument, that Arts, and Sciences, and humane inventions in severall kinds, have received additionall increases and augmentation, from time to time, as well as the Gospel; being at this day (at least most of them) raised to a line of perfection, farre above what they had obtained in their Infancies and youth. For

1. Though Arts and Sciences, and many artificiall inventions which had no greater founders, or Authors, then men (in the sence,

^a Mar. 4. 28.^b 1 Cor. 13. 11.^c Luk. 2. 52.^d Colo. 2. 19.

we argue thorowout this whole discourse) have in continuance of time, and successively received their graduall advancements, and respective growths in strength and beauty; yet this hath been with these 2 signall observations, and differences between them, and the Gospel or Scriptures, First, the men who have been successively employed to raise and build up the body of the Scriptures, have onely built, and never pulled down: he that succeeded in the work, never contended with, never contested against his Predecessor, nor found the least fault with his work-manship; whereas the Great Architects, and builders up of arts and sciences, have still fallen out one with another about their work; he that followed, blaming him that went before, as defective in his way, and insufficient for his undertaking; pretending (for the most part) to correct his errors, and attempting to overthrow, what he asserted. So that the increase and augmentation of Arts and Sciences, being purchased or procured, as well by the pulling downe of what either thorow negligence, or ignorance, had bin built amisse, as by the superaddition of what was regular and sound, carry a expresse character in them of the weaknesse and insufficiencie of those, by whom they received them, and consequently, of those also who were the founders, and first fathers of them, whereas the increase of the Gospel, and growth of the Scriptures, have still advanced without the least error or shadow of miscarriage in their way, those who were set on work to make the former supplements or addition, being never questioned or corrected for any thing they wrote, but attested rather and commended, by those who were engaged in the latter.

2. Though Artes and Sciences and particular Inventions of men, have received growth and increase, since their respective births, or first ground-work laid in the world, yet is there none of them brought to any such perfection, but they are still capable of further augmentation and increase, yea there are new additions made unto them daily: yea there is little question to be made, but that they will be still growing and increasing whilst the world stands, and yet never come to their period of perfection; much like those *filly Women* whom the Apostle represents,

sents, laden with sin, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth. 2 Tim. 3. 6, 7. Whereas the Scriptures and the Gospel, have had the Seal of their confirmation and accomplishment upon them for these many generations; nor hath any man attempted, at least with any success, or acceptance with considering men, since the writing of the book of the Revelation, to indite or publish any thing by way of additament unto them, or as any further part, or member of them. This perfection, & incapacity of any further enlargement from men, found in the Gospel and Scriptures, attested and acknowledged by the whole world for these 1500. years & upwards, is a pregnant inducement to this belief, that he is both the Authour and finisher of them, who knows how to accomplish and perfect his works and undertakings at such a rate, that neither the Wisdome nor skill of any creature are able to make any addition unto them. *I know* (saith the wise man) *that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it* &c. Whereas that invincible imperfection, which is found in Arts and Sciences (invincible I mean, in respect of their strength, who are, and have been, labouring and striving from the first ages of the world to this day, to overcome it, but have not been able) is a great argument, that as well the Founders of them, as Benefactors, are but men.

* Eccle. 3. 14.

Seventhly, There is in the Scriptures a magestique kinde of security, under many seeming (yea many seemingly bold, and venturous) contradictions, that yet neither the Honour of their Truth, nor that unitie which they have, in and with themselves, shall at all suffer hereby. The consideration hereof is of the same blessed confederacie with the former arguments, tending to cleare the pedigree of the Gospel, and to demonstare the originall of the Scriptures to be from God. We shall not need to make any large collection of such places or passages, whose faces seem to be set, and this sometimes very fiercely, the one against the other. I cannot but judge that of your selves you know many in this kinde. If we should but narrowly examine the two Genealogies which the two Evangelists, *Matthew* and *Luke* have drawn up in their Gospels, to shew our Saviours pedigree and lineall descent according to the flesh, and compare them, 1. Between themselves, the one with the other. 2. Both

the one and the other of them with severall places in the old Testament, we shall be furnished with instances in abundance of seeming (yea many strongly seeming, seemingly irreconcilable) contradictions. But for particulars in this kinde, I had rather (Reader) referre thee, to such expositors and writers upon the places, Who being diligent and judicious, as they have taken notice of these friendly (though enemy-like-seeming) contests and oppositions between Scriptures and Scriptures, so have they interposed, and that with much felicity of successe, to compound them: amongst whom, I should abuse an opportunitie of *giving honour, to Whom honour becometh*, if I should not recommend unto thee *Fredericus Spanhemius*, a late (if not present) Professor of Divinity in *Geneva*, for a man, both faithfull and diligent, to take knowledge of, and of singular dexteritie and ingeniousnesse to compromise these knotie and troublefome Phenomena in this part of the face of Heaven. A little before my publike handling this theme concerning the Authority and originall of the Scriptures, I had occasion in the course of my Ministry, to expound the Genealogy of *Matthew*; in which exposition I salved the soares of those seeming inconsistencies between the two Evangelists, *Matthew* and *Luke*, and reconciled both the one and the other of them with the Old Testament in such passages, wherein there was an appearance or face of a combat^a: in which atcheivement, I acknowledge my self a debtor to the pen and paines of the said Author.

It were easy to multiply instances of this kind, where Scripture seems to rise up against Scripture, and saying against saying, and that not only in genealogicall computations, but even in matters of another nature, and which seem to be, yea and really are, of greater weight and moment; and yet one Scripture be wraits no manner of fear of hurting another, or of prejudicing the Honour or Truth of another. The Scripture, *Prov. 26. 4.* Injoynes men, *not to answer a foole according to his folly*, and yet in the very next verse, there seems to be a quite contrary injunction: *Answer a fool according to his folly. Also the strength of Israel* (saith *Samuel*, speaking of God) *will not lie nor repent, for he is not a man that he should*

Repent

^a In his *Dubia Evangelica.*

^a Which was one reason why in laying down the argument in hand to prove the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, I only mentioned some of these seeming contradictions, without repeating their solutions, being so lately delivered before.

Repent^b: and yet it is twice said of him in the same chapter that he did *repent*. Himself tells *Samuel*, that he *repented that he had set up Saul to be King*^c: and afterward it is expressly said that the Lord *repented that he had made Saul King over Israel*^d. It is said, *Gen. 22. 1.* that *God tempted Abraham*: yet *Iam. 1. 13.* men, *when they are tempted*, are forbidden to say, that *God tempteth them*; and that upon this ground, because *God tempteth no man* And (to forbear any more instances) the Apostle injoyneth the *Philippians* (and that again and again) to *rejoyce in the Lord alwaies*: yea and againe (saith he) *I say rejoyce* And yet injoynes them also to *worke out their Salvation, with fear and trembling*^e. It were easy to make this pile of seeming contrarieties in the Scriptures much greater: but by these wherein instance hath been given, we may plainly discern, that there is a greater eye of such passages there, whose appearance is as if they affronted one the other, and were at open warres amongst themselves: Yea that is further considerable, that in all the instances given (as likewise it is, if not in all, yet in most of the rest that might be given, being of the same consideration) the Scriptures, which carrie the strongest appearance of being contrary to their fellowes, yet bewray no manner of tenderesse in this behalfe. They doe not stand to excuse or purge themselves, as if there were any cause at all to suspect them for any crossenesse or contrariety unto others; no, they speak from place to place, what they have a minde to say, with that liberty and freedome, as if there were nothing said by them elsewhere, that either was like to suffer the least prejudice by it, or else to cast the least prejudice on it.

Now then, Let us consider a little, whether there be not in the consideration held forth unto you, that which bewrayes somewhat more then humane in the Scriptures. Of all writings under Heaven, they asume most unto themselves, as that they are the *words of eternall Life* that they are *inspired by God*, that they are the *testimony of Jesus Christ*, the *faithfull witnessse*, that they *shall judge the world*, that they are *that immortall seed of which the sons and daughters of God must be begotten*, &c. And yet they speak and utter themselves from place to place, as if they cared not to destroy that Interest of Au-

^b 1 Sam. 15. 29.

^c verse. 11.

^d verse. 33.

The consistencie of these places, with many other *εναρτιοσα* in the Scriptures, is sufficiently opened by many Interpreters.

^e Philip. 4. 4. f Philip. 1. 12.

thoritic, credit, and belief, which in some places they labour to procure for themselves, in the hearts and consciences of men. For that which in one place they build up, in another they seeme to pull down; that which in one place they affirme, in another they seem to deny: what in one place they injoyne and recommend to be done, in another they seem to prohibit, and to restraints from doing. Some of them seem to lye to the North, and some to the South: some to the East, and some to the west; and to conflict, combate and contend amongst themselves, as *the four Windes of the Heavens* did in *Daniels vision*; upon the Sea^a. And yet for all this, they stand before all the world, God, Angels, and men, like *Princes* (as *Job* speak's) undaunted, untroubled, unappald, as full of confidence to prosper in their way, and carry the world before them, to gaine upon the hearts, and souls, and consciences of men, as if they knew nothing by themselves, were conscious of nothing in themselves, that were like to hinder them. So then this is that which I say, that such a Security and majestic confidence, as the Scriptures ever and anon bewray of doing great matters, of turning the world (as it were) upside downe, of being had in reverence and high esteem with men, upon such terms of disadvantage, and reasons to feare the contrary (as flesh and blood might reasonably judge) is a signe that their confidence is divine, & that their security in such a case, is the security of God; especially considering that this their confidence *makes them not ashamed*, but is justified from Heaven daily by successfull answerable to it. If they did not know, that God both could & would, give gifts of reason, wisdom, and understanding unto men whereby to throw downe the mountains, and to fill up the valleys that are in them, and to make the rough things plaine, to make a clear peace between things that seeme to be at variance, yea and that he would stirre up their hearts, to ingage themselves, and improve these abilities accordingly; at least if they had not known, that men would so far reverence those beames of light, those glorious Truths, which clearly shone in them, as for their sakes to reverence the hidden things of darknesse, which are there, and the things which they cannot understand, so far at least, as not to re-

ject

ject the things that are cleere, because of the things that are obscure; if (I say) the Scriptures had not known and fore-seen these things, they would (doubtlesse) have been as tender of their own interest in this kinde, as provident for themselves and their own honour, as men use to be in their writings. Men that write and make books upon their own interest because they know not, in case they should write as knottily as the Scriptures are written (in many places) and let such sentences or sayings passe from their pen from place to place, which would trouble men as much, ingage men as deep, to make a confidence of sense between them, as the Scriptures frequently doe; because they know not (I say) whether men would ever be at this cost and charge with their writings, or no, or cast any such honour upon them, to make their darknesse, light; therefore they are very tenders, cautious, and circumspect (especially those that are the wisest, and most considerable amongst them) not to expose themselves so much as to the least suspicion of writing contradictions, of being inconsistent with themselves. And when they have any occasion to say or expresse any thing, which carrieth an appearance in it of some contrariety to what they affirm elsewhere, they still give notice of it in one kinde or other, and are carefull to distinguish, and to explain themselves with much anxiety and warinesse, as being timorous and fearfull, that otherwise they should suffer losse in the opinions and esteem of men. Whereas the Scriptures on the contrary, in many places seem to speak, as if they cared not either to be understood, or beleaved: and yet otherwise expresse as great a confidence of both, as if they knew nothing by themselves (as was said) why they should distrust or question either. When they come to assert or deliver any thing afterwards, which seems to trench upon something which they had formerly said, they are so farre from giving any notice or warning of such a thing, or from distinguishing themselves into a cleernesse of confidence with themselves, to prevent a misapprehension in this kinde in the thoughts of men, that very frequently they expresse the negative, in the same word or terme wherein the affirmative was expresse before, and on the contrary; as it were on purpose to raise and strengthen the seemingnesse of the contradiction.

I

For

For example, *Luk. 1.73.74*, the tenour or import of the *Oath*, which God swore unto *Abraham our Father*, is said to be this, *ὅτι δούλω ἡμῶν, ἀσέβους καταρθεῖν αὐτοῦ*, i. that he would grant unto us, *his being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we should serve him without fear &c.* And yet *Phil. 2.12*. Christians are enjoined, *ὅτι ὁθεὶ καὶ δούλω τῶν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν καταρθεῖσθε*, i. to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. So *Matth. 7.* our Saviours promise is, *ἀπαύειτε, καὶ δοθήσεται ὑμῖν*, ask, and it shall be given you: yet *James* faith to those, to whom he writes, *αἰτεῖτε, καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε*, i. ye ask, and yet receive not. To passe by many other places of like consideration; our Saviour professeth, that he was not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel^b: and yet professeth, *Joh. 10.16*, that he had other sheep also, which were not of this fold (meaning, of the Jewish nation) whom also he must bring to hear his voice &c.

Thus then we see what there is in the consideration in hand, to plead the Original and descent of the Scriptures from God, and to difference them from all the writings of men, I mean such as have been written by men, without the inspiration and expresse guidance of the holy Ghost. Other writers and writings are timorous and tender of seeming contradictions: the Scriptures, and he that speaketh in them, seem to delight in such seemings, and go on their way rejoicing, notwithstanding.

There remains only one Argument more, arising from the consideration of the manner how things are carried in the Scriptures, which avoucheth their authority for divine, and is the eight in order. This is the holy and humble ingenuity, candour and simplicity, which upon occasion discover themselves in the respective writings of those, who were the *Amanuenses* or penmen of the Scriptures. There is such a lowly self-denying frame and disposition, such a sweet simplicity and submissiveness of spirit ever and anon observable in their writings, in publishing their own infirmities and weaknesses, as well as other mens; yea the weaknesses of their friends, and such whom they greatly honour elsewhere upon occasion, and both the one and the other without the least air or touch of any complement or vanity, without ministering unto men the least occasion to judge any such thing of them, as that they should bait their hooks with speaking

The true sense, together with the mutuall consistencie of these, & other like passages, are to be inquired, and may readily be found, in our orthodox and learned Commentatours upon the respective places.
^a 1 Tim. 4. 3.
^b Mat. 15. 24.

speaking meanly or disparagingly of themselves, to catch the praises of other men; that, as it was said of the *Almuggim* trees, of which *Solomon* made pillars for the house of the Lord, there came no such *Almug* trees, nor were seen unto this day^a, so neither is there to be found any such holy ingenuity or simplicity of heart in any other writer, or writers whatsoever, as are clearly seen in those, who had this spirit of glory cast upon them, to be the secretaries of heaven, to communicate in writing those blessed counsells of God contained in the Scriptures, unto the world. How often, upon occasion, doth that great Prophet, that man of God (as he is called) *Moses*, who had a favour from Heaven, which never man had but he, I mean to have God speak unto him face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend^b; how oft (I say) doth he upon occasion, in his writings, weave in the relation of his own weaknesses and miscarriages in his history, as if he had not been the historian himself? yea the failings and miscarriages of his house and family in his greatest predecessors? In the third and fourth Chapters of *Exodus*, how doth he at large lay down the story of his infidelity, and great avernesse, to submit unto that calling, unto which he was called, and that in an extraordinary way, by God himselfe? Towards the end of the fourth Chapter, he acknowledgeth his oversight and neglect of the ordinance of God, in not circumcising his childe the eight day: and further relates how neer he was to the stroke of Gods displeasure by reason of it. So *Numb. 11*. he records the shame of his distrustfullnesse, or at least of the carnality of his conceit or apprehension of the power of God. So again, *Numb. 20*. he ingenuously relates, how deeply he incurrd the displeasure of God, by an angry and diffident smiting of the rock, instead of speaking to it with a composed spirit, and faith (according to the tenour of his commission) and withall, how God, because of this his sinne, pronounced this heavy sentence against him (which not long after also he put into full execution) that he should not bring his Congregation into the promised land. And, the Lord spake unto *Moses* and *Aaron*, because ye believed me not, to sanctifie me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this Congregation into the land which I have given them^b. Yea, we may put down in account amongst the fruits of his humility

^a 1 King. 10. 12.

^b Ex. 33. 11.

^a Num. 11. 21.
^{22.}

^b Num. 20. 22.

humility and candour of spirit, that testimony which he gives unto himself of being *very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth*.^c For as the Apostle *Paul*, when upon occasion, he commended himself, or (in his own phrase) *gloried*, made no question but that he exposed himself to the disparagement of being counted a fool for so doing, and withall implieth, that had he not been herunto *compelled* by the strong desire he had of their spirituall well-doing, to whom he writes, there should no appearance of such a *dead flie* have been seen in his *oyntment*; in like manner, *Moses* (doubtlesse) being a prudent, sober, and grave man (as his writings testify in abundance) was not brought but by a strong hand of self-deniall, and by an excellency of desire to accommodate the world in matters of speciall importance, in succeeding generations, to stoop to this lure of folly and weaknesse, I mean to rise up so high in his own praise and commendation.

Nor doth he only freely and plainly relate things tending to his own disparagement, but upon the same occasion, *viz.* when the glory of God, and the after-information of the world required it, he knows neither brother, nor sister, nor the greatest, or most honourable of all his fore-fathers, but unpartially sacrificeth their reputations and honours also upon the service of the comfort and caution of the world, declaring in open and free history, how farre they acted from time to time beneath their excellency, being Saints and servants of the most high God. The prints and foot steps of like ingenuity in others of the same engagement, are evident from place to place throughout the body of the Scriptures; and have been observed by others upon the like occasion. But expedition is a great part of our present intendment.

Now then, as *Nicodemus* said unto *Christ, Master. We know that thou art a Teacher come from Gods: for no man can doe these miracles which thou doest, except God were with him*^a; so have we reason in abundance to conclude and say, concerning the Hagiographers we speak of (the Pen-men of the Scriptures,) no men could have gone so farre out of themselves in so favoury and sacred an ingenuity, had not God himself been their guide, and conductour in the way. Nor is it any waies worthy the first

fruits

fruits of a belief, that God would ever have stood by mortall men with so high an hand of wisdom and grace, as to teach them that (I had almost said) miraculous deportment with their pen, (for self-deniall and humility,) had not their employment been about his own most glorious affairs, and their calling to the work from himself; yea had he not intended this heavenly deportment and behaviour of theirs, as a sacred character or impression, of his own presence with them in what they wrote, and for a confirmation of the soveraigne truth in them, unto the world. *But continue thou* (saith *Paul* to *Timothy*) *in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing* (i. considering) *of whom thou hast learnede them*^b; clearly implying, that the spirit of a Teacher, or writer, may be so excellent and rich, that a thorow taste or knowledge of it, may well be a ground of confidence, that there is a substance of truth in what is either taught, or written by him. And (doubtlesse) if the spirits of humane writers whatsoever, from the first to the last, were judiciously tasted, there would none of them be found so rellish with that inward sweetnesse, or richnesse of contentment to the understanding of a man, wherewith the respective books and writings of the Scriptures, doe gratifie the intellectuall palates of their Readers, if they be intelligent and attentive in the reading of them. Lightnesse, pride, aptnesse to censure or exalt, according to self-interests, or relations, an affectation of obscurities, to be counted profound, a subtile plian-bleness of carriage to gain Readers of the common stature for understanding, with the like, are the ingredients most frequently predominant in the constitution of the spirits of other Authors, and writers of books: nor is there any thing truly noble, or heaven-like, to be found in the best, or greatest of them all. If all that which is truly excellent and desirable in all the spirits or dispositions of all humane writers whatsoever, could be extracted from all their writings together, and made up into one and the same consistence; there might from the writings, either of *Moses* alone, or of *Paul* alone, be drawn forth an extraction, or quintessence, incomparably more ecclesiall and divine, then it.

We might here have presented you with another considera-

^a Num. 12. 3.^b Cor. 13. 11.^b 3 Tim. 3. 14.^a Joh. 3. 1.

tion or argument (reducible to that head of discourse, from which we have argued hitherto) for the further eviſtion of that great conclusion, which we desire to bring forth into a cleer and perfect light, the Divine Authority of the Scriptures; viz. the admirable harmony and consent, for substance and truth of matter, which is found betwixt their respective pen-men and parts, from the first, to the last of them. They march like an Army in good array, where every man keepeth his rank, and none thrusteth, or troubleth his fellow. But because this is a consideration more frequently insisted upon, and opened, by others; and hath been already taken notice of (in part) by us, in a former Argument, we shall, for the present, wave the further plea of it.

Having finished those arguments and considerations of the first sort, drawn from the manner of the Scriptures, in their composition and frame, and which tend with an high hand to secure the world, that they are indeed royally defended, and know no Father, or Authour, either amongst men or Angels, whether good, or bad, but God only; let us in the next place advance such arguments and demonstrations, for our further confirmation in the same truth, which arise from their matter; I mean from the nature, property, and import, of the things themselves delivered, and held forth in them. These are somewhat more in number than the former. For 1. The glorious and absolute holiness which they call the world unto. 2. The strong and potent tendencie in things here delivered unto godlinesse. 3. The like efficacious and soveraigne tendencie of things, unto self-deniall: to make men wholly forgetfull and neglective of themselves in outward things, upon occasion. 4. The penetrating or searching nature and property of the Scriptures; I mean into the hearts and spirit- and consciences of men, *to separate the vile from the precious*. and to discover the hidden things of the greatest darknesse there. 5. The mighty efficacy and power they have, by the things which they teach, to enlarge, raise, and lift up the hearts of men, that are fallen, and sunk, and dead within them. 6. The like power which they have, by other ingredients, to trouble, astonish, and confound the hearts that are high, and full of confidence and security. 7. The transforming power which they

Ten Arguments drawn from the subject-matter of the Scriptures, to prove their ori- ginall divine

they have. I mean to change and alter the natures and dispositions and tempers of men; to turn both the hearts and waies of men upside down. 8. That excellency of wisdom, those heights and depths of understanding, which are discovered in that great transaction of the Gospel, as it is presented unto the world in the Scriptures. 9. The great and wonderfull mysteriousness of this evangelicall transaction. 10. And lastly, The glorious and most transcendent importance of this transaction, by way of benefit and blessing upon the world; all these, especially in a joint consideration, doe, against, and above all contradiction and fear, evince the Scriptures to be from God.

First, That excellent spirit of holiness, which breaths in the faces of the souls and consciences of men, out of many of the commands, motives, examples, and other expressions in the Scriptures, is a fair lineament in the face of God, and plainly bewraies his interest and hand in the framing of them.

Let me 1. (in a word) shew you what I mean by that holiness, which the Scriptures so ardently desire to advance and propagate in the world. 2. I shall (with like brevity) acquaint you, how glorious and fearful the Scriptures are in pressing and perswading unto holiness. 3. and lastly, We will ponder the consideration hereof a little, and see what it contributes towards our important designe.

For the first, Holiness, in the sense we now speak of it (for there are severall significations of the word) may be described after some such manner as this: It is an honourable impression, property, or quality in the rationally nature or being, which disposeth the subject to an absolute and utter separation and abhorrency in affection, from whatsoever is sinfull, as such; (I mean, so farre as it is sinfull.) And such waies and actions which proceed from such a principle as this, may be called *Holy*. We shall not now stand to examine or scan the description, it being not so proper to the business in hand. Holiness in God, seems to be that nature, attribute or property in him, which inclines him to move and act in all his wayes and dispensations, at the greatest elongation and distance that can be imagined, from all unrighteousness whatsoever. In men and Angels, it imports such a principle, which inclines them to an absolute conformity with

The first Argument.

God,

God, in his waies and actions. That passage of the Psalme (with many others, where we finde righteousnesse and holinesse in conjunction) *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works*^a, gives some testimony to the truth and propriety of the description. We shall not (for the present) lead you any further out of the way by following it, or by any narrow inquiring into the nature or property of holinesse, or how it differs from other graces. It is sufficient, as to the point in hand, to know, that the holinesse, which the Scriptures strive with so much importunity to ingage the world unto (as we shall see presently) is a conformity or likenesse unto God in that attribute or perfection of his nature, which inclines him to doe all things that he doth, like unto himself, like unto a God, that is, not only after the most exact and absolute manner in all points, without the omission or neglect of the least, or least considerable circumstance, that might adde beauty and perfection to it, but all this also with the greatest alienation of minde and affection from doing otherwise.

The next thing is to demonstrate and shew unto you, how, and at what rate the Scriptures groan, and travail (as it were) in pain, with the unholinesse, loosenesse, and prophanesse of the world: and how mightily they advance and lift up themselves, to advance holinesse amongst the sons and daughters of men; to transform the hearts and waies of men into the similitude and likenesse of that glorious attribute of holinesse, which is in God, and in all his waies.

There are three great Engines especially (if we may so call them) which the Scriptures use, and by which they drive on this great and blessed designe of promoting holinesse in the world. The first, is made of precepts and commands: the second, of motives or arguments of perswasion: the third and last, of examples. It is true, all the three in strictnesse of speaking, and in a generall consideration, may be reduced to that one mentioned in the second place. Commands of holinesse from God, and so examples of holinesse, both from God and men, have the nature of motives unto holinesse: but by distinguishing them, we both provide the better for method and memory, and likewise follow the example of the holy Ghost himself, who still differenceth
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the precept from the motive, by which it is pressed, and bound faster and closer to the hearts and consciences of men.

Let us first see how instant the Scriptures are upon the world with precepts and commands for holinesse. *For I am the Lord your God* (saith he that speaketh out of them unto the world) *ye shall therefore sanctifie your selves, and ye shall be holy, for I am holy.* And again, *for I am the Lord which bringeth you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy*^a: Injunctions expressed in the future tense of the Indicative mood [*ye shall be holy, &c.*] are most emphaticall and authoritative; importing, not simply the will or desire of the commander; nor simply the duty of the commanded; but also the peremptorinesse of the one, and the imminent danger of the other, if neglected. If we should transcribe, and argue, these ensuing passages, *Lev. 19.2. Lev. 20.7. 1 Pet. 1.15, 16. Heb. 12. 14. 2 Cor. 7.1. Matth. 5.48.* with many others of like consideration and import (which we leave to your private observation) you would cleerly see how strong and soare the Scriptures are in their injunctions and commands for holinesse, upon the world. So that if the authority and interest of him, who seeks to order and empire the world by the Scriptures, can doe anything, men and women shall not be prophane, or unclean, but holy: these are at work with all their might, and with all their power, to make all holy.

Secondly, Take we into consideration also, with what potency, height, and variety of motive, and argument of perswasion, the Scriptures bow and bend themselves, yea, turn themselves this way and that, and every way that lightly can be thought of, to commend the grace and exercise of holinesse unto men; to interesse the hearts and affections of men and women, in the love, desire, and study of it. There are scarce any of the commands lately pointed unto, which call for holinesse, but are attended and guarded with their motives and incitements proper to them.

1. The Scripture presseth and perswades unto holinesse, by this consideration, that *God himself is holy. Be ye holy, for I am holy* (saith he that speaketh in the Scriptures, as we heard before from *Moses*.) Now supposing (for the present, being yet but
upon

^a Lev. 11.44, 45.

upon the proof of it) that it is God himself who thus speaketh, of how soveraign an influence must this consideration, that *God is holy*, needs be upon the hearts and souls of men capable of it, to perswade unto holinesse? What! a mortall man, who is by nature but dust and ashes, and by miscarriage, a thousand degrees more imbas'd then so, to be like unto God? to have communion with him in so darling an Attribute as his holinesse? What? he that was descended so low, to ascend thus high? The Heathen themselves, when they studied and set themselves, to speak at the highest rate they knew how, in way of honour and commendation, whether of persons, or of actions, they usually expressed themselves, by affirming the one to be like unto God, and the other to render men like unto God. Their great Orator *Cicero*, when he had in an Oration drawn the portraiture of the Emperour *Cesar*, as he intended, by the representation of a man performing such and such things highly vertuous and rare, closeth his sentence after this manner; *He that shall doe such things as these, I think him not to be a man, but judge him to be one most like unto God.* And so *Plato*, by way of motive unto men to be active in doing good unto as many as might be, expresseth himself thus *ὁς τις μακρὸς ἀγαθῶν, ἢ τὸ βέλδιον οὐκ ἔσται, ἢ ἵνα τοῦτο γενεῶν ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τοῦτο ποιεῖν ἕως οὗ δύναται, ἵνα τοῦτο γένηται ἕως οὗ δύναται.* i. *to be a generall benefactor, and to doe good unto many, is to become like unto God.*

2. The Scripture perswades and presseth unto holinesse upon this ground; *viz.* that men and women are brought into a capacity of being holy, by so high an hand of grace and vouchsafement from God, as the death of his only begotten Son. The Apostle *Peter* having injoynd Christians to be holy in all manner of conversation, even as he that had called them was holy, and to passe the time of their sojourning here in fear; immediately he subjoyns this by way of motive, or engagement; *Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as with silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your Fathers; but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot. &c.* This also is a motive of wonderfull importance and power, where it is thorowly sented, and takes kindly upon the spirit, to perswade unto holinesse. It supposeth 1. that it is a priviledge, yea a great prerogative, for men that had

Hec qui fecerit, hunc non hominem esse puto, sed simillimum Deo judico.

2. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

3. vers. 18.

been in such a condition of bondage and slavery under sin, as they had been, to be so farre brought off from those terms of shame and misery, as (if they be willing to enter in by it) to have such an effectuall door open unto them, whereby to passe into the glorious liberty of holinesse. The Angels that are fallen, have no part or fellowship in such a priviledge as this: the iron gate of the irreverfible decree of God is fast shut upon them: they are in no capacity of coming forth out of their dungeon of sin and misery, into the light and blessednesse of holinesse. And 2. it asserteth, that this priviledge, or capacity for them to become holy, was not procured or bought, nor procurable, or to be bought, for them, by such mean and contemptible things, as silver and gold, for which yet we know things of greatest worth and consequence in matters appertaining to this life, may be had, but by the precious blood of *Jesus Christ*, &c. implying, that the greatnesse of the price, by which a priviledge, liberty, or commodity in any kinde is purchased for a man, (especially by those, who are of wisdom and understanding sufficient not to over-purchase, not to give their silver for that which is not bread) is a proportionable engagement upon the man, for whom this purchase is made, to improve this priviledge to the uttermost, as well for his benefit and advantage who hath made the purchase for him, as for his own. The price that hath been given to put the world into a capacity of holinesse, being no lesse, then the precious blood of *Jesus Christ*, that only sacred treasure, which either heaven or earth could afford, or furnish the Almighty with, for such a purchase, duly considered, is an astonishing weight of engagement upon the world, to be holy.

3. The Scriptures call upon the world for holinesse, by the great voice of this consideration; that God, when he was free, hath yet made himself a mighty debtour, a debtour of infinite summes of treasure, unto the world, especially by those great and precious promises which he hath given unto it, concerning the life, and glory, and great things of the world to come, the everlasting enjoyment and fruition of himself, and that upon the most desirable terms, that it is possible for a creature to injoy him; *viz.* so, as that he will become all in all unto it; that

is, not communicate himself by any means or mediation whatsoever, or joyn any creature whatsoever with himself, to make the blessednesse of him that shall enjoy him, a compounded blessednesse, consisting partly of the benefit received from a creature, partly of what is derived unto it by the creatour; but will fill the whole capacity of him that shall enjoy him, with nothing but himself; so that his blessednesse shall have no ingredient at all in it to allay or qualifie it but it shall be wholly, purely, and entirely *God, all God*; who as he contains all things whatsoever, *per modum eminentie*, (as the School-men speak) by way of eminency, in his essence or in himself, Angels, men, joy, strength, life, peace, glory, and whatsoever is named not in this world only but in that also which is to come; so will he be this *all things*, after a farre more excellent, after a farre more incomparably excellent manner, to those that shall enjoy him, then the things themselves would be, if they were enjoyed by him. This is the last and most compleat estate and condition of blessednesse, wherunto the creature shall be brought; and wherein, being once entred and brought into it, he shall abide for eternity. But before his coming or bringing hither, he shall passe thorow the accomplishment and sweet enjoyment of many other the great and precious promises of God, as of being rais'd again from the dead, of having his vile body made like unto the glorious body of *Christ*, of living and reigning with *Christ* a thousand years, with many other of like glorious and blessed importance; all which notwithstanding shall at last run into that immense Ocean of blessednesse and glory which we speak of, and there be swallowed up, and lose themselves and their names, as the fairest and goodliest rivers doe, when once they are fallen into the main sea. But this by the way. But that the Scriptures doe (as it were) adjure the world unto *holinesse*, by the *great and precious promises* which God hath made, and wherein he stands ingaged unto the sons and daughters of men, is evident by that place formerly cited, *2 Cor. 7. Having therefore these promises* (dearly beloved) *let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holinesse in the fear of God*; implying, that, however *holinesse* (especially in any considerable eminencie or *perfection*) carries a strong antipathy

2 A COR. 7. 1.

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in it, to the corrupt natures and vile dispositions of men; yet they who have such an advantage over their hearts, such an opportunity to make their corrupt natures turn head upon their vilenesse and corruption, as the glorious *promises* of the Gospel afford, ought in reason, and well may (by the improvement of the means before them) raise, and work up themselves to an eminent degree and pitch of *holinesse*: Yea this improvement of the promises we speak of by men, I mean to an excellencie of *holinesse*, seems to be one of the main ends or intents, on Gods part, why they were given. *Whereby* (saith *Peter*) *are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, &c.* It is the richnesse, the *exceeding greatnesse*, and *preciousnesse* of the Gospel-promises, which makes them a proportionable and apt means to communicate or impart the *Divine nature* (*holinesse*) unto men. If a King should desire to raise a noble and princelike spirit, in a person of low and ordinary birth and breeding, his onely way were to adopt him for his son, and to declare him his successour in his Throne. When *Saul* was anointed by the Prophet *Samuel* to be King over Israel, it is said that as he turned himself to go from *Samuel*, *God gave him another heart*, i. an heart thoughtfull and considerative, how to rule, and act the part of a King; whereas the heart he had before, was but level'd to the occasions and interests of a private man. I conceive that this rais'd and princelike heart was not *given* unto *Saul* by any miraculous or supernaturall inspiration, or working, from God, but by an ordinary concurrence in the minde and spirit of *Saul* with that great providence of his towards him, in calling and anointing him to be a King. The consideration hereof striking effectually upon *Sauls* heart, being now discharged from his attendance upon *Samuel*, and so more free to take the impression of this great occurrence home, it seems quite altered the frame and constitution of it, and made it Regall. The promises of the Gospel thoroughly understood, considered and beleev'd, cannot but *fulfill the joy* of him that gave them, in making his creature like unto himself, *holy*, as he is *holy*.

4. The Scriptures are so impatient of being denied what they

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call.

call for in this kinde (I mean in point of holinesse) from the world, so unable to bear the world in an averfenesse herunto, that they threaten the losse of the sight and face of God, and therein, of all joy, and peace, and comfort for evermore, and consequently the vengeance of eternall fire, to all those that are prophane, or unholy. Follow peace with all men (saith the Apostle in a place formerly cited) and holinesse: without which, i. without which holinesse, nor, without which peace (as is evident by the Article in the Greek, which being of the masculine gender, agree's with *ἡσυχία*, holinesse, not with *ἡ εἰρήνη*, peace) no man shall see the Lord, i. shall injoy him (as the word commonly imports in Scripture) or, come where he is, to behold the glory, which God hath given him; wherein himself seems to place the great felicity of the Saints. This motive is in the hand of the Scripture as a rod of iron, to batter and break in pieces, all that stubbornesse and contradiction, which is in the natures and hearts of men against holinesse.

There are severall other motives, by the meditation whereof the Scripture is wont to urge and presse hard upon the world for holinesse; as sometimes, the consideration of the beauty of it; otherwhile, it holds forth the glory of it, yea, it oft calls it by the name of glory^d; again, sometimes the peace, sometimes the joy of it are commended unto the world; and all to inflame the hearts of men and women with desires after it. By all which, and especially by those that have been somewhat more largely insisted upon, it fully appears, that the face of the Scriptures is set like an adamant, fully set to exalt holinesse in the world, to make the generation of the sons and daughters of men, a generation of sons and daughters unto God, by being partakers of the divine nature, holy as he is holy.

So that we shall not need to insist at all upon the third particular mentioned; viz. the examples of persons eminent in holinesse, over whose names and memories the Scriptures rejoyce so much, and seem to embalm them with honour, on purpose that being preserved, the world by them might learn to love and follow holinesse in all succeeding generations. The stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also of all the holy

Prophets

* Heb. 12. 14.

* Joh. 17. 24.

d. Cor. 3. 18.
Eph. 5. 27. &c.

Prophets and Apostles, with many others that are upon Scripture record; speak plainly and without any parable, that the Scripture designe is, to make the holinesse of these men to propagate in the world, the men themselves being dead. So that the light of this Truth shines clearly from all quarters of the Scriptures, and is spread round about us on every side; that holinesse amongst men, is one of the great prizes, that they run for, and contend and strive about with the world.

Now then (in a word) let us weigh and consider, what we have gotten all this while, to strengthen the hand of our belief, and secure our dearest souls, that the Scriptures preach'd unto us, and profess'd by us, are indeed from God.

If we shall but first call to minde, what that holinesse is, the advancement whereof in the world we have demonstrated at large, to be one of the great designs of the Scriptures; and 2. with what strength and vehemencie and raisednesse of affection and endeavour, this designe we speak of, is advanc'd and carried on, by, or in, the Scriptures; the consideration (doubtlesse) will amount to a most effectuall demonstration and conviction, that the Scriptures themselves are from God. For, 1. Let me ask; doth the advancement of holinesse in the world, look like an Interest of man, or of any unclean spirit? hath it any communion with the naturall temper, disposition, or desires of these? or hath it not the expresse image and superscription of the glorious God upon it, and look like the designe of the most holy? It is a saying in naturall Philosophy; that it is *naturalissimum opus viventis, generare sibi simile*; it is the most naturall act or work of every living thing, to produce another like unto it self. It is said, Gen. 5. that *Adam begat a son in his own image, and after his likeness*^a, and Gen. 1. it is said, that *God created man in his own image, and likeness also*^b. If such an holinesse as the Scriptures set themselves with all their might to exalt and propagate in the world, be the image of man, or of any lying or deluding spirit, let either the one or the other be reputed the Author of that doctrine or writing by which the propagation of it is with so high an hand (as you have heard) attempted in the world: but if it be the image of God, if it carries an absolute and perfect resemblance of his nature in it, what need

^a Gen. 5. 3.
^b 1. 26, 27.

we.

We any more Witnesses? Why should we not conclude without any diffidence or doubtfulness of spirit at all, that he, and none other is the authour of them?

Nay secondly (that which is yet further considerable) the holiness over which the Scriptures so much rejoyce, is so far from holding any proportion or correspondence with the nature or disposition of man; in this estate of corruption and sin, wherein he now languisheth even unto death (much more of any creature more abased then man) that it professeth enmity, and open hostility against it; and seeketh to turn the temper and waies and course thereof upside down. Whereas on the contrary, it is not only of the most rich and full consistencie with the nature of God simply, but with that property, attribute, or perfection in his nature, which is his darling, and wherein his soul mightily delights (as was lately observ'd) as being that, which inclines him to act and put forth himself in all the rest, according to the most absolute and perfect rules for their respective actings, and with the greatest detestation of doing otherwise. Now then (I beseech you consider it) is it any waies like, nay is it possible, for the nature, heart, or soul of man, which are corrupt, vile and sinfull, to labour and travail (especially at so high a rate, as we have shewed you the Scriptures doe) with such a pure and glorious conception, as this of holiness? *Who can bring a clean thing, out of an unclean* (is *Jobs* question) and his answer is, *not one*. *Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles;* (saith our Saviour) implying, not only or simply, that they doe not so, either *gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles;* but that there is an absolute repugnancie in nature, that they should doe either: there being no naturall principle or aptness, either in the *thorn* to bring forth *grapes*, or in the *thistle*, to bring forth *figs*. Which reasoning of his stands upon this known maxime or rule; that where there is not a propriety of cause, there cannot be a particularity of effect. So then, there being nothing, no principle in the nature, soul, or spirit of man, that hath any compliance in point of causality, with such a designe of holiness as we speak of, and as we found driven in the Scriptures, but all things there rising up to the contrary, evident it is, that the designe was new begotten or bred there.

J b 14.4.

there. It is true, there was a time when *Saul also was among the Prophets*, and prophesied, as other Prophets of the Lord did; upon which occasion that interrogative Proverb first took place: *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* But, that is to be considered in this case, that though *Saul* indeed prophesied, yet he did it, as being more then himself when he did it; the text saith, that *the Spirit of God came upon him*, and that then *he went prophesying*: so that all this propheticall deportment in *Saul*, whether in words, or expressions otherwise, was from a cause or principle, every way proportionable to it, I mean the Spirit of God. And in such a fence, I grant, that men, notwithstanding the impurity and unholiness of their natures and spirits, may yet conceive a designe of propagating holiness in the world, yea and bring forth also: but in this case evident it is, that the designe should be from God, and not from man,

If it be objected and said: but may not men by the light of nature, and help of the law of God written in their hearts, by an improving, refining, and carrying up to a greater height and perfection, those naturall impressions of the beauty, loveliness, and excellency of vertue in every kinde, which are in them, as they may by study and strength of contemplation, attain unto such a frame of heart, as out of which they may very seriously, and with great earnestness of affection and desire, ingage themselves in such a designe of holiness, as that which hath been represented unto you in the Scriptures? Doe not many Heathen Philosophers, and morall men, as *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, and others, commend vertue, which they call perfection, in all a mans waies, thoughts, words, and works, to the Heavens, exhorting and perswading all men to it? Why then may not the Scriptures, proceed from one or more such men as these, and so not from God? To this I answer three things.

1. Be it granted, that Philosophers and some of natures prime Scholars, both for naturall and morall knowledge and wisdom, have done that which is ascribed to them in the objection, have recommended vertue and perfection (as they call both the one and the other) unto the world, and have seriously desired and engaged themselves to reduce the world to those terms of morall excellency, which they prescribe; yet if this be

Objection

Ans. I.

supposed and granted concerning men, that they have appeared in the world in such glory as this, have sought to make the world righteous and holy (in their sence) is not the same much more to be presumed, and supposed concerning God, viz. that he also hath appeared for the same purpose, and upon terms much more glorious in this kinde, then they? Will God come short of men, in any vertue, in any praise, or glory? nay as he reasons himself concerning himself in another case, *Iſa. 66.* (both as the former Translation, and *Junius* and *Tremellius* out of the Originall, read, and expound the words:) *Shall I cause to travail, and not bring forth? shall I cause to bring forth, and shall be barren, saith thy God? Iſa. 66. 9. i. as Junius interprets it, Quis alius sum gignendi Author, annon ipse gignerem? I that make others to bring forth, should not I bring forth my self?* so may we say of him in this: Shall he cause others, even Heathen men, and such as are strangers to him (in comparison) to bring forth precepts, and directions, and exhortations unto things that are excellent for the behoof and benefit of the world; and shall he himself be barren, and not doe somewhat in the same kinde, to advance the estate and condition of the world likewise? That it is he who originally (at least, if not immediately also) gives both wisdom and understanding unto those heathen we speak of, and likewise that disposition and frame of will, between which all those books and writings have been begotten and set forth unto the world, whereby they call the world to perfection (in their notion) is not to be questioned: for he it is that gives life and breath, and all things unto all.

Now then, this being granted and supposed, that God, is studious and carefull as well as men, to nurture and train up the world in things that are excellent, certainly he hath his means; 1. his Laws, his Precepts, his Instructions, his Incouragements for such a purpose, and these extant, and to be had in the world, as well as they. If so, then questionlesse, those means in this kinde, those Laws, Precepts, Instructions, Incouragements, that are of the most exact calculation, of greatest efficacy and power amongst all their fellows, for the carrying on and advancement of this great designe, I mean of carrying up the world unto perfection, must needs be looked upon as the means of God; the means of

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his immediate appointment and designation for the work. So then if this one thing further be but granted, (which I presume no man hath the least colour, no nor yet the least thought of heart to deny) viz. that the Scriptures have the preheminentie above all other writings whatsoever, in strength, authority and power, to teach the world all the waies of excellencie and perfection, it undeniably follows, that then these Scriptures are from God. This is the first thing we answer to the objection propounded: though men have done the best they can, and this possibly very considerable in the kinde, to exalt a thing somewhat like holinesse in the world; yet except it should appear, that somewhat that hath been done by them in this kinde, hath a greater and more efficacious tendencie hereunto, then the Scriptures; the consideration is so farre from weakning the Divine Originall of them, that it rather confirms and gives testimony to it. But

2. I answer yet further: that that morall excellency or perfection, which the Philosophers, and learned men of the world, have laboured in their writings to promote amongst men, is quite another thing, and of a farre inferiour nature to that holinesse which he, who in, and by the Scriptures, hath to doe with the world, labours by them, to fill the world withall.

Holinesse, which is the Scripture designe upon the world, differs from that morall excellency and perfection (so called) wherewith Philosophers were desirous to plant the world, severall waies; but chiefly these three. 1. The **holinesse**, which the Scriptures set themselves to exalt in the world, is a perfect and intire **holinesse**, it wants no limb or member to complete it: there is never an impression of worth and excellency imaginable, whether in relation to God or men, whereof the heart or soul of man is capable, never a strein of action or deportment in what case, or upon what occasion soever, that is truly comely and honourable for men, but is compriz'd and comprehended in that **holinesse**, which the Scriptures recommend unto the world: But for that holinesse (if you will needs so call it) or rather that morall perfection, which is of humane recommendation unto men, take the fairest and most perfect draughts that ever were made of it by any, you will finde it halt and maimed, many parts

Answ. 2.

or pieces of it wanting. *I have seen an end* (saith David unto God) *of all perfection: but thy commandment, or thy Law, is exceeding broad*. A man may see from the *Dan* to the *Beerfaba* of that morall perfection, which men either have, or shall at any time, retrieve the world unto; a man may fadome and comprehend it, gather it into his understanding, and be able to say, here I have it, the whole element of it; which plainly shews the imperfection of it: but the compasse and extent of that perfection or holinesse which the Law of God, the Scriptures, call the world unto, is so vast and large, that the reason, conscience and understanding of a man, when they have spent themselves in travell to make a perfect discovery of this continent, and the particularities of it, cannot yet come to the utmost bounds and limits of it: There is a *Terraincognita*, an unknown land of holinesse in the Scriptures, on which no mans understanding ever set foot to this day. *Who knows* (saith the same Prophet) *how oft he offendeth?* or (as our last Translation hath it) *Who can understand his error?* If a man could comprehend the Law of God in the whole extent and compasse of it, he might be able to understand his errours, and to know *how oft he offendeth*. The Jews have this saying, that *God left nothing in all the World, wherein he gave not some commandment*.

Psal. 19. 11.

2. The Scripture holinesse, differs from that perfection which the choicest of men have desired to promote in the world; in the purity or cleanness of it. It hath not only all the parts of holinesse, all things appertaining unto the greatest excellencie or perfection, that men are capable of (as was noted in the former difference) but it hath no ingredient or mixture in it, of any thing that is repugnant unto true holinesse, or perfection; it is an holinesse, which (as we use to say of solid and compact bodies) is *plena sui*, 'tis full of it self, and hath nothing heterogeneous all within it. Whereas the Philosophers *ointment*, hath many *dead sties* in it, which make the whole composition, if not to stink rightout, yet to send forth such a favour, as by which it may be evidently snted and discerned, to be the composition of men, and not of God. *Plato* in that perfection or holinesse which he commends unto the world, besides many other things condemned by the Scriptures, as unlawfull, allows that unnaturall

turall pollution which they call *paderastia*, spoken of *Rom. 1. 27.* *Aristotle* makes severall of his vertues of such things, habits and actions, which the Scriptures make vices and finnes: as 1. He makes *ύβρισις*, i. grief or indignation at the prosperity of unworthy men, to be a vertue; which the Scripture prohibits, as a thing sinfull and unworthy, *Psal. 37.* So again, he makes a vertue of that which he calls *δυσπειθία*, i. a disposition to jesting, or lightnesse of discourse, which the Scripture expressly prohibits in the very terme, *Ephes. 5.* So he makes his *μεγαλοψυχία*, which he defines to be, the judging of a mans self worthy of great things, when he is so, another of his vertues; a disposition which we know the Scriptures doe not allow in men of the greatest worth and excellencie under heaven. *So likewise ye* (saith our Saviour to his Disciples) *when you have done all those things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to doe, &c.* If you look into *Seneca*, you shall finde indeed many excellent precepts of morality, with motives and arguments very considerable, to persuade to them; but you shall finde many a *dead stie* in this mans box also; and among others, you shall finde him commending that as a virtuous resolution in *Caro*, rather to lay violent hands upon himself, and destroy his own life, then to fall into the hands of his enemy *Cesar*, though there was little question but that he should have had his life, yea and honour too, from him; A practice which the Authour of the latter book of the *Maccabees*, commends likewise in one *Razis* a Jew (*2 Mac. 14. ver. 41.* to the end) by which character (among some others of like nature) Protestant Divines have unanimously concluded, that those books are not Canonically, or of divine inspiration. If you search into all the greatest masters of morality that ever nature set up to teach the world perfection, you will finde even in those of the greatest and choicest accomplishments amongst them, many things taught under the names of vertue and perfection, which are imperfections, and things truly dishonourable to the nature of man. This is that which the holy Ghost himself seems to take notice of concerning them, *Rom. 1. 21, 22.* *They became vain in their thoughts, or reasonings (Διαλογισμῶν) and their foolish hearts was darkned; professing themselves wise, they became*

Rom. 1. 27.

Psal. 37. 1, &c.

Eph 5 4

Luk. 17. 10.

2 Mac. 14 41.

Rom. 1. 21, 22.

became fools. Professing themselves teachers of perfection, they taught the world imperfection, and things unworthy of them. But if we look into the Scriptures, we shall finde that they teach holinesse and perfection so, and upon such tearms, that they teach nothing else; they teach no unholy or imperfect thing with them. As *Solomon* hath a saying, *Prov. 10. The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.* So the Scriptures endeavour to make men holy, and they adde no unholinesse, nothing that defileth with it. *The Law of the Lord* (saith *David*, speaking of the Scriptures, according to their growth in his dayes) *The Law of the Lord is perfect*: and presently after, *the Commandment of the Lord is pure*: and again, *the fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever. The fear of the Lord is clean*, i. that reverence and fear of God which is taught in the Scripture, or, which is conceived and begotten in the souls and consciences of men according to the tenour of Scripture commands, leads a man to no impure or unclean action, nay restrains him from all such: and therefore *it endureth for ever*, i. prepares and qualifies a man for a blessed eternity. For as sin and death, i. the losse of being, are of kin, the one making way for the other: so are righteousness and life, or perpetuation of being, the one is a foundation proper for God to build the other upon. But this by the way. You see then a 2. plain difference, between that holinesse which the Scripture teacheth, and that which is, or can be taught by men, otherwise then by the Scriptures; the one is pure and clean, the other adulterate, and mixt with unholinesse.

3. (And lastly, to this particular) That holinesse or perfection which the Scriptures so much magnifie, and seek to adorn and bless the world withall, consists (the greatest and most considerable part of it,) in the due deportments and carriages of the heart and soul towards God immediately; in such inward impressions, or dispositions, which make a man meet for the enjoyment of God in a way of friendship and delightfull communion and converse: the knowledge of God and of his will, and counsells; the love of God, confidence of the love of God towards him, upon rationally and solid grounds; hope or expectation of good from him, dependance upon him for the receiving

Prov. 10. 22.

Psal. 19. 7. 8. 9.

receiving of all good in waies of righteousness and honour, with many more of like consideration; all which qualifie and furnish the creature for communion with God; put him into such a posture, that God may take a pleasure and holy contentment to hold correspondencie with him; and without which men were no more capable or meet either for communion with, or enjoyment of, God, then the wilde beasts of the wilderness, are for the society or acquaintaunce of wife and sober men. Whereas, if we peruse the best models and draughts of that perfection and excellencie, which have come from men unto the world, and shall consider the particularities of them, you will finde very little, very few things directed or enjoyned of any such tendencie as this; the main body or bulk of their writings consisting of such precepts and instructions, whose constitution and frame stand either for the regulating of men in their civill and morall deportments in the world, one towards another, and amongst themselves, or else for the composing and ordering their naturall affections and inclinations, in reference to themselves, partly that they may receive a testimony of honour from the world, as of being vertuous, wise, and worthy men; and avoid the shame and dishonour of the contrary: partly to prevent those inconveniencies, in their estates, bodies, friends, posterity, &c. which many times fall heavy upon men of dissolute and disordered lives; partly also, to nourish and maintain a certain calmnesse and tranquillity of conscience within; which they found by experience was troublesome and tormenting unto them, when they had been wicked and vile in any way or practise of sin against the light and dictates of it, as the Apostle himself intimates, *Rom. 2. 15.* In the writings and works of such men as we speak of, you may finde many things worthy consideration, in reference to their ends: but as for either rules or directions, or much urging or pressing any thing, of any proper and direct tendency to prepare and sanctifie men for the immediate worship of God, or for any speciall and comfortable communion with him, there is not the proportion of a *gleaning after the vintage*, nor of the *shaking of an olive tree, after the gathering of olives is past. Two or three berries* (saith *Isaiah*) *in the top of the uttermost bough*; *Isa 17. 6.*

Rom. 2. 14, 15.

and

and four or five in the outmost fruitfull branches thereof: so there may be here a little, and there a little, a few scatter'd notions of such a tendencie as we speak of, to be found here and there in these writings: but what they do in this kinde, they do as if they did it not: nor is it much considerable what they do. This for the third (and last) difference, between that holinesse, the advancement whereof is the darling designe of the Scriptures in the world; and that morall perfection, or vice-holinesse (as we may properly enough call it) which nature hath ingaged some of the most towardsly of her sons to propagate, as they were able, in the world. And so much also for the second thing by way of answer to the objection propounded: that morall excellencie which Philosophers and learned men of the world, have laboured in their writings to promote amongst men, is quite another thing, of a farre inferiour nature and worth, to that holinesse, which he that speaks out of the Scriptures unto the world, would willingly breath into the hearts and lives of men. So that the Divine Originall of the Scriptures, is no waies prejudiced in the evidence and clearnesse of it, by any such consideration as this; that men either have, or may desire and endeavour, to set the same plant in the world. But,

Answer 3.

3. (And lastly) though the plant of *holinesse* we speak of should be found the same, which both the Scriptures, and men in their writings, joyntly labour and endeavour to plant, and make to grow and flourish in the world, yet the different art, method and means, between them, I mean which he useth, who plants, in, and by the Scriptures, and those that goe about the same buisnesse and work in other writings, do abundantly demonstrate, that he that plants by the one, is God; and they that plant by the other, are but men. I shall cleare the difference, by giving instance only in three particulars, (whereas many more might readily be insisted upon.)

1. Men doe not, cannot with any shew or colour of truth, plead any such ingagements lying upon the world, by reason of any such love or kindnesse that they have shewn to it, why the world should hearken unto their voice in this kinde, or hearken unto the Law of their mouth, as he both can and doth, that teacheth

teacheth *holinesse* in the Scriptures. *Plato* cannot say, nor can *Aristotle* or *Seneca*, or any other of the great Philosophers of the world, say (nor doe any of them say) that they so loved the world, and that when it was their enemy, *that they gave their only begotten sonnes for it*. They have no such golden cords as this, wherewith to draw the hearts of men against their native dispositions and desires, to comport with their instructions or exhortations unto vertue. This Scepter of love, wherewith the hearts of men most delight to be commanded and overruled, is one of the royalties appropriate to his throne, who by the hand of the Scriptures imposeth the tax (or benevolence rather) of *holinesse* upon the world.

2. Nor doe they, that summon and invite the world to excellency and perfection in other writings, propose unto men any such prizes, any such crowns, such Kingdoms, to ingage them to run the race of *holinesse*, as he doth, who makes his addressments unto the world in this behalf out of the Scriptures; if they should, the world would laugh them to scorn, as knowing them unable altogether to make good their ingagements in this kinde. *Will the sonne of Jesse* (saith *Saul* to his servants, standing about him) *give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all Captains of thousands &c.* *Plato* and *Aristotle* doe not so much as pretend to the Lordship of life and immortality, nor to the right of disposing the great things of the world to come.

1 Sam. 22.7.

3. (And lastly,) Nor have the sons of men, who plead the cause of that excellency which they hold forth unto the world, any such prisons, or torments to threaten: they have no worm that never dieth, no fire that never goeth out, no pit without a bottom, no lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever, wherewith to punish those, who shall rebel against the Laws of their discipline and instruction. Sometimes they speak of the miseries and torments which wicked men are like to suffer after death; but at meer peradventure, and Poet-like, so as more to delight the fancies, then to strike or trouble the consciences of men. The Hell of Philosophers, is but like the Hell of the Poets, which is an Hell to play and make sport withall: it is the *Supper Hell*, that makes the hearts, and souls, and consciences, and all that is in men, to quake and tremble.

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This then is the first demonstration that the Scriptures are from God, arising from the nature or propertie of the subject matter thereof, *viz.* the holiness of the commands: together with the waies and means wherein they address themselves unto the world, to procure obedience unto their commands.

A second consideration springing from the same root, and tending to a further demonstration of the same truth, is the strong and potent tendencie unto godliness, which is found in many of the main carriages and passages of the Scriptures, and Gospel it self. The Scriptures as they drive a glorious designe of holiness (and that with an high hand of means and engagements) upon the world (as we have heard) so are they every whit as much bent and intent upon another, *viz.* the advancement of godliness in the world. Inasmuch that the Apostle Paul describing the nature and property of the Gospel in a kinde of periphrasis, calls it a doctrine according unto godliness, *If any man teach otherwise, and consenteth not unto the wholesome words of our Lord (Christ, and so the doctrine which is according unto godliness, he is pesti up and knoweth nothing &c.* By the doctrine according unto godliness, he clearly means the Gospel, that body or frame of truths, precepts, promises, and threatnings, which is generally known to us by the name of the Gospel. Now this he calls a doctrine according unto godliness, because the nature, constitution, and composure of it is such, as if he that framed it, had intended, the exaltation of godliness by it in the world; it every waies suits and answers such a designe as this. As God called David a man after his own heart, or according to his own heart, because he was willing to fulfill all his will or pleasure; So supposing godliness were a person, endued with reason and understanding, the Gospel might be called a doctrine after the heart thereof, because it is set and bent to fulfill all the will and pleasure of it, 1. To doe whatsoever such a person would wish or desire, for its exaltation and advancement in the world. And in this respect also it is call'd the mystery of godliness, 1 Tim. 3.16. *And without controversie, great is the mystery of godliness & Tit. 1.1.* it is called, the truth which is after godliness. or, according to godliness (in the sense declared.) Now the Gospel is call'd a mystery, or, the

1 Tim. 6. 3.

Acts 13 22.

1 Tim. 3 16.
Tit. 1. 1.

mystery of godliness, and the mysteriousness of it affirmed to be great, because, as it is a doctrine, made (as it were) for the honour and dignity, and promotion of godliness, so is it a doctrine, or pile of learning, which consists of such truths, and of such shews, carriages, and connexions of things, that are very far remote from the common thoughts, reasons, and understandings of men; such as the wisest and most inquiring men under heaven would never have discovered or once thought upon, had they not been revealed from heaven by God himself unto them. But for the more full opening and clearing the demonstration in hand, we will observe the same method in the further handling of it, which we observed, in the former: And 1. Shew you what godliness is. 2. How mightily intent the Scriptures are, to lift up the horn of it in the world, to propagate and magnifie it in the hearts and lives of men. 3. (And lastly) We will briefly ponder and weigh the consideration, that we may the better apprehend what there is in it to prove the truth of that conclusion we seek after, *viz.* that the Gospel is from God.

For the first of these: That godliness which the Scriptures bend themselves with all their might to set up and magnifie in the world (as indeed there is none other but this, truly so called) is a kinde of heavenly impression, or propension in the heart and soul of a man, which inclines, and is apt to carry it in all the motions and tendencies of it upon God, or towards God. 1. To cause it to remember God and his glory in all the actings and workings thereof, and to raise, frame and order these in a regular and due proportion thereunto. As we see there is a naturall impression or quality of heaviness in a stone, and in all other heavy bodies, which directs and carries them in their motions in a streight line to the center of the earth, when, or as farre as, impediments unto these motions are remov'd out of the way: and so again, there is a contrary impression of levity or lightness, in fire, whose property is to carry this body in the tendency and motion of it towards the circumference: so there is in some mens hearts and souls, a gracious and heavenly propension, which makes them hang and lean God-wards, and in their actions and motions to look towards him, and his glory, and to comply with them; And this propension or inclination in the

soul, we (together with the Scriptures) call *godlinesse*.

That *godlinesse* is a grace or gracious disposition in the soul distinct from *holinesse* (in the nature, though not in the subject of it) appears, 1. In that *holinesse*, is often ascribed unto God, yea more frequently (I conceive) then any other Attribute, at least as frequently as any: but *godlinesse* is no where attributed unto him. He is often said to be *holy*, but never said to be *godly*. It is true there is a nature or disposition in God, which inclines him in all his actions and motions to comply with himself and with his own glory, as well as with the good of the creature; as there is in *godly* men, besides that principle of *godlinesse* we speak of, there is a natural impression which inclines them also to comport with themselves, and with their own blessednesse and glory, as well as with God and his glory: but as this disposition in men, would very improperly be called *manlinesse* or *mentlinesse*; so neither doth the holy Ghost, take any pleasure to call the disposition in God we speak of, by the name of *godlinesse*; but rather chooseth to expresse and discover it some other way. Now if it were altogether of the same import, or the same thing with holinesse, there can hardly any reason be given, why holinesse should be still so frequently and familiarly ascribed unto God, and *godlinesse* not at all. 2. That there is a difference between them, appears by this; that they are exhorted unto, or enjoyed by the holy Ghost as two severall graces. *Seeing therefore* (saith the Apostle Peter) *that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation, and godlinesse*. So that *holinesse* of conversation, and *godlinesse*, or *godlinesse* of conversation, are two distinct things: otherwise we must say, that the holy Ghost in one and the same sentence exhorts twice to one and the same thing, and that in difference of words, as if there were two: which I suppose cannot be shewed in all the Scripture besides.

The difference between the two sister graces, *godlinesse* and *holinesse* (because some may desire to know this by the way) may be thus conceived. *Holinesse* (in the most proper, and ordinary acceptation of the word) is a gracious disposition, inclining the heart or soul, where it resides, unto actions and waies eminently righteous and just, with a real abhorreny of the contrary,

contrary, or whatsoever is sinfull. *Godlinesse* is a disposition, which inclines the person, in whose soul it taketh place, to act for God, and to make the advancement of his glory, the supreme end of their waies and actions. *Holinesse* may be compared to the lustre, or brightnesse which is in gold: *godlinesse*, to that weightinesse, or that propension in it, which, in the motion of it, carries it towards the center. *Holinesse* respects the nature and quality of the action, and ingageth to a serious and zealous rectitude in these: *godlinesse*, respects the end of the action, and carries the Agent in his intentions herein, upon God; so that though their natures differ, yet the difference is such, that it plainly shews, that they are never divided in their subject, but that wheresoever the one is, the other must needs be also. God never stirs up the hearts of men, truly and seriously to desire, or embrace, waies that are excellent indeed, but he stirs them up also to make him and his glory the soveraigne end of them: yea he seldom or never stirs up men effectually and upon the termes specified, to desire such waies, or things as we speak of, but he doth it by putting the propension of *godlinesse* first into them. When we finde a desire in them to act for God and his glory, then, and seldom or never till then, will men bethink themselves to purpose, of doing things that are excellent indeed. Reasons hereof might be given, but the digression would be too burthensome to the discourse: This little that hath been said concerning the difference, between *holinesse* so much spoken of in the former argument, and *godlinesse* in this, is rather too much on the bye. This then for the first thing propounded, what that *godlinesse* is, which the Scriptures seek to fill the world withall.

The second thing was, briefly to consider how, and after what rate of zeal and endeavour, and to what height the Scripture seeks to build up the world in that heavenly affection we speak of, and call *godlinesse*. 1. It urgeth and presseth upon the consciences of men for it, by way of precept and command: yea 2. It presseth for it upon these terms, universally, I mean in all their waies, works and doings. I put these two together, because I finde them together; 1 Cor. 10. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye doe, doe all to the glory of God.* Ye see here

1 Cor. 10. 31.

here 1. Godlinesse charged in the nature of a duty upon men: doe all to the glory of God. Now to doe a thing to the glory of God, requires these four things: 1. That the thing or deed which is done, be such for the nature, kinde, or substance of the act, that it be apt to yeeld matter or opportunity unto men to glorifie God; as all such acts are, which are done according to the Law and commands of God, either generall, or speciall, and no other. 2. That actions thus qualified as touching the nature and kinde of them, be further qualified with dunesse of circumstance in time and place. It is true, there are some kinde of actions which cannot lightly suffer, or degenerate, thorow any defect in these, or either of them; as the inward acts of the love of God, remembrance of God, &c. but there are few outward actions, but may. There is no externall act whereby love unto God may be expressed, but that the proportion which it hath in the kinde of it for the glorifying of God, may be dissolved and destroyed by a mistiming, and misplacing of it. A third thing necessary to be done by him that would doe any thing to the glory of God, is; that first he consults with the glory of God, and steadily informs himself what that would have, or what it requires for the exaltation of it; as a Taylour first consults with the body, for which he is to make a garment, by measuring the proportion of it in severall places, that so he may know how to cut and fit the garment to it, and make it fit comely. In like manner, he that desires to advance the glory of God by any action, or course, must be carefull to inform himself, what steerage and deportment in all particulars will render them most advantageous for, and comparing with, such a designe. The fourth and last thing (which is the chief of the four) required to the *doing of a thing to the glory of God*, is, that the heart and soul of a man, in, or before the doing of it, makes a secret deed of consecration or dedication of it to this end; raiseth and produceth it for this end, and with this intention, that God may be glorified by it. It is true, there may be such a deed of consecration as we speak of, made thorow ignorance, of such an action, (one or more) which hath no more aptnesse in it to afford glory unto God, then a stone or a scorpion have to nourish a childe withall, in case the parent should give them unto him: such a deed our Saviour himself speak

speaks of, *Job. 16.* where he tells to his Disciples, that *the time would come, that whosoever killed them, would think he did God service*: Such actions as this, devoted and consecrated unto God, are no fruits or expressions of that heavenly impression in the soul, which we call **godlinesse**, which alwaies requires a true and sound knowledge of God, but the fruits of such a devotion, whereof ignorance is the mother, and the Prince of darknes the father; offered indeed and consecrated to the devil for his glory, under a notion or conceit that he is a true God; as the Apostle cleerly expresth, *1 Cor. 10. The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not unto God*: and yet they thought that they sacrificed them unto God, and so intended, not unto devils, as appears by that inscription upon an Altar at *Athens*, which *Paul* met with, *Act. 17. 23.* compared with his answer, or doctrine upon it: The inscription upon the Altar was this: *To the unknown God*. Therefore their intent was to serve, and sacrifice to the true God, though *unknown*: which yet more plainly appears, by what the Apostle speaks to them upon the occasion: *Whom therefore (saith he) ye ignorantly worship, him doe I declare, or make known unto you.* Now certainly *Paul* did not declare or make known the devil unto them (except haply by accident, and by way of consequence) but the true God; as appears by the declaration he makes of him in the following verses, *God that made the World and all things therein &c.* So that evident it is, that however they intended and meant to serve and worship the true God, yet in deed and in truth they serv'd the devil.

If you ask me, how can this be, that they should be said to serve the devil, and not God, whenas they yet intended to serve God, and nor the Devil; nor had they any whit more knowledge of the devil (as it seems) then they had of God? To this

I answer (*verbo*) upon that ground which the Apostle layeth, *Rom. 6. Know ye not, that to whomsoever ye give your selves as servants to obey, his servants ye are, whom ye obey, whether it be of sin, unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.* To which we may adde that of the Apostle *Peter* (of affinity with it) *For of whomsoever a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage*; or, is made a servant, *δεδούλωται* (in the originall) now the gentiles we speak of, being overcome by the devil, i. being

Joh. 16. 2.

1 Cor. 10. 20.
Acts 17. 23.

Rom 6. 16.

2 Pet. 1. 19.

ing persuaded to take up rites and ceremonies in their worship, of his deviling and prescribing unto them, with the neglect of that worship which God prescribed, may very truly and properly be said to worship or serve the devil, and not God; because they obey the one in their worship, and not the other. And so it may be as truly and properly said of many ignorant persons in the land, and of Papists generally, that worshipping God (as they think) but after such a manner, with such a worship, with such rites and ceremonies, as the devil hath devised (to be sure, God hath not) and not with that worship which God hath prescribed, that they also worship and serve the devil and not God; because they obey the devil and not God, and therefore according to *Pauls* rule, are his *servants*. Yea even of those that know God savingly, and are truly godly (in the main) it may truly be said, that they also serve the devil, and not God, when, and as far as, they fulfill the devils pleasure, and are led by that learning which he hath taught the world, in and about the worship of God: as *viz.* when men joyn with polluted and mixt assemblies (mixed I mean with openly profane and scandalous persons, and such of whose interest in Christ, they have no ground or proof at all) in the service of the Lords table: So again when they submit to the precepts and commandements of men, in matters of worship; I doe not say, when they submit to the things enjoyed and commanded by men (for this in many cases may be necessary, and matter of duty to *viz.* when men enjoyn the same things which God enjoyneth:) but, whether in this or in any other case, when they make the injunction or precepts of men, the reason and ground why they submit unto them; in what case soever (I say) they doe this, so farre as they doe it, they serve the devil, and not God, because it being the precept or command of the devil, and not of God, that men should submit to the wills or injunctions of men in the worship of God, they that doe it, obey the devil, and so serve him.

If it be here yet further demanded; But is it possible for ignorant and carnall men, truly and really to seek or intend the glory of God in what they doe, though they be mistaken in the nature and quality of their action, as men truly godly sometimes

times are. Or if they do cleerly and really intend the glory of God, though that which they do, hath no tendencie thereunto, but rather to the contrary, may not this disposition or propension in them which thus inclines them to act for God and his glory, be called godlinesse? I answer,

That for men to think they please or honour God, in such and such actions, is one thing; and truly and really to intend to please him, is another. There is no question but that the men we speak of, ignorant and carnall men, may think that they please and honour God in the couric of their lives and waies, and more particularly in some spirituall actions; our Saviour acknowledgeth as much as this, in that *Joh. 16. 2.* (before mentioned) and the Scripture in many places confirms it: but that they truly or singly intend the glory of God, either in the one kinde or the other, is no where affirmed. If it be objected and said,

But doth not *Paul* (speaking of the Jews) *bear them witness, that they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.* Can men be said to have a zeal of God, or for God, without intending his honour and glory, and that earnestly, and with strength of intention?

To this I answer, by distinguishing, men may be said to intend the glory of God two waies, or in a double consideration; either, 1. Singly or simply, or 2. with relation, *viz.* to themselves, and some end or ends of their own. Now men that are carnall, and hatefull unto God in their waies, may intend to glorifie God in relation to themselves, and some good they desire and expect from him or by him: and thus the Jews were zealous for God and for his glory. They pretended for that, and that very zealously, which they verily thought was for the glory of God, as *viz.* to have the righteousnesse of the law established in the world: because they supposed, this would be an honour to them and to their nation, to have the honour and dignity of the leviticall worship, and ceremoniall law, which had been delivered by God unto them and their forefathers, and whereby they had been separated as a people of excellency, from all the world besides, for many generations: and withall thought, that if the doctrine of the Gospel, which the

Apostles taught concerning justification by faith, should prevail, they and their law together should be despised; and the rest of the world be brought in to be a people of God, and to their priviledge and dignity, which they had a long time enjoyed, *vis.* of being the onely people of God in all the world, should be dissolved and come to nought. And in this sense many carnall and ignorant men now, may (and doubtlesse do) intend the glory of God; they intend, *i.* purpose and meant to serve, please and worship God, and so to glorifie him, in such and such a way as they fancie to themselves to be pleasing to God, hoping to *fare* the better at his hand for it. But this kind of intention to glorifie God, doth not necessarily, or alwaies proceed from that gracious disposition in men which we call *godlinesse*, because it may proceed out of a naturall affection of self-love, and a meer desire to accommodate and benefit themselves. If a man hath any kinde of notion or apprehension of God, as of one that is able to do him good, or evil in one kinde or other (as men that are very ignorant of him in the Gospel, may) much more, if he conceives of him, as one able to do him the greatest good, and withall the greatest evil; he shall but act according to the most common and ordinary principles of humane prudence, to seek to make him his friend; and if he apprehends no other way for this but only the glorifying of him (which is no such spirituall or deep speculation but that he very well may apprehend it,) he may very well intend and purpose this glorifying of him. He that should intend the glory of God upon such terms as these only, doth no more, no greater thing then a prisoner should do, in intending to please or gratifie his jaylour or keeper, knowing that he hath power to make his imprisonment, either more easie and comfortable, or else more grievous and irksome to him. And as the gratifying of a mans keeper upon such terms as these, would argue no truth of affection or love to his person, or any vertuous disposition in him, but onely love to a mans self, and his own ease. In like manner, to glorifie God meerly out of relation to a mans self, and some end of his own, doth not argue any propension of affection or good will towards God, but to a mans self onely.

But

But now singly and simply to intend the glory of God is another thing. It doth not indeed necessarily exclude the seeking of a mans self or his own good, in a regular and due manner; a man may singly and simply, and with sincerity of heart, intend and seek the glory of God, and his own good and peace also; but it alwaies includes a truth of affection unto God, and that grounded and built upon sound apprehension and serious consideration of the infinite worth, grace and goodness of God. So that though a mans own good might be separated from his glorifying of God, and either be attainable by some other means, or else be unattainable altogether, yet the heart of such a man would lean and hang towards God, and be still seeking his glory. As suppose the center were not the proper place for stones, or heavy bodies to rest, and to be preserved in upon the best terms; yet the apprehension, or quality of weight or heavinesse which is in these bodies, would carry them thereunto after the same manner that now they move thither: In like manner, though the creature should not apprehend or conceive his own comfort, peace, or glory, to be wrapped or bound up in his glorifying of God, yet nevertheless, if he were godly, this disposition or impression upon his heart and soul, would beget and breed intentions and desires of glorifying God in him, yea and act, and carry him out accordingly. Whereas he that intends or seeks the glory of God meerly out of a desire to gain or get something by him, if he were not partaker of some such hope and expectation as this, would have no inclination or disposition at all within him to minde his glory. This for answer to the question or demand, how its possible for ignorant and carnall men, truly and really to seek and intend the glory of God, and how this may be done without *godlinesse*. And thus much to let you understand, what the Apostle means, by injoyning men to do things to the glory of God. But

2. He doth not simply injoyne men to do things to the glory of God, but universally, to do all things to his glory: *Whether ye eat or drink (saith he) or whatsoever ye doe, doe all to the glory of God.* The Scriptures you see are so zealously intent and bent upon the exaltation of *godlinesse* in the world, that they allow

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nothing

nothing to be done in the world, no action whatsoever to passe the hearts or hands of men, though of the smallest and lightest consequence otherwise, but what **godlinesse** shall order and direct to be done. Our *eating and drinking*, yea and lesse matters then these, must be formed and fashioned (as it were) by the hand of **godlinesse**. Again,

3. The Scriptures doe not content themselves to advance **godlinesse** in the world onely by commanding the practice or exercise of it, and that univversally in all things; but further seek the promotion of it, by making promises unto it, and to the practice of it, and those many, yea and these great and precious. The Apostle informs us, *that godlinesse is profitable unto all things, having promise, or the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.* And what can a man or woman wish or desire more, then to be well provided for, comfortably apaid in this life, and to be assured of the enjoyment of that which is to come? And we see that God in the Scriptures hath annexed the promises of both these unto **godlinesse**. It were easie to insit upon particular promises in either kinde, out of other Scriptures. But the Apostles authority is sufficient to build upon in this case. With how high an hand then doe the Scriptures seek to lift up the head of **godlinesse** in the world, when as they lay down both heaven and earth at the feet of it? The greater and richer the price is, that is held forth to those that shall be willing to strive or trie masteries, and shall obtain; it is so much the more like that greater numbers will engage in the race. And in reason, the promise or offer made both of heaven and earth together unto **godlinesse**, should make the tents of ungodlinesse desolate in one day, and bring in the world from all the four windes of the heavens, to inquire after the laws, and to learn the statutes and judgements thereof.

4. The Scriptures are not yet satisfied with all this, to make the crown of **godlinesse** to flourish upon the head of it: they further threaten terrible things, as that fire, and hail, storm and tempest shall be their cup to drink, who shall cast the care and study of **godlinesse** behind their back. All these arrows of the fiery indignation of the Almighty levell'd at the face of ungodlinesse, are pillars and supporters of the honour of **godlinesse**,

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Ud 1. 45, 6.
2 Pet. 1. 18,
3 Pet. 1. 6.

5 70

godlinesse, and render it so much the more lovely and desirable in the world.

5. The Scriptures in order to the advancement of **godlinesse** in the world, do not only oppose and seek to suppress and keep down her adversarie, ungodlinesse, by threatening to slay her and her children with death, but presents and holds forth examples of the dreadfull execution of such threatnings upon some. *And spared not the old world (saith Peter) but saved Noah the eight person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly.*

2 Pet. 2. 5, 6.

6. (And lastly) The Scriptures yet further desirous to lift up the throne of **godlinesse** to the highest in the hearts and affections of men, speak one glorious thing more of her, ascribe one excellencie to her, which is apt to commend her greatly in the eyes of some; they ascribe a potency, or power unto her. The Apostle Paul (2 Tim. 2. 5.) speaking of a generation of men that should rise up in the last and perillous times, among other characters, by which he there describes them, gives this for one; that they should have a shew, or *seem* of **godlinesse**, but would deny the power thereof. So that here is asserted a certain might, or power, i. a principle of doing great things, unto **godlinesse**. We must not now stand to explain or open this power; or shew either wherein it consists, or unto what actions it extends. But very powerfull certainly it is, where it is in its just growth and stature; and inables those in whom it is upon such terms found, to do things very strange and wonderfull in the eyes of men, and such as all the world besides can hardly tell how to turn their hand unto. But that which we have to take notice of for the present, is this; that this power which the Apostle speaks of, residing in it, and accompanying of it, is a thing very proper to commend it in the eyes of men, and to set the world on fire with love and desires after it. The mighty strength or power which is in God, is very usually call'd his glory; and men (we know) are apt to boast, and glory much in their strength.

Rom. 1. 16.

This for the second thing propounded; how, and with how high

high in hand, and upon what terms, the Scriptures rise up to magnifie that heavenly disposition in the soul, which they call *godlinesse*, with the waies and fruits of it.

The third (and last) follows, which is this; to weigh and consider what there is in all that hath been said, to bring forth this hidden treasure into a cleer light, to evince the truth and certainty of this conclusion, that the Gospell is indeed from God. This you will easily apprehend to be exceeding much, if you please but to call to minde and consider the two particulars that have been opened and insisted upon; as 1. What *godlinesse* is; and 2. How mightily the Scriptures labour and travail with the promoting of it in the world. The designe it self proclaims the great and glorious God, the authour and projectour of it, but the manner and high hand of the prosecution of it, is a further confirmation of it, and that in abundance.

For the designe it self (in the first place) the exaltation of *godlinesse* in the world. Who can with any likelihood, or colour of reason, be imagined to be the designer, the founder or projectour of such a designe, but God alone? who could ever have thought of cutting such a channell through the midst of the world, as *godlinesse* is, to gather all the streams and currents of all the thoughts, speeches, actions and waies of men into it, and here to appoint them such a course, as to cause them all to fall into that great ocean of the glory of God? *Can any good come out of Nazareth* (saith *Nathaneel to Philip*) *Job. i. 46.* Somay we well ask here: can any such good as this, the projecting of the glory of God, come out of the dark, sinfull, and corrupt heart of man?

But secondly, you will (I presume) conceive it the lesse possible, if together with the nature of the designe, you will please to take into consideration, after what manner, and with how high and glorious an hand it is driven and carried on in the Scriptures. For though it should be granted, that some one man or more, by the help and advantage of his naturall endowments or parts, being larger and richer then other mens, and farther rais'd by industry and contemplation, might attain to such a notion and resolution as this; that it were a thing just and meet that men should plead the cause of the infinite excellency,

excellency, worth and perfection of God in the world, and seek to perswade all men to preferre him and his glory in all their ends and waies, and should give out himself accordingly withall his might and strength to do it (though this be no waies probable, either that ever it hath been, or will be done by any man, as we shall further shew presently;) yet that he should manage, or attempt the carrying on, and making good this his designe, by such a magnificent and God-like method, at such a rate of power and authority, as we have shewed you the designe of *godlinesse* to be carried on by the Scriptures, exceeds all belief much more. To instance in some of the particulars: was there ever any, or is it any waies like that there should have been any mortall sinfull man, that would take upon him to promise the glory of heaven, and the great things of the world to come, whereof the Scriptures speak, and undertake in his own name, and by his own strength to make good, and that with a majestick confidence, such a promise, to what service or work done whatsoever, which we know, and have heard, he doth, who pleads the cause of *godlinesse* in the Scriptures? Doubtlesse no mans heart, at least no considering or wise mans heart, would ever serve him to doe it. Again was there ever any man, or any man like to be, or to have been, that should threaten *the vengeance of eternall fire*, against those that would not hearken unto his voice in any of his commands, yea and threaten the execution of his threatnings in this kinde, by the strength of his own arme, as we heard he doth, who ever he be, that threatens ungodlinesse, and ungodly ones in the Scriptures? nay, was there ever any man, who assuming unto himself the name and power of a God, commanded *godlinesse* unto the world in his own name; as he doth who gives commands thereof unto men out of the Scriptures? The Apostle indeed saith of the man of sin (as he is called) *that he opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God: So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing (or vaunting) himself that he is God; i. he assumes a power every way equall to the power of God; as viz. in dispensing with his laws, and prescribing laws of worship, and articles of faith unto men, and it may be thought, that he in this posture, commands god-*

linesse

2 Theſ. 1.4.

Itselfe in the world. But 1. this man, whosoever he is, is discovered and made knowne in the Scripture to be an impostor, and deceiver of the world: and therefore certainly he was not the author of the Scriptures; if he were, he would never have writ his own name in such black characters of infamy and reproach. And 2. these marks or characters of him, that he should sit in the Temple of God as God, and shew or want himself as God, are descriptive and appropriate unto him; and consequently imply, that there are no more men in the world of the like pride and impiety, but he. 3. And lastly it is evident that he was not the author of the Scriptures, because they prophetic of his coming into the world, some ages after they were finished and completed.

Others there have been, who to procure the more reverence and authority to the laws which they had a desire to commend unto, and to establish amongst a people, pretended and gave out, that they had familiarity and conjunction with some Deity from whom they received them, as *Numa Pompilius*, the founder of the *Romane* state, *Mahomet* with some others. Again, some likewise there have been, who out of a diabolically pride, and vanity of minde, would needs be acknowledged and adored for Gods, as *Alexander* and some others. But for these latter, by such a ridiculous presumption as this, they rather exposed themselves to contempt and scorn, and lost the honour of being esteemed men of wisdom and worth, then any waies gained any opinion with men of being Gods indeed. As when *Alexander* the great sent to the state and citie of *Athens*, commanding them to apotheise, or make him a God, they obeyed him, but with an ironical obedience; drawing up their act for his Deification in these terms; *Quoniam vult Alexander Deus esse, Deus esto*. i. Since *Alexander* will needs be a God, let him be one. Nor were these men, I mean that would needs be Gods, any great Patrons or advocates of godliness. As for the former, those who onely pretend, and asserted a divine originall unto their laws; hereby plainly acknowledged and confessed themselves not to be Gods. Nor doubtles hath there such a thing ever been heard of since the foundations of the world, that a man, especially a sober man, and of a capacity to write

write the things contained in the Scriptures, should in the presence of the world proclaim himself to be the great God that made heaven and earth.

If any man be not yet satisfied with the demonstration in hand, but shall still question and doubt, whether a meer naturall man, exercising himself in the book and law of creation and providence, night and day, may not by such a study and search as this, come to a cleer and perfect discovery of the infinite perfection of God; and consequently that he is a rewarder of those who shall diligently seek him, and the advancement of his glory: and whether upon such a discovery as this, he may not readily come to this conclusion, that it is a thing most reasonable, just, and equall, and worthy all men, to magnifie him, who is infinitely excellent and worthy, to whose praise and glory, all creature interests and engagements should submit and stoop, and consequently ingage himself with all his strength and all his might to perswade the world hereunto; especially considering (that which such a man may easily apprehend also) that there is no course he can take, like unto this, to commend himself, to him that is infinite in perfection, and so to advance his own happiness. If such a chain as this be strong, and will hold in all the links of it, why may it not be possible, yea and probable in some degree, that a meer man might compose the Scriptures, any thing that is there said for the advancement of godliness notwithstanding? To this I answer (and so conclude this argument,)

1. (By way of concession) That there is no question to be made, but that naturall men, by an industrious and diligent culture and improvement of their naturall endowments and abilities, may go very farre in making such discoveries, as are mentioned in the objection; and particularly may come to take hold of this conclusion, and that with cleernesse and confidence, that God is infinitely perfect, perfect above all created perfection whatsoever, from which all the rest of the particulars mentioned in the objection, seem cleerly deducible, without any reluctancie, or gainfaying of reason, in any of them. This the Scriptures themselves do plainly acknowledge and suppose in very many places: but most plainly, and beyond

Rom. 1. 19, 20

all dispute or question, *Rom. 1. 19, 20.* Because (saith the Apostle) that which may be known of God, is manifest in them (i. unto them, or amongst them, speaking of naturall men,) for God hath shewed it unto them. It is manifest unto them; for God hath shewed it unto them; i. this *φανερως* *αυτοις*, that which may be known of God, God hath written it in fair and legible characters in the works of creation, and withall hath given them eyes of reason and understanding sufficient to read. Not (I conceive) that God by any extraordinary revelation or dispensation had discovered, or manifested this unto them; nor that they had actually attained a manifest knowledge or discovery of it. This interpretation is confirmed by that which follows, *v. 20.* For the invisible things of him (i. of God) from the creation of the world, i. ever since men were, and had a being, are clearly seen, i. are clearly to be seen, may clearly and plainly enough be seen (the Greek tongue wanting gerunds, as the Latine Grammarian calls them, still useth the passive voice in stead of them, as we have often heretofore, upon the like occasion, given notice) are clearly seen, being understood *κατανοηθησονται* apprehended, or considered by the things that are made, meaning, that by means of the understanding which is in man, ingaging it self, duly to consider what the works of creation doe necessarily suppose and import, the invisible things of God, *viz. his eternall power and Godhead* (as the following words explain them) may clearly be seen, known, and acknowledged by men. So then the infinite perfection of God, being one of his invisible things, and somewhat of that, which may be known of him, or as appertaining to him: yea, and a necessary and essentiall attribute of his Godhead, evident it is, that a naturall man, by a diligent exercise and improvement of his abilities, may attain the certain knowledge of it. But yet,

2. I answer by way of exception, that though a naturall man, may very possibly attain to a certain knowledge, that God is infinitely perfect, yea and possibly goe along with this knowledge as farre as it is able to carry him, and particularly be led by it unto all those conclusions, resolutions and practices mentioned in the objection; yet notwithstanding it is the first-born

born of improbabilities or unlikelyhoods, that ever such men will do it, I mean, go along with, and follow this principle or conclusion, that *God is infinitely perfect*, in all such practical waies and engagements, which that is apt and proper to lead unto; and more particularly, that ever they will be brought to the ingagement (chiefly insisted upon in the objection) *viz. to persuade the world, with all their might and all their strength, whether they eat, or whether they drink, or what ever else they doe, to doe all to the glory of God;* I say it is a thousand times ten thousand to one, that no naturall man will ever be brought to ingage himself in any such ingagement as this. The Scripture affirms a generall avernesse and indisposition in men (yea in the best of naturall men) to such a thing: and we know that where there is no disposition, no will to doe that which is our duty to doe, any power or abilitie to doe it serves for little, but only to leave us without excuse (as the Apostle speaks) and to justifie God in our condemnation. The Apostle speaking of the best and most considerable amongst the sons of nature, the Philosophers and wise men and disputers of this world, in the fore-mentioned chapter (*Rom. 1. 28.*) saith thus of them. *And as they did not like to retain God in knowledge* (the word *their*, in a different letter in your Bibles, inserted by the Translatours, were much better out then in; for it much darkens the Apostles sence in the place) *God gave them over to a reprobate minde. to doe things that are not convenient.* *Sec. Rom. 1. 28.* *They did not like to retain God in knowledge.* *αποστησαν*, i. they did not make triall, they did not put themselves to it, they regarded not (as the former translation had it) or, they had no minde to it: *ου θεου ειναι εγνωσαν* i. (word for word) *to have God in acknowledgement, i. to bring him forth in his glory, to the sight and view of the world, that to he might be verily acknowledged, for such an one as he is indeed.* They were so neer to themselves, so pester'd and incumbred, so bewitched and charmd with self-love, and self-seeking, with desires of promoting their own interests and ends in the world, as pleasures, profits, honours, &c. that they had nothing of their hearts left to ingage or act them for the advancement of Gods glory; this was not once in all their thoughts.

thoughts. And no great marvell, that poor heathen and naturall men should make shipwreck at this rock (I mean, a neglecting of the things of God and his glory) through an inordinate desire of accommodating themselves, when as the Apostle takes up this complaint against the generality of Christians themselves, *All seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ*. So that though there was, and is in naturall men, a power of laying out themselves to the uttermost for the advancement of **godlinesse** in the world; yet this being a bare logicall power (as we call it) i. a power accompanied with no manner of inclination to act according to it, nay incombred and compassed about with a thousand sinfull distempers and dispositions, which all oppose and rise up against the due exercise and actings of it, it is no waies likely, nay it is next to an absolute impossibility, yea every whit as much as a morall impossibility, that any man should ever be found to rise up, in the due and just imploiment and improvement of it; or consequently, should be the authour of the Scriptures. But

3. And lastly, Suppose there should such a man be found amongst the many millions of *Adams* posterity, in whose eye the glory of God should be so dear and precious, as that the desire of the advancement of it should be predominant in his soul, and over-rule and put to silence, all those contrary risings and reasonings that warre against the utmost improvement of that power, which such a man may possibly be conceiv'd to have, for the glorifying of God, or promoting **godlinesse** in the world; yet could not this man be reasonably judg'd or look'd upon as the enditer, or composer of the Scriptures. One reason (amongst others) is this: because he that in the Scriptures, presents and makes himself the authour and founder of the Scriptures, and pleads the cause of **godlinesse** with so high an hand, avoucheth himself for God (as we shewed before) now if a man should pretend, or undertake to plead the cause of **godlinesse** with never so high an hand, and perform accordingly, and in the mean time affirm himself to be God; he should most notoriously & desperately prevaricate with the cause he undertakes, and plead for the advancement of the glory of a sinfull and corruptible man, under a shew and pretence

Philip. 2. 21.

tence of pleading for the glory of the incorruptible God; and so could not be said to advance **godlinesse**.

If it be yet said, but may not, or might not such a man, take the name of God unto himself in the Scriptures, with uprightnesse of heart, and much prudence for the advancement of his designe? Might he not conceive and think, that such a doctrine, as the Scriptures hold forth for the advancement of **godlinesse**, would be more authoritative and taking in the world, if it should come unto it in the name of God, as compos'd and fram'd by God himself? If so, then is his assuming the name of God in the Scriptures, no prevaricating with his designe of lifting up **godlinesse** in the world, but rather a wise and prudent expedient for the furtherance of it. To this I answer (and so conclude.)

1. That it is no waies likely (scarce a thing possible to imagine) that a man so farre rais'd in zeal and fervencie of spirit, for the advancement of **godlinesse** as to ingage and act in it and towards it, according to the proportion and measure of the Scriptures, should not understand and apprehend, that for any man to intend or propose to himself the advancement of Gods glory by any lie or untruth, is to sinne with an high hand against **godlinesse**, and to take a direct course to overthrow that, which he pretends to build up. For when that lie, which is made the base or corner stone of the building, shall be discovered and found out (as all lies are in danger of being discovered every hour) the world will so much the more abhorre the superstruction, and that which was built upon it.

Nor 2. Doth it stand with the honour of the holinesse and purity, of the wisdom and power of God, for so many thousand years together, as the Scriptures have now serv'd him, to suffer that great and sacred affair of his glory, his deere interest in the world, to be managed and promoted, by the un sanctified hand, and polluted agency of a lie. *Will you speak wickedly* (saith *Job* to his three friends) *for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* and ver. 9. *doe ye mock him, as one man mocketh another:* in the former translation it was; *Will you make a lie for him, as one lieth for a man?* q.d. it is a most dishonourable thing unto God, unworthy his holinesse, his wisdom,

Job 13 9.

wisdom, his power, to think that he stands in need, or will accept with the least approbation, any mans lie, any mans deceit for the building up of his glory; being so abundantly provided with wisdom and power as he is, to serve himself in this kinde, yea to procure himself to be serv'd by men with truth and holinesse. Doubtlesse if he that fram'd the Scriptures, had been conscious to himself, of speaking so deceitfully, of making such a prodigious lie for God, as to say that he himself was God being a man; he would never have put such a sharp reproof against his own practise, into the mouth of so just and holy and vertuous a man as *Job* was, and that according to his own report and account of him. But we have (I suppose) driven this argument so farre, that there is little or nothing left to oppose it with any colour of reason, which hath not been answered; or at least that said, which is a sufficient ground of answer to it.

A 3. Argument from the matter of the Scriptures, to evince their originall from God, is, their standing up with that great authority and power, to call the world, even all the inhabitants thereof to that which they call, a *deniall of themselves* to conjure them with that high hand of importunitie and motive, into a *self-denying* frame of heart and soul, with waies and practises answerable thereunto. Such an attempt as this upon the world, especially so prosecuted, and followed with means so proper and likely effect it, as the Scriptures represent the matter unto us, is a strong and potent inducement to any man that shall duly and diligently consider it, to believe that God and not man is the great architect, builder and contriver of them. Let me (according to the method we observ'd in handling the two former demonstrations) shew you (in a word) what that *self-deniall* is, which the Scriptures so much commend unto the world, and we now hold forth unto you, as a testimony of their proceeding from God. Secondly, how and after what manner, by what arguments and motives, the Scriptures deal and treat with the world to cast it into this heavenly estate of *denying* it self. Thirdly, and lastly, we will consider what weight of reason or proof there is in the one, and in the other, to make good the claim of the Scriptures, wherein

wherein they avouch God for their father.

For the first, that heavenly plant of *self deniall*, which the Scriptures seek to furnish the world withall, and to plant in the hearts and lives of men, may be considered, either in the root, or in the fruit of it. By the root, I mean the inward principle or frame of heart, out of which a man is not only inabled, but inclin'd also, and sweetly disposed to deny himself. By the fruit, I mean all those outward expressions, and deportments in a mans life and conversation, which flow from such a principle, and answer the nature of it. Now this self-deniall, in the principall or root of it, may be thus described: It is such a disposition or frame of heart in a man, which inclines him, *i.* makes him willing and ready, to neglect himself in all personall and self-accommodations especially in outward things, when, and as the glory of God, and generall good of men require it for their furtherance and advancement. We shall not now stand to examine this description in all the particulars of it. The nature or main property of *self deniall*, lies in this; to make a man ready and willing to submit and subject himself and all his ends, interests, and enjoyments whatsoever, unto the glory of God, and good of men, according to the occasions, and exigencies of these. So that when a man hath a call and opportunity to do some speciall service unto God, or men, but yet he cannot doe either, but either with the hazard, or certain losse of some private and personall accommodation of his own, whether matter of pleasure, profit, credit, liberty, life, or the like, if in this case he shall resolve to doe the service however, whatsoever it costs him out of his own interests, or how crosse soever the doing of it proves to his naturall inclinations or desire, such a man may be said to *deny himself* in that action or service. And if a man be inwardly principled and uniformly disposed to act upon such terms as these, he may properly be said to be a *denier of himself*.

The reason of the term, I mean why such a gracious habit or principle as we speak of, is called, the deniall of a mans self, I conceive is this: because he that doth things contrary to his own interests, and to the disaccommodating of himself, doth
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Tit. 1. 16.

(as it were) deny that there is any such person in being as himself. As he that acts contrary to the interests of God in the world (I mean his honour and glory) is said to *deny him* (in Works,) *in Works they deny him* (saith the Apostle) *i.* they doe such things, and live after such a manner, that men are tempted (at least) and have an occasion thereby ministred unto them, to think there is no such nature or being, as God; even as they have, when men expresse themselves in words against the being of God, and say, *there is no God*: so likewise when men shall doe things which are (or seem) contrary to their being or well being in the world, they may be said (in such a sense) to *deny themselves*; *i.* to goe to work, as if they would perswade men, that there are no such persons of men in the world, as they. As on the contrary, men are said to confesse God, or confesse Christ in the world, not only (nor indeed so much) when in words they say, there is a God, or there is a Christ in being; as when they either doe or suffer such things, which were no waies reasonable for men either to doe, or suffer, but only upon this supposition, that there is a God, and there is a Christ, and that such, both the one and the other, as the Scripture represents and affirms them to be. In the same manner of phrase and expression, men may be said to confesse themselves, in opposition to a *denying of themselves*, when they act meerly according to their own interests, and for their own benefit and pleasures, especially at such times and in such cases, wherein the glory of God, and the good of men, doe in a way of reason and equity challenge a waving of all self-respects, and self-seeking at their hand. If in such cases as these, men instead of their not minding, not regarding themselves and their own concernments, shall despise the interests of God and men, acting for themselves as if there were neither God, nor any man or men besides themselves, they may according to the honour of the Scripture phrase we speak of, be called self-confessours or avouchers of themselves. This for the first particular: what that deniall of a mans self is, which the Scriptures call the world unto; which call of theirs, we affirm to be that perfect and distinct voice of the glorious God himself, speaking out of the Scriptures, as from a throne of holiness unto the

the world: So that these Scriptures may hereby also (amongst other signes and means of discovery) be known to be from God.

In the second place, let us with like brevity consider, how and after what manner, by what arguments and motives it calleth the world unto that deniall of it self, which hath been described.

1. By expresse precept or command. *Let no man seek his own; but every man anothers wealth.* *i.* anothers good, anothers comfort. *Let no man seek his own wealth,* but every man the wealth of other. *i.* let no man minde, regard or seek his own interest or wealth, apart from, much lesse in opposition to the wealth and comfort of other men. He commands, that no man suffers his own wealth, or contentment in any kinde, to interpose between him, and his faithfull endeavours to promote the good of others. Not but that it is lawfull for any man or woman, to seek their own good; but it must be with a tender eye had to the good of others, and with subordination thereunto. If at any time there falls out a case of competition, our own personall and private benefit and good must give place to the good of many: as the Lord Christ said of himself, and of the end of his coming into the world; that he *came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to lay down his life a ransom for many.* So the will and command of God is, that men should live in this present world, as if every man were dead unto himself, and alive unto another; *i.* had no wisdom, strength, care, time, will, necessary occasion, to act for himself, and his personall concernments in the outer man, but could finde all these in good proportion to act for the publique good, and for other men.

1 Cor. 10. 24.

Math 20. 28.

Mark 10. 45.

1 Joh. 3. 16.

2. As the Scriptures command that *self-deniall* we speak of, so doe they encourage and presse unto it by the great example of the Lord Christ himself, they hold forth this pattern in the mount, and cry aloud unto the world, commanding every man to doe likewise. *We which are Strong* (saith the Apostle) *ought to bear the infirmities of the Weak, and not to please our selves.* *i.* not to seek the ease or contentment of the flesh or outer man, with the discontent or neglect of any. For otherwise if,

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promoting

Rom. 15. 11.

promoting of the good of other men, be a thing *pleasing* to us, (as indeed it should) we may very lawfully, yea and commendably *please our selves*; and yet this *pleasing of our selves* in that excellent and worthy thing we speak of, should not be the chief end neither, why we do it. In the very next words the Apostle extends the exhortation beyond those who are *strong*, and chargeth the same duty (in effect) upon every man: *Let every man please his neighbour in that which is good* (or, for his good) *to edification. i. let him subject his own ends, and desires to the spirituall good (especially) of other men.* And to binde this exhortation yet closer to the consciences of all men, he makes use of the golden cord of the example of Christ himself, in the next words: *For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee; or, the rebukes of them that rebuked thee, fell on me. Even Christ pleased not himself.* As if he should say, since Christ himself, who above all the men under heaven might in reason have been dispensed with, and excused in this behalf, I mean from submitting his own pleasure, ease, comforts and peace, unto other men, yet was willing to sacrifice all the interests he had in the world, upon the service of the pleasure, peace and comfort of others, even of those that had *reproached*, or *rebuked* God, that is, of sinfull men; sin being a reproaching, or rebuking of God; a dishonour or affront put upon him. This motive unto *self-deniall*, drawn from the great example of the Lord Christ, is elsewhere made use of by the Scriptures, for the advancement thereof in the world.

1 Joh 3. 16.

3. To shew that the example of the Lord Christ in this behalf, though it's true, he was not (in a sence) *exemplaris* as James speaks, subject to the like sinfull passions or infirmities with us; yet is not altogether unimitable by us, the examples of the Saints, are held forth in the Scriptures also to persuade the world into a like deniall of it self. *For though I be free from all men* (saith Paul) *yet have I made my self servant unto all men.* He was free from all men, as touching any engagements upon him, as from them: not but that God had engag'd him unto all men, as he acknowledgeth else where; confessing that *he was a debtour both to the Grecians, and to the Barbarians, to the*

Rom 1. 14.

Wife

wife, and to the unwise; viz. because God had honoured him, with making him a *seefe* in trust for them, by putting that great treasure of the Gospel into his hands for their benefit and use. In this sence he was not *free from men*, but a debtour to them; yet in the sence he means, he was *free from all men*; but however, *he made himself a servant unto all: i.* he did not minde or act his own work, his own businesse in the world; he did not drive any designe of making himself great, or rich, or honourable, with the greatnesse, riches, or honours of the world; but minded the businesse of other men; when he did work for himself (I mean upon his occupation of tent-making) he wrought rather for others, then for himself: his hands (as somewhere he speaks) *ministred unto his necessities, yea to the necessities of those that were with him, that he might not be chargeable unto others.* He subjected all his own temporall and carnall things, to their *spirituall* things; he built up their inner man, as it were, with the ruines and spoils of his own outer man. And this example of himself, he declares and holds forth to the world, to invite others into the same spirit and practise of *self-deniall* with him. You may at your leisure peruse another passage much of the same import (*Col. 1. 24.*) concerning the same man. And another of *Epaphroditus* not much unlike, *Philip. 2. 30.* besides some others.

Philip. 2. 30.

4. The Scriptures doe not onely command and injoyne that deniall of mens selves we speak of, doe not onely invite, presse, and persuade to it by the glorious example of the Lord Jesus Christ himself (which a man would think were alone enough to propagate the disposition and practise of it throughout the world,) and by the examples of the Saints; but they further set themselves to draw the world by the heart and soul into this blessed businesse, with the great promise of life and salvation, and the glorious things of the world to come. *Jesus answered and said* (saith Mark when Peter had begun to say unto him, *Loe we have forsaken all and followed thee*) *Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath forsaken house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive an hundred fold now at this present, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands,*

Mar. 10. 29, 30.

Matth. 19. 29.
Matth. 10. 39.

With persecutions, and in the world to come, eternall life. A like passage you have, *Matth. 19. 29.* And elsewhere you have this promise from the same hand: *he that loseth his life for my sake, shall finde it,* and proportionably, whatsoever else a man shall lose for Christs sake, besides his life, he shall finde that also; i. a full and rich consideration for it, in the life or world to come. Now a man may be said *to lose his life* (and so any other thing) *for Christs sake,* not onely by suffering death, rather then renounce his Christian profession; but likewise when he exposeth himself unto death, or come's to tast of death, for the performance of any duty or service in what kinde soever, which Christ hath commanded him. The Apostle speaking of *Ephraoditus*, saith, that *for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life to supply that service which was lacking on the Philippians part towards him.* Now in case *Ephraoditus* had lost his life, through his zeal and faithfullnesse to stand by *Paul* in his distresse, and to minister unto him, he might as truly have been said to have *lost his life for Christs sake,* as if he had died, because he would not deny, or renounce the name of Christ. And so whatsoever a man suffers losse of, or deprives himself of besides, for keeping any of the words, obeying any the commands of Christ, he doth in true account suffer losse of it for Christs sake. This is a fourth method, or way whereby the Scriptures labour to cast the world into that heavenly ecstacie of self-deniall; viz. by provoking men to drink their fill of the hope and expectation of the glory and great things of the world to come.

5. And lastly, They have yet another formidable engine whereby to bow and bend the world unto a deniall of themselves, or else to batter and break them in pieces; viz. the threatnings of the wrath and vengeance which is to come, of the worm that never dieth, and of the fire that never goeth out. I shall onely insist upon two places for this purpose: The one is, *Matth. 10. 37, 38, 39.* The other, *Matth. 5. 29. 30.* In the former place our Saviour expresseth himself thus. *He that loveth father or mother more then me, is not worthy of me. And he that loveth sonne or daughter more then me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not up his crosse and followeth after me, is not worthy*

of me. He that will finde his life shall lose it, &c. First, What is it to love father or mother, sonne or daughter, and other things proportionably, more then Christ? It is to preferre the enjoyment of them, or our contentment in them, before the enjoyment of Christ, or (which is the same) before our subjection and obedience unto the will and commands of Christ: So that when it comes to a case of competition, between doing the will of Christ, and pleasing a father or mother, gratifying a sonne or a daughter, we chuse rather to please or gratifie these, then to do the will of Christ. *vers. 8.* We know it is the will and command of Christ, that men should labour, not so much for the meat that perisheth, as for that which endureth to eternall life. Now in case we have parents that are carnall, and covetous, and worldly, and would have us to be like unto themselves, and shall be offended at us, and perhaps threaten to cast us off, or the like, in case we shall apply our selves in any serious or intense manner to the means of grace and of salvation, as in frequenting religious exercises, conversing much with good company, &c. if in his case, we shall neglect the best means of salvation we can enjoy, or abstain from holy exercises, and refrain good company, to keep our interests in the affections and good will of our parents, we may be said to love, father, or mother, more then Christ. So we know it is the will of Christ, that those that are rich in this world, should doe good, and not simply so, but that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. &c. Now if men that are rich, and have full estates, and are forehanded in the world, to gratifie their children, and make them great on earth, as either by matching of them, or stocking of them, or leaving them so many hundreds, or so many thousands when they die, shall neglect that commandment of Christ whilst they live, and be penurious and pinching, and poor in good works, backward to distribute and to communicate unto those that want; these may truly be said to love sons or daughters more then Christ. There is the like reason in other things.

But what doth our Saviour mean, by that expression, *is not worthy of me*? This is a figurative expression, wherein the antecedent, is put for the consequent, or the cause for the effect;

Joh. 6. 27.

1 Tim. 6. 17. 3.

a propriety of speech very frequent in Scripture (as heretofore upon occasion, we have taken notice of) His meaning in it is, that such an one, *viz.* *Who love's father or mother, more then him,* shall have no benefit by him, shall not be sav'd by him. He expresseth this, by laying down a plain ground or reason for it; *viz.* the unworshinesse in such a person of him: *i.* the unsuitableness and incongruity that would be in the action, to the equity or wisdom of God in case God should give of that salvation, which comes by me, to such a man: In regard of which incongruity, most certain it is, that God will never do it. As on the contrary, when there is a *Worshinesse, i.* a meetnesse or capacity, as it were, in a person to have any such act of grace or favour as we now speak of conferr'd upon him, God will in that respect conferre it accordingly. You have this passage from the mouth of our Saviour himself, now in glory, *Rev. 3. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments: i.* they have walked answerable to their holy calling by the Gospel, or profession: *these shall walk with me in white: i.* shall be partakers with me in my glory, why? *For they (saith he) are worthy: i.* there is a decorum in it, there is a rationally proportion between such mens waies, and such a reward; nor in respect of any exactnesse or rigor in point of justice, or of merit; but in respect of the goodnesse, wisdom, and bounty of God; so that he may conferre the glory of salvation upon such, without disparagement of himself in the eyes of his creature, either in goodnesse, holinesse, &c. may, he shall do it to the glory and high commendation of these: and because he may reward upon such terms, he will do it. We must not stand here to argue or resolve that question: Why are not wicked men, who *defile their garments,* as worthy of salvation, or, of walking with Christ in white, as they are of receiving grace, or the gift of conversion from God? And if God doth not stand upon worthinesse in the one, but gives grace to the most unworthy of all, from day to day, why should he stand upon it in the other? This question we have heretofore (as I remember) given satisfaction unto; and may upon occasion bestow some further thoughts upon it hereafter: we should digresse too farre to fall upon it for the present. By what

Rev. 3. 4.

what hath been said upon the Scripture cited from *Matthew,* it fully appears, that such persons as shall not deny themselves in outward enjoyments and contentments in the world, shall have no benefit by *Christ,* and consequently shall perish everlastingly: which is yet further confirmed by those two following clauses: *And he that taketh not up his crosse and followeth after me, is not worthy of me: And, he that will finde his life, shall lose it.* We must not now insist upon the particular opening of these; as neither of that other place, *Matth. 5.* which we joynd with the former: we shall do little upon it, save onely repeat the words unto you. *And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.* By the *right hand,* and *right eye,* our Saviour means, all manner of desires, contentments, enjoyments whatsoever, chiefly those that are most pleasing and contentfull unto us above the rest. Now these are said to offend us, or, to make us to offend (as the word signifies) when we are either apt to be tempted or occasioned by them, to baulk any of the waies or precepts of Christ, or to walk contrary to them. And whereas he saith, that *it is profitable for us that one of our members should perish, and not,* &c. He clearly implies, that the not plucking out the *right eye,* or not *cutting off the right hand,* when they offend us, *i.* the not denying of our selves in such contentments, which we cannot enjoy without faulting with Christ in some or other of his waies, will certainly bring the vengeance of hell-fire upon us: So that cleer it is, that the Scriptures strive and contend with the world, to bring men to that *self-denial* we spake of, by this argument also of dread and terrour; *viz.* the threatening of them with hell-fire, if they will not submit. This for the second thing propounded: How, and after what manner, and by what means, the Scriptures bend themselves to fill the world with the denial of it self.

The third, and last thing we have to do, is to weigh and consider, what there is, either in the nature of the designe we speak

Mat. 5. 29 30.

of (*viz* in building up the world in a *deniall of it self*) or else in the manner of the managing of it in the Scriptures (as it hath been represented unto you) or in both together, to evince these Scriptures to be from God.

A. 6. 15.

First, the very nature of the designe, bewrayeth God to be the authour of it, and consequently, of the Scriptures, wherein and whereby it is managed and promoted. It is said, *Act. 6.* that they that *sat in the councell, looking stedfastly upon Stephen, saw his face as it had been the face of an Angel.* There was a divine beauty or comeliness that appeared in it. And, my brethren, if we have eyes to see, and shall but narrowly and stedfastly look upon that noble principle or disposition of *self deniall* which we spake of, with the pretious fruits and effects of it, in which it may be best discern'd and judged of, there will appear a kind of heavenly lustre and brightnesse in the face of it, whereby it may be discern'd and known to have somewhat more then *flesh and blond* in it; to be of a more worthy parentage then from men. For what is the deniall of a mans self truly interpreted, but the making of a mans self, and his own ends, his *footstool*, and the glory of God, and good of other men, his *throne*? And by what way can we reasonably imagine, that ever it should enter into the heart of man (except it came thither by Gods speciall sending) to teach the world to build such a *throne* as this? The great masters and instructors of the world, led by the best genius and spirit which they had to attend and to inspire them, sought to plant the world with a quite contrary principle (upon the matter) and that under the notion of a choice and excellent vertue (as we signified unto you, in our first argument of this second head.) Here we inform'd you that *Aristotle* himself amongst some other of his vertues condemn'd for vices in the Scriptures, set's up that which he call's *Μεγαλοδουχία*, i. a kinde of magnificence and greatnesse, or stateliness of spirit, which teacheth a man to stand upon his termes: and if he be worthy of great things, to judge so of himself, and to let the world know it accordingly. Whereas the nature and property of that *self-denying* frame of spirit which the Scripture commends (yea and commands, as we heard) unto the best and greatest and most deserving of

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men, is to teach, and perswade men, to forbear all reflecting upon their own goodnesse and worth in every kinde; to take heed of setting their hearts upon their wisdome, or vertuous actions when they increase; as well as upon *riches* when they *increase*. To be as men that know no excellencie or desert in themselves, no though God hath made their faces to shine, by making them eminent and signall benefactors unto the world; but to be as *Weaned children* (in *Dauids* metaphor) amongst those to whom they have been as *fathers*, and preservers: to give the world leave to do what they please, even the worst, unto them, when they have done the best they have been able, for the world: yea and to desire no other recompence from the world, for all the good they have done for it, when they have done the uttermost they have been able, then onely an opportunity to doe them more still; and to expect no other recompence from it, but ingratitude in the highest. The voice that teacheth these things unto the world, is certainly the voice of God, and not of men. Alas, the learning and wisdome of the wise men of the world, never reach'd any such notions, or strains of true excellency as these: these things dwelt with God in that *light which is unaccessible* unto men, untill himself was pleased to bring them forth into such a light which is accessible.

But secondly, if we shall adde the consideration of the means wherewith the Scriptures are furnished, and whereby they daily advance this work of *self-deniall* in the world, this character of their divinity, will appear more clearly. For certain it is, that whatsoever excellencie, or praise-worthy thing, of how neer affinity soever to which *self-deniall* indeed, the wisdome, learning, and piety of this world, have at any time recommended unto, or endeavoured to advance amongst men, they never had that outstretched arme of means, nor any like unto it, to carry on their attempt, which the Scriptures have, to exalt that *self-deniall* in the hearts and soules and lives of men, which they have abundantly exalted in all these, against all the strong oppositions, the numerous and potent contradictions herunto, which they have met with, and do meet with daily, from the most inveterate corruptions in the natures and customes, in the lives

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and waies of men. Never did *Plato, Plutarch, Seneca*, or any of that generation of men, who sought to make the world wise without the *wisdom revealed from heaven* in the Scriptures, ever lift up such a motive to the hearts and souls and consciences of men, so likely to transform them, to act, and work, and mould them into a self-denying frame, as that most strange and never-enough admired humiliation of the Sonne of God, in the description and demonstration whereof the Gospel so much rejoiceth. Nor did any man, the eyes of whose soul were never bless't with the sight or enterview of the Gospel, ever engage life and immortality, or the powers of the world to come, to teach men how to *deny themselves*; especially upon those terms of advantage on which the Scriptures employ them, for such a purpose: nor did any man, especially without the aid of the Scriptures, ever cause *hell to rise up from beneath*, after any such manner, with that emphasis of dread and terror, which the Scripture doth to carry men upon the wings of fear over that great gulf, which lies between *self-love*, and *self-deniall*, to land them here. But this consideration we have further opened and urged, in another argument, and therefore only give a tast of it here. Howbeit the very mention of it, is sufficient to dignifie, and distinguish the Scriptures from all writings whatsoever, whose authours are men, and not God.

A fourth evidence or demonstration, from the matter of the Scriptures, to prove their originall and descent from God, is that heart-searching properly, which is found in many of the veins and passages of it, that penetrating force and vigour which ever and anon, in the preaching and opening of them, is felt in the reins and consciences and inward parts of men. As *David* saith of the sun, *his 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*. So doe the Scriptures compass the hearts and souls and consciences of men round about, there is nothing in the inward parts of men, though never so secret or retired, and that is hid from the beams of the light of them. They are as mediators to bring men and their hearts, men and their consciences together; and to make them acquainted the one

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with the other, who before liv'd, as it were, at a distance, and had little knowledge the one of the other. *There is not a word in my tongue* (saith *David*) *but loe, O Lord, thou knowest it all together, viz.* whilst it is yet *in my tongue*, and before it is uttered. So experience shews, that there is not a word, not a thought, not a purpose or intention in the heart or soul of a man, but the Scripture knows it altogether, even whilst it is yet secret; whilst it doth but work in the very conception and first gathering or rising of it, before either it be perfectly form'd within, or put into outward act or execution, the Scripture takes hold of it, the very fountains of the great depths in men are many times as it were broken up by it; and the foundations of the round world in the souls of men discovered. The hidden treasures of darknesse are brought forth into light; and men come to see the invisible things of their own spirits by it.

The Scriptures themselves speak much of that property of theirs which we are now holding forth unto you, as a proof, that they are from God: but because it is their own cause that is in pleading, we shall not insist upon their testimony in this kinde, save onely so farre, as the frequent and sensible experience of men and work concur with it, and so are a conformation to it.

Now the Scriptures may be said to search, or to discover the hearts of men, two waies, or in two respects. 1. As they declare and shew unto men, such things in them, as they took notice of, and knew to be in themselves, before such declaration was made unto them, but were not aware that any other took notice of them, but themselves; thought them secrets, into which no soul had entred but their own. 2. As they disclose and discover unto men such things in them, which they never knew before to be in them, which they never minded in themselves, untill the discoveries we speak of came upon them.

For the first, There are many things in the hearts and spirits of men, which doe *emerge*, i. float and swim as it were in the top of the waters, which are nigh unto themselves, and with which they themselves converse familiarly from time to time; but yet they little think or consider that any other hath conjunction with them in the knowledge hereof. Thus many are

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conscious to themselves of such and such fears under which they live, least such or such wicked and foul practises of theirs, as in waies of adultery, cheating, coining and the like, should break out and be discovered, and come to the publike knowledge of men. So again, many know well enough that such and such purposes and intentions lodge in them; yea and that such inclinations and dispositions work in their members (as the Apostles phrase is) Now then, this is that which I say, that the Scriptures many times, especially in the ministry and opening of them, meet with these secret and hidden things of the soul; challenge men and women for them, and charge them with them; describing them with so much particularity and exactnesse, and so neer to the life, that men cannot lightly but think, that either he that presents and shews them unto them upon such terms, hath been within them, and seen the things themselves, as it were, face to face; or that he that sets them on work, and directs them to speak, hath had that advantage. The Scriptures speak of such things as these, such discoveries as we speak of, as things very agreeable to them, and which may well come to passe by their ministry. *But if all propheticie* (saith the Apostle) *and there come in one that beleeveth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all.* viz. of all that propheticie at such a time: he is convinc'd of them, and judg'd of them; i. it may come to passe, that he may be convinc'd and judg'd of them. There is that in the nature of propheticie, or of opening the Scriptures, which is apt to convince and judge men. It is a property of speech very frequent in Scripture, to signifie the aptnesse of a means for the doing of such or such a thing, or producing such or such an effect, by mentioning the effect, as produced by it, whether it be really and actually produced, or no, see 1 Cor. 8. 11. Gen. 20. 3. *And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.* How, or to whom, are the secrets of such a mans heart made manifest, by means of that propheticie, or opening the Scriptures here spoken of? It seems not so much to others, no, nor to him neither who prophecieth; but rather to the man himself, as appears by the effect or consequent of this manifestation, in those words:

1 Cor. 14. 24.

words: *and so falling down on his face.* so, i. by reason of the secrets of his heart manifested, he will fall down on his face and worship God: though by this effect of the discovery made to himself, they are in part made manifest unto others also. But if the secrets of the mans heart here spoken of, be such things as were known unto him before, how can they be said to be made manifest unto him, by hearing the Church prophesie? I answer, they may in a five-fold sence or consideration, be said to be made manifest to him by the means here spoken of, though they were known unto him before.

1. Though in respect of their nature or simple being they were known to a man before, yet in respect of their first originall, and source, from whence they came, viz. Gods heavy curse upon mankind in the person of Adam for sin: and in this respect, viz. which concern's the shamefull and dishonourable pedegree of them, they may be said to be made manifest unto him by prophesying according to the Scriptures. And the truth is, that sin, and things that are sinfull, can never be manifest (in the emphaticall sence of the word) i. fully manifest, unlesse it be known what, or who, was the author or first founder of the generation. This discovery or manifestation of sinne, cannot be made unto any man, by any other way, light, or means, but onely by the Scriptures. Or,

2. Though the secrets of the heart of the man of which the Apostle speaks, might (as was said) be known unto him before, in respect of their simple being; yet in respect of their sinfulness, or the evil cleaving to them, they might be unknown to him (or however very darkly and obscurely known) men may know that such and such desires, and so that such and such dispositions, such and such apprehensions, and imaginations are in them; and yet be ignorant that these desires, dispositions, imaginations which they know are in them, are so wicked and reprovable in the sight of God, as the Scriptures represents them. It is one thing for a man when he hath vowed a vow unto God, and not paid it, to know that he hath not paid it, and another thing to know cleerly how sinfull he is before God for not paying of it. It is one thing for a man to know, that he was at masse, or did reverence to the host; another thing to know

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that he sinn'd in doing either. The Papists generally know, when they are at masse, that they are at it; but they do not know that they do evil in being there: So naturall and unregenerate men, may know that such and such desires, as (for example) of such things as are another mans, and dispositions, as to uncleanness, fornication, revenge, &c. are in them; and yet not know that they are hatefull in the sight of God. Now then, when the Scriptures in the ministry of them, discover the evil and vileness of such things, they may very properly be said to make them manifest, and that in speciall manner to the persons themselves, in whom they are; because the discovery or reproof of particular sinnes by the Scriptures, doe nothing in that degree affect or smite the consciences of those that are free, as they doe of those that know themselves guilty of them. And the truth is, that things which are evil and sinnefull, are never manifest unto men, *i.* in any measure known, as they are to be known, and as they should be known, till the Scriptures hath had to do with the judgements and consciences of men, and work about them; till they have represented them unto men by their light. Hence you have the expression of the Apostle, *Ephes. 5.* *But all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light;* or rather (according to the former treatise which is much better, here) *But all things when they are reprov'd of the light* (meaning of the Scriptures, or that light which shines from them) *are made manifest, for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light. q.d.* As it is the nature and property of the naturall light, to discover and manifest all things, *i.* all visible and corporeall things, where it shines, without which their nature shapes and forms and colours could not be seen or known: in like manner, all things that are speciall, and which relate to another world, cannot be manifested, *viz.* to the judgements and consciences of men, neither in the evil of them, if they be things that be evil; nor yet in the goodnesse of them, if they be things that are truly good, but onely by the Scriptures, or the light that shines from them.

Well then, this is another consideration, in which such secrets of the hearts of men, which were in respect of their beings known before, may yet be said to be made manifest unto them

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by that Scripture exercise of prophesying.

3: There is another manifestation of the things we speak of, which usually follows upon the two former, as the effect or consequent of them, especially of the latter: and this is a manifestation of them in their proper tendency, which is unto death, and the everlasting destruction of the creature, with whom they are found, if they be things that are evil; whereas on the contrary, the proper tendencie of things that are good, is unto life and glory; and these also are *made manifest* in this their blessed tendencie by the Scriptures. Men may know that they have such and such desires and dispositions, such and such ends and intentions within them, and may yet further know, that they are sinnefully evil; and yet not necessarily know that they binde men over (and that with adamantine bands that cannot be broken, but by the hand of faith in Christ Jesus) unto eternall condemnation, and the vengeance of eternall fire. But the Scriptures when they *make* them *manifest* in the two former considerations, usually make them manifest in this also. *I was once alive* (saith Paul) *without the law, but when the commandment came since reviv'd but I died.* When the commandment came, *viz.* to my conscience, in the light and power of it; discovering first unto me the great evil of my sinne: secondly, the heavy condemnation which in that regard attended it; *since reviv'd,* *i.* that evil principle within me, the malignity of my nature, began to work at an higher rate of wickednesse then before, causing me to think harder thoughts of God, and of his law then I did before, and strongly tempting me to be desperate in sinning, since all hope of mercy was cut off from me. *But I died,* *i.* I gave my self for a childe of perdition, for a lost man. This is a third manifestation, which the Scriptures make of the sinfull secrets of the hearts of men. There is yet another consideration

(In the fourth place) wherein they may be said to make them manifest too; which results as it were from all the former. This you may conceive thus. The secrets of the hearts of carnall and sinfull men, being so discovered unto them (as you have heard) in the three former considerations in their originall vileness, and guilt, must needs become so much the

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Rom. 7. 9.

more a deformed, ghastly, and formidable object, in the eye of their consciences; which appearance answers the reality and truth of them; for things that are sinfull, are out of measure, deformed, ghastly, formidable; and when they come to be so apprehended and look'd upon, then are they *manifest* indeed unto them who so judge of them: and so much the more *manifest*, by how much the more frequently and attentively men shall thus look upon them. Now when the Scriptures have put their colours upon the things that are sinfull in men, and made them to appear in their eyes like unto themselves, *i.* monstrous, ghastly, and formidable (as was said) the conscience is so much the more provoked and engag'd to look both frequently and attentively upon them, and cannot lightly forbear either the one or the other. This is a fourth fence or consideration, wherein the *secrets of mens hearts* may be said to be *made manifest* unto them, by the Scriptures preached.

5. And lastly, there is yet another fence, wherein the Apostle may be understood, and the *secrets of mens hearts* be said to be *made manifest* unto them, *viz.* when they are cleerly represented and held forth unto them in the Scriptures, being opened and laid before them, as a mans naturall face may be said to be *made manifest* unto him, when such a glasse is presented to him, and held before his eyes, wherein all the lineaments and true proportion of this face of his appears. And though it be supposed, that a man had some knowledge of his face, as what manner of one it is, before the glasse be presented to him; yet this face of his may truly and properly enough be said, to be *made manifest*, *i.* cleerly shewn unto him in the glasse. In like manner, though it be supposed, that naturall men know the *secrets of their hearts* before they come at the Scriptures; yet this displaying, and describing them before their faces, may very properly be said to *make them manifest* unto them. Now there is no man or woman who converseth much, and understandingly, and conscientiously with the Scriptures, especially that lives under, or frequents a lively and powerfull ministry of them, but he experimentally finds, and cannot but give testimony unto the truth of what hath been said in all the particulars insisted upon, concerning the property which we have

asserted

asserted unto them, *viz.* of *searching the hearts and the reins* of the sons and daughters of men. As the King of *Arams* servant told her master, that the Prophet *Elisba* made known to the King of *Israel* even the words that he spake in his privy chamber: So doe the Scriptures ever and anon tell men and women in their ear, the words they speak in the secret chambers of their hearts; they discover unto them, their most private and retired thoughts, their counsels, the particular motions, debates and agitations of their spirits, in reference to such or such a businesse, or the committing of such or such a sinne; what hath pass'd, and hath been argued *pro & contra* within them. They describe unto them the figleaves, which they sew together to cover their nakednesse; I mean the fleshly and foolish arguments, reasons and grounds, by which they strengthen and encourage themselves, in waies and practises of loosenesse, vanity, and sinne. They declare unto drunkards, and vain-company keepers, upon what grounds they build their drunken practises; and so to the adulterer, and unclean person, what their hope and confidence is of coming off at last without danger from the waies of that abomination: and so to the covetous person, and those that practise deceit, they unboosome these also to themselves; and lay before them those snares of death wherein their feet are taken; I mean those carnall reasonings and conceits, which are the oracles they consult with, for the comforting of them in their way.

Let me adde this one thing further under this first head: look what hath been spoken to illustrate and confirm the heart-searching property of the Scriptures, in respect of things that are evil in men; as much is to be conceived, and might readily be spoken on the other hand, I mean to illustrate and prove the like divine faculty or property in them, to discover and attest all things that are just, and holy, and good in the hearts and spirits of good men. They declare and shew their hearts also unto them, with all the goodnesse, beauty, and excellent workmanship, that the holy Ghost hath wrought upon them; they present them ever and anon with a modell and draught, of that uprightnesse and sincerity, of those holy affections and desires, those gracious purposes intentions and resolutions,

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those

2 King 6.12.

those spirituall and substantiall reasonings and debates, whereby they strengthen and establish themselves in the waies of life and peace. And this for the first of the two waies mentioned, wherein the Scriptures may be said to search and discover the hearts of men; viz. as touching such things, which are already known in part unto men themselves, when they come to discover them. But

2. These Scriptures have a more searching and piercing faculty then so, into the hearts and spirits of men. They doe not onely search out and descrie such *secret* things in men, which swim upon the face of the waters, and lye in the uppermost parts of the soul, being known [in part] unto the hearts of men themselves; but they dive to the bottome, and draw out even the deep waters of the soul; such as the soul it self was not aware of, knew not of their being there; they declare what is below, even in the nethermost parts of the earth. *Who knoweth the things of a man* (saith the Apostle) *but the spirit of man which is in him?* Yea, the spirit of man which is in him, knows but in part the things of the man. *Hazael* knew not there was any such disposition or principle in him, which would carrie him to commit those barbarous and bloudy finnes, mentioned 2 King 8 as the setting of strong Cities on fire, slaying young men with the sword, dashing infants against the stones, tearing in pieces, or ripping up Women with childe; nay he was so far from being conscious unto himself of any such disposition as this within him, that when the Prophet charg'd him with it, he replied with great disdain: *What? is thy servant a dog, that I should doe this great [or strange] thing?* He thought he was as far from doing such things as these, as he was from being turned into a dog. And 1 Job. 3. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater; then our hearts, and knoweth all things:* clearly impli- ing, that our hearts, i. consciences and understandings, are very defective in knowing and comprehending those things in us, that are just matter of condemnation to us: And that in case we have not the testimony of our consciences, that our atonement is made by Jesus Christ; we have cause to fear and to expect a proportion of wrath and vengeance from God, for much more sinne and wickednesse, then we know by our selves. *Yea the things*

1 Cor. 2. 11.

2 King. 8. 13.

1 Job. 3. 10.

things of a man, which the spirit that is in him, knows of, hold no considerable proportion with those things of the man, that are in him, whereof this spirit is ignorant: as the filhes of the sea which are taken and drawn out of the waters, are not the thousand part for number, of those that are left behind. *Therein* (saith David, speaking of the great and wide sea) *are things creeping innumerable, both great and small beasts.* So likewise it is in that great element, that vast treasure-houfe of the heart and spirit of man: there are thoughts, affections, dispositions, imaginations, with other furniture of that kinde without number, of a thousand shapes and sorts, the least portion or part whereof it is, that ever comes to the knowledge of the heart and spirit of man, except it be by the mediation of such discovaries, as are made by the light of the Scriptures unto them. For God (as we heard even now from *John*) is not onely greater then our hearts (viz. in knowing what is in us) but is so far greater, as that he knows all things in this kinde, our hearts (i. our consciences, as was said) knowing little in comparison. Now look what knowledge of the hearts and spirits of men, is in God, is likewise in the Scriptures; for God hath communicated this knowledge unto them. Look whatsoever God himself knows concerning the generall frame and temper of the hearts and natures of men and women, he hath transfused and wrought it into the body of the Scriptures. So that *τι γνωσεν τὸ εὐρύναι* whatsoever is knowable of the evil or wickednesse of the heart of man (in generall) and so likewise of the goodnesse thereof too, when it is regenerate, is to be found in the Scriptures, if we were able to search the treasure hereof. This great truth seems to lye in the joyn't of those two verses, vers. 12. and 13. of the 4th to the *Hebr.* For the word of God is lively, sharper, &c. Neither is there any creature which is not manifest [in his sight]: but all things are naked and open &c. q. d. The word of God is (and must needs be) thus lively in operation, &c. — because God hath the perfect and through knowledge of all things whatsoever in the hearts of men; and hath leavened (as it were) and seasoned the Scriptures (his word) with this knowledge. He seem'd to take measure of the heart of man, when he fram'd his word, they are so commenfurable the one

Heb. 4. 11. cum
13.

unto the other, in that respect. There is no man or woman that have had any intimate and consciencious doings with the Scriptures, but know by their own experience, that these things are so: I mean that the Scriptures do not onely declare unto them such things, as they themselves know to be in them, when the declaration is made; but that they prophesie also of many other things, which they knew not of, and could hardly believe were in them indeed, which yet do appear from within, and discover themselves in their season; as the disposition in *Hazael* which we spake of, did, when the tentation came in his way, and he made King of *Syria*.

Let us now briefly consider, whether there be not weight and power in abundance in the consideration now proposed and opened unto you, to exalt the conclusion on high, in your judgements and consciences, which we drive at; viz that the Scriptures are the offspring and issue of God. *When I consider* (saith *David*, speaking in his meditation unto God) *thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the starres which thou hast ordeined, what is man,* — &c. *David* (we see) calls the *Heavens Gods Heavens* (*When I consider thy heavens*) and the *work of his fingers*; and one thing (it seems) which made him so positive in his conclusion, that the *heavens* were Gods, i. the *work of his fingers*, was the consideration of that glorious furniture of them, the *moon and the starres*; these (it seems) gave light in the eyes of *David*'s judgement and understanding, to see and judge that God was the workman and maker of them. But certainly the *moon* and all the *starres* in the firmament of heaven (take the sun himself into the conjunction) do not give any such light whereby to be led unto God, as the architect and maker of them, to discover him in this relation unto them, as those characters and impressions of light in the Scriptures, which answer with so much exactnes the secret & hidden impressions of things in the hearts and spirits of men and women in the world, doe demonstrate these to be a fabrick of wisdome and knowledge, whose builder and maker must needs be God. Some that have been diligent observers of the *sun, moon and starres*, have yet doubted whether God was the maker of them, and have rather thought that they were from eternity:

P. 1. 8. 3.

eternity: Yea some that have minded them narrowly, have doubted whether there be a God or no, yea denied it, as *Diagoras*, with some others of old. But (doubtlesse) never did any man, who in any considerable degree, understood and minded those strains and carriages in the Scriptures, which comprehend the darknesse, and open the hid treasures of the hearts and spirits of men, doubt or question, whether the Scriptures were from God or no. *And thus* (saith *Paul* as we heard before, speaking of the unbeliever that should come into the Church, and hear the Saints prophesying) *Thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report, that God is in you of a truth.* The discovery of the secrets of the heart, even nature it self teacheth men to acknowledge and resent, as that which is above the sphere of the creature, and proper unto God. *Come see a man* (saith the woman of *Samaria* to her countrymen) *that hath sold me all things that ever I did? Is not this the Christ?* implying, that to be able to tell things that are secret, argues special communion with a supernaturall principle, which is God. So *vers. 18.* when *Christ* had said unto her; *thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband;* she presently concluded, that he was a Prophet. *The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a Prophet:* meaning, that he had the knowledge of such things as he declared, imparted unto him by God, *Act. 1. 24.* God is said to be the knower of the hearts of all men: and the Lord *Christ* in his Epistle to the Church of *Thyatira* dated from heaven, assumes this unto himself, as his prerogative royall, to be he which *searcheth the reins and the heart;* and declares that he will cause all the Churches to know it. *And I will kill her children with death* (speaking of *Jezebel*, a false Prophetesse) *and all the Churches shall know, that I am he which searcheth the reins and the heart. I am he which searcheth,* &c. Implying that he alone, and no other, is invested with this glorious priviledge of *searching the reins and the heart.* So then this being a principle of truth written as it were by the hand of nature in the tables of every mans heart, of every mans conscience, that to discover the secrets of the hearts of men is the proper character of God, and the Scriptures having

1 Cor. 14. 25.

Joh. 4. 29.

2.

Act. 1. 24.
Rev. 2. 23.

this character so plainly, richly and visibly stamp'd upon them; evident it is, that their originall and descent is from God.

If it be objected and said; but may not men, especially learned, wise and acute men, partly by observing the motions, waies and turnings of their own hearts, partly, by observing the dispositions, humours, interests and ends of others in the world, and partly by holding intelligence and an intimacy of friendship with men of wisdom and understanding like themselves, and so ever and anon comparing, as it were, notes together; be able to say as much as is to be found in the Scriptures, concerning the secrets of the hearts and spirits of men? To this I answer.

1. By confession; that such men as the objection speaks of, may say much upon the advantages mentioned, concerning the inward frame, the secret actings, and turnings, and windings of the hearts of men: they may discover abundance even of the deep things of men: and goe farre in searching the hidden treasury of their hearts and spirits. And the truth is that many of them have done much in this kinde. But

2. I answer further (by way of exception) that as Gideon said to the men of Ephraim, *that the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim were better then the vintage of Abiezer*, so say I in the case in hand: that the *gleanings* of the Scriptures, i. a little which the Scriptures doe in breaking up the depths and secrets of the hearts of men, is better, of greater weight and worth, then the *vintage* of Philosophers, then all that ever they have done, or indeed were capable of doing in this kinde. The plough of the holy Ghost in the Scriptures, makes a deep furrow, and turns up more of the earth and soil of the heart from beneath, then the Philosophers plough doth: yea it brings up such things, which the other never touched, or came near. The *Philosophers*, having neither themselves the grace of the Gospel, and the great things of *Jesus Christ* tendered unto them, nor yet any of those, with whom they had acquaintance; and wanting the experience of the behaviours, carriage, and expressions of men closely pursued, urg'd and pressed by the Gospel, the holy commands, and terrible threatnings thereof, as

also

Judg. 8. 1.

also of the confessions of such as were in time, after long resistance and disobedience, converted by the Gospel unto God. *Philosophers* (I say) wanting these helps and opportunities, to know the hearts of men, could not possibly reach those streins, nor those workings in the spirits and consciences of men, which such occasions and provocations as these produce from time to time; and which are discovered and made known in the Gospel. And the truth is, there is no occasion, provocation, or tentation whatsoever besides, nor all the occasions and tentations in the world put together, can raise such workings, motions, streins, thoughts, apprehensions, intentions, in the spirits and consciences of men, or draw them forth by suitable practises and expressions of themselves, as the Gospel, effectually and lively preach'd unto them. This was the effect of that prophetic concerning *Christ*, which *Simon* uttered, *Luk. 2. 34. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his Mother, Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel: and for a signe which shall be spoken against* — that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed; implying, that *Christ* being effectually preach'd in the ministry of the Gospel in the world, will be a means to reveal and discover more of the hearts and inward parts of men, then ever would have come to light, or have been taken knowledge of otherwise; and that this was one of the designs or intentions of God, in sending *Christ* upon such terms as he did, into the world. Now certain it is, that there is no kinde of thought or imagination, no motion, strein, or turning in the hearts of men, that are either stirr'd up within only, or externally drawn forth upon occasion, by means of the Gospel, but that there is some intimation, mention, or discovery of it, in the Gospel it self. For the word of God is quick and powerful (as we heard before from the Apostle, upon a like occasion) and sharper then any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner, of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Now the knowing or discovering of the intents of the heart, i. of all the ends and propalls which the heart conceiveth and projecteth in it self, is the highest pitch, and utmost period of whatsoever can be known concerning the heart of man.

Hcb. 4. 12

Again

Prov. 29:27

Ecl. 37:31.

Matth. 5:11.

Again the *Philosophers*, never saw the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent play; never had the experience what an *abomination the Wicked man is to the just*, or on the contrary, what an *abomination he that is upright in his way, is to the Wicked*. They could neither see the one, nor have experience of the other, because the world where they lived was planted but with the one nation only, I mean with the seed of the Serpent: or if there were, where some of them lived, a small sprinkling of the other nation, of persons regenerate, by the incorruptible seed of the word, it is not like, that they much minded them, or look'd upon them under any such notion. Now there is no such torture and rack to the hearts and spirits of meer naturall and carnall men, to make them confesse more of their naughtinesse and vilenesse, as the life and power of godlinesse and true holinesse acted by men like unto themselves (their unregeneracie, with the fruits of it, onely excepted) in their faces from day to day. *The Wicked* (saith *David*) *watcheth the righteous and seeketh to slay him*. The thoughts, counsells and devises of the hearts of carnall and evil men, to work mischief in every kinde against the righteous, are very strange, and sometimes very hard to be beleaved, for the strangenesse and unreasonablenesse of them. *Blessed are you* (saith our Saviour himself to his disciples) *When men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake*. That men should revile, persecute, speak all manner of evil of such men as the Apostles of Christ were, who were the greatest benefactors (of meer men) that ever the world had, did the greatest service for it that ever was done, were the most blamelesse and harmlesse that ever men were in their lives and conversations, were unwearied in their labours, and travells, neglected themselves and their own accommodations, exposed themselves to dangers and deaths continually, and all to doe good unto men, and make the world blessed; that men (I say) should so maliciously and desperately intreat such a heavenly generation of men as this, is a strain of wickednesse (expressing it self out of the hearts of men) which the heathen *Philosophers* neither ever saw, nor knew; or if they did see, or know

know it (as I confesse some of the later of them might) yet they did see and know it materially onely; i. they saw or knew these men, or some like unto them, as grievously intreated, as we speak of, but they neither knew the excellency or transcendent deserts of these men, but thought them worthy to suffer as they did; nor did they (nor could they, upon the former supposition) look upon the practices of those that persecuted them, as matters of any great impiety and unworthinesse; and consequently not as bewraying any secret in their hearts much considerable in one kinde or other. Now the Scriptures (we know) speak of the perfection of the Apostles (especially) yea and of the Saints, as a discovery of the most grievous blindness, and desperate wickednesse in the hearts of men: and this judgement and censure of it (we know) is agreeable both to reason and truth. So that the *Philosophers* had no line to let down into whose waters or depths of the hearts of men, out of which this wickednesse (I mean of persecuting the Apostles and Saints) with all the streins and shapés of it, proceeded.

3. (And lastly) the *Philosophers* wanting the communion and fellowship of the Saints and servants of God, and the true knowledge of them otherwise, could not possibly anatomize, open, or display the hearts and spirits of this generation; could not describe or set forth the warre which they sustain in their bowels continually, the combat between the flesh and the spirit; nor yet the weapons by which they fight the good fight of faith (as Paul speaks) *The spiritual man* (saith the Apostle) *judgeth* [or rather examineth, *εραυσιει*] *all things*; [or every man, as the original will rather bear] *but he himself is judged*, [or rather, examined, or sought into] *of no man*. By the *spiritual man*, the Apostle doth not (as I conceive) mean simply the regenerate man, or a man in the state of grace (as we call it) but such a kinde of men, who over and besides a work of grace, have some good degree of the knowledge of the mystery of the Gospel: as by the word *carnall* (opposite to it,) a verse or two after, it is evident he meaneth, not merely carnall or naturall men, who are yet in these sins, but men who being regenerate, are weak and low in the know-
ledge

1 Cor. 3. 1.

ledge and understanding of spirituall things. *And I brethren, could not speake unto you, as unto spirituall; but as unto carnall, even as unto babes in Christ.* He could not speake unto them as unto spirituall, though he looks upon them as regenerate (for he calls them, *babes in Christ*) but as unto carnall, i. as unto such Christians, who had much of the ignorance and weaknesse of their meer naturall conditions yet upon them, and had attained no considerable growth or stature in the knowledge of Christ. So then, the Apostle saying, that *the spirituall man judgeth, or trieth, every man; but himself is tried of no man* viz. but of such as himself: for he speaks here of the whole species or kinde of spirituall men, though he useth the singular number (a thing usuall in Scripture) his meaning is cleerly this; that such men as are *spirituall*, any thing well grown in grace, and in the knowledge of *Jesus Christ* and the Scriptures, are acquainted with, understand, and are able to discourse, and speak of the inward condition of all sorts of men, they know how it is with the hearts and spirits of meer naturall men, what their thoughts, counsels, and inclinations are (in the generall) so likewise they know the state and condition of young and weak Christians, that are yet but *babes in Christ*, how it is with them, in the way of their hearts and spirits; and so also they understand how it is with men that are *spirituall*, and like unto themselves. They have a double advantage thus to judge, or understand the condition of every man. 1. They have pass'd thorough, and had experience of all these conditions in themselves, 1. they have been naturall men, and therefore they know the heart of a naturall man: as God reasoneth with his people, *Exod. 23. For ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye your selves were strangers in the land of Egypt.* 2. They have been weak Christians too, before they were strong, and therefore by the same reason they know the hearts of these also. And 3. (and lastly) they have had experience, and have daily, of the heart of *spirituall* men; and therefore they know the heart of such men likewise. This is one advantage, or means they have to judge of every man. The other, is the knowledge which they have of the Scriptures, and of the word of God, which assisting their foresaid experience of the estates of all men, and

Exod. 23. 9.

and concurring with it in that respect, must needs adde much unto them in this kinde, and make them very able to judge of every man. But *he himself is judged of no man*, i. of no other sort of men, but his own, and such as himself (as was said) his heart and the waies thereof, his thoughts, counsels, purposes, intentions, dispositions, desires, hopes, fears, &c. cannot be known or comprehended by any, but *spirituall* men. The reason is, because other men, having never had the experience of such things in themselves, nor any report of them by any relatour, whose language they understand, and whose testimony they beleeve, cannot come to know whether there be any such thing in men, or no; especially considering, that they are things of such an excellent, sublime, and spirituall nature, that though they should be reported and declared unto men, yet and that by an authour of much credit and authority with them, yet would they hardly be beleeved. So then most certain it is, that the Scriptures, in as much as they judge *spirituall* men, as well as others, i. relate the heavenly story of their hearts and spirits from the first to the last, could not be composed or fram'd by any, but either by men who were *spirituall* themselves, or else by God himself. Now to say that *spirituall* men composed them, is in effect to say or grant, that God composed them, it being an essentiall character or property of a *spirituall* man, not to publish or put forth any thing into the world, in the name of God, or as from him; which he knows to be onely from himself, and not from God; this being, in effect to make himself God; which is a deep abhorring to a *spirituall* soul. And besides, *spirituallnesse* in men being, as it were, an extract, or expresse of the divine nature, a fair resemblance, of the light and holinesse which is in him, though it should be granted that the Scriptures were made and composed by such men as these; yet will it follow, that the originall of them, especially of all that which concerns the case and condition of a *spirituall* man, is from God. This for answer to the objection propounded: and for this fourth demonstration.

A 5. Demonstration of the same conclusion, viz. that the Scriptures are from God, drawn from the matter of them;

is, that glorious and mighty power which sometimes utters and expresseth it self, out of some of the veins and passages thereof, in comforting, raising, filling and lifting up the hearts of men. The world now for many generations together, hath had a full experiment of this great power we speak of, breaking out of the Scriptures in the ministry of them, like fire or lightning out of the cloud, by which their hearts and souls have been reviv'd, quickned, and rais'd, as it were, from the dead: yea and sometimes taken up into the heavens. I make no question but that our own ears have heard, and that some of our fathers, yea and some of our children, and many of our friends have told us, many of these *magnalia*, these great and wonderfull works of the Scriptures in them, and upon them; how they have at such a time been strangely lightned and eased in their spirits, at another time, gloriously strengthened in the inner man; at another, fill'd with joy in beleeving: at another, when they came in sackcloth to hear, that by the hand of the Gospel their sackcloth was taken off from them, and they girded with joy and gladnesse before their departure; when they came in darknesse, and with the shadow of death spread round about them, that the light of life shone unto them, and scattered that darknesse. Yea I make no question but many of you that hear me this day, have in the Scriptures, *tasted of the powers of the life to come*; and felt your souls, as it were, bound up in the wings of the Gospel, as if they had been ready to have been carried up into heaven immediately; that you have felt the iron bands and fetters of your fears and doubts loosed by the hand of the Gospel, and falling from you; that upon the suddain *turning of the captivity* of your souls, you have been *as those that dream*. My brethren these are no strange things that I now mention unto you; they are no things, that you had need of any, either to ascend up into heaven to know the truth of them from thence; or of any to goe down into hell, to inquire the truth of them there; no, they are things really, sensibly, acted and done in the midst of you; yea I nothing doubt, but that the hearts and consciences of many of you, are ready to rise up, and stand forth to give testimony to the truth of these things. We shall not need for our present

sent purpose, to inquire any further after those things in the Scriptures, or in the Gospel, by which those great and mighty works we speak of are brought to passe; as *viz.* what, or which they are, or what aptnesse there is in them, so gloriously to affect and take the hearts and consciences of men: it is fully sufficient, as to the demonstration in hand, to know and consider, that such great things as were lately mentioned, are really effected and accomplished amongst the sons and daughters of men, by the Scriptures, and Gospel, in their ministration. Therefore now let us seriously weigh and ponder the tenour and importance of what hath been said, that we may be the better able to judge, whether there be any sufficient light in it, whereby to see and discern truth in this assertion, that the Scriptures are from God.

When *John* the Baptist sent some of his Disciples unto *Christ*, to ask of him this question (for their own, and their fellows satisfaction) *Art thou he that should come? or doe we look for another?* Our Saviour returned onely this answer by them unto *John*. *Goe and see John again those things which ye doe hear, and see: The blinde receive their sight, and the lame walk, the leapers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them, or rather (as the word *ἀγγεῖον*, may signifie) the poor are Gospelized, i. are taken with the Gospel, are perswaded by the Gospel, or (as the former translation) receive the Gospel; meaning, that such great and mighty, and strange works as these, being so frequently wrought either by him, or in his name, did sufficiently demonstrate him, to be he that was to come; the glory and repute of them, being unproportionable, and too great for any deceiver, or false Prophet to be invested, and honoured with. In like manner, the question being whether the Scriptures (and so the Gospel) be from God, or no; is it not sufficient to conclude affirmatively for them, that certainly they are so, they are from God, if we be able to say, that poor souls are mightily comforted, the weak hearts of men are wonderfully strengthened; the dead spirits of men are raised and made to live again; men and women, that fate in darknesse, and in the shadow of death, are inlightned; many that were in chains*

Matth. 11. 3.

and fetters of fears and terrors of soul, are delivered and set at liberty, and the world is fill'd with joy and gladnesse by them? Is it reasonable to conceive, that a tree that bears such wonderfull fruit as this, was planted by any other hand, then the hand of God? Who can speak words, that should be able to order the powers of darknesse, when they are fallen in making havock and desolation in the souls of men? that shall be able to give laws to the fears and terrors of death, of eternal death, when they have taken hold of the consciences of sinners? who hath any such rod in his mouth, but the glorious God alone, by the smiting whereof the fiery and cruell burnings, the fierce and furious ragings of the guilt of sin in the inward parts of soul, will be rebuked, and give place to that joy and peace which are unspeakable and glorious? Are these like to be the achievements or works of the words of men? is flesh and bloud like to speak those that are dead, alive? Or hath God sanctified the breath or wisdom of any mortall man, to act at this rate of excellencie and power, otherwise then in conjunction with his own? *Lord* (saith *Peter unto Christ*) *to Whom shall we goe? thou hast the words of eternall life?* Men may goe the world over and over, and wait upon the lips of all the wisdom and knowledge, and understanding under heaven all their daies, and never meet with the words of *eternall life*, but from the mouth of *Jesus-Christ* (I mean originally) and yet to speak properly, they come not originally from him neither, as he is mediator, but from God himself. When the *two sons of Zebedee desired of the Lord Christ, that they might sit, the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in his glory*; he made this answer, told them, that *they knew not what they ask'd*, meaning; that surely they did not apprehend or consider the disproportion that was between such persons as they (at least, as they were, when they made this request) and the excellency of that glory which they desired; implying, that if they had known and duly considered this disproportion, and how unmeet they were for these places which they desired, they would have refrained such a request, they would never have lift up the least desire in their soul, to have that done, which was so unlikely to be done, yea so repugnant unto the wisdom and equity

Job. 5. 68.

Mar. 10. 38.

equity of Gods dispensations to doe. In like manner if men shall say and plead, that the Scriptures and the Gospel, notwithstanding all those great and mighty works that put forth themselves in them, and are done by them (as those lately instanced, with their fellows) may yet proceed but from men; it may very reasonably, and most truly be said of them, that they know not what they say, nor for what they plead: the disproportion, which lies between the weaknesse and inconsiderablenesse of men, and the most transcendent excellencie and greatnesse of the works specified, were it duly considered, would quench the spirit of such a reasoning, and stop the mouth of that discourse. *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you* (saith *Paul to Agrippa, and the Jews*) *that God should raise the dead?* He plainly grants, that if he should have preached, or asserted, the *raising again of the dead*, by any other agent, then *God*, they might reasonably have judged it a thing *incredible*, and no waies likely to be done; but since he entitles the outstretched arme of an omnipotent God to the work, and gives them an account withall, why God should be willing to make use of his arme and power in this kinde; he suppleth that upon these terms, there is nothing unworthy the wisdom or judgement of a considering man, in the belief of it: Because, though *the raising again of the dead*, be a work of as great a difficulty, as can lightly be conceived, and in that respect, and in it self, very incredible; yet in relation to an infinite power, before which there is no difficulty at all^a, it hath the consideration onely of what is obvious, and easie to be performed. In like manner, those glorious and wonderfull effects, which have been, and that with the free and full consent of frequent and undoubted experience, ascribed to the Scriptures, hold but a regular and ordinary proportion, to the infinite grace and wisdom of God, and so may well proceed from the Scriptures, it being supposed that these are from God; but will be found altogether incredible, and farre above the belief of an understanding man, if the Scriptures shall be supposed to be of any other *inspiration*, then *divine*. Doubtlesse there had been many strange things heard of in the world, in our Saviours daies; yet was it truly said, by that sometimes-blinde man,

A. C. 2. 6. 8.

A. C. 1. 9. 13, 15.

* Gen 1. 6. 14.

verf 32.

Job's

John 9. that *Since the World began it was never heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blinde*; in consideration whereof he had said a little before to the Jews; *Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes*; *clearly implying, that he that did a work more excellent and wonderfull, then ever was known to be done by any man, must needs act by a divine power, and consequently have his mission from God. So though it be granted, that many things very considerable for the cheering and strengthening the hearts of men have been effected by writings and doctrines of humane inspiration: Yet *since the World began it was never heard that the souls and consciences of weak and sinfull men, were so raised or fill'd with joy unspeakable and glorious, by any means of that calculation, as by the Scriptures they have been, and are yet daily, both raised and filled therewith*. In respect whereof it may well be look'd upon as a thing somewhat *marvellous*, that any man should not know, *Whence, or from whom they are*. Can men *gather grapes*, and yet be ignorant whether the plant they grew on, be a vine, or no?

A 6. Demonstration from the matter of the Scriptures, to prove their originall from God, is another power which sometimes discovers it self out of some other places and quarters thereof, answering the former (in excellencie and in glory) but producing effects of a contrary nature; a power, which smites, troubles, wounds, terrifies and shakes all the powers of the souls and consciences of men, and sometimes like a storm and tempest of the wrath of the Almighty, bears down all before it. The world now hath had the real and sensible experiment of this power also in the Scriptures for many generations. How many *mountains* have the Scriptures in their ministry, thrown down, as well as fill'd up *valleys*? how many *fontaines of pride* have they *abated*? how many obdurate and hard hearts have they broken? how many secure persons have they awakened with affrighting and horreur, out of their golden dream? how many confident ones have they shaken, and made them company for fears and doubts; as *Nebucadnezzar* was turn'd out of his Kingdome from amongst his Princes and nobles

bles, to live amongst the beasts of the field, and owles of the desert? many a soul hath these Scriptures covered with the shadow of death, who conceited themselves to be full of light: unto many a soul have they opened their eyes, to see themselves in the midst of *Samaria*, when they thought they were in *Dotham*: many a soul have they thrown down unto hell, which thought themselves in the very confines and borders of heaven: unto many they have been as the appearance of the hand-writing in the wall, was unto *Belshazzar*: they have made *their countenance to change, and their thoughts to trouble them, and the joints of their loins to be loosed, and their knees to smite one against another*. Thus have they from day to day, made havock and spoil of the high thoughts in the hearts and judgements of men, which exalted themselves there against the knowledge of God, yea and of men themselves, and of the truth. They themselves report many great things done by themselves in this kind, which, though they be no testimonies, considered in themselves, of the divinity of the Scriptures, being related by themselves, yet falling in with the frequent and sensible experience of the world in all ages, and receiving a rational confirmation of truth hereby, they cannot in this respect but give in somewhat towards the building in hand, viz. the evidencing of them to be from God. We shall mention onely some few of them.

* Upon *Peters* preaching the resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; it is said, that *they that heard it, were prick'd in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and the other Apostles; men and brethren, what shall we doe?* Here were a generation of men, who before they heard this word of God preached unto them, were so far from asking *Peter* or the rest, *what they should doe* (meaning, to be saved) that they thought they could have told *Peter* himself and the other Apostles, what they ought to have done, in such a way. For the Jews generally were of this temper. But this word of the Scripture coming in the power of it unto them, was like a sword, it *prick'd their hearts*: it smote the pillars of their confidence, and made them tremble. The Sermon upon *Stephen* preach'd before the counsell, had this operation upon those that heard it; that it made them *burst with anger, and gnash upon him with their teeth*. In *Peters*

Dan 5.6.

2 King. 12.
ver. 1, 12, 13.

Act. 2. 7.

Sermon, the Scriptures fought against the ignorance, and wickedness of men, and overcame: in *Stephens* Sermon, they fought also, provok'd and intrag'd the wickedness in men; but they did not overcome. God was not pleased to give such a victory unto his word in the mouth of *Stephen*, as in the mouth of *Peter*: yet it fell on very sore, and did terrible execution upon the hearts and spirits of those that heard it: it threw them out of the possession of their patience, and transform'd them into a rage and passion. So *Act. 24.* when *Paul* dispersed of righteousness and temperance, and of the judgement so come, it is said that *Felix* trembled. A poor prisoner at the barre pleading for his life, by discoursing somewhat out of the Scriptures, made his Judge in the midst of his greatest pomp, and with his guard of strength about him, so tremble. Take that one instance more; concerning the Apostle himself, whilst he was yet a Pharisee (as it seems) or in an unregenerate condition. For (saith he) *I once was alive without the Law: but when the commandment came, sinne reviv'd, but I died. When the commandment came, I died.* i. when God made way for his Law, to come at my judgement and conscience, in the life and power, i. in the holiness, spiritualness, and authority of it, by removing that carnality and ignorance which had formerly separated between the law and me, and kept it from coming at my conscience, or taking hold on me; I became as a dead man; I was out of measure astonied, at what the law now being come home unto me, discovered both in my person and condition. I found nothing but carnality in my self, when the spiritualness of the law appeared unto me: I thought I had stood upon a sure bottome, had built upon a good foundation, untill the law caused me to see that I was in the midst of death, and that there was but a step between me and the bottomlesse pit. Now (my brethren) let me ask you; doe not the Scriptures, when they are effectually preached in the world, ever and anon work after the same manner, in the hearts and souls of men? are not the mighty thrown down from the seats and thrones of their confidence by it? is not the security of many turn'd into fear and horrour by it? are not the consciences of many made to burn by it, as if they were set on fire of hell?

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Act. 24. 25.

Rom. 7. 9, 10.

are not the souls of many made to dwell among lions by it, amongst devouring terrours, and consternations? How frequent are cases and complaints of trouble of conscience, and distresse of soul of men and women, brought even to their wits ends, amongst us, and that generally occasioned, or begotten by the Scriptures. I know you are not the onely strangers of the world, to be ignorant of these things. If you have not born any of these burthens your selves, I doubt not but you have been partakers with, and helpers unto others in the bearing of them.

Thus then you see that the Scriptures have a spirit of power attending on them, working in them and by them, very great and terrible effects in the inner parts, and that rules the souls and consciences of men, as it were with a rod of iron. Let us now consider in a word, what there is in this consideration also, to argue their descent from God. *Hast thou an arme like God?* (saith God himself to *Job*, arguing with him) *or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* The voice of the Lord (saith *David*) is powerful: the voice of the Lord is full of majesty: The voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars: yea the Lord breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon. The Hebrews call thunder, the voice, or mighty voices of God. Pray unto the Lord (saith *Pharaoh* unto *Moses* and *Aaron*) (for it is enough) that there be no more voices of God (saith the original) i. no more thunder. Thunder is call'd the voice of God, because it is so majestic and full of power and terrour; and hath an influence of awe and dread upon the mindes and spirits of men: *humanae mentium tonitrua mentes*: the thunders which move or shake the mindes or hearts of men: Now certainly to thunder in the spirits and consciences of men and women, as the Scriptures ever and anon are wont to doe, to make such terrible commotions and concussions there, as are from time to time made, to fill the soul with astonishment, as if hell were risen up from beneath, and all the powers of darkness gotten into it, cannot but argue a power adequate to that which causeth it to thunder in the clouds of heaven. It is true in a sense (I mean in that sense, in which the Scripture affirmeth it) when time was, that God was neither in the tempest that rent the mountains, and brake

Job 40. 9.

Psal. 29. 4, 5.

Ovid Met.

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1 K. 19. 10.
19. 11. 12.

the rocks in pieces, nor yet in the earthquake, nor yet in the fire, but in the still voice. God was neither in the tempest, nor in the earthquake, nor fire; i. he intended not to speak, or to reveal himself out of any of these unto *Elijah* in that gracious manner, which now he was purposed to doe; he was in this respect, onely in the milde and quiet signe; the still voice: but yet he was in all the rest, the other three, by the manifestation of his power; they declar'd the stretching forth of his mighty arme to produce them, and of his presence neer: So when spirituall tempests, earthquakes and fires, are produc'd and rais'd by the Scriptures in the spirits and consciences of men, it is a signe that the mighty power of God is there, and that he interposeth and acteth in a speciall manner in the raising of them. For let me ask, who should doe it besides? From whence should those grievous agonies and conflicts of soul, so grievous above measure, as sometimes they are, even unto despair of salvation, arise, but from God? If it be answered and said, that the devil may tempt men to despair, he may cast in his fiery darts, and make them stick in the souls and consciences of men; there they may remain eating, and burning in the soul, and cause extremity of pain, &c.

I answer: It's true, the devil hath a power to tempt men and women to despair; he hath fiery darts, and a naturall skill, so to throw them, as to fasten, and make them stick in the souls and consciences of men; i. suddainly to inject or raise such thoughts or apprehensions in men, which have a tendencie in them to persuade, or move men to despair. But

1. God keeps a bridle in the lips of this power of his; he cannot use it when he pleaseth: for then (the Saints especially) should never be free from this temptation to despair. But now and then upon some speciall occasion God slips the bridle for a while, and then Satan is at liberty; yet so, that even under this liberty permitted to him, the Saints, if they will keep their watch and guard strong, may make resistance. *Resist the devil* (saith *James*) *and he will flee from you.*

2. Though God gives the devil liberty to tempt in that kinde we speak of, yea though men doe not make that resistance which they both might, and ought, against his tentations, yet

1 sm. 4. 7

except

except God gives up the souls and consciences of men into his hand to be tempted by him, I mean so be tempted, as to be overcome, or to suffer from the tentation, nothing the devil can doe by way of tempting men, will fasten upon them, or much annoy them. It is the blessed priviledge of the creature, to be still held and kept by the gracious and mighty hand of God, out of the reach of all evil, at least of all evil, in any considerable degree prejudiciall to the comfort and peace of it, as well that which is sinfull, as that which is penall, except onely in such cases, and upon such occasions, when God hath some speciall designe, either for his own glory, or the creatures good, or both, in letting goe this hold, and so delivering up his creature unto either. Ye have this expression twice, *Rom. 1. God gave them up to uncleannesse*: and again, *God gave them up unto vile affections*, &c. implying, that these vile affections, though they were in men all the while, yet they had no power over them, to carry them forth, into vile actions and practises, till God let goe his hold of the men, and so delivered them up, as it were, into the hand of these affections, that they might doe with them even what they list. And *Psal. 73.* we have the like from *David*. *He gave up their cattell also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunder-bolts*: implying, that the hail might have fallen, yea and upon the cattell too (and so the thunder-bolts) without doing them any harm, except God had let goe the hold which he had on them before, and so leaving them naked of their wonted protection, they became a spoil to the hail and thunder. That likewise in *Isa 42.* is of the same kinde (to omit many others) *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers?* implying, that all the spoilers and robbers in the world, could not have made a prey or spoil of *Israel*, had not the God of *Israel*, put them, as it were, out of his own hand into theirs. Thus is it in the matter of temptation: Satan upon permission, may tempt men, as he did the Lord *Christ* himself: yea temptations may fall thick upon the soul; and yet the soul suffer no great annoiance from them, or losse in the things of the peace and comfort of it, unless God deliver it up, and leave it in the hand of these tentations. So that still whatsoever the devil doth, or whatsoever temptations

Rom. 1. 24.
26.

Psal. 73. 13.

Isa 42. 24.

doe, in causing trouble and perplexity in the souls of men, God is in the trouble and perplexity, as well as either of them.

3. Let me adde this further; that as no man can be tempted by Satan or by any temptations whatsoever, to the disturbance or wounding of his soul or spirit, except God delivers him out of his own hand of safety into their hand of danger and evil; so neither can any man be tempted by either, to any further degree of inconvenience or trouble, then according to that degree wherein God is pleased to take off his hand of protection from him. Gods hand of protection was taken off from *Iob*, in respect of his children, his cattell, his estate, his health; and thus farre the devil was able to advance his temptation, he did afflict *Iob* with the losse and deprivation of all these: but God keeping his hand still upon *Iob*'s life, the devil could not by any engine or means he could make, reach this. So is it likewise, in spirituall and inward temptations in the soul: look to what degree the soul is naked before him, he is able to smite and wound it, to infest and destroy the peace of it: but as farre as it is shadowed, or covered by the hand of God, it is devil-proof; nor can any temptation, though never so fiery, kindle upon it.

4. Though the devil with his temptations may truly be look'd upon, as the efficient causes (in their kinde) of many the troubles and sad disturbances rais'd in the souls, and spirits of men; yet reason it self teacheth, that God is the sovereign and supreme cause of them, at least as they are penall, or afflictive to the creature, according to that of the Prophet *Amos*; shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? and whatever God doth, he doth not as a subordinate, but as a principall cause. So that when the souls of men suffer in any kinde, Satan and his temptations are not so much the cause of them, as God, who doth not onely permit Satan to doe his doe, to act his part in them, but likewise withdraws his own presence, and hides his face from the creature, which indeed is, as it were, the soul of the temptation, without which Satan, and all his *militia* can doe nothing considerable to afflict the soul. It no waies stands either with reason or Religion, to think, that the creature

Amos 3.6.

creature should suffer or be afflicted, especially so deep and sore, as many times it doth suffer, under some tentations, but by the speciall order, providence and inspection of the Creator. Indeed for whatsoever is sinfull in any temptation, we must finde out another father then God, who being infinitely pure, cannot bring forth any impure, or unclean thing out of himself.

But 5. (and lastly) to answer home to the objection, or difficulty propounded; the question is not concerning trouble of conscience, or perplexity of soul in generall, or whither Satan with his temptations may not grievously infest and annoy the soul; but whether in those great effects of this kinde, those deep impressions of fear, dread, and astonishment, which are occasioned or produced in men by the Scriptures faithfully opened, or effectually applied unto them, it be any waies reasonable to conceive, that Satan, and not God, hath principally to doe. What Satan may doe otherwise, or by temptations of another kinde, doth no waies encumber or concern the demonstration in hand: Indeed if that efficacie and power which puts forth it self in the Scriptures, truly and substantially preached, in sinning, wounding, and troubling the consciences of men, can reasonably be ascribed unto him, this will (with more colour at least) cut the strength and sinews of it, and render it infirm. But that this hath no degree of truth, or likelihood of truth in it, may appear from hence: because if Satan should joyn with the Scriptures in affecting the consciences of men with impressions of fear, and astonishment, according to the tenour of those things which are contained in them, he should joyn with them in asserting their authority, and truth in other things: which would be a pulling down of his own kingdom with both his hands: and Satan in such a case should be divided against Satan (as our Scripture speaks) and then how could his kingdom stand? For he that attests the Scriptures for true, in any one vein of the matter or subject of them, though he doth not by this testimony, as fully attest or confirm the truth of all other things, in them, yet such a testimony as this countenanceth the generality of them, and to a degree perswades and opens a way likewise to a belief of the rest.

Now

Now Satan certainly is not in disposition or will, a *help* of mens *faith*; nor yet in any such act, which so plainly and directly tends hereunto, as that we speak of. And besides matter of faith or belief of the Scriptures, those great effects we speak of, the shaking of the consciences, and overawing the spirits and hearts of men, being observed and known, are very proper to procure reverence and high esteem unto them in the mindes and consciences of men. Therefore whatsoever Satan may doe to disturb the peace of the consciences of men by his own weapons or fiery darts, which possibly he may sometimes make of Scriptures, falsified, misargued, or misapplied; yet certainly he will not joyn or concurre with the Scriptures, in a direct way towards any such effect, because he knows that his losse will be farre greater, then his gain, thereby. Somewhat further relating to this objection, will be touched, in the answer to that which followeth.

If it yet be further objected and said; but may not such effects as you speak of, troubles, fears and consternations of soul, be ingendred and caus'd in men, by some mistake and misunderstanding of the Scriptures? either in the preacher or interpreter of them, or in the hearers, or both? And can such troubles as these, thus occasioned and rais'd, be any argument or proof, that the Scriptures, by which, though misunderstood, they are occasioned, are from God?

To this I answer, that concerning trouble of conscience, it may be occasioned, either by the misunderstanding of some Scriptures, one or more, simply and alone, or in conjunction with the ignorance of some other Scriptures, with the true import and sence of them. Now the truth is, that there can hardly any great trouble of conscience be occasioned in men or women, either by the misunderstanding, or right understanding of all those Scriptures, that are likely to occasion trouble either in the one way, or in the other; but onely in conjunction with the ignorance or unbelief, of some others. For he that knows and beleeves that *Jesus Christ is the son of God*; and that *whosoever beleeves on him shall not perish*, but ——— and shall goe along in his reason and judgement with this truth, cannot lightly be troubled (I mean with any trouble looking, or

Job. 2. 16.

tending

tending towards despair) by occasion of any other Scripture, or Scriptures, however understood, truly, or untruly. The truth of this assertion we have argued heretofore; and may again, upon occasion. But for the present, to the objection propounded, we say this: that troubles of soul, agonies and perplexities of conscience, being more generally occasioned by the Scriptures, whether rightly, or not rightly understood, and seldome, if at all, otherwaies, or without them; they cannot reasonably be conceiv'd or look'd upon, but as great intimations, yea as strong evidences, that the Scriptures are from God. For who is it that hath to doe with the consciences of men, but God? or who doe men fear, in reference to eternity, but God alone? Are men afraid of being incountred by any created power, after they are pass'd the line of mortality? or doe they see any creature beyond the grave, at whose sight they have any cause to be troubled? So then it being God, and God onely, who makes the spirits and consciences of men to quake and tremble, and it being the Scriptures and the Scriptures onely (upon the matter) by which the quaking and trembling of mens consciences are from day to day produced: is not this a clear demonstration that these two hold intelligence the one with the other, and that the one (God) puts forth that mighty power of his, in consideration whereof the consciences of men are so apt to tremble, in the other (the Scriptures.)

That the consciences of men are seldome much troubled or shaken, but by means of the Scriptures, appears from hence, that such a thing as trouble of conscience, is seldome or never heard of, from among pagans or infidells; no nor often out of such places, where the Scriptures are not with some efficacy and power preached. And for those other means, by which some such effect as we speak of, trouble of conscience, may (happily) now and then be occasioned, without the Scriptures, they are generally such, as the Scripture speaks of, and gives testimony unto, *viz.* some great expressions, either of the justice and severity, or of the glorious power of God, &c. So that still, that great effect we speak of, the shaking of the conscience, is occasioned, and produced either by the Scriptures themselves, or by waies and means of a plain and perfect con-

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currence with them. And if so, the consideration in hand, is (as hath been proved) pregnantly demonstrative of truth in this assertion, that the Scriptures are from God.

A Seventh consideration, taken from the matter of the Scriptures, strongly argumentative of their descent from God, is, that great and marvellous transforming power which ever and anon, puts forth it self in them. The hearts and spirits, the thoughts and counsells of men, the dispositions and inclinations, the waies and courses of men, are marvellously chang'd, and turn'd, as it were, upside down, by the nature, force and power of the spirit, which speaks unto, and acts, in and upon, the world, by them. The Prophet *Isaiab* foretells of a strange and wonderfull change, that shall be found among other creatures, in the day of that great Jubilee of the world, viz. when the Kingdomes thereof shall be given unto the Saints (as *Daniel* speaketh) *I be* *Wolf* *also* *shall* *dwell* *with* *the* *lamb,* *and* *the* *leopard* *shall* *lie* *with* *the* *kid,* *and* *the* *calfe,* *and* *the* *lion,* *and* *the* *fat* *beast* *together,* *and* *a* *littell* *childe* *shall* *lead* *them.* *And* *the* *cow* *and* *the* *bear* *shall* *feed,* *their* *young* *ones* *shall* *lie* *down* *together:* *and* *the* *lion* *shall* *eat* *straw* *like* *the* *ox;* *and* *the* *sucking* *childe* *shall* *play* *upon* *the* *hole* *of* *the* *asp:* *and* *the* *weaned* *childe* *shall* *put* *his* *hand* *on* *the* *cockatrice* *den.* This will be a change indeed, strange and wonderfull in the highest, when it shall be effected and take place: And the change that shall then be amongst men, will be answerable unto it, as it follows, *verf. 9.* *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.* Now the Gospel in the ordinary course of it, where it runs and is glorified, makes, as it were, a prelude or preface to that great change, by altering the property of the hearts and lives of many. The covetous man it makes liberall, the oppressour it makes mercitull, the earthly minded, it makes heavenly; the fearfull, it encourageth; the proud, it humbleth, the unclean it purifieth; the profane it sanctifieth: the powers of sinne and darknesse in the natures and souls of many, flee before it. It alters many times the whole course and frame of nature in men; and so defaceth the image of *Satan* in many, both men and women, that those that knew them in the daies

of

of their vanity, looking upon their waies and spirits after the Scriptures have had to doe with, in the way of their change, could hardly say, these are the men: it takes away the heart of stone, and gives men an heart of flesh in the stead of it. You your selves that hear me this day, cannot (at least a good part of you) but give testimony, and that in your own experience, of the truth and certainty of these things. How many of you are really and fully sensible, that your old hearts have been, as it were, taken out of your bowels, by the hand of the Scriptures, and a new put into you, by the same hand? that the Gospel hath come in and separated between you and your old waies, wherein *sometimes* you walked in the vanity of your mindes, and in the lusts of your ignorance; and hath guided your feet into waies of farre more excellencie and honour, yea and hath made them lovely, and waies of pleasure and delight unto you? The Apostle having reckoned up, severall sorts and kindes of sinners amongst the *Corinthians*, as *fornicators,* *idolaters,* *adulterers,* *wantons,* *abusers of themselves* with man-kindes, *thieves,* *covetous,* *drunkards,* *railers,* *extortioners;* tells them, that such some of them had been: *And such* (saith he) *were some of you: but yee are washed, but yee are sanctified, but yee are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.* They were justified, in, i. by or through the name of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, beleevd on, and they were washed, viz. from all those pollutions and abominations, and so sanctified, by the spirit of God. The spirit of God by acting and working the consideration of the great grace of justification by *Christ* upon their hearts and souls, overcame and slew all those vile and sinfull affections and dispositions in them, and so made them meet for the service of God. In like manner (I make little question, but) it hath been, and is the case with many of you: you have been so and so, proud, covetous, unclean, *lovers of pleasures more then lovers of God,* &c. but now you are a people of another spirit, and all these waies of sin and vanity, are an abomination unto your souls: yea, whatsoever you know by your selves in this kinde, there is yet lesse question, but that you know many such things by others, many such alterations & changes that have been made in the hearts and lives of others, both men & women,

V 2

by

I. 1. 6, 7.

verf 9

I. 1. 6.

I. 1. 6, 7.

Ma. 5. 13.

by the power of the Gospel overshadowing them. You know many, who sometimes were as a *parched heath*, as a *dry and barren wilderness*, now by the pouring out of the waters of life upon them by the hand of the Gospel, become as *Eden*, and as the *garden of God*: you know where, and in whom that prediction of *Isaiah*, chap. 55. 13. is specially, or in a morall sence, fulfill'd: *For thorns, there shall come up [or, there shall grow] the fire-tree: and in stead of nettles, there shall come up the mistle-tree.* My brethren, this property or power of the Scriptures whereof we now speak, thus to transforme the mindes and spirits and waies of men, hath not been matter of opinion, or of conjecture only, but of the most sensible and certain experiment unto the world, now for many generations. And this experience so perfectly agreeing with many things which the Scriptures report of themselves in this kinde, the mention and consideration of them, cannot but adde some weight to the demonstration in hand, and turn for a testimony unto them, that of a truth they are from God: therefore let us mention some few of them. *And many that beleeved (saith Luke) came, and confessed, and shewed their works: Many also of them which used curious arts, brought their books, and burned them before all men, and they counted the price of them, and they found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed. And such were some of you (saith the Apostle, meaning, fornicators, idolatours, adulterers, thieves, covetous, drunkards, &c.) but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Iesus, and by the spirit of our God.* See likewise the other Scriptures noted in the margin.

Thus we see by testimonies and witnesses and evidences on all hands, and in all kindes, that the Scriptures are mighty and wonderfull in their operations and workings upon the judgements and consciences, upon the hearts and affections of men, even to the changing and altering, and making all things new in them; they boast of great things, that they have already done, and are doing daily, yea and are yet further able to doe, in this kinde. Let us then (in a word) consider, whether there be not a spirit of much conviction in the thing, to prove them the royall issue of the eternall God.

As

As *Nicodemus* said unto *Christ*, *master, We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can doe these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him:* In the same manner, and upon the like ground, we may conclude, that the Scriptures are teachers come into the world from God: for they could not doe such miracles, as we have heard, both in this, and in the two former demonstrations, they could not raise up children unto *Abraham* of the bones of the earth, they could not of such as were a generation of vipers, make a generation of holy and heavenly-minded men; except God were with them. When *John* sent two of his Disciples unto *Christ*, to ask him whether he was the *Messiah* that was to come, or whether they should look for another, *Christ* made them this answer: *Goe, and shew John again those things which ye doe hear and see: The blinde receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, &c.* meaning, that the beholding and considering of such great works as these, so familiarly, and frequently done by him as they were, were an indubitable argument and proof that he was the long expected *Messiah*, and that they had no reason to look for any other. Now (my brethren) all these works, and miracles being in a spirituall way or sence, wrought as familiarly, as frequently, by the Scriptures, and the Gospel, are they not every whit as lively, as pregnant an evidence and demonstration, that they are confederate with the *Messiah*, and partakers of the same original, yea and power also, with him? yea the truth is, that to doe the works mentioned (in a spirituall way) as to give sight to those that are spirituall blinde, and to enable them (with *Moses*) to see him that is invisible; and so to make the lame to walk, i. to make those able (with *David*) to walk in Gods statutes, and run the way of his commandments, who before halted right-down in their obedience unto him, or rather mov'd not at all in these waies; and again, to wash and cleanse men from the noisome and contagious leprosie of sinne, and to make them clean both in flesh and spirit; to open the spirituall ears of men, and to cause them to attend diligently and conscientiously to the great things of their peace, who before had no ears (as the Scripture speaks) to hear such things; and

Job. 3. 2.

Math. 11.
v. 4, 5, & 6.

V 3

lastly

lastly to quicken and raise up those that are dead in sins and trespasses, and to make them live by putting in a spirit of faith, and hope, and grace into them; I say to doe such spirituall works as these, requires as great, as holy, as outstretched an arme, as the other did.

Joh. 14. 12.

Our Saviour expresseth himself thus, *Joh. 14. 12. Verily verily I say unto you, he that believeth in me, the works that I doe he shall doe also and greater works then these also shall he doe.* Now *Christophorus* (who was simply the best expositor of Scripture amongst all the fathers) by these greater works, which *Christ* affirmeth that he should doe, who believeth in him, understands spirituall works upon the hearts and souls of men, analogically, and by proportion, answering those that *Christ* did literally and externally in the bodies of men: and those he affirms to be greater, i. (I conceive) of more worth and consideration then these. And *Anselme* in his book *de lib. ro arbitrio*. hath this saying. *Magis miraculum estimo cum Deus voluntati desertanti, reatit rectitudinem, quam cum mortuo vitam reddit amissam.* i. I esteem it a greater miracle, when God restores unto the will of a man, that rectitude, or integrity, which it willingly deserted and forsook, then when he restores that life unto a dead man, which he hath lost. Of which opinion he gives this reason: *Corpus enim necessitate moriendo, non peccat, ut vitam nunquam recipiat: voluntas vero per se rectitudinem deserendo, meretur ut illa semper indigeat.* i. The body dying by necessity, sinneth not, that it should never receive life again, but the will, voluntarily, and of it self forsaking uprightnesse, deserves to want it for ever. So then, those transformations and changes which are made in the hearts, and mindes, and lives of men and women by the Scriptures, being so exceeding great and wonderfull as they have been represented to us, clearly argue that there is a power and presence with them when they act at this high rate, like the power and presence of the Almighty, and which can be none other but the power and presence of God.

Object.

If it be here objected and said; but have not such alterations and changes as you speak of, been made in the mindes and conversations of men, by the morall discourses of Philosophers and wise men amongst the Heathen, who had not the opportu-

nity

unity to take any thing out of the Scriptures to put into their writings? Have not many upon their principles, persuasions, and directions, been reduced from incontinencie unto chastity; from intemperance, unto sobriety; from prodigality, unto parsimony: from passion and revenge, to a temper, and placableness of spirit (besides many others.) And doth not *Horace* (a Heathen Poet) give this great testimony to practical and morall literature?

*Nemo adeo ferus est ut non mis-scere possit,
Si modo cultura patientem accommodat aurem.*

i. The fiercest wight to meeknesse may be won,
By patient hearkning to instruction.

Yea is there not a very memorable story, reported both by *Dionysius Luertius*, and *Valerius Maximus* (both authours of good credit) concerning one *Polemo* an *Athenian*, who at first was a most dissolute and debauch'd young man; and afterwards, upon hearing *Xenocrates* the Philosophers discourse of modesty and temperance, was on the suddain taken off from his loosenesse, and betook himself to the study of Philosophy, and in time became a famous professor of it. The story they relate of this man, is briefly this. This yong *Polemo*, having fate up all the night long revelling and drinking with his companions, in the morning after the sun was risen, comes in his revelling habit and dresse, with a light transparent garment, with a garland of flowers upon his head, and with fragrant ointments upon him, the strength of his wine being yet in his head: in this posture he comes along by the School of *Xenocrates*, who was reading a Philosophy lecture to many of his Auditours, grave and sober men: and finding the door open, in he comes, and sits him down, with an intent to disturb the Philosopher in his way, and to dash him out of countenance with some drunken prank, or other. The rest being much offended at these uncivil and rude doings, *Xenocrates* himself no waies changing his countenance, fell off from the subject he was upon, and began a discourse of modesty and temperance: which discourse of his, by reason of the gravity and weight of it, so wrought upon this dissolute gallant, that he began to repent of his way, and first pulls off the garland that was on his head, and throws that

that away, presently after he draws and gathers in his arm within his cloak; and within a little while, his countenance and carriage were compos'd, and no signe of a reveller to be seen upon him, and ever after was a sober and temperate man, and fell to the study of Philofophie, and prov'd famously excellent in it. I have stood the longer in relating this passage, because I conceive it somewhat hard to finde another like unto it, to commend and set forth the efficacie, power, or success, of Philosophicall and morall learning.

But for answer both to this instance, and to the body and strength of the objection: it is, 1. to be granted, that for such waies and practises of extravagancie, which in the eye of reason, and of the naturall conscience (I mean, upon a little consideration and inquiry) are notoriously vile, and unworthy the nature and dignity of a man, being otherwise likely to be accompanied with many inconveniences and sorrows, to them that practise them; it is easie to conceive, that men by morall persuasions and inducements may be taken of from them; yea many are reclaimed and won from dissolute courses, onely by the advise and counsell of friends. In which cases, there is indeed a great change in their outward course and conversation, yea and some change too within, otherwise there would be none without. Yea

2. A man sometimes by consulting onely with himself, and with his own thoughts and understanding, yea sometimes upon a suddain motion or apprehension rising up within him, without much consultation, resolveth to make some remarkable change in his life and waies. See *Luk. 15. 17. Mat. 21. 29.* But

3. Though men may by morall interests and engagements, be brought to alter many things in the course of their lives and conversations, especially such things as they may easily discern to be destructive to their honour, comfort and peace in this present world, and to alter so much within also, as is simply requisite to maintain and carry on such an outward reformation (which was the case in the example related) Yet

1. It is very seldome seen but that men who alter and change any thing in themselves or in their waies, by the influence of morall engagements onely, or such inducements as Philofophers are

are able to administer unto them, it is seldome seen (I say) but that they doe it with reservation and exception; I mean, of many things (at least of some one thing) which they will not alter or reform, though they cannot but know, that even these things also are evil and therefore ought to be chang'd, and done away, as well as any other. As Christ said to him in the Gospel, who thought he had kept all the commandments from his youth up, that yet he wanted one thing: So is it still found in morall converts, who by the spirit that works in Philosophicall discourses, are reduced from waies of loosenesse and vanity, to more regularnesse in their course, they are seldome so chang'd, but that there is some one thing at least, and that notoriously evil, which is not changed or reformed; they rather exchange their sins, then forsake them. Whereas those that are kindly wrought upon by the Scriptures, and by the spirit that speaketh in them, are hereby so farre changed and renewed, that (with *David*) they become men and women after Gods own heart, which sympathie or conformity stands in this, that they will (i. are made inwardly and truly willing to) fulfill all his will, or pleasure, i. to have such respects to all his commandments (so farre as they are made known to them,) and sincerely to ingage and devote themselves to an univerfall obedience unto them; yea and otherwise then in the case of surprizall by temptation, actually to obey them. The leven of the Scriptures is spiritfull and strong, diffusing it's alterative vigor and property to the leavening of the whole lump of the nature and frame of man: the leven of Philofophie is weak and faint, and when it works to its utmost activity, it leaves the lump (in the most considerable part of it) unleavened.

2. The change which is made in men by morall influences, and the spirit that works with the greatest efficacie in the Doctrines of men, is onely a gradu in gradum, or a specie in speciem; not, a genere in genus. i. from a greater degree of sinne to a lesser, or from one species of sinne to another; but not from sinne unto holinesse. They return (saith the Prophet *Hosea*) but not to the most high. *Polemo* (of whom we heard in the objection) though by mingling the words of a Philosopher with faith, was so farre profited by them, as of a debauched man

to be made sober; from a reveller, to be changed into a Philosopher; yet did he not by any change or alteration hereby wrought in him, attain the honour of a Saint, or son of God, or come to partake of the Divine nature. The encouragements, motives, promises, which Philosophers were able to administer and tender unto men; were not great and precious enough to work their hearts about unto holiness, or to transport and carry them out of themselves unto God. Indeed the promises and encouragements by which some of them attempted the hearts and spirits of their disciples, to make them more than ordinary men, were great enough to have effected this; yea and more than they projected or intended: for they also spake of life and immortality, and avouched the abiding of many glorious things after death, for those who should hearken to the voice of their precepts and instructions. But though their promises in this kinde were great enough for their purpose, yet were they not precious enough: they wanted a Jesus Christ at the bottom of them, to give credit and authority, to give life and power, and fulnesse of interest in the souls and consciences of men, unto them: thorough a deficiency whereof they were able onely to beget a dead faith, and a dead hope in many of the things promised: now it must be, not a dead, but a living faith, that worketh by love: and so it must be, not a dead, but a lively hope, which must set men on work to purge themselves, even as he (i. God himself) is pure. Philosophicall promises were sufficient to prevail with men to deny themselves in lusts and practises, which were more ignoble, sensuall, and vile, but left them to seek themselves in others of a more subtle, though no lesse sinfull, nature and import, as vain-glory, self-admiration, &c. Whereas the promises advanced by the Scriptures, are of that strength and interest in the souls and consciences of men, that they suffer them not to seek themselves in any thing that is terrene, much lesse in any thing that is sinfull; but carrying them over, and beyond all these, prevail with them to seek themselves in God onely, and his service. Thus then we see difference in abundance, between those changes which are sometimes wrought by Philosophicall receipts in men, and those which are frequently seen and known

known to be effected by the Scriptures.

The eighth argument or demonstration to evince the descent of the Scriptures (and so of the Gospel) from heaven, arising from the matter of the Scriptures, is the excellencie of that wisdom, the heights and depths of that understanding, which shine forth and discover themselves in them, and particularly in the great transaction of the Gospel, as it is presented unto the world in the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul hath this passage, *Eph. 3 8 9. 10. Unto me who am lesse then the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.* What the Apostle here asserts unto God, in respect of the Gospel, a manifoldnesse, or an abundant variety of wisdom; is easie to be discern'd by those that will draw neer to the Scriptures and to the Gospel, and give out the strength of their minds and understandings in the study and contemplation of them.

Argum. 8.

Eph. 3 8, 9, 10.

Col. 2. 1.
Joh. 14 26.

If you ask me, but by what rule shall we be able to judge of excellencie of wisdom, and choicenesse of understanding? what is that which you call excellencie of wisdom that when we see or apprehend it, we may be able to acknowledge it, and do reverence unto it. To this I answer.

1. That all men are not alike capable of the knowledge of wisdom; nor alike apprehensive of the excellencie and choicenesse of understanding. Some men are by nature of low, dull and depressed understandings, who cannot rise, nor to an ordinary pitch to conceive and reach things of a middle nature or of any whit more then of a common purport. Others have their lot of reason, apprehension, and capacity assign'd unto them by God, in a better ground: I mean, they are naturally more ready and quick of apprehension, can relish and taste wisdom when they meet with it, sooner, and with lesse consideration and fewer debates upon things, then others. Now for the former of these persons that are slow of apprehension,

hension, it is very hard to prescribe them a rule, whereby to judge of excellency of wisdom, that they are capable of; but onely the rule of much labour and diligence to consider the nature, and tendencie of things proposed to them. As Solomon saith, If the *iron be blunt*, and a man hath not whet it to an edge, *he must put the moe strength to it*: So where nature hath not confer'd an estate of reason and understanding, they must be content to betake themselves to the hand of diligence and industry, if they mean to live and act at the same rate of wisdom with other men.

2. Some by *reason of use, habit, or custome* (as the Apostle speaks) *have their wits, or senses exercised to discern both good and evil*; he speaks of the discerning of things spiritually good, and spiritually evil; and consequently of discerning things, truly good, and truly evil. These differences of things, *good and evil*, are most considerable in spirituall things; and of light consequence in all others. Now as some have their *senses* (he means their intellectuall *senses*) *exercised in discerning good and evil*, i. that are ever and anon, weighing, and studying and considering matters of a spirituall nature, to finde out truth from error, and that which is *good*, from that which is *evil*; so there are others, whose *senses*, in this kinde, through disuse, grow rusty, and unfit for those operations and functions, which are most naturall and proper to them. Now for those that have their *senses so exercised*, as the Apostle speaks, they need no rule to be given them, whereby to discern or judge of excellency of wisdom; the very constitution, frame and temper of their senses, or discerning faculty, is a sufficient rule unto them in this kinde: as the very palate or taste of some men, qualifies them to an excellent degree, without any other rule, to apprehend with all exactness the different tastes both of meats and drinks. The excellent strains, the savour and taste of the wisdom of God in the Gospel, is (doublelesse) strongly and with much satisfaction apprehended by such men. Yet

3. And lastly, to fix a generall rule, whereby to judge of excellency of wisdom and understanding (at least in one of the most considerable subjects or objects of it) and herein also

to shew them wherein this excellency consists; excellency of wisdom (in the generall) consists as in other things, so chiefly in this: *viz.* in the contrivement of such means, for the bringing of any great and much desirable end to passe, such an end which otherwise, and according to all rule of common apprehension, is very difficult, and scarce possible to be brought to passe; wisdom (I say) chiefly stands in the contrivement of such means for the bringing such an end as this to passe, which have these four properties in them. 1. A strong, and indissolvable connexion with the end, i. when they are such, which can hardly, if at all, be defeated or miscarry. 2. An equitableness or righteousness thorowout; when there is nothing insull, nothing unjust or unworthy in them. 3. A sweetness and pleasantness of proportion to the end; i. when the strength of that connexion, which they have with the end, lies more in the stratagem, I mean in the manner of the contrivance, hath most of the head in it, and as little of the arme, or right-down force, as may be. The 4th and last propertie, Is a certain remoteness of the whole, or main of the projection or contrivance, from the common thoughts or apprehensions of men: this is, when the means we speak of is of such a nature, compounded, as it were, of such ingredients, and made up into such a devise, which was no waies likely to have entered into the heart or thoughts of any other, but onely his, who is the contriver of it. I shall not stand to argue any of these particulars; nor yet to prove, that excellency of wisdom consists in them; the reason why I place wisdom, and that in the excellency and glory of it, in these jointly taken, is evident enough by a diligent consideration of them respectively and together. I shall (for the present) onely shew you how you may by the rule now delivered unto you, be able to discern and judge somewhat, of that excellent and choise wisdom, which rules and reigns, yea triumphs in the frame and composure of the Gospel; this onely premis'd by way of caution, that we doe not limit or confine wisdom in the excellency of it, onely to the contrivement of means of what nature or property soever, or for the compassing or obtaining of what end soever. There may be an excellency of wisdom, 1. In the election of

mens ends (at least their particular and subordinate ends) as *viz.* in setting up godliness, or excelling in grace, for a mans end, before riches, or greatnesse in the world; and so, in making the good, or comfort of others, a mans end, rather than himself, or his own advancement in outward things; though the truth is, that in propriety of speech, the chusing of such ends as these, is rather a chusing of means, then of ends. Indeed if we speak of the great and ultimate end of *men*, their *summum bonum*, their sovereign good, wisdom hath no place in the chusing of this, but nature onely. All men naturally, without any deliberation or consultation upon the matter, desire happiness; this is every mans end without exception: though there be a vast difference among men in traversing, or prosecuting this end, answerable to their different apprehensions concerning the nature and substance of the end itself. Again

2. There is choicenesse of wisdom too in a due and diligent prosecution of means, as well as in a choice contrivance of means. *The sluggard* or the slothfull man, and the fool, or *man destitute of understanding*, are one and the same with *Solomon*; and otherwhile, the wise man and the diligent, or industrious, the same. And this wisdom I would gladly recommend unto you (my brethren of this Church and fellowship.) I wish your wisdom in prosecuting the means of your spirituall welfare, were like unto the faith of the Romanes, *Rom. 1.8.* which was *famosa throughout the world*.

3. Wisdom likewise is seen, and may be seen in much of his excellencie and strength, in judging of connexions and proportions between causes and effects, whether naturall or morall: as in being able to discern and foresee, what men of such and such principles, of such and such practises, are like to doe in such and such cases, under such and such circumstances, &c. as God by means of the infinitenesse of his wisdom was able certainly to foresee, how the men of *Keilah* would have dealt by *David*, had he staid in their city, till *Saul* had come to demand him: and so likewise how the men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* would have acquitted themselves in matter of repentance, in case the like *works* had *been done amongst them*, which were done

1 Sim. 23 13, 14.

M. c. 22. 13.

done in *Chorazin* and *Beithsaida*.

But however wisdom may have place to shew her self, and that with much excellencie, in these and haply in some other particulars besides these, as well as in the contrivement of means for the bringing any end whatsoever to passe; yet I have made choice of this head rather than any of the rest, as more commodious and proper to work upon, and prosecute, for that end and purpose which we have in hand; *viz.* to make you capable (in some measure) of discerning that transcendent excellencie of wisdom, which shines in the face of the Scriptures (and of the Gospel more particularly) and makes it glorious, even like unto the appearance of that *invisible* one, whom *Moses* saw, though *invisible*.

First then you must understand and consider distinctly, what that end, or ends are (be they one, or more, at least the principall and most considerable of them) which God propounds to himself in the Gospel, I mean which he discovers in the Gospel that he doth, or hath propounded to himself; and which he pursues and prosecutes by those means which are revealed therein: Because without a distinct knowledge of these ends, you can never apprehend nor judge to any purpose, the excellencie of the wisdom in those means, by which he intends (and is every day at work accordingly) to bring those ends to passe. His great and suprem end, is the glorifying of himself, yet not simply this neither; but the glorifying of himself in such or such a way, or, by such and such means, as *viz.* the salvation of *some*, and the condemnation of others, of that kinde of creature of his, which is called, *man*, and him considered as *sinfull* or fallen. And not simply this neither, the glorifying of himself in the salvation of *some*, and condemnation of others: but the glorifying of himself like unto himself, *i* upon terms of the highest and richest advantage for his glory. He might possibly have glorified himself at an under rate, both in the one and in the other, without going that way to work, which now he hath done, for the glorifying himself in them. So that the salvation and condemnation of men, as they respect the glory of God, procured and rais'd by them, have the nature and consideration of means; though other wise, in respect

respect of the means by which themselves are accomplished and brought to passe, they have the nature of ends. Now when I say and affirm, that Gods great end which he discovers in the Gospel as intended to be brought about by him by the means there specified, is the glorifying of himself, in the salvation and condemnation of men; I doe not intend to deny, but that God hath many other means and designs on foot in the Gospel, for the glorifying of himself, besides these (I mean the salvation and condemnation of men) but this is that I would say; that by what means soever besides these, spoken of in the Gospel, God intends to glorifie himself, they all relate unto these, and are subordinate unto and resolve themselves into these. So that this still remains an unquestionable truth, that Gods great end held forth in the Gospel, is the glorifying of himself like himself, partly in the salvation, partly in the condemnation of men.

In the second place to give you yet some further light, whereby to see and judge the excellencie of wisdom in the Gospel, you must consider, that the glorifying of God by the salvation and condemnation of men (at least as now they are devis'd and intended by him to be effected) is an end of very high and glorious consequence, not onely in respect of God himself, but of the creature also, both men and Angels (I mean those of either kinde, whom God hath, or shall think worthy to take into part and fellowship with himself in his own blessedness and glory.) We shall not now stand to argue or prove this; but take it for granted, as being a thing cleer, and easie to be assented unto. Onely it is to be taken into consideration, for our present purpose; because, if that which is the chief and supream end of the Gospel, were but some light, ordinary, or inconsiderable thing, there were no place for that excellencie of wisdom we speak of, to be found in any means whatsoever for the effecting of it. Yea it argues rather weaknesse and folly then any thing else, to be curious and profound in contriving means for bringing that to passe, which being effected is of little or no consequence unto any.

Thirdly (and lastly) it is yet further to be considered, concerning this end we speake of (the glorifying of God,

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in the salvation and condemnation of men) that it is an end of such a nature and consideration, that being seriously thought of, and narrowly inquired into, it will be found to be such a thing, such an end, as was not compassable, was not to be attained or brought to passe by any other person, one or more, nor in any other way, or by any other means, then by him who hath now taken it in hand, and is in the pursuite of it (I mean, God himself) and that in that way and method of means, wherein he pursues it. Neither shall we spend time (for the present) in the demonstration of this; it being a point which frequently comes to hand; and besides hath no great difficulty in it to be apprehended, and beleev'd. Onely the remembrance of it, is necessary for our present occasion; because, if the glorifying of God upon the terms we speak of (*viz.* in, or by the salvation and condemnation of men fallen) were an end, either in it self, or in respect of any wisdom, strength, or power of any creature, or creatures whatsoever, of an easie assention, obvious to be attain'd, the wisdom of God which hath contrived the way and means for the obtaining of it, would be lesse considerable, and the excellencie of it not so like to affect, or take the hearts and souls of men. For that which every man, or men of ordinary abilities, can doe, no man will much value the doing of it, by whomsoever it be done; no not though there be more then ordinary understanding, skill, or wisdom shewed in the effecting of it. But now the glorifying of God in the salvation and condemnation of sinfull men, being not only a thing of a most transcendent consequence and import, but of a very difficult, and next to an impossible performance, it yields the fullest and largest opportunity that can be imagined, for the greatest excellencie of wisdom that can be conceived, to shew it self in contriving a way or means how to accomplish it. Thus farre then we have prepared your judgements and understandings, to conceive of the excellencie of wisdom in the Gospel: We have shewed you, that the great end there presented and driven at, will not onely bear or admit an excellencie of wisdom, but necessarily requires, calls aloud for an excellencie of wisdom, yea the greatest excellencie in this kinde that can be imagined, for the effecting of it.

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In the next place then, let us consider, whether the means, which the Gospel tenders unto us, as contrived and disposed by God, for the effecting of the great end mentioned, hath not all those four characters or properties in it of an excellencie of wisdom, formerly expressed.

The first was this; *a strong and indissolvable connexion with the end*; when a means is such, or so laid, that it cannot lightly prove abortive, or miscarry. And is not the course, and means which God (according to the report of the Gospel) hath taken for the glorifying of himself in the salvation and commendation of men, a means of this property and commendation? First, can the salvation of men miscarry in the hand of such a Mediatour and Redeemer, so great and glorious, every waies so accomplished for his undertaking in this kinde, as with grace, goodness, love, wisdom, power, interest with God, &c. as the Gospel exhibits him to the world, on whose shoulder the weight of this great businesse is here laid? Is not such a Saviour every waies able, yea and willing, to save those, and that perfectly, that shall *come unto him*? And shall not those most certainly *come unto him* (and so partake of salvation by him) whom God the Father shall draw, and perswade effectually to come? Therefore certainly that means which the Gospel holds forth, for the saving of men, is a means of efficacy and power, a means that will reach the end with an high hand, and against, and above, all contradiction. And the salvation of men, upon the Gospel terms, in that way, and by the means we speak of, is every whit as effectual for the glorifying of God. The glorifying of God, is but the naturall, or essentiall result of the salvation of men in the Gospel way, as will further appear in opening the other properties.

Again for the condemnation of men, we need not question but that there is place and room enough left in the Gospel, for many to perish, and to be condemned, and that most certainly, *viz.* all such as shall not beleieve, and continue unbelieving unto the end. But that which is mainly considerable in this point, is: not, that many shall certainly perish, notwithstanding the Gospel; but that such provision is partly made in the Gospel, partly here declar'd to be made otherwise, that every person

person without exception, man or woman, that shall perish, notwithstanding the Gospel, shall yet so perish, and upon such terms, that God shall be highly glorified in their condemnation, and in their perishing. His perfect hatred of sinne, without the least touch or tincture or mixture of any unrighteousness, yea or any hardnesse or rigorousnesse of proceedings, shall only appear in their condemnation: they shall perish with their blood upon their own heads; as we shall see further in the next particular.

The second property of a means, wherein (in conjunction with the former, and the other two remaining) the excellencie of wisdom doth appear, is, an equitableness, or cleerenesse of righteousness throughout; when there is nothing injurious or oppressive unto any, nothing that bears hard upon any principle or rule of justice or equity, within the whole course or compasse of the means projected. It is cleerly repugnant to the principles of wisdom, much more of the excellencie of wisdom, to put any polluted or dishonourable ingredient into any means whatsoever, whatsoever the end be which we desire to accomplish by it. But when a means is strong and greater then resistance, and yet hath nothing hard, nor unequal in it, the end being excellent and of high concernment, thus farre an excellencie of wisdom discovers it self, in the election and contrivement of it. Now most certain and evident it is, that the means contriv'd in the Gospel, for the glorifying of God, in the salvation and condemnation of men, hath this character upon it in the fairest and most visible manner that can be. For 1. Whom did God injure or deal hardly by in the least, in any thing which relates either to the salvation, or condemnation of men according to the Gospel? The greatest appearance of hard measure offered to any in this kinde, is in the abasement and sufferings of *Jesus Christ*. But 1. the common saying is, *volenti non fit injuria*; nothing is an injury which is done to a man with his will, and free consent. Now *Jesus Christ* was most willing to take up, and bear that great burthen of the world, that lay upon his shoulder in shame and sufferings. *Therefore doth my Father love me* (saith he) *because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self.* Joh. 10. 17. 18.

If it be here said; But what though *Jesus Christ* was never so willing to suffer what he did; yet might there not be some hard measure (at least) offered unto him, in putting him upon it? Good dispositions may be wroag'd, not onely when they are forc'd upon the doing those things, which are contrary to them, and which they are unwilling to doe; but when they are wrought upon by perswasion, and drawn into a willingnesse to doe that, which is inconvenient or prejudiciall to them. To this I answer (in a word) goodnesse of disposition when it is attended and guarded with excellencie of wisdom and prudence, so that it knows how to repair any breach, that it shall be willing to make upon it self, for the good of others, is not at all obnoxious to any such danger or inconvenience, as to be drawn to any thing prejudiciall to it. Now this was the blessed frame and temper of the heart of *Jesus Christ*; as he had goodnesse in abundance, even to act him to a willing *laying down his life* for men: so had he wisdom in abundance, even to teach him how, and upon what terms to *lay it down*, so that he might receive, or *take it again* [and that indeed upon terms of advantage] and his father (it seems) loved him as well, if not as much, for this wisdom, as for that goodnesse. This I conceive to be cleerly asserted by himself, in the Scripture lately cited; *Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life* [so, or upon such terms, of innocencie, righteousnesse, and will] *that I may* [viz. in a way of justice and equity, and without the least dishonour unto him] *take* [or rather, receive] *it again* from him.

Again, goodnesse of disposition is not in danger neither to be wrought upon to inconvenience, by those, who are tender and jealous over it, and withall prudent and wise, to know what things are hartfull and prejudiciall to it. Now the Gospel informs us, that it was God the Father, who put his Son *Jesus Christ* upon those sufferings, which he suffered for the salvation of the world: and he (we know) was farre from working in any unworthy or unkinde manner, upon the sweet disposition of his Sonne *Jesus Christ*. Nor (doubtlesse) would he ever have drawn this sonne of his into such an engagement, of so much shame and sorrow, and suffering, no not for the sal-

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vation of the world, if he had not known how to have recompens'd him to the full for all the labour, and travail of his soul therein.

Again; true it is, in the course of means, which the Gospel holds forth as projected and laid by God for the salvation of men, the troubles and sufferings of other men also, are included, especially of the Preachers and Ministers of the Gospel. Men cannot be saved without beleeving, they cannot beleeve without hearing: they cannot hear without Preaching: nor can the Ministers of the Gospel preach unto them, without exposing themselves to many troubles and persecutions from the world for their work sake. I have sometimes opened that passage of the Apostle unto you, *Col. 1. 24.* from whence we took notice of two things as necessary for the salvation of men. The first, is the making of a Gospel: the second, the making known, or preaching of this Gospel: and both these (as we shewed at large, when time was) require sufferings: the former, the *sufferings of Christ*; the latter, the sufferings of those, who shall Preach and publish this Gospel in the world. In which respect, the Apostle here calls his *afflictions* in Preaching the Gospel, *the filling up of that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body sake, which is the Church*; i. for the actuall effecting of their salvation. But the case is every whit as cleer here (if not much cleerer) I mean in the sufferings of the Apostles, and Ministers of the Gospel, viz. that there is no wrong done unto them by God, whatsoever they suffer in this kinde from men, as it was in the sufferings of *Christ* himselfe. We shall not need stand to argue this

2. As there is no injurie or wrong unto any person whatsoever included in the means, which God hath projected for the salvation of men, and the glorifying of himself herein; so neither is there any thing that entrencheth upon any rule of justice or equity, simply considered, and without relation unto persons. God might (I mean in regard of his executive power, not his will, for this is doubtful in the case;) he might by a strong hand have sav'd men, without any injury done either to man, or Angel; and yet have seem'd (at least) to have

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dispensed with some main principles or rules of equity or justice, in saving them; as *viz.* in case he had sav'd them, without any atonement at all made for them; or without an atonement of full consideration and value; or if he had sav'd them, whilst they were yet impenitent, and altogether sinfull, before their mindes were changed. To take a murthrer, or malefactor in any kinde, immediately upon the murther, or other act of vilenesse committed, and without any account given, or repentance shewen for the sinne, to make him a King, and set him up upon a throne; carries a strong appearance (at least) of injustice, or of somewhat that is as bad, in it. But suppose there were any perfect atonement, that it were possible for a murthrer to make for the murther he hath committed, and this atonement should be made by him; and further, he should give full satisfaction, that he was now become a new man, and abhor'd any inclination unto blood; in this case, and upon these terms, if he should be countenanced, or prefer'd to any place of dignity or honour, whereof he was otherwise capable, there were no colour of injustice in it, or unworthinesse otherwise. This is the case of the salvation of men, according to the tenour of that way and means, which God, according to Scripture information, hath devised to effect it. He saves, he exempts, no sinner from deserved punishment (much lesse advanceth any unto glory) but onely such, for whose sin, or sins, 1. a plenary atonement hath been made already: 2. who have unfeignedly repented of their sinnes, and are become new creatures, and perfect haters of sin.

3. (And lastly) as to the condemnation of men, every whit as evident it is, that there is not the least touch of injustice, nor of anything that is unequall or hard, in all that method or course of means, by which it is effected, or taketh place. Indeed if God should deprive men of all ability and power to repent and to beleeve, and then should be still moving and perswading, still intreating and beseeching, urging and pressing them to beleeve with that patheticalnesse of affection, wherein he expresseth himself in the Scriptures, even to those that perish, as well as to those that are saved; this would seem very hard, yea somewhat harder then injustice it self; but this is not

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so. As if a King having caus'd a mans leggs to be cut off suppose he hath done it in a way of justice, and according to the law, *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, this man having cut off the leggs of another; yet if he should urge, presse and perswade such a man as this, whose leggs he hath cut off, to runne a race with those that have their lumbs, and are swift of foot, and should promise him, with many expressions of love, exceeding great rewards, if he would quit himself in the race like a man, and come as soon to the goal, as they that runne with him; this would be a carriage favouring more of a bloudy and unmanlike insolencie over this poor wretch in his misery, then of any reall affection, grace, or respect towards him, or of any desire of his good: in like manner to conceive that God applieth himself with such moving and melting expressions of mercy, tendernesse of bowels, love, grace, bounty, &c. towards his creature, man, as the Scripture from place to place emphatically asserts that he doth, yea towards very sinfull and unworthy men, promising unto them life, and glory, and the great things of the world to come, if they will beleeve, repent, and turn unto him; and yet to suppose withall, that these men, to whom he maketh these rich and sweet applications of himself, are wholly destitute of all power to doe what he requires of them in this case, to save them from destruction, and to conferre the great things promised upon them, as *viz.* to beleeve and repent, is to represent the glorious God in his greatest expressions of mercy and grace, and love unto the world, rather as laughing the world to scorn in that great misery wherein it is plunged, then as a God any waies truly desirous, or intending to relieve it, his glorious overtures and professions of love, grace, and favour towards it, notwithstanding. Some indeed imagine that they see such a face of God as this, presenting it self in the glasse of the Gospel. But, God giving life and opportunity, we shall demonstratively shew and prove in due time, that all such conceptions are most unworthy of God, and wholly inconsistent with those things, which the Scriptures hold forth and teach, as well concerning him, as those gracious abilities which he hath indulgently confer'd upon men, in and through the *second*, notwithstanding

withstanding their fall in the first, *Adam*.

The third property mentioned of an excellencie of wisdom, discovering it self in the contrivement of a means for the compassing such an end as we spake of, was, when the means have a sweetnesse and pleasantnesse of proportion to the end, *i.* (as we further explain'd it) when the strength of that connexion (formerly spoken of) which they have with the end, lies more in the stratagem, *i.* in the manner of contrivance, and hath most of the head in it, requiring as little of the arme, or rightdown force for the execution of any thing, as may be. Now that the means, which the Gospel holds forth, for the bringing about that great end, the glorifying of God in the salvation and condemnation of men, hath this character also, or property in them, is evident upon these two grounds or considerations.

1. Because there is nothing within the whole compasse of this means, which is to be effected by the power of God (I mean by his executive power) but what in a way of reason, wisdom, and equity, may, yea and ought to be effected, yea and is morally, or in the justly-moving-causes effected, before God puts forth his out-stretched arme, for the literall or externall execution of it; nothing is belayed, or spoken of, as to be effected or done by the power of God, but what naturally, as it were, and with a rationall voice, calls for this power of his to effect it, even as grapes when they are fully ripe, call for the hand of the gatherer, and corn when that is ripe, for the hand of the reaper. And

2. Because all other parts or ingredients in the means we speak of, which doe not stand in any executive force or power, but rather in a simple contrivement, doe in the eye of reason, and of a considerate understanding, looke with a very delightful and pleasant aspect, upon that great end. And because the Gospel consists of such a means for the glorifying of God, in the salvation and condemnation of men, as hath been signified unto you, *viz.* which is effectually and potent as to the obtaining of the end, and yet the potencie of it chiefly consists in the wise contrivement of things in reference to the end, and not in force; hence (I conceive) it may well be that the

Apollie

Apollie calls the Gospel, both the *wisdom of God, and the power of God*. But unto them that are called, both of the Jews and Grecians, we preach *Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. By *Christ*, he means the Doctrine of *Christ*, *viz.* the Gospel; which he calls *the power of God*; because it is so effectually potent for the end; and withall, *the wisdom of God*; because this potencie chiefly consists in the wisdom of it.

Let us begin with the former consideration. There are but four great turnings, or transactions of things (in the generall) within the compasse of that means, which the Gospel holds forth, for the glorifying of God in the salvation and condemnation of men, that are to be effected by the unbaring of the mighty arme of God. The first, is the raising of *Christ* from the dead, with the appurtenances and consequences thereof. The second the destroying of the devil (as the Scripture speaks) *i.* the cutting him off from the exercise of that power, which he was interested in, and possessed of, over all flesh, first, to make men and women doe his work, whilst they live: secondly, after death, to torment them night and day for ever. Now the devil is by a strong hand, restrained from the exercise of this power, especially in reference to the Saints: and if it be not to all men, it is through their own negligence and default. The third, is the casting of wicked and impenitent persons into hell, with the things appertaining therunto; The fourth and the last is, the advancement of the Saints unto their estate of glory, with what is requisite hereunto. I doe not (for the present) remember any thing besides these four (with their members and appurtenances) within the compasse of the means, we speak of, that is to be transacted, by the immediate force and power of the omnipotent arme of God. It is true, the power of God is sometimes put forth in drawing men unto *Christ* when they beleeve; so the Saints are said to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; but the power of God we speak of, works in these, and such like effects as these, by means proportionable to them; as when he makes grapes to grow upon the vine, and *grasse to grow upon the mountains*, he works both one and the other with his omnipotent

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power (for he hath no other power, but this) but he works by means proportionable unto the things produced by him. But when he rais'd the Lord Christ from the dead, he did not put on any covering of flesh on his arme, but wrought with it bare: and so when he shall compell the wicked to goe into hell fire, having rais'd them from the dead (by way of a preparative thereunto) so again when he shall put the righteous into a condition of perfect blessednesse and of glory, having rais'd them also from the dead, by way of preparation to it; he will, and must interpose with his almighty power upon the same terms, *viz.* without the concurrence or cooperation of any second cause, or causes, apt or likely to produce these great effects. Now then this is that which we say, that for all the four particulars mentioned, though they are to be effected, and brought to passe, by strength of arme, yet there is such a disposition and contrivance of things precedaneous to every of them, yea, so pleasantly introductive to them, that they will seem to be as much (if not more) acts of wisdom, reason and equity, as acts of power; and consequently there will no more of this executive power of God be seen in bringing about that great end of glorifying himself in the salvation and condemnation of men, then needs must. To run through the particulars, with as much brevity as may be.

First, for the raising of the Lord Christ from the dead (which is a master vein in the body of the means, which the Gospel presents unto us for the end so often specified, and carries a great breadth in them) 1. Was there not all the reason in the world, why God should raise him again from the dead? was there, or is there any thing, to disparage that act of God, either in point of wisdom, righteousnesse, or equity, by which he rais'd him from the dead? Did he not live holily, and blamelesly in this present world, whilst his naturall life stood by him? Did he not challenge all his enemies to *rebuke him of sin*; and none of them accept to challenge? yea and were not his inward parts as *full of grace and truth* (as John speaketh) as his life was of the fruits and expressions of them? There was no spot or blemish of sinne to be found in him, body, or soul. So that there was not the least cause, nor colour of a cause, why God should leave him

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in the hand of death in respect of any thing relating to himself, or why he should not raise him up again: yea the truth is, that thus farre there was no cause why he should so much as *raise of death*: much lesse why he should be left in the hand of death. Again, as touching his undertaking for others (I mean of expiating and making atonement for the sinnes of the world) it is true, there was reason, why in respect of this, he should die, or taste of death; because otherwise he could not have performed his undertaking. But there was no reason, why having perform'd this, and that with a surplussage of performance, not only dying, but remaining in the bands of death for a longer time then was simply necessary for that expiation, there was no reason (I say) in respect of this neither, why God should not raise him from the dead. Nay what in respect of his innocencie, and of his willingnesse to lay down his life for others, and of his full accomplishment of what he intended and undertook to doe, yea or was necessary for him to doe, for others; it was no way consisting with the wisdom or righteousnesse of God, not to have made out that outstretched arme of his power which he did, to raise him from the dead. And in this respect it was, that Peter spake, as he did, *Act. 2.* *Whom God hath raised up and loosed the sorrows of death, because it was impossible that he should be holden of it, i. of death.* How, or in what respect, was it impossible that Christ should be held by death? It was not impossible in respect of that nature, wherein Christ suffered death (this humane nature,) nor was it impossible simply in respect of the Divine nature, wherein he had communion, even whilst he suffered death, as well as in that nature, wherein he suffered death; nor was it impossible simply in respect of that absolute holinesse and freedom from sinne, which was in him; but this impossibility (I conceive) sprang chiefly from an utter inconsistencie with the righteousnesse and goodnesse of God, to suffer a person so innocent and holy as Christ was, and withall, having fully accomplished what he undertook by dying, to remain any longer in the bands and prison of death. So that this act of God in raising up Christ from the dead is (as was said) to be look'd upon every whit as much (if not more) as an act of righteousnesse, and of equity,

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equity,

A. 2. 24.

equity, as of power; yea the righteousness and wisdom which together shine forth in it, give, as it were, a gracious lustre, and set off to the power that appear'd in it. *The Kings strength* (saith David) *loveth judgement,* [or righteousness.]

Psal. 99. 4

2. As there was a necessity that God should raise Christ from the dead, in respect of the righteousness of his will, which could not suffer so righteous a person, as he was, to remain under the power of death, without cause; so was there a necessity also of the same act on Gods part, by way of designe, or wisdom, viz. to accommodate that great end we so oft speak of, the glorifying of himself in the salvation and condemnation of men. Neither could, either the one, or the other (I mean, either the salvation, or condemnation of men) have taken place, or been brought to passe upon the like terms of advantage for his glory, had not the raising of the Lord Christ from the dead, been one ingredient in the means of either. First, they that are saved, could not be saved (at least upon any such terms) without being justified; justified they could not be, without believing; believe they could not, but by and through, and by means of the rising again of Jesus Christ from the dead. *Who by his means* (saith Peter speaking of Christ) *doe believe in God, that rais'd him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God:* and in this respect he is said, *Rom. 4.* to have been raised again for our justification. *Who was delivered to death for our sinnes, and rose again* (or rather, was raised again, as the originall hath it) *for our justification:* viz. by being hereby put into a passive posture (as it were) or capacity of being believed on by men; whereby they come to be justified. And as Christ was raised again for the justification of those that are saved; so may he be said (and that in a sense very considerable) to be rais'd again also for the condemnation of those that perish. For were not Christ presented and preach'd unto wicked men, as being in such a condition, wherein he is every waies meet and worthy to be believed on, their unbelief, with all the sinne that accompanies it, would not be so heavy upon them; nor could God make any such earnings of glory, as now he doth, of their condemnation (as might be shew'd more at large,

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1 Pet. 1. 21.

Rom. 4. 25.

but for brevities sake, *We are* (saith Paul) *unto God a sweet favour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish.* The preaching of Christ, as he is described and held forth in the Gospel, in regard of the many mighty motives, encouragements, advantages, for believing, which of necessity must be tendered unto men in such a preaching of him, must needs render those altogether inexcusable, who believe not. So that though there be somewhat of the arme, and executive power, in the means which the Gospel holds forth for the glorifying of God in the salvation and condemnation of men; yet there is no more (at least as to that particular we last spake of; and we shall shew the like in others) then needs must, and what the excellencie of wisdom in the contrivement, did require.

2 Cor. 2. 15.

A second particular in the means we speak of, wherein the power of the arme of God is engaged and put forth, is the *destruction of the devils,* (as we interpreted it) the forcible restraining of him, from tempting men in this life especially above, or beyond, what they are able; and the absolute restraining him from tormenting them afterwards. Now the arme of God in this act also, is clothed with so much righteousness on the one hand, and wisdom on the other, that the power that is put forth in it, is hereby made every waies beautiful and lovely. First the righteousness of God, in destroying the devil, with the double destruction we speak of, appears as to both the degrees or parts of it, thus. It is righteous for God to restrain any creature whatsoever from any act, which it hath no right or interest to doe, or perform: but the devil hath no right or interest to tempt men (left of all the Saints, and those that believe) above what they are able to bear, or overcome, nor yet to torment them afterwards. Therefore it is every waies just and righteous for God to restrain him in this kinde: nor is there any thing of any hard reflexion upon God in it.

If you ask me, but why hath the devil no right to tempt even such men as you speak of, and that to that degree you mention? and so to torment them afterwards? If ever he had such a right (as you seem to imply he had) how did he

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lose it? what act did he, whereby he devoted himself of it?

To this I answer (supposing that for brevity sake, which already should have been shewed somewhat more at large, viz. that *Satan*, sometimes had a right, such as it was, to tempt men, whom, and to what degree he pleased, and was able) but my answer (I say) is.

1. That that right which at any time the *devil* had to tempt men, was but a right of permission, or sufferance on Gods part: it was not any right the devil could challenge or claim, either by his nature, or birth, or by any heroike, or high-deserving action; for the truth is, that that act of the devils, upon the success whereof, God gave him, or rather (to speak warily in a business of this nature) suffered him to take a right (or rather a power) of tempting men (the tempting of man in Paradise) was an act, so farre from meriting any thing at the hand of God, that it was highly provoking in his sight, as may clearly be gathered from the arraignment of the serpent, who was his instrument in it (*Gen. 3.*) and the curse there laid upon him: yea some Divines of great worth and learning, conceive, that the *devils* eternal condemnation was not sealed, or past recovery, till he had added this sinne, unto his former; brought the creature, man, into an estate of misery and death by his temptation (but this we leave to the assertors to prove) So then, that right which the *devil* ever had of tempting men, being nothing else but a thing permitted unto him by God, not purchased by any desert of his, but meerly out of a displeasure, and offence taken at his creature, man; may certainly with righteousness enough, be taken away by God upon a very slender occasion given on the devils part; yea it may be taken away at pleasure, without any occasion at all given by him, from whom it is taken upon such terms. Yea

2. In as much as this power of tempting men in this life (and there is the same reason of his power of tormenting them for ever, afterwards) was permitted unto the devil by God, only out of displeasure conceived against his creature man, and not at all for any gratification of him; whensoever this displeasure of God against man shall be taken off, and healed (which

Gen. 3. 7-9

(which is done by mans reconciliation to him by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ) there is occasion and ground enough for God to recall that permission of his given unto the devil; or otherwise to limit and restrain it, and the exercise of it, as he shall please. And in this respect it is said of Christ that *through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death* (i. had a power permitted unto him, to order and manage the affairs of death, temptations, occasions, allurements unto sinne, and all which concern the state, as it were, and kingdom of death, and so to execute torments, which may be called, the treasures of death) *that is, the devil*. Now how did Christ by death, destroy him (in the sense formerly given) *who had the power of death, the devil*? Doubtlesse by reconciling the world by it, unto God. For all the right and power the devil had in any consideration against man, being founded (as was said) in that displeasure, which God had conceived against him for sinne; when this displeasure of his shall cease and fall, that right and power of the devil standing upon it, must needs cease and fall with it. Yet

Heb. 2. 14.

3. (And lastly) there may be somewhat conceived even on the devils part also, somewhat done by him for which such a destruction as we speak of, might justly be inflicted by God upon him. First, that power of tempting men, especially the Saints, was forfeited by him, when he presum'd to tempt him, who was their head; having no right at all, nor colour of right, to be troublesome to him with any temptation; in as much as he was not in the number of those, with whom God was displeas'd for sinne: and consequently had no sufficient ground to think, that God had given him any such permission, to tempt him, as he had to tempt other men. Now we know that an abuse of a priviledge or power, is (especially so notorious, as that of *Satan* was in tempting Christ) a just cause of taking it away from him that abuseth it.

There is the same consideration, of the other part of Satans power, I mean his power to torment men after death. His abuse of this power in procuring the Lord Christ to be cut off by a death full of pains and torment, in whom *he had nothing* (as *Christ* himself saith) *i.* had no ground at all of doing any thing

John 14. 30.

thing against him, was a just ground why he should be devided and despoiled of it, at least so farre, and in respect of such persons, as God should please to deliver out of his hands. Thus you see, that what God doth by a strong hand in destroying the *devil*, he is lead unto it in a way of equity and perfect righteousness. But

2. God was not lead hereunto in a way of righteousness onely, but likewise in a way of necessity, in relation to that great designe of his we oft speak of (the glorifying of himself in the salvation and condemnation of men) First, except Satan had been limited and restrained in the exercise of that power, which he hath to tempt men; the Saints should have no rest nor breathing time from his malice in this kinde; he would alwaies be buffeting them, night and day: and consequently, they would be in no capacity, never enjoy any opportunity, of building up themselves in their most holy faith, nor of preparing or making themselves meet for their glory: their *soyl* would be *among lions* continually, and they *lie covered with the shadow of death*: they would have enough to doe, yea they would suffer sorely in bearing the devils burthens in this kinde: yea they might be brought to hanging down of hands, and waxing feeble of knees, and to despair it self. In a word, as our Saviour saith (in respect of a temporall preservation) *that except those daies* (speaking of the miserable times of *Jerusalem*) *be shortened, no flesh can be saved*; so have we cause to judge and say, in respect of the eternall preservation of men; that except Satans power of tempting men had been shortned, in an ordinary way and course of things, there could *no flesh*, nor spirit neither, have been *saved*; at least, not have been saved upon those terms of advantage for the glory of God, which now many will (as might be declared more at large; but that we are now upon the speed,) Neither could the condemnation of men have taken place, with such advantage for the glory of God, as now it doth, in case the *devil* had not been destroyed, & limited and confined in his tempting power. For the fewer and weaker temptations men are exposed unto, and tempted with, the more inexcusable they are if they yield, and quit their loialty and subjection unto God. And the more

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Matth. 24. 17.

inexcusable men are, who are condemned, the more is God glorified in their condemnation: and therefore all things are so laid in the counsell of his providence, that they which perish, shall be without *excuse*, Rom. 1. 20. Rom. 3. 19.

Rom. 1. 20.
3. 19.

2. The case is yet more cleer, as concerning his tormenting power. Except he had been destroyed in this, the salvation of men could have had no place at all. How can those be said to be saved, who are allwaies exposed to the tormenting power of the devil? Yea the condemnation it self of men, could not in that degree have abounded to the glory of God, which now it doth. For if Satan had not been destroyed by Christ, in respect of this tormenting power of his, there had not been those mighty encouragements and ingagements upon wicked men to beleve; and consequently, nothing that sinne in their non-beleaving. If they had been as obnoxious to be tormented by devil, in case they should beleve, as they could or should have been without beleaving; they had been in a very great measure excusable, above what now they are, in their unbelief. And look in what measure or degree men who are condemned, or perish, are capable of excuse, the glory of God is so much the more obscure, and lesse conspicuous in their condemnation. Thus then ye see, in this second particular also (the destruction of the *devil*) how that forcible power of God which acteth in it, acteth not onely with the *full* and *free* consent of righteousness, but also by the counsell, and at the instance of that excellencie of wisdom, which hath contriv'd the whole method and means for the glorifying of him, in the salvation and condemnation of men. So that all this while we neither see, nor hear of any whit more of the arme for the advancement of this great designe then is simply necessary, and that according to the principles of the most exquisite wisdom that is.

The 3. particular, wherein the arme of God comes in, and acts with it's glorious force and might, towards the glorifying of him, in the salvation and condemnation of men, is the very casting or forcing of ungodly and impenitent persons into hell fire; with that which makes way for, and prepares to it, the raising them from the dead, and gathering them together before

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his judgement seat, to receive that dismall and dreadfull sentence, *Goe ye cursed.*

Now 1. That this act also of Gods power, whereby he forceth wicked and unbelieving persons into hell, is led by a fair hand of righteousness, so that there is nothing in it contrary to the greatest excellencie of wisdom in that behalf (and there is ever the most jealousie & danger of unrighteousnes, where there is force and greatnes of power) but that this act of God (I say) whereof we now speak, is fully and cleerly righteous, is evident, partly from the demeritoriousnes or *sinfulness* (as the Apostle calls it) of *sin* in generall; partly (and more particularly) from the demeritoriousnes of the sin of unbelief.

Rom. 6. 23.

For the first, *the wages of sinne* (saith the Apostle, speaking of sinne in generall) is *death*. His meaning is, that *death*, i. the eternall ruine, misery and destruction of the creature, is but a stipend or consideration most justly, due unto, and deserved by sin, as wages, or hire for labour, is the most just and due debt amongst debts of all kindes, howsoever growing or accruing. There is no more hardnesse or inequality in it, that God should destroy a creature for ever, that hath sinn'd against him, then there is, that a man who hath hired a labourer to work for him, should give him his hire for his work. Though there is not (haply) a greater truth, yet there is a greater plainnesse and evidence of equity in it, that God should destroy the creature for sinne, especially who beleeves not, then that he should save him for *Christis* sake, who doth beleeve.

Rom. 3. 5a

Is God unrighteous (saith the Apostle) *who punisheth* (viz. sinne, or for sinne) *God forbid*. The meaning of his Interrogation seems to be, is God to be thought, or judg'd unrighteous, because he punisheth for sin? *Mih Xpianis, q.d.* at no hand: farre be it from us so to imagine or think: implying that there is a most manifest and apparent righteousness, or equity in it, that God should punish or take vengeance, for sinne; for otherwise, the thought of his being unrighteous in punishing, would not be so horrid and abominable.

Again 2. As sinne in the generall, or as it is sinne, be it what kinde of sinne soever, most justly deserves death, so that God in inflicting death, is no waies unrighteous, oppressive, or hard,

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so doth the sinne of unbelief, in particular, and in a more peculiar manner deserve death, without which (as we know) no man dieth, or perisheth, for all his other sinnes. The demeritoriousnesse or sinfulness of unbelief (and consequently, the equity of God in inflicting death upon men because of it) consists in the great uncapableness of it, or (which is much the same) the strong and manifest opposition which it carries in it against the grace of God; which appears chiefly in three things. 1. The great and formidable consequence or concernment of it unto men: 2. In the abundant reason which men have so to judge and conceive, I mean, that it is of that deep concernment unto them. 3. (And lastly) in that abundant means which God hath given, or vouchsafed unto men, to beleeve, or to escape all the evil wherewith unbelief (especially in and after death) is accompanied.

First, We all know, that faith and unbelief, are matters of the highest and most weighty consequence of all things whatsoever relating to the condition of the creature, man; a great matter of his present comfort and discomfort, well being, and evil being, depend upon them; but the whole and entire summe of his everlasting condition, his well being, or evil being for ever, depends upon them. *He that beleeves* (saith our Saviour) *shall be saved*, i. shall be everlastingly blessed; and *he that beleeves not* (viz. either sooner or later, first or last) *shall be damned*, i. everlastingly miserable and accursed. So that this is cleer: unbelief is, amongst all the irregularities, unworthinesses, and miscarriages of men, of the most grievous and formidable consequence unto him. As to beleeve is an act of more value, worth, and consequence unto men, then a thousand vertuous and commendable actions of another kinde; so is unbelief, at least continued and persisted in unto death: of a thousand times more sad and grievous consequence, then the committing of ten thousand sinnes of the greatest provocation otherwise.

Mark 16. 16.

2. I adde further, that men have reason in abundance thus to judge and think of it. First, for those that have the letter of the Gospel, the case is more evident. For they have all the reason to beleeve this, which they have to beleeve the Gospel,

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it self; in as much as the Gospel doth so plainly reveal and affirm it. Now that men have reason upon reason, reason in abundance to believe the Gospel, hath been already demonstratively proved, and may be yet prov'd further. Secondly concerning those, who have onely the heavens, the sun, moon and starres, and the goodnesse of God in the government of the world, to preach the Gospel unto them; these also have reason sufficient (if not in abundance) to think the same thought, and judge the same judgement with the other, in the point in hand. For having the Gospel (I mean, the substance and effect of it, the willingnesse and readinesse of God to be reconciled unto the world.) preached unto them by the Apostles aforesaid, the sun, moon, starres, the patience, goodnesse and bountifullnesse of God in the government of the world (as heretofore hath been declared, and may be further argued in due time) they cannot reasonably think, but that it is of great weight and moment unto them to believe that, which is so taught them by such a glorious ministry sent from God. This is one of the most common dictates and suggestions of reason; that *Deus & natura nihil faciunt frustra*: God and nature doe nothing in vain, from whence it follows seembly, in a way of reason; that the greater and more considerable any thing is, which God doth, the end depending upon it, or relating to it, and for which it is done, is so much the greater, and of the more weight and consequence. Now that act or work of God, whereby he preacheth the Gospel (as hath been said) unto all the inhabitants of the earth, cannot reasonably be looked upon but as a very great and highly considerable act of his; and so the Scriptures from place to place, reports it to be. If it be so, so highly considerable an act of God to preach the Gospel unto men in such a way, it follows then, in a way of reason, that for men to believe or not to believe, that which God himself preacheth, must needs be of very high consequence and concernment unto them. Because there is no other end (I mean no other immediate and direct end) can reasonably be imagin'd, which God should propound unto himself, in preaching a truth, or a Gospel, but the believing of it by those to whom it is preached. Thus then you see the

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second point cleer also: *viz.* that there is sufficient reason and ground, yea indeed reason and ground in abundance, why men even heathen men (as we call them) should conceive and judge that the believing, or not believing of the Gospel, are things of the greatest consequence and importance unto them. And this is another thing which tends to demonstrate the great demeritoriousnesse, or provoking sinfulnessse of unbelief: *viz.* the reason and means, which men have to come to the knowledge and consideration, of the dreadfull consequence of it. If men had no ground or reason at all thus to conceive or judge of it, doubtlesse the sinfulnessse of it would be much eased and lessened thereby.

3. (And lastly) Another thing, which in conjunction with the two former, compleats the unmeasurable *sinfulnessse* of the sinne of unbelief, is, the gracious, liberall and plentifull means, which God hath vouchsafed unto men, to bring them to believe, or, to make themselves believers.

As for those 1. Who have the letter of the Gospel, the writings of the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, to reade and to consider of, they have all those reasons and grounds, as means enabling them to believe, which have been yet insisted upon, to prove the original of the Gospel to be from God, as being drawn, partly from the stile and phrase, partly from the matter or substance of the Gospel; besides all those yet remaining of another consideration, and which are externall, in respect of the Gospel. All which reasons and grounds diligently considered, amount to a rich and plentifull means, whereby to believe. A thousand things are generally and confidently believed by the world, the truth whereof stands upon no such pillars of evidence and rationally demonstration, as the truth of the Gospel doeth.

And 2. For those that are without (I mean, without the Gospel written, or preach'd, upon such terms as it is preached amongst us daily) they also have sufficient means (if not large and plentifull) for believing. *But I demand* (saith the Apostle) *have they not heard? yes verily* (saith he) *their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* He had said in the verse immediatly foregoing, that

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Rom. 10. 18.

faith comes by hearing: In this verse, he shews (in an answer which he gives to a demand or question put by him) what hearing it is, by which faith comes; or at least what hearing is sufficient to beleve upon, or to produce faith. This hearing, he saith, is the hearing of that *sound, and of those words*, which the heavens, and the day, and the night speak, and *that are gone forth into the ends of the world* (as appears by the place, in *Psal. 19.* from whence these words are added) If you ask me, but what is the *sound*, or what are the words which the *heavens, and the day, and the night*, i. the constant course of the providence of God, in the government of the world, speak in the ears of all nations, and of all people, that *faith* should come by the hearing of them? I answer: they are the *words of eternall life* too, as well as those, which (as *Peter* acknowledgeth) our Saviour himself had to speak; yea and did speak upon all occasions; onely they are not so plainly spoken, as he was wont to speak: their parable is somewhat more dark, and harder to be understood. But the sence and import of what the heavens moving still in their naturall course, and the gracious Providence of God, jointly speak in the ears of all flesh, is, that God is taken off from the fiercenesse of his displeasure against sinne, and that he holds forth his white flagge, and offers terms and conditions of peace unto the world; and that upon their coming in to him by repentance, they shall be received into grace and favour. And what is this but the very tenour, summe, and substance of the Gospel? which yet is more plain from that of the same Apostle, *Act. 14.* to the men of *Lystra*. Who (saith he, speaking of God) *in times past suffered all the Gentiles to walk in their own waies. Neverthelesse he left not himself without witnesse, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitfull seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladnesse.* In respect of what was it, that God left not himself without witnesse amongst the Gentiles, even then when he suffered them to walk in their own waies? (viz. without admonishing and directing them how to walk, and what to doe, after any such manner as now he doth by the letter of the Gospel sent amongst them) what did the *Witnesses* the Apostle here speaks of, witnesse concerning God, or, on his behalf? Doubtlesse he

Psal. 19.

Act. 14. 16, 17.

he doth not speak here of his God-head, nor of his power, nor of his wisdom, as if his meaning were, that God left not himself *without witnesse* of these (though it be true, that he did not leave himself without witnesse, i. means of convincing men, of these also) but the works of creation, as distinguishing from the works of providence (whereof he here speaks) are sufficient *Witnesses* of these, according to the tenour of *Rom. 1. 20.* and besides, there are naturall impressions of these in the spirits and consciences of men, which are *Witnesses* on Gods behalf thus farre. But doubtlesse, that in God or concerning God, which the Apostle here saith, that God intended should be testified or witnessed on his behalf unto men, was somewhat more secret, more out of the way, as it were, of mens common thoughts or apprehensions; and particularly it was that gracious and good affection which he bears unto the world through *Jesus Christ*, his inclination unto peace with men, upon their repentance (which is the substance of the Gospel.) This appears 1. by the nature or quality of the witnesses here spoken of, which were, Gods giving men *rain from heaven, and fruitfull seasons, his filling their hearts with food and gladnesse.* Such *witnesses* as these, are onely proper to testifye grace, and love, and desire of the good of those, to whom they are given, in him that giveth them. They plainly shew, that he that bestows them, is not extream, useth not extremity against those that doe amisse; and consequently that he is by one means or other, taken off from the rigour of his justice, and severity of his wrath against sinners. And 2. it appears from hence; because *Paul* who was not onely a diligent and faithfull Preacher of the Gospel where ever he became, but was in speciall manner design'd to be an *Apostle to the Gentiles*, preached no other doctrine but this at *Lystra* (a city of the Gentiles) upon that great opportunity that was now offered him. We cannot think that he should only preach a philosophical or metaphysicall Sermon, concerning the essence or naturall properties of God onely; but that which was Evangelicall, and favouring of the Gospel. Now the holy Ghost recording either the whole, or (at least) the summe and substance of what he preach'd in this place, reporteth nothing

Rom. 1. 20.

Evangelicall

Evangelicall as spoken by him, except this be acknowledged for such. So that cleer it is from the Scriptures, that all the world, even those that are most straitned and scanted in this kinde, those that have not the letter of the Gospel, have yet sufficient means of beleeving granted unto them; of beleeving I mean, 1. *that God is*, 2. *that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him*: which is all the faith or belief that the Apostle makes simply and absolutely necessary to bring a man unto God, *i.* into grace or favour with him, *Heb. 11*. There are severall other Scriptures that speak home to this point, besides those argued; particularly, that *Rom. 2.4.* Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance? The long suffering and goodnesse of God are said to lead men to repentance, because they testify, according to a rationall and cleer interpretation, a willingness and readinesse in God, to receive all such into grace and favour with himself, who shall unfaignedly repent of their finnes. There is no other consideration, but this (at least, none without this) in respect whereof, the *patience or bountifullnesse of God*, can be said to lead, *i.* to perswade or invite, to *repentance*. There is no motive or perswasive whereof sinners are capable *unto repentance*, without hope of pardon upon repentance. But this Scripture we shall finde occasion to argue further some other time. In the mean season, you see it cleer from the Scriptures (and the Scriptures as ye have seen, run parallell with evident and cleer reason all along in this point) that even heathen men, and those that want the history of the Gospel, have yet a sufficiencie of means whereby to beleeve, and so to prevent the wrath and indignation which is to come: in which regard, they are altogether unexcusable, if they doe it not. We will not here incumber the tenour of our present discourse, with arguing or deciding the question, whether, or how any man can be said to have sufficient means of beleeving, who doth not actually beleeve: this dispute we shall respite till some better occasion. In the mean time, most certain it is, that they who are destroyed and perish by the hand of God for unbelief, had means, and those sufficient, whereby to have beleeved; otherwise they

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would not be unexcusable; no, not though they should be found negligent in improving those means, which they had. For he that certainly knows, that all that ever he can doe, should he put forth himself to the uttermost, is not able to compasse his end; is in a great measure excusable, though he attempts nothing at all. But we shall not now stand upon this. Thus then you have the third and last thing, which makes the sinne of unbelief, so exceedingly sinfull, so abundantly demeritorious as it is; *viz.* the voluntarinesse of it, men having plentifulnesse of means vouchsafed from God, to keep themselves from the defilement of it. Put all the three now together, and you will cleerly see the great unworthinesse and demeritoriousnesse of it rising up from them all jointly. 1. The sinne of unbelief, is (above all finnes whatsoever) of the most dismall and dreadfull consequence unto men. 2. There is light enough for men, to come to the cleer knowledge of it, I mean that it is of that dreadfull consequence. 3. (And lastly) men have a sufficiencie of means, a price put into their hand, wherewith to redeem themselves out of the hand of it. Now then that man or that woman, that in the face of three such considerations as these, shall either sit still, or quit themselves but loosely and carelessly to recover their souls out of the snare of unbelief, commit a sinne (doubtlesse) of the greatest and most desperate opposition to all principles of reason that can be; and consequently, a sin of the greatest demerit, and highest provocation, in the sight of God.

Thus you see, what between the demerit of sinne in the generall (I mean, of all other finnes wherewith men defile themselves) and the great demerit of unbelief in particular, the righteousness of God in punishing and destroying wicked and ungodly men, *appears in perfect beauty*: there is nothing hard, nothing unequal in it: yea there is nothing in it, but what commends the wisdom of God it self, as well as his righteousness, or perfect hatred of sinne. For as it would be an unfavoury thing, and contrary, as well to principles of wisdom and prudence, as of justice, in a civil magistrate that bears the sword, and tending to his great disparagement and dishonour, if either he should not punish those that transgresse the laws, which he is

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to execute, or if he should punish them with punishments unfitable, and unproportioned to their offences, whether on the right hand, or on the left: in like manner, it would reflect dishonour upon the ever blessed and glorious name of God (and so be contrary to the excellencie of wisdom) if he should either not punish wicked and ungodly men, the transgressours of his law, at all; or if he should punish them, and not some waies (at least) proportion both the nature, and degree of their punishment, to their sinne. So that all things considered, this act also of the powerfull arme of God, whereby he casts sinners into hell, is no more then what necessity requires of him; is an act as well of righteousness and of wisdom, as of power.

The 4. and last great act of the power of God to be put forth and exercised in bringing about that great designe we have oft mentioned (the glorifying of himself in the salvation and condemnation of men) is that whereby the Saints shall be advanced, or put into an actuall possession of their glory, with all things requisite hereunto, as the raising of them from the dead, the changing of their vile bodies, &c. Now that this act also of his power is drawn forth by principles of reason, equity, and of the most excellent wisdom, is evident thus; by these and such like considerations.

1. That God should reward his friends and faithfull servants that have done his will and fought his glory (as the Saints have done) is reasonable and equall in the eyes of all flesh: such an act as this, is no waies obnoxious to any ill resentment, or interpretation whatsoever. Nay if God should not doe it, there are thousands of his creatures that should (in such respect) be more excellent then he. There is no man of ingenuity, and that favours the things of his honour, but that will remember and consider proportionably to his power, the faithfulness of friends and servants shewed unto him.

2. When men have erected and set up any kinde of exercise, or tryall of masteries, as by running, wrassling, or the like, and have made their orders and laws for those that shall exercise, and thus have drawn men of activity and worth in that kinde from severall parts, to try their strength and activensse, by

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ingaging themselves in the exercise; it is but reason and equity, that he that striveth, and *striveth lawfully* (as the Apostle speaks) i. observing all the laws and orders of the exercise, and overcoming, should be crowned, or receive the *bravium*, or price, that is held forth, for the conquerour. Now God in the Gospel propounds (as it were) a noble exercise of faith and holiness; he hath appointed his laws and orders for this exercise; he hath designed a crown of life, and of immortall glory, to those that shall overcome; he draws persons from all quarters of the world, whose hearts will serve them, to ingage in his exercise. Now then it is but just and reasonable, that those that doe strive, and *strive lawfully*, and overcome, should receive the reward that is promised, and consequently should be by a strong hand put into possession of eternal life.

3. When souldiers have stood by their Generall, indured much hardship, and ventured their lives with him, and for him, in any hard and hot service; in case the day goes on their side, and their Generall triumphs, it is but equall that such souldiers should partake according to their measure, of the joy and honour of the triumph with him. Now the Saints are good souldiers of *Jesus Christ*: they stand by him in this present world: they undergoe much hardship from the world for his sake; they are partakers with him of his sufferings, as well by mortification, as by persecutions by men; therefore *Jesus Christ* himself triumphing in eternity of life and glory, it is but equall that they should partake of the same triumph with him. This the Scripture it self acknowledgeth for equall. Now if we be

Rom. 6 8

dead with *Christ*, we believe that we shall also live with him. We believe, i. we have cause or reason to believe it, viz. because of the equitableness of it. So in another place: If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also

2 Tim. 2 11, 12.

reign with him. The Apostle doth not argue these consequences (as he doth many others) because they are so naturall, and evident in, and of, themselves. Yes

4. And lastly, there is not onely an equitableness in the thing (I mean, that the Saints shall be highly honoured by God) but there is an excellencie of wisdom in it also, yea that

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they should be honoured with the height of honour, that (according to the Gospel) shall be conferred and cast upon them by God; and that in a double consideration.

1. Because great and excellent recompences and rewards given by men for services done unto them, being within the compass of their means, or abilities to give, without any sensible prejudice to their estates, are much for their honour, and for the advancement of their interells in the opinions and estimations of men. A great and bountifull reward, is a kinde of artificiall and pleasant picture of a mans worth, drawn by himself, or with his own hand. For he that is liberall in recompensing services done unto him, seems to be conscious of some speciall worth in himself; and that which he doth in this case, above the usuall rate of others, to doe out of conscience; as conceiving, that he that hath done any good office to him, hath done a better deed, and so deserves a better reward, then if he had done the same, yea or a greater, to another man. For certainly to save the life of a good man, and who is like to be a benefactour unto many, is a better act, and more worthy a reward, then the saving of the life of an ordinary, or undeserving man: and so it is proportionably in other services done, or to be done respectively, to such persons: whereas such persons, who having means and opportunity to deal bountifullly by those that serve them, and yet should reward them poorly; they doe by such sparingnesse (in effect) acknowledging themselves to be persons of little worth or value; and that they that served them, had done onely that which was next to nothing; and therefore a slender consideration was reward enough for them. So then the great and glorious God, in rewarding those that have served him, with crowns and kingdoms, and the great things of eternity, draws, as it were, a lively and happy portraicture of his own infinite worth and goodnesse; and declares in the sight of heaven and earth, and hell, at what an high rate he values himself, and his own glory, by shewing himself so above measure bountifull unto those that serve him.

2. There lay a necessity upon God to lift up his Saints as high in blessednesse and glory, as now he intends to doe, in respect

respect of that foundation, which he hath laid to build this fabrique or building upon, I mean his onely begotten Son *Jesus Christ*; that so there might be a comlineffe of proportion, a correspondencie, between the foundation, and the superstructure, or that which is built upon it. If men shall lay either silver or gold, or precious stones for their foundation, and build nothing but a little hay, or stubble, or wood upon it, would not all men laugh at them (as our Saviour speaks in a case not much unlike) and say; they *began* gloriously, but they *finish* shamefully. So, God having laid the foundations of the blessednesse of his Saints, in his Son *Jesus Christ* and in his bloud (as indeed he had none other foundation to lay for that building) if he should not build somewhat proportionably thereunto, the glory of the foundation would be a shame and dishonour to the rest of the work, and swallow up all the beauty and excellencie thereof. The truth is, that (to speak after the manner of men, as the Apostle speaks in some cases) God will have much adoe to finde materials, stones sumptuous or magnificent enough, either in heaven or in earth, or in all his dominions, to build up the glory of the Saints, upon any such terms, but that the glory of the foundation will be a kinde of evershadowing to it, when he hath done. In other buildings the superstructure sometimes chargeth, and overchargeth the foundation: but in this building we speak of, it rather is, and will be contrary; the foundation is, and will be, too weighty in glory for the superstruction; yea though this be as weighty in glory, as glory it self can make. For even that which was made glorious (saith *Paul*, speaking of the ministracion of the law) had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory which excelleth (meaning, in the ministracion of the Gospel.) In like manner, though the blessednesse, which shall be vested in the Saints, shall be glorious, yea excellently glorious, in it self; yet being compared with that excesse and super-abundance of glory in the foundation, there will be found as little glory in it, as could reasonably be expected; though as much allso, as the capacity of the subjects will well bear. And therefore to be sure, the wisdom of God (mark, I doe not the goodnesse, the love, the bounty of God, or the like, but) the wisdom of

God will put him upon searching out whatsoever is rich, whatsoever is precious, whatsoever is excellent, whatsoever is glorious, whatsoever hath the least ingredient of happiness in it, whether in heaven or in earth, to build up the blessedness of his Saints with, to save, as it were, it's own glory. Consider whether that of the Apostle doth not rise as high as all this: *He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* The interrogation, *How shall he not, &c.* is marvellously emphaticall and conclusive. It is as if he had said; If we doe but grant or suppose, that God hath given up his Sonne unto death for our sakes, and for our good; we cannot reasonably imagine, should we study never so seriously, with never so much intenseness of minde and thought, to raise and form such an imagination within us, how it is possible, or any waies consistent with the wisdom of God, to give us any thing lesse then *all things*, for the compleating of our happiness. Thus we have shewed you how that all that power, all those acts of power to be performed by God, within the compasse of that means, or any part of that means, which he hath projected for the glorifying of himself in the salvation and condemnation of men, are both all clothed with wisdom, and that they are no more, none other, then what are simply necessary to the accomplishment of his end.

We signified unto you (in the second place) that all other parts or ingredients in the means we speak of, *viz.* which doe not stand in any executive force or power, but in a simple contrivement, doe in the eye of reason, and of a considerate understanding, look with a very pleasant, delightfull, yea with a divine aspect, upon the great end, so o't, and lately mentioned. To take all particulars in this kinde into consideration, would be a long work, and require much time, and (I fear) prove wearisome unto you. We shall onely touch some of the most considerable of them. Gods end being (as hath been still said, and once proved) the glorifying of himself like himself, in the salvation and condemnation of men, it was necessary for him so to provide for the effecting of the one, and so to make way for the execution of the other, not onely that none

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of his glorious attributes or perfections might suffer, or be disparaged in either; but that by means of the one and the other jointly taken, the glory of them (I mean of those attributes of his) might be discovered and made known, and that to an excellent degree of manifestation. For the bringing to passe the former of these (the salvation of men) upon the terms mentioned; three things were necessary for God to doe (in the generall: the two former whereof make way likewise for the latter, I mean, the glorifying of himself like himself in the condemnation of men.) But it was necessary (I say) for God, in reference to both these great transactions, as well the salvation, as condemnation of men. 1. To put himself into an honourable capacity of treating with man about the great things of his salvation. 2. To make him capable of such terms, upon which he might, with the safety of his own glory, save him. 3. (and lastly) If he meant to make sure work of the salvation of man, it was further necessary for him, to provide, not onely that men might be capable of those terms, upon which he might honourably save them, but that they should actually yield unto, and accept of them. In all these you shall see strains of wisdom indeed, such as are enough to make all the wisdom under heaven abased.

For the first of these: Necessary (I say) it was that God should put himself into an honourable capacity of treating with man about his salvation. For man being a traytour and a rebell, by reason of sinne committed against him, and so standing as a guilty person before him worthy of death, unclean, unholy, unrighteous; it was no waies agreeable with the infinite holiness and purity of Gods nature, and that strict severity against sinne, which is in him, to fall immediately, and without any consideration at all intervening, upon a treaty with him, about the great affair of his salvation and glorification. And though it's true, he might have saved men without any preceeding treaty with them about it; yet he could not have glorified himself in this salvation of theirs, upon those rich terms, which now, as he hath contrived matters in order thereunto, he may, and will doe. It is a saying in naturall philosophy, that *natura non conjungit extrema, nisi per media*: and again,

again, that *natura non facit saltum*, i. nature, [i. God, in the course of nature] is not wont to join extremes together, but by somewhat of a middle nature between them: and again, nature doth not leap. Nor would it have stood with the wisdom of God, considering the infinite holiness of his nature, and the transcendent excellencie of his majesty and glory, to have clozed in such a treatise as we speak of, with that polluted and imbased dust and ashes, called man, after that grand rebellion of his, without some mediatory consideration or other, yea and that of such weight, which might render this act of his, in treating with such a creature, every waies honourable to him. Now what other consideration can there be imagined, so proper and full, to justify the glorious God in admitting that most unworthy creature of his, man, to a treaty of grace with himself, as that his own Son *Iesus Christ*, should be made man, and in this nature of man, suffer death, and that by way of atonement, for the sinne of man? Now to judge (in part) of the proportion or meetnesse of the consideration we speak of, for that great end and purpose mentioned, *viz.* the making way, and that with honour, for God to condescend to a gracious treaty, with his guilty and sinfull creature, man, we must conceive after this manner. Suppose a subject or person of mean quality hath injured and provoked his Prince, let the injury be supposed never so great, and the provocation never so deep and just, yet in case any thing shall be done by any of the kindred of him that hath so injured this Prince, and in relation to his offence, every waies as valuable for the accommodating, or repairing the honour, or to the benefit of the Prince otherwise, as the injury or provocation was in dishonour or discontent in any kinde unto him, this Prince hath now a consideration before him, upon which with the safety of his honour (I mean, even as men count honour) he may send to that subject of his, and be so farre pacified towards him, as to treat with him, and offer him conditions of pardon and reconciliation; because in this case he is no looser by him; and if he will be perswaded to change his minde, and to vow loyalty, and love, and faithfulness unto him, he hath honourable grounds to forgive him, and to be friendly unto him afterwards. In
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like manner, God having received that service and that obedience from the hand of such a person as *Iesus Christ* is, being of the nature or kindred of man, and that in relation to the sinne and provocation of man, which is every waies as considerable in matter of glory to him, as the sinne of man was in dishonour and provocation; he may upon this consideration, without the least touch of disparagement to his holiness, purity, wisdom, or any other attribute whatsoever, offer terms of reconciliation and peace, to him that hath provoked him. The reason is, because now he is no looser by him: and therefore if he will be perswaded and won by offers and terms of grace, such as are meet for God to offer, to change his minde, and to swear homage and fealty, love and faithfulness unto him for the future, he is at perfect liberty to receive him unto grace and favour; and to doe further unto him whatsoever his soul desireth, in any way of goodness and bounty. Not as if God were bound, presently to forgive men their sins, and to take them into his speciall favour, upon what, or, because of what *Christ* hath done, or suffered for them (which seems to be the sence of many) no, *Christ* did not satisfie for any mans finnes in such a sence, or upon such terms. But therefore *Christ* is said to have satisfied for the sins of men, or (which is the same, in Scripture, and therefore in better and more proper, language) to have made an atonement for men, or for the sins of men, because he hath so farre pacified and reconciled God unto the world, that he is willing, notwithstanding their great sinne, and unworthinesse, and affront put upon him, to beat a parley, and to condescend to offer propositions and terms of life and peace unto men; yet so, that they who will not condescend (or rather indeed, that will not ascend) first or last, to the conditions and terms offered by him, i. that will not believe, shall have no further benefit, by any thing he hath either done or suffered for them. Nor will it follow, that they for whose finnes *Christ* hath satisfied, must needs by vertue of this satisfaction, be presently justified, and saved; or, that God otherwise should be unjust, *viz.* if having received satisfaction, he should condemn men for those finnes, for which he hath been satisfied. The reason is because the satisfaction of *Christ*,
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being an ordinance of God, I mean, a means of and for the justification and salvation of men, meerly arbitrary and depending upon his will and pleasure, as well in the operation, as in the being of it; it cannot be conceived to extend any further, nor to produce its effects in any other way; or upon any other terms, then his will and pleasure is, that it should produce them. Now the Scriptures are very cleer and pregnant in this, that the satisfaction, and sufferings of Christ, doe not justifie or save any man simply or by themselves, but by and through a mans beleeving, as on the contrary, that they are satisfactory and justificatory in abundance, to all without exception, in case they shall beleeve. *So God loved the World* (saith our Saviour) *that he gave his only begotten Son; not simply that men, or any man should have everlasting life by him; but that whosoever beleeves in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* Notwithstanding the love of God, notwithstanding the guilt of Christ unto the world, yet without beleeving, there is no escaping eternall death, no obtaining everlasting life. Why? *viz.* because the love of God and the guilt of Christ, being both voluntary, they justifie, they save, no further, no otherwise, upon no other terms, then the will and good pleasure of God is they should. Now the will of God touching salvation by *Jesus Christ* unto any man, is none other, but that he should be saved by *Christ*, through beleeving. Fully consonant hereunto, is that of the Apostle, *Rom. 3. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [i. an actuall or personall propitiation] through faith in his blood.* Though justification be free, though through the grace of God, though through the redemption which is by *Christ Jesus*; yet no justification, by any, nor by all of these actually accrues unto any man without beleeving.

If it be objected; but if men be not completely justified by *Christ*, or by the satisfaction of *Christ* without beleeving, then beleeving adds somewhat to *Christ*, or to the satisfaction of *Christ*; makes this efficacious unto justification, which (it seems) in it self is weak. I answer (briefly.)

No; Faith doth not adde in the least to the nature, value,

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or efficacie of *Christ*'s satisfaction, it onely interresseth men in the value and efficacie of it; both which were in it in as ample and full matter, before men beleeve, as they are after. The fire whilst a man keeps at a distance from it, doth not warm him, when he comes neer it, it doth: yet his coming neer doth not make the fire any whit hotter, then it was before; onely it gives him interest and communion in the heat of it, which he had not before. So the applying of a plaster to a sore, doth not adde any healing vertue to it, nor make it any whit more healing in the nature of it, then it was before; onely it interesteth him, that hath the sore to which it is applied, in that healing vertue which it had, before it was applied. Thus then you see how mens sins may be said to be fully satisfied for, and atoned by *Christ*, yea as fully as it is possible for them to be; and yet men remain under the guilt of them, and perish everlastingly because of them, and that without the least touch or shadow of disparagement to the justice of God. But we may have occasion to speak further into this point some other time: where we may further cleer the difficulty; how it may stand with the justice of God to accept *Christ*'s satisfaction for the sins of men, and yet destroy men for them notwithstanding: and indeed it is a point well worth our inquiring into; because generally we doe not understand the counsel and minde of God in it aright. If we did, it would set us at perfect liberty from some of the most ensnaring intanglements in the Antinomian way; and quite break the credit thereof: and the very truth is, that Antinomianisme (as we call it) is nothing else, but a systeme or body of the due and lawfull consequences of their opinions, who most fiercely oppose it. But this onely by the way.

Thus then you see, as to the first of the three particulars mentioned, how God hath put himself into an honourable capacity of treating with men, though vile, sinfull, and rebellious, about the great things of their salvation, by giving his own Son, *Jesus Christ* to be made man, and by gaining his consent, in this nature, to make an atonement by his death for their finnes. And the truth is that there was no other way or means for him to doe this (or at least none like unto it) but that

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2 Cor 5. 9.

which hath been declared, nor was it (as hath been said) for the glory of God to have done it, to have saved men, otherwise then by way of treaty first had with them; as might be shewed at large, if it were necessary; The Apostle himself implies as much, as all that hath been said in the point hitherto, 2 Cor. 5. 19. saying, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* First, God intending to save the world, intended to doe it by the way of reconciling those to himself, whom he meant to save, before he saved them: he did not intend to take them in the midst of their enmity and hatred, whilst their hearts were yet full of wickedness and rebellion against him, and so put them into heaven: no, his method and designe was, first, to slay that enmity in their natures against him, and to reduce them to terms of friendship and love; which was necessary to be done by a way of treaty and capitulation with them in this world. But secondly, how or which way should God come at a treaty with man, with honour? It was not (as we said) agreeable to the infinite holiness of his nature, or greatness of his majesty (nor did his wisdom so apprehend it) to offer treaty or terms of peace unto man being in actual rebellion against him, without some consideration mediating and leading thereunto, and that such as was meet to sway in a business of that high and great import. Nor indeed was he as yet provided of such terms, or capable of making such propositions or offers unto man, which were like to take with him, or to bring him over in love unto him. How then did he goe to work? what did he, to prepare himself a way, to treat with his wretched creature, man, with honour? *He was in Christ* (saith the Apostle) he went, and got, or put himself into *Christ*, [God and man] having first contrived and disposed of him for the purpose, & prevailed with him, after a few years spent holily and blamelessly in the flesh, to yield to die for the sins of men. Now God having thus put himself, as it were, in Christ, thus prepared and wrought for his designe, being now provided for a treaty, in him he comes forth, invites the world to a treaty, and offers such rich and gracious terms of love and peace, which are most effectual and likely to take the world off from their hatred and

and enmity against him, and to bring men over unto him in love, and with all affections of loyalty and honour. *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*, but how? by what engine doeth God attempt such a piece as this? by *not imputing their finnes* [or trespasses] *unto them* (saith the Apostle) i. by propounding and promising unto them a free pardon of all their finnes, with all the rich and blessed consequences of such a grace as this is, as purchased by Christ, and ready for them, if they will but love him, and disavow and abandon, that sinfulness in their hearts and lives, which are enmity to him. Now the glorious God, though he hath an heart infinitely larger then the sand upon the sea shore (which was the measure of *Solomons* wisdom) my meaning is, though he be infinite in wisdom, yet doubtlesse he hath not another word to speak unto the heart of the world, so proper, or so effectual for the gaining in, and *reconciling the world unto himself*, as this; that their finnes are pardoned, and shall never be *imputed* unto them, if they will beleve. The root of all that hatred and enmity which is in the natures of men against God, is the want of a sense of that love of God towards them, which he hath abundantly manifested, by providing for them free pardon and forgiveness of all their finnes, if they will but accept of it. Make men but truly apprehensive and sensible of this, and you shall without any more ado *reconcile them unto God*, and heal that root of bitterness, I mean that hatred and enmity against him, which is in them.

Now in the preparation unto, and carriage of this great transaction of God described and opened unto you from the Scriptures, his putting himself (as I call it) into an honourable capacity of treating with his creature, man, there are many particular strins and passages of an excellencie of wisdom, the consideration whereof would require much more time, then I beleve you would willingly allow upon this occasion; as about the incarnation, conception, birth, circumcision, baptism, the life, death, resurrection, ascension of Jesus Christ; the carriage of all which in that variety of circumstances, which the Gospel relates, is full of wisdom, and looks with a very pleasing face in them all upon that great and blessed

1 King 4. 29.

transaction we speak of, the treaty which God hath at this day on foot with the world, about the great things of their peace: But we must not now insist upon any of them, Again

2 As it was necessary, in reference to the great end, of specified, for God to put himself into an honourable capacity of treating with his creature about matters of salvation; so was it no less necessary for him, to make this creature of his, capable of such terms, I mean of yielding or condescending to such terms, upon which God might not onely with the safety, but with the advancement of his own glory, save him, in case he accepts of them; or otherwise condemn him, if he rejects them. If you ask me, 1. What are the terms, which the creature must be made capable of, that God may be glorified like himself, either in the salvation, or condemnation of it; I answer, the terms are, only beleeving in God through Jesus Christ with a faith unfeigned, and which works by love: the creature must be made capable hereof, that God may be glorified, either in his salvation, or condemnation.

If you ask me (in the second place) but what necessity is there, that the creature should be made capable of these terms, that God may be glorified in his condemnation? We grant it necessary, in respect of his being glorified in his salvation, but we conceive no necessity of it in respect of Gods glory, in his condemnation.

I answer briefly (for the present, hoping ere long to give you a further account of what I shall now say) there is this necessity of it: if God should not make men capable of beleeving, I mean, indue men with such principles, abilities, or gifts, of reason, judgement, memory, understanding, by the diligent improvement whereof they might come to be convinced, of a willingness or readinesse in him to receive them into grace and favour, upon their repentance and turning to him (upon which conviction, that repentance and turning unto God we speak of, alwaies follows) they which are condemned would have their mouths open against Gods proceedings with them thereunto, and furnished with an excuse. Now look whatsoever men shall be able with reason to say for themselves,

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or in their own defence, why they should not be condemned; it will be so much out of the way of the glory of God, in their condemnation, in case he should condemn them. And therefore the Scripture tells us, that God hath dealt so with men, and means to doe so still, that if they be condemned, their mouthes shall be stopp'd, and all manner of excuse taken from them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and Godhead, so that they are [or, may be] without excuse. And again, Rom 3. Now We know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopp'd, and all the world become [καταδικασται ὁ ἅθρωπος] i. obnoxious, or subject to the judgement of God; clearly implying, that men, though wicked and sinful, yet would not be obnoxious to the judgement of God, [i. sinfull and wicked enough for him to destroy] if they could plead any tolerable excuse for their finnes, or why they should not be destroyed. Now of all, and all manner of excuses in the world, that ever were alledged or can be alledged by any man, for not doing what he was commanded to doe, there is none more plausible, none more reasonable or fair, then this, to say, that he was not able to doe it, neither mediatly, nor immediatly, or that it was a thing impossible for him to doe: yea to be able to say this with truth, and out of knowledge, it is not properly to make an excuse (as we commonly take the word) but it is to speak that, which according to the strictest rules of reason and equity, ought to exempt a man from all censure and punishment, though he doth not that, which was commanded him.

Besides, if God should offer and promise unto men life and peace and salvation (as we know he doth to thousands, who never accept of his offer, and so perish everlastingly) yea and presse upon them with many expressions of love, tendernesse, and great compassions, even beseeching them by his Ministers (as the Apostle speaks) that they would be reconciled unto him, having taken away (though justly) that power from them, whereby they might have been able to have done themselves good by accepting those offers of grace, if it had not been

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Rom. 1. 19. 21.

chap. 3. 19.

taken from them, and should conferre none other upon them in the stead, this would be a very strange dispensation or deportment towards poor miserable creatures, altogether unworthy that God, who is the father of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and in him, the father of *mercy*, and God of all consolation, Suppose a Prince had in a way of the most regular justice, and according to the laws, by which he rules, and ought to put in execution, and for some offence deserving such a punishment, caused a mans tongue be cut out of his head; and afterwards should come to this poor creature, and make such a proposition or offer as this to him (and withall bear him in hand, that he did it out of much love, and tender respects to him) that if he would give him a cleer answer by word of mouth, to such a question as he should ask him, he would conferre great riches upon him, and make him honourable in the state, &c. could such a deportment as this, be looked upon as favouring in the least of any love, or desire in the Prince to doe this miserable creature any good, and not rather of a most tyrannicall and cruell spirit, taking a delight to deride and insult over persons in miserie? It were easie to shew many other necessitites, besides these, which lay before God to render men capable of yielding or assenting unto his propositions and terms of grace, if he meant to glorifie himself like himself, in their condemnation. But the fuller examination of this businesse we shall referre to a further occasion: where we shall answer likewise the objections usually brought against it. As to that objection wherewith this opinion (perhaps) is burthened in the thoughts of many, as *viz.* that it is an *Arminian* doctrine, and maintains free-will, with the like: we shall answer no more for the present, but this; that if it be a doctrine asserted by *Paul* and *Peter* (as most assuredly it is) it ought to suffer no disparagement for being found amongst the tenets of *Arminius*. It is a faithfull saying, and never the lesse worthy all acceptation, that *Jesus Christ* came into the world to save sinners, though it was (in effect, and for substance) the saying, and sence of the devil, when he affirmed *Jesus Christ* to be the holy one of God, *Mark* 1.24. But it is a common Papistcally trick, to nick-name truths and opinions, which rise up against the interests and

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honour of the sea of *Rome*, and to bethink themselves of some heretike or other, who asserted them. And I wish that too many of those who are called Protestants, and who as ambitiously as they, affect the name of Orthodox, did not too much praise such their sayings, by a frequent imitation of them.

In the mean time the excellencie of wisdom in God is highly considerable, in framing and tempering a creature, so, which shall be indued with a sufficiency of strength and power to beleve, and yet this strength and power notwithstanding, never shall, never will beleve, without a further supply from God; yea and this as certainly in the eye and knowledge of God, as if he had deprived him of, or denied unto him, all manner of strength and power to beleve. And yet we have an instance or example of this wisdom in God, we speak of, in the framing of the first *Adam*; and that by the generall confession of all Divines, as well Protestants, as Papis; all concluding, that *Adam* received from the hand of his bountifull creatour a sufficiency of power, or spirituall strength, whereby to have stood, and made good the possession of his innocencie, against all assaults and temptations whatsoever, had he pleased to have improved the same accordingly; and yet that God did withall fore-see that he would fall, and that with as much certainty and infallibility of knowledge, as if there had been a necessity of his falling, and he invested with no possibility, or sufficiency of power, whereby to stand.

The third (and last) particular mentioned was, that if God meant to make sure work of the salvation of men (as doubtlesse he did) and withall to make earnings of glory to himself, in, or out of their salvation, it was simply necessary for him, to provide, not onely that men might be capable of those terms, upon which he might with the safety, yea and with the advancement of his own glory, save them, but also that they might and should, actually yield unto, and accept of them; yea and that with certainty, and infallibly, and yet without any enforcement, compulsion, or constraint, or otherwise, then by opening the eyes of their mindes and understandings, to see,

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apprehend, and consider those things, which should effectually incline their hearts to yield up themselves unto God in believing. Now that God, according to the tenour and current of the Gospel, hath made such a provision as this, cannot lightly be unknown unto those, who are so much as competently acquainted therewith. When the Lord informed *Paul* by a vision in the night that *he had much people in the city of Corinth*, his meaning (doubtlesse) was, that he had many souls there, to whom he intended the grace of faith, and conversion, and that by the Ministry of *Paul*: yet *Pauls* way and method of converting souls to the faith, was none other, but by opening their eyes, and turning them from darknesse unto light, and [hereby] from the power of *Satan* unto God, Acts 26.18. 2 Cor. 4.6. (to passe by other places without number of like import.) But into this point we may have opportunity otherwise further to inquire.

Thus we have found the third character or property we mentioned of an excellencie of wisdom, fairly stamped upon the Gospel; fully appearing in that devise, that glorious projection of God, to glorifie himself in the salvation and condemnation of men. There remains onely the fourth and the last character of this wisdom, which we shall now briefly open unto you; and shew it you in the Gospel also.

This character or property, we said was a certain mysteriounesse in the means, which shall at any time be levied and advanced for the bringing of some great end to passe: when the modell and whole projection thereof is of such a nature and contrivance, that it doth not sympathize with the ordinary projections of men; is of such a strain and carriage, that the reasons and understandings of men, when they come to apprehend it, are ready to fall down before it, to admire, and adore the rarity of it; and to confesse and say concerning it, that according to the rate of their speculations and workings, they should never have come neer it; it lies a thousand degrees beyond the line of all those discoveries, which they had been ever like to make. Now that the means which the Gospel holds forth, for the effecting of that great end (so oft named) is of this nature, mysterious in this sence which hath been declared,

adored, is evident, and that in respect of sundry particulars, and veins (as it were) of dispensation, running along in the body of it. We shall insist only upon that, which is the very basis or foundation of the whole work; the incarnation of the son of God. This is mystery upon mystery, and all is mystery. Who would ever have said to *Abraham* (saith *Sarah*) that *Sarah* should give children suck? But how many thousand degrees further, from all rationall expectation or belief was it, that the Son of God, who being in the form of God, i. actually known, acknowledged, worshiped, and adored, as God: yea and counted it no robbery (as the Apostle speaks) to be equall with God, i. to claim an equality with God, being indeed himself God blessed for ever, should become man; and that upon such terms as he did? Who would ever have said unto the world, that the Son of God should become the son of man, and dwell in a tabernacle of flesh, to give salvation to it? There are severall things relating unto, and depending upon this incarnation of the Son of God, which are all mysterious (in the sence declared) First, that God should have a Son, consubstantiall and coessentiall with him, and yet personally distinct from him, is a great mystery it self: i. is a conclusion or truth, which all the sagacity and quicknesse of all the reason and understanding of men under heaven, was not likely to have brought out of that darknesse, wherein it is hid, into the light; had it not been revealed, and that in visions of the noone day, from heaven: yea, notwithstanding that cleer and perfect revelation which is now made of it from heaven, yet how many thousands have there been, and are at this day, not onely of Heathens and Infidels who reject the whole body of the Scriptures, but even of those, who have subscribed unto the truth of the Scriptures, as being from God (I say) many thousands of these, yea many of them, men of great abilities, parts, and learning, have not acknowledged this for a truth, that God hath any such Son as we speak of, who is consubstantiall, with him; For denying him whom the Scriptures hold forth under this relation, viz. as being the naturall or consubstantiall Son of God, to be any such son of his; they must needs be supposed to deny, the being of any such sonne at all; this being the main why they

Gen 21.7.

deny *Jesus Christ* to be the Son of God (in any such sense) *viz.* because they cannot, or at least doe not, conceive, that there is any place or possibility for God to have any such Son. And this shews the truth, or conclusion we speak of, to be very mysterious; *viz.* that God hath a son coessentiall and consubstantiall to him.

2. That this Son of God (supposing his being) should come to be incarnate, or made *flesh* (as the Scripture expression is) is *without controversie* (as the Apostle saith) *a great mystery* also, i. such a dispensation, or transaction, as the thoughts of men, had they been all engaged for a thousand years together, compassing heaven and earth with inquiries after truth, or probabilities of things, would in all likelihood never have come neer, nor so much as look towards it: and that in regard of these two considerations. 1. The manner or strangeness of the way, or means, how it should be done. 2. The strangeness of the grace, or condescension in the Son of God to doe it, or to suffer it to be done.

1. The reason or thoughts of man would never have expected, or thought of the personall uniting of the Son of God, and the nature of man, in regard of the strangeness of the way, or means how such an union as this should, and must be effected: as a man would never expect or think that the reasonable soul of a man should be personally united to the body of a pishire or she, because the means how it should come to be thus united is very difficult to be conceived. The unlikelyhood of means, whereby any thing is to be brought to passe, and must be effected, if ever it takes place, is very apt, especially if it be great, and drawing neer to a supposed impossibility, to turn men aside, and take them off from all expectation, yea and thought, that ever the thing should be effected. What was the reason that made *Sarah* to conceive, and speak (as we heard, she did) *viz.* that no man would ever have said unto *Abraham* (*viz.* as being a thing no waies likely to come to passe) that *Sarah* should give children suck in her old daies? Doubtlesse her reason was, because she thought there was no probable means that any man would apprehend or think upon, how she should conceive, and bring forth children, after she had ceased to be with her
after

after the manner of women. So what was it, that turned the thoughts and expectations of that noble man aside, on whose hand the King of *Israel* leaned, from the fulfilling, or taking place of what the Prophet *Elisba* had prophesied, notwithstanding he had the advantage of this Prophets word and prediction, to keep them to it; *viz.* that *by to morrow, a measure of fine sower should be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gates of Samaria?* what was that (I say) that took off this noble man from all expectation or thinking that any such thing would be? but onely that there was no means in his eye likely to bring it to passe, as is evident, *vers. 2. Thou, b* the Lord (saith he) *would make windows in the heavens, could this thing come to passe?* In like manner, if there had been nothing else in the way, to put the incarnation of the Son of God quite out of all the thoughts, and clean besides all the expectations or imaginations of men, but onely the unlikelyhood of any proper means to effect it, this alone according to the common course of the actings and workings of the minds of men otherwise, had been enough to do it.

If you ask me, but what means needs there be for the effecting of the incarnation of the Son of God, or, the uniting the two natures, the divine, and the humane, into one person, but onely the will of God, acting in the potencie and power of it? And if so, this means might easily have been apprehended by men; and consequently, the want of the knowledge of such a means as you speak of, can be no reason, why men might not probably have expected or thought of, this great act of the goodness and power of God, the incarnation of his son. To this

I answer, It is true, the will and power of God, are causes sufficient to bring any effect whatsoever to passe; so farre as efficiencie (properly so called) is able to produce an effect. But

1. Though they be sufficient causes in respect of any effect whatsoever (with the limitation mentioned) yet they are not probable causes of any effect, save onely in conjunction and concurrence with such second causes, which are proper to produce the effect with them; or else of such effects, as they

2 King 7 1.

vers. 2.

produce constantly, and without ceasing. As for example: the will and power of God are probable causes of the preservation and continuance of the universe, though in respect of these effects, they are in no conjunction with secondary causes, but perform them by themselves alone. But why are they probable or likely causes of these effects? not because of their potentie or sufficiencie to produce them; but because of their long accustomed and experienced imploiment in producing them: They have supported the creation in being for so many generations; therefore it's probable and likely they will doe so still. But in respect of contingent effects, and which are produced but now and then, though they be as sufficient causes of these effects as of those other, yet they are no probable causes of them, except they be joined with particular and proper causes, and which have a naturall tendencie to produce these effects also. As for example, the will and power of God, or, the powerfull will of God, is able to make a poor man, who to day *is destitute of daily food*, rich, and worth many thousands, before to morrow: but it is no probable cause of such an effect; it is ten thousand to one, that it will not effect it. The reason is, because such an effect as this is contingent, and there is no means or second cause in view likely to join with the powerfull will of God therein. Now the incarnation of the Sonne of God, was an effect of this kinde: it was contingent; yea and most rarely contingent; never any like to it, or neer to it, effected or brought forth, from the daies of eternity. Therefore the will of God, though it be granted to be a sufficient cause of it, yet was it no probable or likely cause of it; and therefore the knowledge of this cause in men, did no waies incline or accommodate them, to expect, or so much as to think of it: the eye of the reasons or understandings of men, were no waies like, ever to have fastened upon this cause, as likely to have produced the effect we speak of. Again,

2. Though the will and power of God be causes sufficient in respect of any effect whatsoever, as farre as efficiencie, properly so called, *i. e.* the vertue of that kinde of cause, which we call efficient, can possibly contribute towards the effect; yet they

they are not sufficient without the concurrence and mediation of some other cause, or causes, in respect of such effects, which stand in need of other causes besides efficient causes, to produce, or give them being. For example, the will and power of God are causes abundantly sufficient to make a man; but they are not sufficient to make a man without a reasonable soul; because a reasonable soul is an essentiall requisite to the being of a man; and whatsoever God should make without a reasonable soul, is not that kinde of creature, which we call, man, whatever else it may be. The rule of the Schoolmen is more true, *Deus ipse non potest supplere vicam cause formalis*: God himself cannot supply the place or stead of the formall cause; he cannot make a wall white, without whiteneffe, nor a man wise without wisdom, nor learned, without learning, &c. It is true he is as able to produce these formall causes, as well as any other kinde of effect, and so to give a compleat being to things, as he pleaseth: but he is not able to give a compleat being unto things, without producing that, which is simply necessary to make them compleat. Now then, be it granted, that men might very possibly apprehend the will and power of God to be sufficient causes of producing such an effect, as the incarnation of his son, as well as of any other possible effect whatsoever; yet there being other causes, or at least another cause, as necessary to the actual production of such an effect as this (I mean, the making of the son of God, man, or, the son of man) as the will and power of God themselves; and this cause, or causes, being no waies such, as were ever like to enter into the heart or thoughts of men, evident it is, that this great effect we speak of, the incarnation of the son of God, must needs be a mystery to men, a thing which they were no waies likely to have thought of, or to have expected, notwithstanding they did, or might, apprehend the will and power of God sufficient causes to produce as great and difficult matters, as this.

If you ask me, but what cause, or causes, were there further necessary or requisite to the incarnation of the son of God besides the will and power of God, which were so unlikely to have occurred in the way of the mindes and thoughts

thoughts of men, in all their travells and enquiries.

I answer, the two natures, the divine and the humane, being hypostatically or personally united in the Son of God being made flesh, doe necessarily require some band or tie, or means of such an union: and this band, cause, or means of the union we speak of, is that further cause we mean, which is required to make the Sonne of God, man, besides the power of God, and which we affirm to be a thing altogether unlikely to have ever been thought of by men. We said before, that God himself could not supply the defect, or place of the formall cause of any thing, but must of necessity create or produce a formall cause in being, if he means to make the thing it self: so in this case, intending to unite his own divine nature, and the nature of man in one and the same person, and to make one Christ of both, he must of necessity create, or make some band or other, by which the two natures, being in themselves not only distinct, but infinitely disproportioned the one unto the other, might become so intimately and intirely one, as an hypostatical or personall union importeth. This, evidence of reason, yea almost sense it self teacheth, that two things of different natures, or beings, cannot come to combine to make a third thing, which shall be intirely and perfectly one in it self, and different from them both, but that first, there must be some efficient cause or other, so to unite and combine them together: and secondly, there must be also somewhat in the nature of a band common to them both, by which, 1. all two-ness (as it were) or plurality of beings between them, must be either dissolved, or prevented; and 2. such a relation founded between them, whereby one must be looked upon as a part of the other, I mean, as a fellow part with it, and so both of them as together intirely constituting one and the same thing, or being. The bringing or putting of two things together simply, though it be with never so much nearness of the one unto the other, doth not presently make them one and the same thing, or one and the same being, doth not make one to be a part of the other; but there must be somewhat of another nature raised between them, which must give them another manner of a mutual intireness and relation, then any locall scituation or nearness

nearness of place can doe. The body and soul in a living man, are truly and properly one, *i.* make one and the same person and being: but a spirit, good or bad, Angel, or devil, joining it self with, or putting it self into, whether a living, or dead body of a man, and acting out of it, or by it, as the soul it self doth, as by speaking, walking, or the like, doth not make one and the same person with that humane body, or person, which it thus acteth, or possesseth. The spirit in this case, is no fellow-part with that body, where to it is joined, but remains a distinct being by it self, notwithstanding any such union as this. The reason of the difference is; because there is a personall band, between the body and the soul in a living man; which there is not between a spirit, and the body or person of a man, notwithstanding the one be possessed and acted by the other: In like manner, that the Son of God should be incarnate or *made flesh* (in the Scripture sense) *i.* should personally be united to the nature of man, so that one and the same person, who is called Christ, should be the result, as it were, and product of both thus united; it was absolutely necessary, not onely that he should act, be essentially, present with, or in, and so shew his divine power, out of, this nature, but further, that a personall band should intercede between him (I mean between his divine nature) and this humane nature assumed, which should take hold of both; and raise another manner of relation between them for intireness and oneness of being, then is between him (or his divine nature) and all the holy men that ever were in the world; in many of whom notwithstanding he acted, and shewed forth his divine power, by sundry acts of the same nature with those, which he acted in that very part of the humane nature, which he had personally assumed unto himself. Now then this is that which I say; that same personall band (as I call it) by the mediation whereof those two natures, so infinitely distanced and differing the one from the other, the divine and the humane, became one person, and without which, it were, and had been simply impossible that ever they should have met, or combin'd in such a way (I mean, to make one and the same person) is even now, the *ōz* of it (as they call it) being known, so mysterious, so difficult and

hard above measure to conceive what it is, or may probably be; that certainly, if there had not been a cleer revelation from heaven, that such a thing was in being, it would never have entred into the thoughts or mindes of men, either to have inquired into it, or to have expected it; least of all would they have been either able, or indeed desirous, to apprehend it. And thus you have the first consideration opened, in regard whereof, the incarnation of the sonne, was never likely to have come into the mindes or thoughts of men, had it not been revealed; *viz.* the exceeding difficulty or strangeness of the manner, way, or means, how it should be effected and brought to passe.

2. The latter consideration was this; the strangeness and incredibility of the grace or condescension in God, and in the Sonne of God, to yield unto it, and to effect it. It is true, the *Whole earth is full of the goodness of the Lord* (as the Psalmist speaks) *i.* of the fruits and expressions of his goodness; and men by consideration, and a diligent contemplation of the works of Providence and government of the world, may come to know much of the goodness, and bounty, of the patience and long-sufferance of God, and to make their souls sat here-with: yea for God to take *knowledge* of what we stand in need of (as our Saviour saith he doth) or (as *David* speaks) to *behold the things that are on earth*, is a great and gracious humility (as is there said) and condescension in so glorious a God, that hath his dwelling so high (as the Psalm expresseth it) and there are *none like unto him* amongst the great ones of the earth, those that are called Gods, in such condescension expressions of themselves, as these, to those that are beneath them: they do not consider, what, or how many, the wants, necessities, distresses, miseries, of poor creatures are, nor doe they engage, or employ themselves any waies to supply, or relieve them. But that humility, or condescension to the creature, which God sheweth in such aspects of his Providence, and in such a tenour of dispensations as these, belong unto him, as he is the governour of the world; and much in such a fence, *vengeance* is said to *belong unto him*. But that grace and condescension in God, and in his Sonne Jesus Christ, in his incarnation, in vouchsafing

Math 6 72.
Psalm 113. 6.

to assume the nature of man into the same person with him, especially upon those terms on which he did assume it, *viz.* with such poverty and contempt, with such, and so many sorrows and infirmities, with such bitter and reproachfull sufferings, &c. duly considered, is a condescension of another kinde, and strain, and measure, farre differing from the other; and that which was a thousand times lesse credible, or to have been expected from God, then the other. Now to make some kinde of estimate of the strangeness and wonderfulness of this condescension, it will be necessary to take into consideration, to weigh and ponder these circumstances; 1. The sublimity, the transcendent excellencie of the divine nature. 2. The depth, I mean, the weakness and vileness of the humane nature. 3. The small encouragement he had by way of engagement from that nature, to yield to such a condescension, as to be personally united to it. 4. The small encouragement he had from any hope of gain or benefit likely to accrue to himself, by such a condescension as this. 5. (Lastly) the great abasements which he knew he was further to undergoe and to abide in this nature assumed, over and besides the assumption it self of it. For the first, the supertranscendent excellencie and sublimity of the divine nature, is such, that it is an object, proportioned only unto, and comprehensible only by, it self. And as the beating back of the eye by the sun with a kinde of indignation and disdain to be (directly) beheld or looked upon by it, argueth a marvellous strength and fulness of light in it; so doth that constant sending-empty-away of the reasons and understandings of men by God, when they come to fasten, and feed upon the contemplation of his essence and being, abundantly argue and prove, a strength, fulness, glory, and perfection of being in him, which disdaineth all proportion, or commensurableness, with any creature whatsoever, yea with all of them put together. 2. For the weakness and vileness of the humane nature, especially since infested and embased by sinne, *quod homines, et testes*; there are as many witnesses, what, and how great it is, as there are men. And though the Son of God did not assume it with any defilement or embasement of sinne; yet (as the Scripture saith) *God sent his Son in the similitude*

Rom. 8. 3.

or likenesse of *sinfull flesh*; i. in such flesh, in that flesh, which to the eye, and in outward appearance, differed nothing from that, which was sinfull indeed (no, the sinfulness of it it self, not excepted) yea which was charged with all those naturall weakneses and infirmities, which that flesh, which is really sinfull, is universally exposed, and subject unto. 3. He was so farre from being under any engagement whatsoever, to that nature, which with such an infinite condescension, he did assume (I mean, unto men) that as farre as evil intreaties, injuries, provocations in the highest, could interpose and prevail with him, he was likely to have stood engaged and bent in his resolutions and desires, upon the ruine and destruction of it. 4. Nor could he expect, being truly and substantially God, that any matter of gain, advantage, or addition of good in what kinde soever, should, or could accrue unto him, by such a condescension; that which is infinite, can have nothing, either added to it, or taken from it. 5. (And lastly) nor could he but know, even before he put on, and ware that garment, or cloathing of flesh, which we speak of, how it would be rent and torn, and a thousand waies abused, before he should come to put it off again. These circumstances (with some others of like consideration, which might be added to them) duly considered, must needs render the condescension of the Sonne of God, in his incarnation, hyperbolically strange, wonderfull, and mysterious.

Thus have we at last fully and cleerly demonstrated unto you (though in somewhat a more generall way, and in the main carriages of it only) that transcendent excellency of divine wisdom, which shines in the Gospel; & which we laid down in the eighth place, amongst our arguments or considerations of the second sort, to prove the Scriptures, and so the Gospel, to be from God. As for all the particularities of this wisdom we speak of, they are like the *Starres in the firmament of heaven* for their multitude, which no man can number, or call by their names, but only he that made them. Let us now (in a word) weigh and consider attentively, what there is in the consideration argued, to demonstrate, or prove the Gospel to be from God. *With him* (saith *Job*, speaking of God) *is wisdom and strength: he hath*

Job 12.13.

counsell

counsell and understanding. So *Daniel*, *Wisdom and strength are his.* And the Apostle *Paul*, *To God* (saith he) *onely wise, be praise, through Jesus Christ for ever:* Where he seems to make wisdom an incommunicable property in God. *To God onely wise; i.* who onely, or who alone, is wise. Amongst the Heathen, *Pythagoras* an ancient Philosopher, and who was the first that gave the name of *Philosophers* to men studious of knowledge (a word which signifies lovers of wisdom, whereas before such men were called, *σοφισται* wife;) gave this reason, why he contented himself with the name of a Philosopher, or lover of wisdom, and thought it was a term high enough for men; because he judged no man wise, but God only. So that wisdom, properly so called, was by the light of nature it self, adjudged a perfect distinguishing character between God and man, or, of God, from man. *David* findes this character of God in the frame and making of the heavens. *To him who by wisdom made the heavens:* and so again in the whole course and tenour of his Providence: *O Lord, how manifold are thy works: in wisdom hast thou made them all.* *Solomon* also, the wisest amongst men, takes notice, not so much of the power or omnipotency of God, as of his wisdom, in laying the foundations of the earth, and stablishing the heavens. *The Lord by wisdom hath laid the foundations of the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens.* So that a choicenesse or excellency of wisdom found in any thing, hath still been acknowledged and looked upon, by the wisest and most considerate of men, as a cleer impression of God, and hath been a sufficient ground unto them to conclude such things to be from God, or of his doing, wherein it hath been found. Now he that shall diligently contemplate and behold that face of wisdom, which hath been presented unto you in the glasse of the Gospel, will easily perceive that the beauty and lustre of it is more sublime, ravishing, and God-like, then is any where to be found in all, or all manner of the works of God besides. So that well might the Apostle call Christ, as he is contrived in the Gospel, or the doctrine of *Christ* (as the word oft signifieth) *the wisdom of God.* *But unto you that are called* (saith he) *both of Jews and Grecians, we preach Christ, the power of God, and the*

Dan. 2.10.

Rom. 6.17.

Psal. 136. 5.

Psal. 104. 24.

Prov. 3.19.

1 Cor. 1.24.

E e 3

Wisdom.

wisdom of God: we preach Christ, *i.* the doctrine of Christs Gospel, which is *the wisdom of God, i.* a piece of admirable and divine wisdom, worthy of God, or, wherein God himself is clearly to be seen. And to this purpose the same Apostle in the latter Epistle to these *Corinthians*, chap. 4. vers. 3, 4. hath this passage. *If our Gospel them be hid, it is hid to them* (or amongst them) *that are lost, or* (*τις ἀποκρύβηται*) that are in a way of being lost, that are in the loosing, or ready to perish, or to be lost; meaning, that it is *hid, i.* the truth of it, or, the descent of it from God, undiscerned and unacknowledged, onely amongst, or unto, such: The reason whereof he gives in the next verse, thus: *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes of those who beleve not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;* clearly implying, that there is such a glorious light or lustre in the Gospel (which must needs be in respect of the wisdom thereof, at least principally, in respect of this: because this is that which as *Solomon* saith, makes a *mans face to shine*) such a glorious lustre (I say) or brightnesse of wisdom the Apostle supposeth to be in the Gospel, that except *the God of this world, i.* the devil (whom our Saviour in *John* calls the Prince of this world) had through the just judgement and permission of God, bewitched men (as the Apostles phrase is elsewhere) or blinded their eyes (as here he saith) *i.* made them incapable and in-apprehensive of things otherwise notoriously, yea and gloriously, manifest, they could not but see and discern it plainly. Where 1. (by the way) we have that objection against the point now asserted, fully answered and cleared; *viz.* that if there were such an excellent lustre or brightnesse of wisdom in the Gospel, why should not the wise and prudent, the rationally and understanding men of the world, come to see and embrace it, rather than others? yes (saith the Apostle) there is a clear reason for this; *the God of this world, the devil* more generally practiseth more upon such men as these, than upon others; and that through the just judgement of God; because such as these (commonly) are proud and high conceited of themselves and their own wisdoms, or otherwise wickedly given; and so in respect of their knowledge or naturall indowments

2 Cor 4
verse 3, 4.

Eccles. 8. 1.

ments they are more exposed to the stroke of Gods displeasure, and consequently to the devils *blinding of their eyes*, then other men. Now as the common saying is, that *corruptio optimi est pessima*, the corruption of the best, is worst; so when men of great parts and indowments are spiritually blasted and blinded by Satan, they become more froward and perverse in their reasonings and motions about spirituall things, then others; and more averse then any men, as to any regular and unpartiall dijudication of such things, which in themselves are proper and sufficient to convince them of the truth and certainty of the Gospel. And

2. That is observable also from the last recited passage of the Apostle, that where the devil hath not had to doe with the mindes and understandings of men, where men and women have not so farre provoked God, as to cause him to deliver them over to the effectuall working of Satan, there they are in a capacity to close with the Gospel as a doctrine of truth, and from God. *Our Gospel* (saith the Apostle) *if it be hid, it is hid to those that are lost*: and who are these? such whose eyes, *i.* the eyes of whose mindes, are *blinded by Satan*, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them: clearly implying, that it is not mens being in their naturall conditions, but in their hardened, or further blinded condition, that utterly disables them from submitting to the Gospel by faith. If so be that men naturally, and before the committing of such sins, for which God gives them up unto Satan, *so blinde their eyes*, were in an utter incapacity of beleiving, the not-shining of the glorious Gospel of Christ in their eyes, could not reasonably be attributed to Satans blinding of them. If men be born blinde, their blindness, or non-seeing of things, cannot be ascribed to any accident that shall befall them afterwards. But this only by the way: and that in reference to somewhat lately delivered, and for the strengthening and confirmation thereof: otherwise there are many other things, observable in the verse. But (as to the business in hand) you clearly see, that either the holy Ghost himself, or whosoever it was, that framed the Epistle, wherein the passage late mentioned stands, judgeth that excellent light

and to make discoveries and reports of things there. But as it was in the Israelites gathering of *Manna*, he that gathered least, had no want; and he that gathered most had no overplus: so in the case we speak of; as the workings, contrivements, and debates of the meanest, and most ordinary understandings of men, want not altogether the favour of that which is common to men (I mean, reason) they have some taste, more or less, of what is proper to men: so neither have the theories, contemplations, and achievements of the richest and most sublime understandings of men, any overplus (I mean, any thing more excellent) than what is humane, and what upon a due search into, and consideration had of it, may be clearly known to be but from men. Therefore, when any such piece of wisdom, or projection of a business, shall be presented to us, wherein upon diligent inquiry made, there plainly appears *aliquid augustinus*, that which is more adorable, mysterious, and divine, then what is any waies likely, yea or indeed possible, to fall within the compass of the largest sphere of the understanding of men; as to the contrivement of it; there is a sure foundation to conclude and build upon, that doubtlesse a greater wisdom then any that is humane, was interested in the framing and composition of it. Now that the Gospel, or that great Gospel transaction (as I called it) is of that consideration we speak of, a piece of wisdom, a projection, which carries a fuller and more majestic lustre of wisdom in the face of it, then ever was known to appear, or is any waies likely to appear in any doctrine, project, or device of man, hath been sufficiently argued, and made good in what hath been already said. I shall onely adde, the consideration of those words, *Who is the image of God*, in that passage of Scripture lately cited (and in part opened) *2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. In whom the God of this world hath blinded the mindes of those that believe not, least the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them. Who is the image of God*: It is, as if he should say, it is scarce possible, but that men should see and acknowledge, the truth of the Gospel, and the descent of it from God (as we the Apostles preach it) if Satan did not marvellously blinde their mindes, and so make them very uncapable of such things; inasmuch

inasmuch as the Gospel, is the glorious Gospel of Christ, & displays and sets forth Christ gloriously, and like unto himself; and Christ is the image of God; i. a person, in whom, the nature, and being of God, and all his attributes, wisdom, grace, holinesse, justice, power, are clearly to be seen, as farre as they are discernable by men; which is farre enough, to inable men to put a clear difference, between him and his image, and likeness, and between any created being whatsoever, and the likeness thereof. So that if men were not under the power of Satan, and justly delivered up by God unto him to make fools and sots of, in respect of the great things of their peace, they could not but see the very compleat image and likeness of God himself in the Gospel, as being that which is most manifest, and most plainly and palpably discernable, from the similitudes or likenesses of all creatures whatsoever; and consequently subject themselves in faith and obedience to it. Great mountains when they are before us, are easily discerned from little moul-hills, or from pins heads; if men have but any tolerable use of their eyes. So (saith the Apostle, in effect) is the image and likeness of God, when it is presented before men, as it is in the Gospel (where Christ is gloriously presented) easie enough to be distinguished and known, from the superscription or likeness of any other being whatsoever, if men be not either smitten with spirituall blindness by the hand of Satan, or willingly shut their eyes against it. Where the sight is but weak and dimme, yet if the object be full of visibility, and very easie to be discerned, it is able to apprehend it; if a man hath but a glimmering of a seeing faculty, he will be able to discern an house from a man, or from a tree, neer at hand; so though mens reasons and understandings be naturally slow, and dark, and dimme, &c. yet such an object as God is, so full of intelligibility, or of that which may be apprehended and understood, being in a clear glasse proposed and brought neer to them, certainly may be discerned by them, and known from other objects, if the God of this world hath not breathed upon them, and blasted them. Indeed if Christ were only the image of some creature, as of a man, or an Angel, and not of God; the Apostle seems to suppose, that though he

were presented in the Gospel to the utmost line and lineament of his beauty and perfection, yet the *light of the Gospel might not have shined unto them*, though Satan had *not blinded their mindes*: because such an object as this, would have had but *parum de ratione formali*, little of that in it, which makes an object intelligible, and apt to be distinguished from other things, by the understanding; all created beings being empty of entity or being, and consequently of intelligibility, comparatively in respect of God. But now, Christ being *the image of God*, who contains all perfection and fulness of entity and being, and consequently of whatsoever is intelligible and that may be apprehended and understood; and withall, being so excellently and fully set forth, as he is in the Gospel; if men doe not see the light of truth in it, and that it is from God, it is a certain signe, either that *that evil one* (as *John* calls him) hath *touch'd them in the eyes of their understandings*, and made them blinde; or else that they wilfully shut their eyes against the light of it, and do not see it, meerly because they will not, or care not to doe it. And so the same Apostle writing to the *Galatians*, asks them, who had *bewitched them*, i. hindered and bound, as it were, their reasons, judgements, understandings, that they *should not believe the truth* [of the Gospel] clearly implying, that if some such strange thing, as a spirituall *bewitching* be not fallen upon men, if they be but free, and have their reasons and understandings at liberty, to act that which is proper for them to doe, they cannot lightly but acknowledge, and submit unto the Gospel, as a truth. If you ask me, why so? the Apostle himself answers you in the case of the *Galatians* (in the place mentioned) where he gives this reason why they must needs be *bewitched*, in that they did *not obey the truth of the Gospel*; viz. that Christ had *been plainly described unto them: before whose eyes* (saith he) *Christ hath been evidently set forth*, [delineated, or described, as the word signifieth] *crucified among you*. Whereby he plainly insinuates, that the image or portraiture of Christ, being so drawn to the life, as it is in the Gospel, by the hand of the holy Ghost, (especially) if it be but well and clearly shewed, and presented unto men in the ministry thereof: is such an object,

Gal 3 1.

object, or image, which is sufficiently convincing of its own verity and conformity, 1. to the person of Christ; 2. to the nature of God, where the eyes of mens reasons and understandings have not been shut up, or at least dazled and made unserviceable for such a purpose; by the devil. If the truth of the Gospel were such, or so conditioned, that men by nature, I mean, before they receive any secret and penal stroke upon the eyes of their mindes from the devils hand, were no waies capable of it, and of consenting to it; the Apostle would never have asked the *Galatians*, who had *bewitched them*, that they *did not obey it*. But this by the way. As to our business in hand; this is that which I desire you will take special notice of upon occasion of the former passage of Scripture (the interpretation whereof given, hath been cleared and strengthened by this latter) that the great and profound mysteriousness of that blessed transaction in the Gospel, wherein the salvation of the world works with so high an hand, is one of the fairest and most discernable lineaments of the image of God that is to be seen there; and consequently is very pregnant and demonstrative, to evince the Gospel to be from God.

The tenth (and last) argument from the matter of the Scriptures, that was proposed to satisfy the soul and conscience about their original, and to prove that they are from God, was this: the glorious, and most transcendent importance of this transaction of the Gospel, by way of benefit and blessing upon the world. Amongst many others, there are these eight great benefits and blessings, which the Gospel is set, and seeks to bring upon the world; yea and which it actually brings upon the heads of all those, who unfainedly desire, and seek after them. The first, is our reconciliation with God, or unto God. Secondly, our justification, or righteous-making in the sight of God. Thirdly, our adoption, or sonship unto God. Fourthly, the mortification of the body of sin and death in men. Fifthly, the quickning unto, or the inspiration of, a new life, to live holly, and unto God. Sixthly, peace of conscience, with God, or towards God. Seventhly, our redemption or deliverance from the wrath and vengeance which is to come. Eighthly,

(and lastly) the bringing of us to glory; or the investing of us with a glorious and blessed eternity. It is well known to us, that the face of the Gospel is fully set to possess the world of all this treasure; to invest the sons and daughters of men, with all these blessed priviledges (besides many others.) And because this is a thing so generally known, we shall onely touch the particulars, and that very lightly.

1. Our reconciliation with God, or unto God; *i.* the slaying, or taking away that enmity against God, and those hard thoughts of him, which before lay burning, and working in our hearts and inward parts, together with the kindling of a spirit of love towards him, and the raising of a good and honourable opinion in us concerning him, in the stead thereof, is fully expressed, and asserted, *2 Cor. 5. 18, 19. Rom. 5. 10. Col. 1. 21, &c.*

2. Our justification, or righteous-making in the sight of God; *i.* the rendring or setting of us free from all guilt, demerit and imputation of sinne whatsoever, and that in a way of the greatest equity and righteousness, without the least reflexion upon his most district justice, perfect hatred, and deepest severity against sinne, is cleerly testified in these, and many other passages of Scripture, *Aff. 13. 38, 39. Rom. 3. 21, 22, &c. Rom. 5. 9, &c.*

3. Our adoption, or relation of sonship unto God by faith, is with no lesse evidence and frequency of assertion held forth in the Scripture. Let these texts, with many others of like notion, be perused for satisfaction herein, *Joh. 1. 12, 13. Rom. 8. 14, 15. Gal. 3. 26. Gal. 4. 5, 6, 7, &c.*

4. The mortification of that body of sinne and death (as the Apostle calls it) which is in us, is a glorious priviledge, benefit, and blessing, which we receive by the Gospel. The Gospel ministrerth unto us wisdom and strength wherewith to doe it, yea wherewith to make us willing to doe it, The two great Apostles, *Paul* and *Peter*, give knowledge of this Evangelicall blessednes also. The former, *Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5.* and again, *Col. 3. 3, 5.* The latter, *1 Pet. 4. 1, &c.*

5. A vivification, or quickning unto a new and more excellent life; an inspiration of a new principle of vitall motions and

2 Cor. 5. 18, 19.
Rom. 5. 10
Col. 1. 21.

Aff. 13. 38, 39.
Rom. 3. 21, 22,
&c.
Rom. 5. 9.

Gal. 3. 26.
Gal. 4. 5, 6, 7.

Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5,
&c.
Col. 3. 3, 5.
1 Pet. 4. 1.

and actions, farre more honourable and august, then our former, is a Gospel benediction also unto, and upon, the world. This grace is visible in these Scriptures (with their fellows) *Rom. 6. 4. Jam. 1. 18. Eph. 2. 1, 5, &c.*

6. Peace with God, or peace of conscience with God, or towards God, is another great blessing that accrues unto the world by the Gospel; and depends upon, and flows from that other priviledge and blessing we spake of, our justification. Let that great oracle of divine knowledge (the Apostle *Paul* I mean) be consulted about this, *Rom. 5. 1.* Therefore (saith he) being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord *Jesus Christ*. The meaning is not only, that God is at peace with us, in himself, and intends no acts of hostility against us, we being fully acquitted and discharged from all matter of offence, which might justly provoke him hereunto; but further that we have this peace with him, *i.* we enjoy, or may enjoy this interest of peace with God; we have sufficient ground of injoyment of it in our justification. Fear (we know) hath torment (as *John* saith) whether there be any cause of fear or no: and they that fear trouble, or warre from any, cannot properly be said to have peace with them, though nothing but peace be intended towards them. See yet more of this, *Aff. 10. 36. Rom. 10. 15. Eph. 2. 17, &c.*

7. Redemption, and deliverance from the wrath and vengeance which is to come, is a priviledge or blessing, without which most miserable were the condition of those that are called happy (yea, even the first born of this denomination) in this world. But for this great blessing also on the worlds behalf, see whether the Gospel undertakes not, in these and other-like places, *1 Cor. 1. 30. Ephes. 1. 7. Colos. 1. 14. 1 Thes. 1. 10.*

8. (And lastly) the Gospel also, doth not only raise and lift up the world, with the hope and expectation of a redemption or deliverance from the wrath which is to come: but of an investiture and possession also of the glory which is to come: yea it carrieth on those who believe, so farre in the waies of righteousness and of peace, untill they be ready to enter into the city of the great King: it maketh us meet (as the Apostle speaketh)

Eph. 2. 5.
James 1. 18.
Rom. 6. 4.

Rom. 5. 1.

Aff. 10. 36.
Rom. 10. 15.
Eph. 2. 17.

1 Thes. 1. 10.
Eph. 1. 7.
Col. 1. 14.
1 Cor. 1. 30.

Col. 1. 12.
Act. 20. 31.

speaketh) to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light (Col. 1. 12.) yea and is able to give us an inheritance amongst those that are sanctified, Act. 20. 32.

Now then these being the known benefits wherewith the Gospel undertakes to bless (yea and wherewith it really doth bless) the world, some of them actually, yea and sensibly enjoyed by the Saints, as the mortification of that body of death which we speak of, the dying of the old man within them, the quickning and raising up of the new, that peace of conscience, which they enjoy with God, &c. let us briefly consider, whether, I doe not say the actuall collation of these things upon men, or the grounds and reasons upon which this Gospel undertakes to secure men of the reall enjoyment of them all in due time: but whether the very treaty with men about such things as these, being so spirituall, and holy, and of that high and glorious concernment unto the world, is not a rich and pregnant demonstration, that the Gospel is from God. As one of those that were in the high Priests Hall, with Peter, discovered him by his speech or language, to be none belonging to the high Priest or his family, nor of those that came against his Master, but to belong unto Christ, and challenged him upon it; surely also thou art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee: in like manner, the very nature and subject of the discourse of the Scriptures; especially upon, and about the subjects mentioned, clearly discover them, to be none of the writings of the wisdom or learning of this world; because there is not a lip of such excellencie, not a pen that ever advanced such a magnificent and sublime discourse, that ever so much as faced the world, no not with the least mention or overture of things so super-transcendently rich and glorious, to be found amongst all the scribes, or wise-men, of this school and order. And as the Lord Christ gave this account to the disciples of John, who were sent unto him, to inquire whether he was the Messiah, or no, to prove himself to be the Messiah indeed: The blinde receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor receive the Gospel; meaning, that these great and wonderfull cures, and blessings, so abundantly wrought, and given unto men by him, were a great

Mat. 26. 73.

Matth. 11. 5.

great argument that he was the Messiah indeed, the great benefactor of the world; in like manner, when we hear of the enemies of God reconciled to him, of sinners justified, of aliens and strangers adopted for sons and daughters unto God; of sinne and corruption mortified, where sometime they were alive; of men quickned, and made alive unto righteousness, who before were dead in sinnes and trespasses; of men redeemed, who were the worst and most miserable of bond-men and vassalls; of men glorified, and made like unto the Angels, who were the children of shame, vilenesse, and contempt; I say when we hear of all these great and marvellous things, partly already brought to passe, partly undertaken, and this, with all possibly-imaginable likelihood to be brought to passe, in the times and seasons assigned hereunto, by a piece of wisdom or learning; may we not without any fear or doubting conclude, that certainly this wisdom, this learning, which advanced the blessednesse of the world to this height, is not from men, but from God? For what greater things then these can God himself, if he should ingage himself with all his divine wisdom it self, though it be infinite, what greater things then these can he project, or by his power bring to passe for the sonnes and daughters of men? This for our tenth and last demonstration, taken from the substance, or subject matter of the Scriptures.

We have now finished our first kinde of arguments, or demonstrations, to vince the divine originall of the Scriptures, which were such, as we called intrinscally, and are found in the Gospel it self; which we subdivided again, or differenced under two heads; some of them were taken from the manner; the other, from the matter of the Scriptures. We now proceed to the second generall head, or kinde of argument, to demonstrate the same truth (I mean that the Scriptures are from God) these we formerly called extrinscally, because they are the considerations of such things, which doe not inhere in the Scriptures, nor properly result from them; but yet they face them, and relate to them with such a kinde of relation, which takes hold of the divinity of them, as the former did, and demonstrates the same parentage, and descent of them,

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with those other. The particulars of this kinde of argument, or consideration also, which we call extrinsecall, may be ranged under two subordinate heads likewise. The former are such passages or acts of providence, whereby God plainly owns the Scriptures as his, and from him: the latter, are such, either doings, or sayings of men, which are so farre confederate with those providences of God, as to join in testimony with them on the behalf of the Scriptures.

For the former of these; those great actings, and workings of providence, which relate unto the Scriptures, by way of testimony, that they are from God, are chiefly five. 1. The wonderfull preservation of the Scriptures: 2. the manner of the plantation of the Gospel when it first went forth into the world, with the strange sucresse which attended it: 3. the exact and punctuall fulfilling of the predictions contained in the Scriptures, in their season: 4. The great and wonderfull effects, which God hath formerly, and continues still daily to produce and work by the Gospel, and ministry of it: 5. (And lastly) the government of the world, carried on and managed with such a sweet conformity to the Scriptures, and according to the tenour of the Gospel, and the high things thereof. To which you may adde (if you please) the remarkable judgements, that have been executed and inflicted upon their chief enemies.

For the first of these; that great hand of providence which hath appeared in preserving of the body, or books of the Scriptures, for so many generations together, as have passed over them, since the first writing of them, in the midst of so many dangers, and against so many indeavours to root them out of the world, is a great argument that they belong unto God, as the author and parent of them. It is a common saying in naturall Philosophy. *Eadem est causa procreans & conservans*. The procreating, and preserving, cause of things, is one and the same. And as the Scripture seems to make that dispensation of God towards *Christ*, his not *suffering him to see corruption*, though he were in the grave, and so (as it were) in the very hand and power of corruption; an argument that he was his son, his *holy one*; *thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to*

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see corruption; so is that hand of protection and preservation, which God for so many years (or rather ages) together hath constantly held over the Scriptures, not suffering them *to see corruption* in one kinde or other, when as the world, and the enemies thereof, who sought their corruption and destruction, seem to have had them under their power, and that they might have done to them, as *Christ* said they did unto *John* the Baptist, *even what they list*; that God (I say) hath all this while preserved the Scriptures in the midst of so many dangers, and likelihoods of miscarrying, is a very strong presumption (at least) that they have some peculiar interest in him, and are *holy* unto him with a more endeared holinesse, then other writings.

There are three kinds of corruption, or perishings, whereunto books and writings are obnoxious; and so the *Scriptures* themselves also, so farre as they partake in the nature and infirmities of other writings. The one is, by an utter losse or perishing of all, and every part and parcell of the writing; when there is not so much as a fragment, fragments, or broken piece remaining. The second is, when they are much dismembred and maimed, so that the beauty and comelinesse of their structure and frame is wholly defaced, and some, or more, of the more considerable and principall things at first contained in them, wholly lost, or perished from the world. The third and last kinde of perishing is, when their body or bulk is not diminished, nay perhaps this may be augmented; but the spirit and life of that knowledge, or of those truths, which were at first plainly and clearly held forth in them, is much inseedled, if not quite dissolved and destroyed, by falsifications, additions, subtractions, and alterations in one kinde or other. Now from all these kinds of corruptions or perishings, God hath, if not by way of perfect miracle, yet by a very high and remarkable hand of providence, preserved the Scriptures: and shall we not then think that they are his?

1. It is a matter of marvellous consideration, if we look downwards, and towards the earth only (I mean, only upon second causes) that the whole body of the Scriptures, rush and branch, they and their memoriall with them, are not long be-

fore this perished from under the heavens: considering, 1. what numbers of enemies they have alwaies had, who have sought their extirpation and ruine: 2. with how perfect and un- placable an hatred, these (at least many of them) have sought their suppression: 3. how potent many of their ene- mies have been, furnished with power in abundance (in the eye of reason) to wreck their hatred upon them in this kinde: 4. what opportunities they have had, and advantages, in con- junction with their power: 5. (and lastly) what hath been attempted by some of them in this kind. These circumstances taken into consideration, render the providence of God little lesse then miraculous, in the preservation of them to this day; especially without any maim, or losse of limb (as it were) yea or corruption or falsification in any part of them (as we shall adde in the other particulars) but let us (for dispatch sake) run over the particulars mentioned very briefly; which otherwise might be much enlarged from history.

1. I say the Scriptures, and the doctrine contained in them, have very many enemies; as 1. all the devils in hell: and 2. all wicked, ungodly, and prophane persons on the earth. First, all the devils in hell, yea and out of hell (if they be not in hell, whilst they are in the aire, and compassing the earth to and fro) but the whole host of this accursed kinde of creature, which we know is numerous above measure, are certainly enemies to the Scriptures, and seek their ruine. The enmity and hatred which the devil bears to the Scriptures, is discovered severall waies. 1. in that he watcheth the seed of the doctrine there- of, when it is sown by the hand of the spirituall seedsman in the hearts of men, and catcheth at it immediately, and many times *snatcheth it away*, as soon as ever it is fallen upon the soul; which shews, that he is not willing it should remain there, no not for the shortest season. And if he be not willing it should remain in the heart of a man, surely he would not have it have any place of being in the world. But that disposition and practise of his we speak of, you shall finde cleerly asser- ted by our Saviour himself, in his explication of the parable of the sower.

2. The devils enmity against the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof,

Matth. 19. 13.

thereof, appears in this; that they are still casting blocks in one kinde or other, in the way of those, that are most able and willing to propagate the knowledge of them in the world; to prevent them of their opportunities, and hinder them from the work. Thus *Paul* complains, that when he was resolved, and *endeavour'd abundantly* to have gon to *Thessalonica*, to strengthen and edifie the Saints there, *Satan hindered*

1 Thes. 2. 18.

3. In that he attempts the discouragement, and molestation, both temporall and spirituall, of those that are the professors and upholders of them in the world. Thus *Antipas*, a faith- full Martyr, is said to have been slain, where *Satans* seat or throne was, and where he dwelt; to imply, that *Satan* was the chief stickler to procure his death. And our Saviour signified in his Epistle to the Church of *Smyrna*, that *Satan* would cast some of them into prison, and that they should have persecution ten daies, viz. by his means, and instigation of men to persecute them. Again, that he is still attempting the spirituall distur- bance and discouragement, of such as hold forth the Scrip- tures, and the doctrine of them, unto the world, appears from many places. *Resist the devil and he will flee from you*, Jam 4. 7. And again: *Above all, taking the shield of faith, whereby ye shall quench all the fiery darts of the devil*, Ephes. 6. 16. In which pas- sages with many others, there is plain information given of Satans diligence and desire, to disturb the inward peace of the precious souls of men.

Rev. 2. 13.

verf 10.

Jun 4. 7.
1 Pet 5. 8.
Eph. 6. 16.

4. The devils hatred against the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof, appears in this; that he endeavours all he can to *blinde the mindes of men*, that the light of them should not shine unto them. As farre as lies in his power, he labours to keep the world in *darknesse and in the shadow of death*; the light of the Gospel, is to the devil, as the *light of the morning* to the thief and murderer in *Job*, i. as the *shadow of death*. When it shines in the eyes of mens mindes, it is as a *sword that passeth through his soul*; yea when men are *lifted up into heaven* by it, the devil is *thrown down* from his heaven, into his hell: When the severty Disciples, having been sent forth by our Saviour, to work miracles, and preach the Gospel, returned back to him,

1 Cor. 4. 4.

Job. 14. 17.

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Luk. 10. 18.

relating with joy what great successe they had had in their expedition, against the devils; our Saviour made them this answer; *I beheld Satan, as lightning, falling from heaven*; *q. d.* I was a spectatour of the combate between Satan and you, whilst you were in the ingagemēt, about which I sent you, and knew before you came to relate to me your successe, how that great enemie of yours, and of men, the devil, fell before you: *I saw him* (saith he) *like lightning falling from heaven, ca. 10. 18.* out of the heaven, wherein he was before your coming against him; *i.* I saw him with extream regret and torment quitting the possession, which he had before, both of the souls, and bodies of men; which possessions were as a second heaven unto him: but (saith *Christ*) *I saw him falling from this heaven* after the same manner, or upon the same terms that lightning sometimes falls, or rather is forced, from the materiall heavens, or the clouds of heaven (as the Scripture usually calls them) *i.* by a motion very contrary to his nature and disposition; as the descent or falling of lightning, from the heavens, to the earth, is contrary to the nature and proper inclination of it, which being of a fiery and light nature, desires naturally to ascend, and to be above, in the circumference, not to descend and fall downwards towards the center. But this by the way, to shew the main ground and reason, of the devils enmity and hatred against the Gospel; *viz.* because it is an engine in the hand of God to batter him down from his heaven upon earth, to dispossesse him of that interest and hold, he hath in the hearts, and judgements, and lives of men.

5. (And lastly) his enmity against the Scriptures and main doctrine thereof, the Gospel, appears in this, that he tempts, perswades, and ingageth men from time to time, to invent and substitute other Gospels, and other doctrines, and other Christs, as neer, and with as much affinity and similitude, to the true Gospel, and true doctrines, and the true Christ, as he knows how: and so to hold them forth unto the world, on purpose to trouble and confound the mindes and thoughts of men, and to put the world into a maze, to make men at a losse, which, or what to call the Gospel, or what the truth, or who the true Christ;

Christ; yea and to make them question whether there be any Gospel, any doctrine, any Christ at all, able, or likely to blesse them. Such wiles, and methods, and stratagems as these put upon the world, are (I conceive) called the doctrines and depths of *Satan*, by our Saviour himself, in his epistle to the Church of *Thyatira*. I shall not need to instance in particulars in this kinde; it is two well known, and two commonly found (and it hath been the devils sieve of vanity, to sift all ages and nations withall, where so much as the sound or mention of the Gospel hath come) that there are false Gospels, and false doctrines, and false Christs, ever and anon putting forth into the world; yet as neer, and as like the true Gospel, and true doctrines, and the true Christ, as the devil can teach his prophets and workmen to shape them; onely providing, that yet there may be so much dissimilitude or unlikenesse between them, as may be sufficient to deceive with danger, and if it be possible, to destroy with death. Now as *Jannes* and *Jambres*; the *Egyptian* Sorcerers, are said to have withstood *Moses*, because by working false miracles, yet in appearance and shew the same with those true and reall miracles, which *Moses* wrought, they opposed and obstructed that conviction in *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, of *Moses* his being sent from God; which otherwise could not lightly but have been effected, by the miracles which *Moses* wrought, and so the deliverance of the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt* (which was *Moses* his designe) have been obtained: in like manner they who preach false doctrines, and another *Jesus*, besides him; whom *Paul* preached, yet with such a semblance of those that are true, that they are sufficient to entangle and confound the judgements of men, are as dangerous opposers, and withstanders of the able and faithfull Ministers of the Gospel, as any other sect of men whatsoever.

Thus we see (in the first place) that *Beelzebub*, with all his host of principalities and powers, and spirituall wickednesses, are profest, yea and ingaged enemies against the Scriptures: ye have in part also heard the reason of it.

2. I adde further, that all wicked and prophane men in the world, are enemies to them also, *He that doth evil* (saith our Saviour)

Rev. 2. 14.

2 Tim. 3. 8.

Job. 3. 10.

Rev. 11. 10.

Saviour) [*i.* whosoever doth evil] *hates the light*; *neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.* And those *two Witnesses* (as they are called, *Revel 11.*) *i.* those that held forth the light of the truth of the Scriptures unto the world in the times of that great Antichristian darknesse, which overspread (in a manner) the whole face of it, are in respect of that engagement of theirs, said to have vexed, or *tormented them that dwell on the earth.* So that the light of the truth contained in the Gospel, is a vexation and *torment* to all earthly minded men; and who is there but hates their tormentours? Wicked and ungodly men, may for some by respects, and out of some carnall ends, come to hear the Scriptures preached, and possibly now and then, by the overruling hand of Gods Providence, may speak a good word, or doe a good piece of service for them. But as *Solomon* saith, that *even in laughter the heart is* (sometimes) *sorrowfull*; and that *the end of that mirth is heavinesse*; so it may truly be said of such men, as we speak of, that whilst they are blessing the Scriptures with their mouthes, or with their hands, they curse them in their hearts, *as if they were their very enemies.* But evident enough it is, that all the wicked and prophane persons in the world, hate the light and purity of the Scriptures. Thus then you see the tenour and truth of the first circumstance. The Scriptures have enemies in abundance; farre more for number, then those Saints spoken of, *Revel. 7.* whose *multitude* notwithstanding is there said to be *such, that no man could number them.* Doubtlesse, if the *devils* were numbred, from the *Dan* to the *Bethsheba* of hell, and wicked men from the first edition and coming forth of the Scriptures into the world, untill now, from the *Dan* to the *Bethsheba* of the world, the account of this list would rise to a double and treble, if not to an hundred fold proportion above that other.

Rev. 7. 9.

2. But though the Scriptures have alwaies had many enemies, yet if they have been any thing qualified in their enmity or hatred against them, so that they have rather despised them, then opposed them, or sought their destruction (as the story saith that *Herod* did by two of the brethren of *Christ*, when they were brought before him, because they were poor) the preservation

preservation of them from ruine by God, were so much the lesse considerable; nor would it be an argument of that strength and power, to evince that relation of them unto him, which we labour to assert and prove, which it is, and upon due consideration will be found to be, in case it appear, that these enemies of theirs, are, and still have been (at least the greatest part of them) full of wrath, deeply and inveterately set in hatred against them.

1. For the devils, there is little question but that they bear a *tyrannous hate* against them, *hate them with a perfect hatred,* as being their greatest enemies. If they that *dwell upon earth* be tormented by them, doubtlesse they that dwell in hell seven times more; and proportionable to the torment or damage they receive, or fear to receive from them, such must their hatred to them needs be conceived to be. Though some ignorant and inconsiderate men and women, may possibly rather despise and neglect the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof, then positively hate them, or trouble themselves with making any opposition to them; yet doubtlesse the *devils* know them better then so; I mean, they know them to be of another manner of concernment to them, and their kingdom, of a more formidable importance, then to passe them over with contempt, or neglect, *But I hate him* (saith *Ahab*, one of the sons of the devil, concerning *Micahajah*) *for he doth not prophesie good concerning me, but evil*; In like manner, the *devils* knowing that the Scriptures prophesie *no good, but evil.* onely *evil,* and that in abundance, concerning them, it is not to be thought, but that they *hate* them, yea and this in abundance also.

1 Kings 22. 8.

2. That many (at least) and generally, those that are most considerable, among that other sort of enemies, which the Scriptures have, and alwaies have had (I mean, evil and ungodly men) are enemies to purpose, traveling (as it were) in pain with the suppression and extirpation of them (at least) of that, which is the life and soul of them; the truth of the Gospel) is every whit as evident as the former. *The Kings of the earth* (saith *David*) *set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying;*

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Plal. 2. 3.

let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. These bands and cords of the Lord and his Christ (or, his anointed one) which Kings and rulers set themselves, and take counsell together to break asunder, and so to cast away from them (farre enough) are nothing else but those laws and commandments from heaven, which binde them unto subjection to the Gospel, and the will of Jesus Christ therein: or, the intire rule, or doctrine of the Gospel; This the Kings and rulers of the earth, with their subjects, would have to be broken in pieces, i. suppressed, extinguished, extirpated out of the world; that so they might be out of all danger, of being impeded or troubled in the way of their lusts, and earthly delignes by it. As the Lord Christ was sought by Herod, to be slain as soon (almost) as he was born; so was the slaughter and subversion of his Gospel, whilst it was yet in the infancy of it, attempted by men. Those exhortations of the Apostles to Christians in the primitive times, to contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, Jude 3. and so, *μαρτυροῦντες*, to strive together with (rather then, for) the faith of the Gospel, with the like, clearly imply, that the powers and wisdom of the world were bent against that faith and doctrine of the Gospel, which they professed and held forth. It were easie to enlarge in this point. But

Jude 3.
Philip. 1. 27.

3. Though the Scriptures should have, and have had never so many enemies, and those never so full of wrath or hatred against them, yet if they had been contemptible in their power, and had not had wherewithall to have endangered them, the preservation of them, had been but a providence of an ordinary character, or line; or however, had argued no such singular affection, or care in God towards them, as now it doth; considering that these enemies, were not an heap of angry men, without horns, of naked, weak or unarmed men, destitute of power to make any considerable attempt upon the Scriptures; no, there have always been amongst those enemies of the Scriptures we speak of, men that have been abundantly furnished and provided with weapons of all kindes, to make warre against them, whether with the one kinde of warfare or the other (I mean, whether by force, or by skill, either by

slaying

slaying the Gospel only, leaving the men alive, as sometimes the sword is melted by lightning, when the scabbard is not hurt, or else, by destroying both together) and who have been, in the eye of reason, and according to the ordinary course of things in the world, able to destroy them from off the face of the earth.

1. For the devils, who are the captains and leaders, under Beelzebub, the Generallissimo, or commander in chief, of all the forces that ever were levied, or up in arms against the Scriptures; these are known, to want neither wiles nor methods, stratagem, nor delusions, whereby to circumvent the world (if it were possible) of the Scriptures, by representing of them, fabulous, weak, no waies worthy to be beleaved; nor yet power or strength of arme for execution, if there be any thing to be done against the Scriptures in that kinde. Paul speaking of the opposition and danger, which might arise unto them from men, or from flesh and blond (as he calls it) makes light of it, in comparison of what was to be expected from the devils. For we wrastle not against flesh and blond (which is but a dull and contemptible enemy, in comparison) but against

Ephc. 6. 12.

Principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darknesse of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places; meaning, against an innumerable company of devils, and these of the chiefest ranks and orders amongst them, and consequently, so much more devils, i. fuller of rage, malice, subtilty, activeness, power, &c. then their fellows.

2. For men, who have been enemies to the Scriptures, yea, and have professed it; amongst these also there have been, both lions, and foxes: many who have had strength of arme in abundance, and been great in power; and many also who have had strength of brain; and great provisions of the wisdom and subtilty of this world. So that if God had not preserved the Scriptures, as well against the one, as the other, there was neither of these kindes of enemies, but might easily have destroyed them from the face of the earth.

1. How great a part of the powers of this world (I mean of the Kings and Princes of the earth) who have been formidable in their daies for their power, and made the earth to

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shake round about them, farre and neer, whose *hand found many enterprises*, (as *David* speaks) *i.* performed many exploits of farre more difficult performance in the eye of reason, then the demolishing of the Scriptures, have been enemies unto them? Were they not the *Kings and rulers of the earth*, who (as we heard before from *David*, *Psal.* 2.) *set themselves, and took counsell together, against the Lord and against his anointed; saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us? i.* in effect (as we interpreted) let us destroy that law, that doctrine, that Religion, whereby they ingage the world unto them, and are troublesome unto us in our way, and would make even us also subject unto them. Those great and famous *Kings* (as *David* calls them) which God vanquished and slew by the hand of his people, in their passage to the land of *Canaan*, because they opposed them therein, were professed enemies to the Scriptures which then were, as well as to those, that professed and held them forth in the world. So were the great *Kings of Assyria*, and *Babylon* afterwards; the great *Monarchs and Potentates of the world*. *Antiochus*, who reigned (or rather, raged) in the times of the *Maccabees*, and whose rage and cruelty against the Jews and their Religion were prophesied of by *Daniel* many years before, had power to doe, yea and did greater things in appearance (of which you may read in the second book of the story of the *Maccabees*, chap. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.) then the defacing of the Scriptures and the Religion of the Jews; upon which notwithstanding his heart was as much set as any other designe whatsoever. Afterwards the heathen *Emperours of Rome*, who were Lords in a manner, of the whole world, as one of their own *Prophets* said, *Romane spacium est urbis, & orbis idem; i.* the City of *Rome* (meaning in her dominion) and the world, are of one and the same compasse and extent; were known enemies to the Scriptures, to the doctrine and Religion of *Christ*, and fell on persecuting, especially some of them, as if they had been resolved to leave neither root, nor branch, nor so much as any mention or memoriall, of *Christ*, or *Christian Religion* in the world. I passe by the mention of all those *Kings*, and *Nations*, who have been enemies to the Scriptures, and the doctrine thereof,

Psal. 2. 3.

Pl. 136. 17. 18.

thereof, since the time of these *Roman Emperours* (though in simple consideration, many of them were very considerable in power) because they were yet farre inferior in this kinde to these others. Thus then you see (in the first place) that the enemies of the Scriptures, whether devils or men, have alwayes had a great and formidable arme of flesh, strength and power of hand in abundance; so that the difference in this kinde, between them, and the Scriptures, hath been like that which was (at least, was apprehended) between the old inhabitants of the land of *Canaan*, and the *Israelites*; the one were as *giants*, the other as *grasshoppers*, in comparison of them. And yet as these *grasshoppers*, overthrew those *giants*; so have the Scriptures, which have been but as *grasshoppers* in comparison of their enemies, from first to last, had the better of them; and may say with the Church of God, in the like case (speaking of her enemies) *Psal.* 20. *They are brought down and fallen; but we are risen and stand upright.* The Scriptures never stood so strong and upright in the world, in respect of outward strength to support them, as they doe at this day; whereas their enemies fall before them daily.

Psal. 20. 8.

2. The enemies of the Scriptures, as they have been armed with strength of hand to work their ruine in that kinde; so have they been furnished with another strength too, every whit as proper, as advantagious, and as likely to prosper in an attempt against a doctrine, an opinion, a Religion, as that other kinde of strength is; I mean, with wit, subtilty, parts, guifts, endowments, as of eloquence, knowledge of arts and sciences, &c. It was said of one of the *Grecian* oratours (*Cornelius* by name, as I remember) that he never pleaded any cause but that he carried it. My brethren, parts of wit, eloquence and knowledge, as they may be raised, and as they are found in some, what is it (almost) in that kinde we speak of, but they are able to doe? The Heathen Oratour spake (doubtlesse) out of experience in part, as well as out of judgement, when he said, that there was *nil tam dictu incredibile, quod dicendo non fiat probabile; i.* that there was nothing so incredible in the bare speaking of it, but that may be made very probable by pleading and arguing for it. And it is (in many cases at least)

as true on the other hand; that there is nothing so credible, or like unto truth, in the bare affirming or proposall, but may be so disfigured by reasonings and arguments brought against it, that it may be made to look like a palpable error. Especially this incrustation or palliation of truths and errors by strength of parts, as of wit, eloquence, &c. is most likely to doe execution upon, and to beguile persons of lower parts, and weak understandings; and most of all, if they be single, and plain-hearted withall. Now then this is that which I say; that men of the greatest abilities, and naturall parts and endowments, for wit, learning, eloquence, &c. have been opposers of the Gospel (which indeed is the summe and substance of the Scriptures) and have laboured with all their strength and might to overthrow the goings of it in the world; and on the other hand, those that have beleev'd it, and stood up to plead the cause of it, have (for the most part) been persons of inferiour gifts and parts, and such as were little raised or holpen by education; and withall persons of plain, open, and single spirits. The Scriptures themselves give testimony of both these; and the testimony of other writers doe in this fully accord with them. For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, &c. See the other Scriptures in the margent.

For the testimony of other authours; it is well known to those that are acquainted with the Church story, and the writings of *Justine Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, and others, that *Porphyrie* a great Philosopher, an acute and subtile man, with *Lucian*, *Libanius*, and many others not much inferiour to them, were professed enemies to the Scriptures, and to the whole doctrine of Christian Religion; and sought with all their heart, and with all their soul, with all their might, and with all their strength, to lay waite the honour, interest, and authority of the Scriptures, and to make the doctrine of Christian Religion an abhorring unto the world; a loathing to the souls and consciences of men. And yet we see that God hath carried these Scriptures and the Religion we speak of through this fire and

1 Cor. 1. 26, 27,
28.
verf. 29.
Aa. 17. 18.
Colof. 2. 8.

water also, without suffering either the flames to kindle on them, or the floods to drown them; and their feet now stand in a wealthy place, they are in as much, or more honour, and acceptance in the world, then ever; yea and this without any diminution of their substance, without any impairment or violation of any sentence therein (as we shall have occasion to shew afterwards) So that as it is said of those three servants of God, whom *Nebuchadnezzar* caused to be cast into the midst of an hot fiery furnace, because they would not worship his golden image, that though they had been in the fire, yet there was not so much as an hair of their head burnt, nor their garments singed, nor any smell of fire upon them; so may it be said of the Scriptures, though they have been cast by Satan into the midst of so many fiery oppositions and contestations of men in all ages, yet have not these oppositions or contestations, had the least power over them; there is not the least hair of their head fallen to the ground by means of them. Are not these then the Scriptures of God? And as a father pleaded the cause of this relation of his, to one that doubted it, by this argument, *Et patrio pater esse metu probor*, I am sufficiently proved to be thy father, by that fatherly care or fear I have of thee: In like manner, Gods fatherly care to preserve the Scriptures in the midst of all dangers and enemies, is a demonstration of his fatherly relation to them. Especially, if we shall consider how many books and writings besides, which have been the darlings of the world, and which have had no enemies, no opposers (at least none considerable) are yet perished out of the world, scarce so much remaining of many of them, as there did of *Jezebel*, when there was nothing of her to be found, but only *her skull and feet, and the palmes of her hands* (2 King 9. 35.) and that within a lesse compasse of time, then the Scriptures have continued, at least since the first edition of them by *Moses* into the world? To mention only those writings or books of *Solomon* (mentioned, 1 King. 4. 33. compared with chap. 11. 41.) wherein he wrote (doubtlesse) a more compleat story of nature, and naturall things, then ever was written either before or since, even from the cedar in *Lebanon*, to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; as likewise concerning

ing beasts and fowls, and creeping things, and fishes; these writings I say of his, though they had no exemie, none to oppose them (nor was there any pretence or colour for any to be enemies unto them) nay in reason it cannot be thought, but that men generally made great treasure of them, and highly valued them; yet these long agoe, for many generations by past, have *seen corruption*, and are as if they had not been: whereas those writings of his, which by the providence and spirit of God, were embodied with the Scriptures, as the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and the *Canticles*, though they have had enemies in abundance, and have been opposed in all the oppositions, which the rest of the Scriptures have been opposed withall, yet they live; yea they are like unto those that are *planted in the house of the Lord, they bring forth fruit in their old age, they are fat and flourishing*, Plal. 92. 13, 14. But

4. Suppose the Scriptures should have had never so many enemies, and these never so inveterate, and full of wrath and malice; yea and never so compleatly furnished and armed with strength and power in every kinde to execute their wrath upon them; yet if they never had had an opportunity to have acted, or made use of their power in this kinde, if the Scriptures had never come in their way, or where they had to doe, upon such terms, as that there was a likelihood they might have crushed them, and made them sure from lifting up their head any more in the world; the preservation of them in the world, would be nothing so pregnant and lively a testimony of a speciall interposall by God on their behalf; and consequently no such eviſion, that he himself is the authour and father of them. But if it can appear, that these enemies of theirs have had that opportunity we speak of from time to time, so that in all outward appearance, they have been as much in their hand and power, as *John the Baptist* was in the power of his enemies when they *did to him, even what they listed*; or as the *Lord Christ* himself was in the hand of his, when they put him to death; their preservation upon such terms as these, cannot reasonably be looked upon, but as a consideration teaching with authority their descent from God, and relation to him, as a father.

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First then, it is to be considered (in the generall) that look at what advantage the enemies of the Scriptures we speak of, have at any time had the Church and people of God, who have been at all times the onely keepers of this treasure, at the same advantage they have had the treasure it self (I mean, the Scriptures) so that what opportunity they have had at any time to destroy and root out the one from the earth, the like they had to destroy the other also. The Church of God is said to be, *the pillar and ground*, or settlement (*ἰσχυρὰ*) ^{2 Tim. 3. 15.} of truth, or of the truth; meaning, of the Scriptures, or word of God, which by the *Lord Christ* himself, is affirmed to be *the truth*: *Sanctifie them with thy truth, thy word is the truth.* ^{Joh. 17. 17.} Now the Church of God is said, 1. to be *the pillar of truth*, because they are that body and society of men in the world, which hold forth that writing or book (I mean, the Scriptures) wherein the great truth of heaven, and of God, is contained. The expression (doubtlesse) is borrowed, from the manner and custome of those times; which it seems by the records of history more ancient then they, was received by them, and continued, from the first times and ages of the world, before books made of paper, parchment, or any such kinde of material, were invented or known. In these times (say some) it was the manner of those that were learned, and had knowledge of things any waies secret, and yet worthy to be known, to engrave them in great pillars, or monuments built for that purpose, either of brick or stone, that so they might be for the use of the present, and likewise preserved for the benefit of posterity in future generations. But whether this custome of writing in or upon pillars, were either so ancient, as is pretended, or ever in use at all; certain it is (and there is frequent and cleer mention of it in authours of best credit) that it was an usuall custome in *Rome*, about the times of the *Apostle Paul*, for those that were desirous to publish any thing by way of writing unto the world, to fasten or set up their books upon pillars in publike places, for people to read; much after the same manner, as we see bills, and writings, and titles of books, pasted upon pillars in the Exchange. Now look what office or service those pillars did, to those authours, who

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set up their books or writings upon them, or to the books themselves; which was to hold forth the contents of such writings unto publike and open view; the same doth the Church of God, unto God himself, and to his book, or writing, which he hath put therein (the Scriptures) it holds forth the Doctrine, and all the truth, and truths contained in this book, unto the world. Again, 2. This Church of God is called *ἰδρύματα τῆς ἀληθείας*, the *ground*, firmament, or firm-settlement, or seat of the *truth*; because God hath not only appointed it, to hold forth the Scriptures unto the world, after the manner of a *Pillar*, which in time may decay, and become ruinous; and then whatsoever depends upon it for publike representation, is from thenceforth disappointed in that kinde; but hath made it a *pillar*, in the nature of a foundation; which usually is the strongest part of the building, and remains, when all the building besides is ruined: he hath made it as a firm and grounded seat for the Scriptures, or the truth (as it were) to sit and rest upon for ever. So that now there being, by the will and appointment of God (as you see) such an absolute dependance between the Scriptures and the Church of God in the world, that these cannot be held forth unto the world, but by it; nor yet have any place of abode, or being in the world, but in it; evident it is, that look at what advantage the enemies of the Church, or of the Scriptures, have had the Church it self at any time, what opportunities they have had at any time, to make havock, and utter desolation of this; the same advantages, the same opportunity they have had to make the Scriptures a desolation also. Now it is (I presume) a thing generally known unto us all (and so we shall not need to spend time in proof of it) that that company, or fellowship of persons in the world, which are the Church of God, have been from time to time (yea perpetually almost and without any *lucidum intervallum*, without any *interim* at all of any better posture or condition) obnoxious, in outward appearance, to the wrath, rage and power of her enemies; and no waies able to have made resistance, or to have defended her self, in case they had come forth against her, and assaulted her, with all shee strength and power which they might easily have levied
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and raised up in the world against her. It is true, the Church of God hath had some criticall daies and houres, wherein for one moment, shee hath been in greater danger then ordinary, of being ruined and swallowed up at once; and immediately after, upon a miraculous deliverance or escape from the danger, hath been upon terms of more security and safety then ordinary; but let her case and condition even in her greatest glory of outward strength, be diligently considered; and there will scarce be found at any time, any more distance (in appearance) then a step, between her soul, and death, between her present standing, and falling in the world.

But more particularly (in the second place) Satan, and the rest of the enemies of the Scriptures have had them at a greater advantage to suppress them, and to cause them to cease from the world at once, at some times, then at others. It seems that in the daies of King *Josiah*, there was but one copie or transcript, if not of the whole body of the Scriptures, which then were, yet of the principall and most materiall part of it (I mean, of the law, and all the writings of *Moses*) and this (as appears by circumstances in the story) very likely to have been quite lost, and never seen more. For first, if there had been any more copies of this part of the Scripture we speak of, then that, which was casually found by *Hilkiah* the Priest in the temple; it is not like, but a King so zealously and piously given as *Josiah* was, would by one means or other have furnished himself with one: especially the injunction of God upon the Kings being so expresse and strict as is to be seen, *Deut. 17.18, 19.* And secondly, the deportment of the King upon hearing the book read, being so extraordinarily affected, and afflicted in minde about it, as to *rend his cloaths, and weep*, with some other expressions, cleerly shew, that the very contents of the book were strange, and before this, unknown to him. Thirdly, the carriage of the Priest, who is said to have found the book, in sending it as a choice present, by the hand of such a messenger as *Shaphan* (a chief officer of state) was, evinceth the same thing; *viz.* that it was a rarity indeed, and that there were no more copies or transcripts of this writing. Fourthly (and lastly) by the strangeness of the contents of

2 King. 22.8.

2 Chron. 34.14.

Deut. 17.18, 19.

the book (as they appeared both to the Priest himself, the Scribe that carried it to the King, and the King that heard it read) it seems that there had been no copie of it extant for a long time before, and that the tenour, substance, and contents of it, were matters altogether unknown, not to the generality of the people onely, but even to the Priests themselves, upon whose lips it lay (in speciall manner) to preserve knowledge; yea and to the King also. It is conceived by some, that it was purposely conveyed out of the way, and intended to have been buried in perpetuall darkness, by some idolatrous King or other, some Priest, one or more, being of the same accurred counsell, and complying with him therein; that so it might have been suppressed for ever. So that during all the time, that the book we spake of, was lost, and laid up in the chambers of darkness, *Satan* (at least) had an opportunity to have avenged himself of it, had not his hand been restrained and held back by one stronger then himself. And if that conjecture of some which we spake of, be true (and there is much probability in it) that the book of the law was hidden by some idolatrous King or Priest, or both, in some uncouth and obscure hole in the wall of the Temple, with an intention, that it should there have perished, and never been found more; the providence of God is so much the more remarkable in and about the preservation of it; as it was in permitting *Satan* to smite *Job* with a very noisome and grievous disease, yet without suffering him to touch his life. For if the mighty hand of God had not overruled those, whoever they were, that hid the book of the law, with an intent wholly to suppress, or to destroy it, and to have it never more seen; they might in reason, as well have secretly burnt it with fire, or cut it in pieces with a penknife, or the like, and so have made sure that it should never have come to light, nor been seen more, as to throw it into a by hole, where, though it were not very probable that it would, yet very possible it was, that it might, be found before it was consumed.

Job. 1. 6
2 Chron. 36. 19.

When the City *Jerusalem* was sacked, and burnt with fire, and the Temple it self burnt likewise, defaced, made little other then a ruinous heap, and so all the while, during the seventy years captivity, there was a large opportunity before the God

of

of this world, to have bound up the Scriptures in the same bundle of common calamity and destruction with the City, house, and people of God; had not the God of heaven put his book in his nose, and said unto him, destroy them not. Again, in the daies of *Diocletian* the Emperour, who set on foot the last and most grievous of the ten primitive persecutions (as they are commonly called) about the year of Christ, 302. there being this edict set forth amongst many others, for the rooting out of Christianity from the earth; to injoin all Christians that had Bibles, or books of Christianity, under pain of most grievous torments, to deliver them into the hands of those, that were sent about by the Emperour to gather them, to be burnt with fire; there was an opportunity for Satan and his agents, to have put an end and period to the reign, yea or being, of the Scriptures in the world: Especially considering, 1. that the number of Bibles, copies of them being then farre more chargeable, and harder to be gotten, then now, by reason they were then all written (which was very costly, in comparison of Printing) could not be proportionably so many to the number of Christians, as now they are; partly also, that many of those Christians, who had Bibles, through the weakness of their faith, and for fear of the torments threatned, did deliver them into the hand of the inquisitours to be burnt (for which they were in after times, branded by Christians with the disgracefull name of *Traditores*, i. traytors, or deliverers) which yielding in some, was of very dangerous consequence, to have weakened the hand of others also, and so to have caused an utter surrender, or delivering up of all the copies of the Bible in the world, to have been burnt with fire. But God, as it appears at this day, watched over this book (the Scriptures) in this dangerous exigent; and would not sell them into the hand of the enemy, at any rate; but strengthened the hearts and hands of some in the very face and presence of the fiery rage of the Emperour, and torments threatned, to value the lives of their books above their own. For the doctrine of Christianity (more properly so called) and the books of the new Testament, what an opportunity had that great enemy of God and good men, with his instru-

ments, either to have prevented their rising up, and coming forth into the world, when the Apostles and Evangelists, who were the penmen and publishers of them, were so inconsiderable, both for their number, and quality also, or power in the world, and might in reason, and according to the course of other things, have easily been taken out of the way, before they had been delivered of those writings; or else, to have prevented (at least) their continuance, and propagating in the world, by laying out, and making search for them, when the copies extant were yet but few. These opportunities, and some others (possibly) like unto these, the enemies of the Scriptures have had for a totall suppression, or quenching of the light of them in the world. Several other opposers also they have had, for the adulterating and corrupting of them, for the mangling and maiming of them; more especially these two: The first, all the while the Christian world lay under a deluge or inundation of *Arrianisme*; the latter, when it lay under the like inundation and overspreading of *Antichristian* apostacy, and idolatry; which was lower down towards these present times, and not many generations past. Under both these estates or conditions of the Christian world, Satan had a marvellous advantage, to have procured a depravation of the Scriptures, at least in those places and passages, which rise up with greatest evidence and strength against those errors, wherewith the whole body (in a manner) of Christian profession, was now infected. What might not the faction of *Arrius*, being so numerous and potent, having not only the generality of ordinary Christians, but the nobility and great persons in the Empire, yea the Emperours themselves for their abettours, have done, to deprave and falsifie all such places, which plainly hold forth the Divinity, or Godhead of *Christ*? In like manner, when *Antichrist* and his apostatizing party had all the Christian world (in a manner) both Princes and people *wondering after them*, and by this means had the sole interest in correcting and setting forth all the new impressions of the Scriptures from time to time, what might not they in all likelihood have done, to have compelled the Scriptures to speak plainly for the Religion of *Rome*, which now they oppose

oppose with cleereft evidence and demonstration? But we see, that God by a mighty providence, and by a strange overruling of their spirits, hath not suffered the Scriptures to feel so much as the weight of the little finger of either of them, in this kinde.

5. (And lastly) Suppose the Scriptures shall have had never so many enemies; and these never so full of wrath and envie against them; yea, and armed withall manner of power to have wrought their ruine; yea further, that they had had opportunities from time to time to have effected their ruine; yet if they had been negligent and slept away their opportunities, and done nothing at any time to effect it, the preservation and protection of them had not been altogether of that wonderfull consideration, which now it is; considering, that some of these opportunities have been improved by a very high hand, and with much diligence and vigour, to such an end. And for those, which such persons as we speak of, have overseen waking, or else have hoped to carry on their designe against the truth, without attempting any thing by way of alteration, or depravation of the letter of the Scriptures, the divine interposall is as evident in either of these, as it could have been, in causing the highest attempts in this kinde to miscarry.

But that severall things have been upon advantage and opportunity, attempted with the deepest engagement of heart and hand from time to time, either directly or indirectly against the Scriptures by the enemies thereof, to overthrow them, is evident by what hath been already said. *Pharaoh* drove as furiously as *Jehu*, after the Church of God, to overtake and destroy them (and consequently, the Scriptures with them) when he had them in a body together in the wilderness, untill the wheels of his chariots were miraculously taken off by the hand of heaven; and then he slaked his pace, and (as the text saith) *drove heavily*. They that hid the book of the law in the Temple wall, hoping it would never have been found there, did that which was probable enough to have deprived the world of all further use of, or benefit by, it. But he that *draws light out of darkness*, loosed the bands of that darkness, wherewith this treasure of light was bound for a time, and raised it, and the world it self together with it, from death
unto

Dan. ch. 8 & 9.

unto life. *Antiochus* surnamed *Epiphanes*, which signifies the illustrious, or famous, whom others (with more agreeableness: to his spirit and practices, and with no great variation in the sound) called *Epimanes*, i. the furious, or mad; of whom *Daniel* prophesieth, both in his eighth, and eleventh chapters; in the former (*vers. 23.*) calling him a *King of fierce countenance*; in the latter, saying that *his heart should be against the holy covenant, and that he should have indignation against the holy covenant* (*vers. 30.*) meaning, against the law of God, the Scriptures which they were amongst the Jews; this *Antiochus* (I say) did prosecute his indignation and hatred against the holy covenant, with all extremity; and came suddenly upon the City *Jerusalem*, being newly shaken, and much weakened with the factions and cruell doings of some of her malignant citizens and Priests within her, and by a violent storm took it, and made a most miserable slaughter, of persons of all sorts, men, women, and children; and in speciall manner, by threatening and inflicting most barbarous and cruell torments, sought the ruine and subversion of their law; as you may read more at large in the story of the *Maccabees*, in the 5, 6, 7, and 8. chapters of the second book of that history. And so the Emperour *Diocletian* (of whom we spake before) after the poor *Christians*, with their Religion, had been grievously persecuted, oppressed, and wasted by nine severall persecutions in the daies of his predecessours, he with a full resolution to root out *Christians* and *Christianity*, with the very remembrance and memoriall of them (if it were possible) from under the heavens, meaning (as it seems) to doe that by whole-sale, which the former Emperours attempted to doe by retail; advanceth a persecution against both, with a far higher hand of subtilty, cruelty, and blood, then any of the former had been. The edicts which he commanded with greatest severity to be put in execution against *Christians* and *Christianity*, were these and such like: 1. *ut diruerentur ecclesie*; that their meeting places should be demolished and pulled down. 2. *ut omnes Christianorum Scripturae igni traderentur*, i. that all the Scriptures, or writings which *Christians* had concerning their Religion, should be delivered up to the fire. 3. *Ut qui honores*

honores fuissent adepti, deponerentur, i. that all *Christians* who were in any place of office, or honour, should be deposed, and put by them (the copy or arch-type, as it seems, of one principall vein in the body of that designe, which lately discovered it self, to be set on foot and driven on, against the faithfull servants of God amongst us.) 5. *Ut easteri libertate privarentur*; that all others of them should be deprived, or debarred of their liberty (another lineament of that deformed face we spake of) 5. and lastly, *ut omnes ubiq; Ecclesiarum Praefidi: conigerentur in vincula*, i. that all the heads or governours of Churches should be put in prison, & *quibuscumq; adhibitis machinis, victimas idolis immolare cogerentur*, i. and that they should by all manner of means, both fair and foul, be compelled to offer sacrifice unto his Idols. These, with some other such edicts as these, were put in execution with that vigour, and success (at least as the Emperour himself was perswaded to beleeve) that he thought his desire was now in his bosome; and that he had eased himself, and the world, of the burthen of *Christianity* for ever. For by the merit of this worthy act, desiring to make himself famous unto all posterity, he caused a monument or pillar to be erected with this inscription: *Diocletiano Caesari Augusto, superstitione Christi ubiq; deleta*. i. For *Diocletian* the Emperour, having destroyed, or abolished the superstition of *Christ* all over the world. Thus we see in part, not only what enemies the Scriptures have still had, as well for multitudes, as for fierceness of wrath, and greatness of power in every kinde; not only what opportunities they have had from time to time, to have made them as dust before the wiade; wholly (I mean) to have destroyed them; but also what sore and dangerous attempts have been made by them upon advantages and opportunities, again and again, to cause them to cease for ever from the world. For besides those few particulars that have been now mentioned; there have been a thousand machinations and politique designs set on foot; not only the strongest hands, and longest armes, but also the best wits, and subtlest heads, the profoundest learning, the most plausible eloquence that the world could afford, have been engaged to the uttermost line of their sphere, to out-law the Scriptures,

and leave them neither place, nor being in the world. And yet we see that they stand; and are as mighty, and as like to stand still in the world, as ever; all their enemies, with all their counsells, imaginations, attempts and machinations against them; from first to last, are fallen, and ready to fall before them; whereas many other books and writings, which had no enemies, no opposition either from devils, or men; nay which had friends in abundance, that loved them, and looked after them; are wholly perished, and lost, their very memoriall scarce remaining. Doe not these things, duly considered, speak plainly, and without any Parable, that the Scriptures are the darlings of heaven, and the *most high* the preserver of them? Were he not the father of them, would he have unbared his arme from time to time (as we have heard) to deliver them?

But behold (in the second place) yet a further confirmation of the relation asserted between God and them. The life and being of the Scriptures, have not only been preserved, in the midst of all those *deaths*, that have been threatned, and attempted against them; but there hath not been so much as a *bone of them broken*; neither hath any limbe, or member perished from of their body, in all those sharp and fiery encounters, which they have sustained from their enemies; I mean, there is no part, or parcell of them wanting, or that hath miscarried, to this day. It is true, that not only *Bellarmine*, and the Papists more generally, but some of the ancient fathers, yea and some Protestant and learned writers themselves, of later times, as Doctour *Whitaker* by name, are of opinion, that divers books, and parcels of writing, which were sometimes part of the Canonically Scriptures, are wholly lost, and past recovery; as (by name) the *three thousand parables or proverbs of Solomon*, and a thousand five hundred songs (or as some read, five thousand songs) spoken of, *1 King. 4. 32.* so the *book of Nathan the Prophet*, and of *Gad the Seer*, mentioned, *2 Chr. 29. 29.* And againe the *Prophecie of Akiab the Shilonite*, and the *visions of Iddo*, or *Addo the Seer*, spoken of, *2 Chron 9.* So the *Epistle of Paul written to the Laodiceans*, mentioned, *Col. 4. 16.* (as the place is commonly taken; though here be no mention made of any Epistle written by him to *Laodicea*; but only of one

1 Kin 4. 32.
1 Cro. 29. 26.
2 Cro. 9. 9.
Ecl. 4. 6.

one written from *Laodicea*) And there may possibly be the same difficulty, or objection concerning some others.

But others again of the Ancients, as *Origen* and *Austin* by name, and the greater part of our late learned writers, as *Junius*, *Polanus* and others, conceive (and that doubtlesse according to the truth) that no book or piece of writing, that ever was truly Canonically, is, that ever did belong either to the old, or new Testament, as any part or member of either, was ever lost; but that both these, as well the old as the new, and againe, the new, as well as the old Testament, are as whole, and as compleat as ever. For

1. If any book or parcell of that writing, which was commended unto the Church of God, for a rule of faith or manners, be lost, it must argue a strange conspiracy of this whole Church in carelesse and negligence; and such as is not lightly incident to this generation of men. It is true, some particular Churches, and single persons, have rejected some parts of the Scriptures, now generally acknowledged for *Canonically*; but the whole Church never hath been known to doe any such thing. And besides, there is no reason to judge, nor can it ever be proved, that any book or piece of writing, which ever, or at any time was judged by the whole Church of God, to belong to the Scriptures, *viz.* as part, either of the old or new Testament, and was afterward either doubted of, or rejected by any particular Church, one, or more, is now lost, or perished. As for the old Testament, against the intireness whereof the arguments insisted upon, by way of objection, seem to lie strongest; the zeal which the Jewish nation have alwaies, and doe still at this very day, bear to the writings of *Moses*, and their *Prophets*, and other writings which they count sacred (which are the very same with those which we call the Scriptures of the old Testament) is known to be such, that there is very little ground to imagine, that they have suffered any of them to be lost.

2. Neither doe we read, that either *Christ* or his Apostles, who were wont to reprove the *Jews*, and to tell them of the sins of their fore-fathers, ever so much as intimated unto them any such sinne, as either the defalcation, or dismembing of

the Scriptures, or the suffering of any part or parcell of them to perish, or to be lost: which (doubtlesse) had been a sin most worthy rebuke, had they been guilty of it. Nor is it credible that our Saviour, and all his Apostles would have kept silence of it, had they been justly chargeable with it. Our Saviour indeed chargeth the Scribes and Pharisees with *transgressing the commandments of God, by their tradition, yea to have made a speciall commandment of God of none effect by their tradition*; and again, that they were the *children of those, who slew the Prophets*; but he no where chargeth them, with being the *children of those, who destroyed, or slew the Prophesies* themselves, or with abolishing the letter or writing of any jot or tittle of the law, or of any the commandments of God, which yet had been a farre greater sinne then the other, the *slaying of the Prophets*. Nay he gives this testimony unto the *Jews* in general, that they so farre honoured and regarded the Scriptures, that *in them they hoped to have eternall life*. Doubtlesse, they that made such a treasure as this of them, would not be injurious to them, in impairing them, nor yet negligent in preserving them. Yea God himself by putting this nation and people in trust with his Oracles (which the Apostle *Paul* affirms he did, and numbers it amongst the great and honourable priviledges of this nation; that they were so trusted by him) did judge them faithfull in this kinde, and meet for such a trust; as the Apostle, speaking of himself, and of his being put into the Ministry of the Gospel by Christ, *who counted me faithfull* (saith he) *and put me into the Ministry*: So God counted the nation of the *Jews* faithfull, as touching their care and custody of the Scriptures; and therefore trusted them with the keeping of them. Yea their trustinesse and faithfullnesse in this kinde was such, that *Philo the Jew*, an ancient, learned, and approved author of that Nation (though he wrote in Greek) affirms, that *from the going forth of the children of Israel out of Egypt, till his daies, which was above two thousand years, there was not so much as a word changed or altered in the law of the Hebrews*; yea and adds further, that *there was not any Jew, but would rather die a hundred times over, then suffer his Law to be changed in the least*: yea the care, or shall I say the

superstition,

Mat. 15, 3.

Mat. 23, 30, 31.

Joh 5, 39.

Rom. 3, 2.

1. Tim. 1, 21.

superstition, or Religious scrupulosity of this people, was such, for the preserving the divine Oracles committed unto them, from either maim, or alteration, that some of them employed themselves to tell and take a perfect account, how often every letter in the Alphabet was used in every book thereof. So that (doubtlesse) there is nothing, neither jot, nor tittle, syllable or letter of the Scriptures of the old Testament, that hath miscaried.

3. That none of them, nor any part of them, was lost, or wanting in the Apostles daies, is evident from that of the Apostle *Paul* to *Timothy*; where he doth not only affirm, that the *holy Scriptures, which Timothy had knowne from a childe, were able to make him wise unto salvation*; but further, that *they were profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*; and all this to such a degree, *that the man of God* (i. a teacher or Minister of the Gospel) *may be perfect, thorowly furnished unto all good works*. So that if we shall suppose, that any of the Scriptures were wanting, when the Apostle gave this high testimony unto them, concerning their sufficiency, for all ends and purposes, for which they were given or intended (at least in reference to the state of the Church in these times) we must suppose withall, that those which were wanting, were little better then superfluous; at least in respect of any those great ends and purposes, for which they were given; which is little lesse then blasphemous to conceive of the Oracles of God. So that there is no question to be made, but that the body of the Scriptures was as whole and intire in the Apostles daies, as God himself had made it. And that it hath been impaired, or maimed since the Apostles daies, many of the Papists themselves, who yet generally seek to make the Scriptures lame, that so they may make the authority of their Church whole, have not (as is observed by some of our learned Protestant Divines) as yet attempted to affirm. And *Bellarmino* himself, having somewhere in his writings, affirmed, that it was certain that the Epistle written to the *Laodiceans*, was certainly lost; in the first chapter of a book which he wrot afterwards, which he calls a *recognition* [i. a survey or review] of *his Works*, he acknowledgeth that it is

2. Tim. 3, 15.

uncertain whether such an Epistle be lost, or indeed whether ever there was such an Epistle or no; and cites *Chrystom*, as making the matter uncertain; and besides weighing the words in the original, from whence the conceit of such an Epistle first came, he findes no ground for it in them. Onely he affirms it to be more certain, that an Epistle written by *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, is lost. But 1. Suppose it shall be granted, that an Epistle written by *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, is lost; yet it doth not follow from hence, that any part of the Scriptures, i. of those writings which God intended for the perpetuall use of his Church; or which were ever reckoned by the Church of God amongst the Scriptures, is lost. For it is very possible, that neither all which the Prophets wrote, nor whatsoever the Apostles wrote upon any occasion whatsoever, might be Scripture (in either of these senses) no, nor yet of any more inspiration from heaven, then those letters were, which *David* wrote to *Joab*, and sent by *Uriah*; or then *Peters* practise was, for which *Paul* reprooved him to his face. Yet probable it is, that neither the one, nor the other of them (I mean, neither Prophet, nor Apostle) wrote much, but what well became men of that speciall interest in, and acquaintance with God, which was their crown; but that whatsoever they wrot, was of equall authority, or by any order from God, to be alike imbodied with, or moulded into the Scriptures; hath nothing at all in it so much as to invite the belief of a considering man. But 2. *Chrystom* and the Greek expositours, understand that expression of the Apostle, *I wrot unto you ἐν τῇ ἐπιτολῇ, in an Epistle* (as we read it) as if he said, ἐν ταύτῃ ἐπιστολῇ; in this Epistle; having a little before commanded them to cast out the incestuous person from amongst them. Therefore

4. And lastly, concerning those books mentioned, in the old Testament, as the book of the Prophet *Nathan*, of *Gad* the *Seer*, the Prophecie of *Abijah* the *Schilonite*, &c. There is no reasonable (much lesse any necessary) ground, to judge any of them ever to have had the image or superscription of Scripture authority upon them, unlesse (hapily) we shall judge concerning some of them (as some judicious and learned men doe) that they are, either in whole, or in part, some of those

books, which are yet extant, and generally acknowledged by us, for genuine members of Scripture. As for example; some conceive, that by the books of *Nathan* the *Prophet*, and *Gad* the *Seer*, is meant nothing else, but such particulars concerning *David* and his affairs, which are inserted in the books of *Samuel*, and of the *Kings*, and were drawn up in writing by those Prophets, who had certain knowledge of the truth of them, as being contemporary with *David*. Others think that the whole second book of *Samuel*, with part of the first (viz. from the beginning of chap 25. where *Samuels* death is recorded) as likewise the former book of the *Kings*, were penned by these two holy men, *Nathan*, and *Gad*, and are therefore called, their books. But whether this be, or no, little question there is, but that whatsoever hath at any time been Scripture, is so still: and the perishing of other writings, holy and usefull in their generation, the Scriptures still remaining, clearly argueth some such difference between the one and the other, as the delivering of Christ from under the power of death, or from seeing corruption, evinceth betwene him and other holy men, who to this day remaine in the bands and prison of death.

Thus then we see, that God hath with an high hand of providence and care, watched over the Scriptures, to keepe them from that second kind of destruction, or perishing we spake of, viz. from being impaired or diminished in respect of any member, or part of them.

We adde (in the 3. place,) that the same God hath with the like hand of providence and care, kept them from that 3. kind of perishing (which we also mentioned) viz. from being corrupted or depraved, that is, from any such alteration or change in the words, whether by transposition, pointing, or otherwise, whereby the native or proper sense of them should be impaired, or cast out, or a sense that is spurious or unsound brought in, in the stead thereof. What they spake in the first day of their nativity, in the hour wherein they came forth into the world, out of the womb of the wisdom and will of God, the same things they spake at this day also. *Paul* indeed saith, that when he was a child, he spake as a child; and

1. Cor. 13.

and that *when he came to be a man, he put away childish things*; meaning, that he now spake and did like a man. Certaine it is, that the Scriptures in their deepest infancie, *spake* neither as *children*, nor *like men*. but like God, and now they are grown to the maturity of many generations, they have not *put away* their divine things; they do not speake either like children, or like men. Looke what treasures of wisdom and knowledge they brought at first out of the bosome of God with them, the same they present and hold forth unto the world at this day. God hath suffered no man to rob them of their silver, or to give them tinne or drosse in stead of it. The words they now speak, are the same spirit and life, which they spake in the beginning. It is true the holy God did not guide all the pens of the *Transcribers* of the Scriptures, with the same heavenly infallibleness, with which he guided the pens and tongues of his immediate secretaries, who tooke and wrote them from his mouth. This appears from that variety and difference of readings, which is found in some words, between copy and copy; which difference of reading, proceeded either from the ignorance or negligence, or (perhaps) from a worse principle sometimes in those, who were employed to transcribe them. For as we have a common saying, that *the greatest Clerkes, are not allwaies the wisest men*; so neither are the best penmen (I meane in point of faire writing,) allwaies either the best Clerkes, or the most carefull and circumspect men; nor yet the freest from corruption. So that men of this faculty being heretofore (as is most probable) chiefly employed in writing out copies of the Scriptures, they might easily mistake, one in one word, or in one place, and another in another, and so manuscripts, and copies came to differ one from another in some things. But it is one thing for God to suffer some written or printed copies of the Scriptures to erre, and to miscarry here and there; another, to suffer the import and sense of the Scriptures to be so defaced in all copies whatsoever, that the error or mistake should be irrecoverable, either past finding out, or healing, by men of diligence and understanding. The sense and meaning of many places in Scriptures may be much obscured, and be made intricate and hard by such and such expositours commenting

commenting upon them. Yet this doth not hinder, but that the true and cleer sense and meaning of these places may be attained by consulting with other expositours upon the places; or by a diligent inquiring into, and comparing the Scriptures themselves. In like manner, possibly the true and native sense of a Scripture, may thorow a mistake, want, or redundancy of a word in a false copy, be past finding out, in respect of any light which the place mistaken affordeth thereunto; yet what by the help of other copies or readings, where there is no such mistake, what by the series and carriage of the context, either before or after the place, or both, and what by the diligent pondering and comparing other Scriptures with it, the dead may be raised to life again; the sense (I mean) of this Scripture, which (like men) was lost one way, may be restored and saved by another. And in this sense onely we desire to be understood, when we affirm, that God hath preserved the Scriptures, as well in the integrity and truth of their sense and meaning; as of their parts and members. Nor can any man reasonably here object and say, But how do I know, when copies, or readings differ, which is the genuine and true, and which the false? If the difference be materiall and weighty, the truth between them is so much the more easie to be found. For as it is in the objects of the outward senses, look how much the more any of them have *deviatione objecti*, of that quality or property which makes them the objects of such, or such a sense, so much the more easly they are discerned; as the more visibilty any thing hath in it, it is so much the more easie to be seen; and so in the rest: so is it also in the two objects of the understanding, truth and errours (especially in matters of Religion.) The greater, and more weighty any truth is, the more intelligibleness it hath in it (which is that that maketh it the object of the understanding) and so is more easly apprehended; and for the same reason, the greater or broader an errour is, it is so much the more readily discovered. If the difference be light, and lesse considerable, though it may be so much the greater difficulty to finde on which hand the truth lieth, yet it is so much the more like that there is no simple or direct errour asserted on either hand; but only that there is an

uncertainty of the true sense and meaning of the holy Ghost in that particular place. Now in case God should preserve all and every the particular truths contained in the Scriptures, that none of these be lost; though true expositions and meanings of particular places should fail us never so much, or be inaccessible to our understandings, yet God may be said to preserve the Scriptures pure and incorrupted. Yea though many of the truths contained in the Scriptures, were not (for the present) stirring, or on foot in all the world (which I am very confident is the case of many of them at this day) yea and though the true sense and meaning of many places in the Scriptures, were not extant in all the world (which I believe to be as true, as the other) yet may God be truly said to have preserved the Scriptures from corruption, in case the letter of the Scripture be so preserved, that all the truths contained at first, or at any time, in the Scriptures, may in a rational way, and without miracle, be found and drawn out by men. And this is that which we have now under assertion and consideration; viz. that God hath watched with that tender eye of providence over the letter of the Scriptures, that there was no truth deducible from thence at the first coming of them into the world, but that by an equal light of understanding, and conjunction with a like hand of diligence, and a like measure of assistance from God, may be also deduced from them at this day.

If you ask me, but how doth this appear? I answer;

1. (As before) It is evident that in the daies of our Saviour on earth (as likewise in the daies of his Apostles after him) there had been no violence offered to the Scriptures in that kinde we speak of, there had been no falsifying of the letter of them. He that had so much to doe with the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadduces, and expounders of the law (yea and with the rest of the Jewish nation) who must needs have been the polluters of the Scriptures, if any thing in this kinde had befallen them; and found so many corruptions and sinnes amongst them otherwise, yea and remembered them again and again, of the sinnes of their forefathers; doubtlesse would not have gratified such a sinne as this (forgery, or falsification in the

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records of heaven) with silence, if they had been guilty of it. Nay he was so farre from charging, either them, or any others, with falsifying, or corrupting the Scriptures, that he sends them to them, to seek for him there; professing, that they gave testimony unto him. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternall life: and they are they which testify of me.* And the Apostle Paul severall years after this, called the Scriptures *holy, and theoricall*, which though we reade it, *given by divine inspiration*, yet it relates rather to the present constitution and spirit of them, then to the origination of them; And the place would be read thus, *All Scripture, or, every Scripture, is divinely inspired*, full of the spirit of God: and besides this, he commends them highly from those glorious effects and services, which they were fitted and every waies furnished to produce, and doe for the world. Therefore certainly they were not prophaned, or polluted then.

2. The Jews (as we heard before out of *Philo*) were so zealous above measure in preserving the letter of their Scriptures, that *there was none of them but would rather die an hundred times over, then suffer that to be changed in the least.* And since (as the Scripture testifies of them) that they *thought they had eternall life* in these Scriptures, hoped to be everlastingly blessed and made happy by them, it cannot reasonably be imagined, but that they should be transcendently zealous and resolved, even unto death, to maintain the truth and purity of them. *Will a man rob his God* (saith God himself by his Prophet) so that till the daies of Christ, and during the times of the Apostles, there is no colour to imagine, or suspect, that the Scriptures, which then were, were any waies falsified or corrupted.

Let us come briefly to consider, whether there be any likelihood or ground of fear, in the least, that they should be corrupted afterwards, since the times of Christ, and of the Apostles. And first, for the space of about four hundred years next after Christ, till the times of *Hierome* and *Augustin* (who were contemporaries for some part of their time) that the Scriptures had suffered no disturbance or losse, in that kinde we now speak of (I mean to the damage or prejudice of the

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fence and meaning in any part, or place of them) you may receive satisfaction from these substantiall and grave authours themselves. *Hierom*, writing upon the sixth of *Isaiah's*, and taking occasion to observe, from a passage there often cited in the new Testament, how that many testimonies alledged by our Saviour and his Apostles, were found in the old Testament without any variation or change, from hence reasons thus. *If any man shall say, that after the coming of Christ, and the Preaching of the Apostles, the Hebrew books were falsified, I can hardly forbear laughter, that our Saviour, his Apostles, and the Evangelists, should so cite and produce testimonies from the Scriptures, as the Jews were to falsifie them afterwards.* In which place he cites *Origen* also, making the same conceit, as ridiculous, as he himself did. And *Augustin* in his fifteenth book, *de civ. dei* c. 13. argues to the same point thus. *It is not to be believed, that the nation of the Jews, so farre scattered and dispersed some from others, should conspire together in the same designe of Writing a falsehood; or that envying the authority of the Scriptures unto others, they should deprive themselves, and their posterities, of the truth of them.* And concludes: *Farre be it from any wise man to believe or think, that any Jew, or Jews, though never so perverse, mischievous or malicious, could have any such power over so many books, especially being so scattered and dispersed in all parts of the world. The same reason (saith *Vives*, upon that place of *Austin*) holds good against those, who [at this day] to make men believe that the truth of Religion cannot be drawn out of the originall fountain of the Scriptures [that so they may honour the Roman translation the more] object, either that the Scriptures of the old Testament are falsified by the Jews, or the Scriptures of the new Testament, by the *Grecians*. When the profession of Christianity was once scattered farre and neer up and down the world from East to West, and North to South, and copies of the Scriptures both old and new Testament dispersed accordingly, it was next to an impossibility, that there should be an universall consent of all Christians, that had copies of the Scriptures, to agree together, to have them all falsified, and that alike, in the same places, and with the same falsifications: and except this be supposed*

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to have been done, the conclusion which we are now labouring to establish, will stand strong, *viz.* that God hath by a great and gracious hand of providence, protected the Scriptures, so, that no jot or tittle of the native fence and import of them is perished, but that it is in some transcript, or other to be found. We shewed you before, how, when copies or readings differ, that which is true and uncorrupted, may be discerned from the others.

Besides, that the originalls of the old Testament (in which the substance of the new is contained; as the substance of the old likewise, is comprehended in the new) are extant in their old likewise, and native integrity at this day, there is this argument full of proof and conviction. If so be the Jews shall be supposed to have corrupted or falsified their Scriptures (the Scriptures of the old Testament) it must in reason be supposed, that they have, either only, or principally falsified them in such places and passages, where they most favour and countenance Christian Religion, and seem to give testimony to *Jesus* the son of the Virgin *Mary*, as the true and great *Messiah*, or the like; it cannot be imagined, why, or to what purpose they should falsifie them, but only to defeat *Christians*, and the assertours of *Christian* Religion, of such weapons for the defence of their Religion against them, which they have been wont to fetch out of their armoury (I mean, their Scriptures, the old Testament.) But that they have not falsified them in such places as these, is evident by this consideration; because the Hebrew text, as it standeth, and speaketh at this day, uttereth it self in some places more emphatically, with more vigour and pregnancy of expression for *Christian* Religion, and for *Jesus Christ* being the *Messiah*, then either the *Greek* or *Latine* translations themselves doe. Take one brief instance, in stead of more, *Psal. 2.* where the *Greek* translation reads, *Take hold of instruction, or discipline, the Hebrew* hath it (as our English translation presenteth it) *Kisse the Son.* Now this reading comports much better with the faith and doctrine of *Christians* touching the *Messiah*, whom they beleeve to be the Sonne of God, then that other reading of the *Septuagint* doth. All which duly considered, that conceit of some *Papists*,

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Ergo si qui dixerit, post adventum Christi, et predicatorem apostolorum libros Hebraeos fuisse falsatos, risum tenere non poterit, ut salvator, et Apostoli, et Evangelistae, ita testimonia protulerint, sicut à Iudeis falsandi erant. Incredibile est, Iudeorum gentem, tam longè lateq; diffusam, uno consilio conspirare potuisse in conscribendo mendacio: Et dum a'ijs invideant auctoritatem, sibi abfuisse veritatem. Absit ut prudens quisquam, vel Iudeos cum Iudeis: perverstitatis atque malitiae, tantum potuisse credat in vobis tam multum, et tam longè lateq; dispersis.

Psal. 2. 12.

to entitle the authority of the Church of *Rome* to a divine interest or right, that there should be a generall confluence and meeting of the Jews from all nations under heaven in the City of *Tiberias*, about four hundred and fourscore years after *Christ*; and that there, out of their hatred to *Christians*, and *Christian* Religion, they should combine and agree together to falsifie their Scriptures, &c. This conceit (I say) is ridiculously weak, and hath neither substance, nor colour, of truth in it; and hath been confuted, hand and foot, rush and branch, by Protestant writers. Yea there are not wanting among themselves, men of so much wisdom and ingenuity together, as to disclaim all part and fellowship with that conceit, and to assert an indubitable purity in the *Hebrew* text, any thing that ever was attempted to corrupt it, notwithstanding. Yea that great, learned, and famous man amongst them, *Arias Montanus*, looks upon that convention of the Jews at *Tiberias*, not as many of his fellows look upon it, *viz.* as a meeting intended for, and managed to, the corruption of the *Hebrew* Scriptures; but as a meeting providentially disposed by God (and no otherwise either intended, or managed by those themselves that met) for the preservation, and perpetuall security of the *Hebrew* fountains of Scripture from corruption. But

3. (And lastly) That there is nothing disturbed, nothing perverted, nothing corrupted of the sense and import of the Scriptures, or (at most) nothing considerable; this consideration is to me, instead of, and above, all other demonstrations; that whereas all things contained, and at this day held forth in the Scriptures (yea all things that can reasonably be imagined should be contained in the Scriptures) relate unto one of these two things, faith, or manners; those things which the Scriptures now hold forth and speak, either in the one relation, or the other, are of that efficacious, satisfactory, divine and heavenly importance, that whoever shall narrowly and impartially consider hereof, will soon be lifted up by the spirit of his contemplation above all suspicions or jealousies, that any creature, much lesse, any unworthy or wicked man, or men, hath had to doe in the moulding, framing, ordering, or fashioning

fashioning of any thing there. There are, for matters of faith, and what is to be beleevd, mysteries so transcendently glorious and beautifull, of such a blessed aspect to take, please, satisfie, and ravish the hearts, and souls, and consciences of men, that a due apprehension or right understanding of them, cannot but deliver a man out of the hand of every furrmie and fear, that man, yea or any creature, should have been the contrivers of them. A man may as well, and with as much reason, and upon as good grounds, affirm, that some smith or founder, took a great ball of iron, or brasse, red hot, or flaming out of a furnace, lifted it up with his arme, and put it into the heavens, and so made the sun, as say or think, that a man had any thing to doe in framing the glorious Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, who is the image of God, even as now it is represented, and appears in the Scriptures. And in case the world were as wise as it should, and might be, by the means vouchsafed unto it by God for such a purpose, he that should say, there is any thing of men in that mystery of faith, which the Gospel holds forth and shews unto the world, would render himself a man of weaknesse, one of a thousand in ignorance and simplicity unto it. And so for that other kinde of materiall in the Scriptures, such things (I mean) as relate to manners, and matter of life and conversation, these are raised to that height and pitch of excellencie and perfection, that it is not lightly (indeed, not possibly) incident to the thoughts or apprehensions of advised men, and thoroughly seen in all the particulars, once to imagine, that such principles, rules, and precepts of action, should ever have proceeded from a sinfull man.

If any man desires to know when, or at what time, the severall pieces or books of Scripture came to be added to the rest of the body of them; though I doe not conceive the knowledge hereof would be much beneficiall unto men, especially considering that God himself hath not thought the revealing of such a thing, worthy his spirit, nor necessary to the perfecting of the Saints, and sitting them for their glory; yee the best and the only way I know for men of this desire to purchase satisfaction (the best that is to be had) is to consult with chronologers, a principall part of whose work and undertaking

taking is, to finde out and discover, when, and in what age or year of the world, men that have any waies been famous, and amongst the rest, the ancient Prophets and pen-men of the Scriptures, Christ, and his Apostles, when they flourished, lived, and died. It is most probable, that the men who received the severall revelations from God contained in the respective books of the Scriptures, did withall receive speciall order and direction from him to set down in writing, what they had by way of revelation communicated unto them, and withall, to present them unto his Church, or the chief head and governour thereof, in his name, as a further enlargement of, or addition unto, those sacred records, which he had purposed to make a perpetuall and standing treasury of divine light and knowledge for his Church, in all succeeding generations. And this also may serve to resolve another question, which some may possibly ask, *viz* how, or upon what ground, or by what authority, those books, which are now generally received and looked upon as so many parts of the sacred Canon, or Scripture, came to have part and fellowship in this honour, so many others, for ought is known to the contrary, of equall worth, and possibly given by the same inspiration, being laid aside, and not taken into this account. For though I doe not know any particular ground in the Scriptures themselves, on which to frame a positive and direct answer to this question: yet 1. most probable it is, that the persons whom God made choice of, to be his Secretaries and pen-men, to receive and put down in writing those sacred dictates of the holy Ghost, which he intended for Scripture, had not only an order and command from him, to tender in his name what they had written from his mouth in this kinde, unto his Church and people, as that which his will was should be added to his book (which we call the Scriptures) but were further enabled by him, though not alwaies perhaps with a gift of working miracles, as *Moses* was, yet in one kinde, and by one means or other, to convince and give satisfaction unto the Church of God, that God indeed had appeared unto them, and that what they did, in offering unto them what they had written, to be accepted as part of the divine Oracles, they did by speciall warrant and injunction

injunction from God. And 2. that compleatnesse and intirenesse of the Scriptures, that same all-sufficiency in them for all holy ends and purposes whatsoever, which we formerly argued and proved, is a ratiounall and cleer demonstration, 1. That those writings which are now generally received and acknowledged in the name of the Scriptures, are from God. 2. That there needs no further addition to be made unto them by any other immediate or extraordinary revelation from God: and consequently (in the third place) that if there were any other pieces of divine revelation, besides those, which now being joined together make up the body, or volume of the Scriptures, yet it was never any part of the will or pleasure of God, that any of them should partake in this glory, with the other.

And thus I have done with the first demonstration, taken from amongst the great and famous acts of the Providence of God, to prove that the Scriptures are from God, *viz*. that strange and high hand of protection which he hath held over them throughout all generations, farre above the rate of what he hath done in this kinde, for any other book, or writing, or doctrine, in the world. I have stood somewhat the longer upon the opening of it, because being duly considered in the compasse and extent, and all the particulars of it, I judge it to be an argument of that potent conviction, that it cannot (lightly) but on the one hand satisfie a conscience that is scrupulous, and on the other hand scruple a conscience that is obdurate, and bent against the divine originall of the Scriptures.

My second demonstration propounded under the former head, was this; the high hand of successe, wherewith the Gospel, even in the infancy of it, and soon after it first went forth into the world, was attended; the mighty and marvelous prevailings of it, where ever it came, notwithstanding the many, and great disadvantages, which it was to encounter, and overcome, before it could conquer, or subdue the hearts or lives of men unto it. When one of the spies that were sent to view the land of *Canaan*, represented it, and the inhabitants of it as unconquerable, affirming, that the people were of great

Numb 14. 9.

Gen 19. 5.

nature, and many of them of the race of the gyants, they but as grasshoppers in comparison of them, their cities walled up unto heaven, &c. Caleb and Joshua, in the very face of these great discouragements replied notwithstanding; *fear ye not the people of the land: for they are bread for us: and so they were;* for the Israelites soon overcame them, and fed themselves with them, notwithstanding the mighty arme of flesh which they had to defend themselves; but in the mean season, this was a great argument and proof, that they had a farre stronger arme then their own to assist them. In like manner when the Gospel went forth to conquer and subdue the world, all things in appearance, threatned a miscarriage, and defeature of the attempt: the world looked big upon the Gospel with contempt and scorn, saying to it (in effect) as the men of Sodom said to Lot. *This fellow is come alone as a stranger, and shall he judge and rule?* They made account, that they being many, and he but one, and that a stranger, and so not likely to have any party among them, they should doe well enough with him, to keep him under, and not to suffer him to have his will, and umpire amongst them: in like manner, the world, at the first coming in of the Gospel unto it, looking upon it as a stranger, a new and a strange doctrine, that had never been taught in the world before, and considering how solitary and naked it was, destitute of friends and favourers, who were any waies likely, either for their number, or for their quality, to promote, or protect it; made none other account but they should easily binde the face of it in the dust (as Job speaketh) and stay the course, and stop the mouth of it presently. But all this notwithstanding, though the oppositions against the Gospel, and the unlikelyhoods of its successe in the world, were of the race of Anak, and like unto gyants, and the hopes and means of it's prevailing but as grasshoppers (in comparison) yet the world was but bread for it; all those strong and fiery oppositions which rose up against it (in the Scripture phraze) it kicked them up as ox ticketh up the grasse, and made trophies and triumphs of them. And was not God now in the still voice of the Gospel, which though like Christ, it neither strove, nor cried, nor did any man hear it lift up its voice in the street, though

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it neither brake any bruised reed, nor quenched any smoking flax, yet did the soft words of it break the bones of the world; it brought forth judgement into victory, the little strength it had notwithstanding; it brought forth judgement into victory, i. it made the world at last to acknowledge the rightcounesse, equity and truth, of that cause of God, which it pleaded and maintained; the true judgement whereof was for a time, denied, opposed, and suppressed by the world; it triumphed over the unjust judgement, and those unrighteous thoughts, wherein the world rejoiced, and gloried against it for a season. And in this sence Christ himself is said to bring forth judgement into victory. My brethren, whilst the sound of these things is in your ears, doe not your hearts begin to burn within you, with a secret sence and acknowledgement, that doubtlesse this Gospel, and so the scriptures which hold it forth unto the world, are from God?

But to give your souls and consciences their fill in satisfaction (if it may be) from the consideration and demonstration in hand; we will in somewhat a more particular and distinct manner lay before you, 1. the great disadvantages and unlikelyhoods of successe, wherewith that great and glorious undertaking of the Gospel (to subdue and subject the world unto it self) was threatned to be made null, and laid in the dust. 2. How victoriously, yea triumphantly notwithstanding the Gospel acquitted it self, swallowing up all impediments, disadvantages, enmities, oppositions, unlikelyhoods of successe, into victory.

For the first; there are four things (in the generall) which seemed to threaten the Gospel with being non-sited, in that great controverfie which it went forth to plead with the world; and to prophesie nothing of that high undertaking, but only that it would be like the untimely fruit of a woman, which never seeth the light of the sun. The first was, the very tenour, frame and composure of the Gospel it self. The second, the deep and desperate opposition, or contrariety in the natures, hearts, and spirits of men against it. The third, the weak and contemptible arme of flesh, which it had to assist or promote it in the world. The fourth (and last) that strong and potent

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arme of flesh, which was every where likely to be, and for the most part, was, lifted up against it, and the proceedings of it, in the world.

For the first of these: The very frame and tenour of the Gospel, seemed to prophesie that little but neglect, opposition, and scorn, did abide it, in every place where it should come. Five things more especially there are in the frame of the Gospel, which thus threatened: 1. The sorenesse and grievousnesse of many (and those the main and principall) commands, or injunctions of it. 2. The great unlikelihood of truth or certainty in the promises, which should ballance those commands, and make the yoke of them any whit tolerable; the unlikelihood I say of truth or certainty in these promises, according to what flesh and blood is likely to judge in such a case. 3. The unlikelihood (according to the same judgement) that those fore and terrible threatenings should ever be put in execution, with which disobedience to the commands of the Gospel, is charged and threatned. 4. Those frequent abasings and vilifications wherein the Gospel utters and declares it self ever and anon, against the excellent and honourable things (so called, and esteemed) in the world. 5. (And lastly) those seeming contradictions in the Gospel, by reason whereof it seems to make warre against it self, and its own acceptation, with reasonable and considering men. These particulars in the frame of the Gospel, seemed, to write it *childlesse*, and a doctrine that was not like to prosper in the daies thereof. Let us weigh these particulars a little.

First, For the commands, and solema injunctions of the Gospel, these are like *Pauls* Epistles (as some represented them) *fore* and high; they require such things, which are importunately unreasonable, in the sence of *flesh and blood*, to be demanded of men: they require of men *the one half*, yea the whole of those *Kingdoms* of ease, pleasures, honours, riches and injoyments in every kinde, which they have gotten (it may be) with *the sweat of their brows*, and are fully possessed of in the world; they require of men to *forsake houses, and lands, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, yea and their own lives too*, to expose themselves to the hatred, scorne, violence, contempt,

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and indignation of the world. Now what extream hard sayings are these to *flesh and blood*? was it like that the delicate sons, and daughters of the pleasures and delights of this world, would bear them? So again, we know they command the *Wife men of the World*, and all those that are such in their own eies, to *become fools*, and to beleeve many strange and unheard of positions and conclusions, marvailously improbable, yea incredible, till after much debate, consideration, and inquiry; from which too the very face, and first appearance of the incredibleness of the things, seem to discourage them; as to beleeve, that God was made man, was born of a virgin, suffered those indignities of being reproached and reviled, spitted on in the face, buffeted, scourged, crucified at last on a crosse between two notorious malefactours, as a greater malefactor then they, with the like? The Gospel injoyning wife, sober, grave, learned, acute men, to subject their judgements to such notions and opinions as these, seems to command them out of their senses, wits, reasons, judgements, understandings, and to leave them nothing of men in them. So again; when it commands them, that *when they are smitten on the one cheek, to turn the other also*, when their *coat is taken from them, to suffer him that takes that, to take their cloak too*; to *love their enemies*, to forgive injuries, to *pray for those that persecute them*, &c. they are apt to imagine, that it had as good (in plain terms) command them to turn fools, or to imagine themselves stocks or stones. This then is one ingredient in the composition of the Gospel, which seems so to imbitter it to the taste of the world, that it would never be digested, nor down with men. And yet we shall see that even such commands and injunctions as these, notwithstanding the harshnesse, sournes, and offensiveness of them unto *flesh and blood*, were taken down, and digested by many thousands in the world; yea *the Gospel ran and was glorified*, these notwithstanding.

Secondly, Another ingredient in the frame of the Gospel, which was like to set off the world at as great a distance as might be, from imbracing it (especially considered and compared with the former, the offensiveness of the commands) is the tenour and strain of the promises thereof, especially the great

and main promises; which are they that must ballance, and weigh against the commands, and heal the offensiveness of these, if ever the Gospel be received by men. These promises may very possibly seem in the eyes of carnall men, to be (in Peters phrase) but *swelling words of vanity*, and to have but little *spirit* or *life* of truth, or certainty in them. As 1. That great promise of justification in the sight of God, unto those that believe, upon which all the other promises are made to depend; how is the truth of this incumbered and overshadowed with such difficulties or objections, which in the eye of reason, exercised only in the Theories, debates and disputes of naturall things, and the things of this world, are apt to make the promise it self, not so much a matter of *doubtfull disputation*, as of present rejection? For 1. That he that is a sinner, should be made righteous, or innocent at all: or 2. that he that is known to be a sinner, should be judged and pronounced righteous, or just, by a judge of infinite justice, and impartiality: or 3. that one man should be made righteous or just, by the doings or sufferings of another; or 4. that many thousands should be made righteous or just, by the doings or sufferings of one; or 5. that such a justification as this, which is obtained by the worth or merit of the doings or sufferings of another; should be attended with such a glorious and royall retinue of blessings, and favours, and great things from God, as to be made his sons and daughters by adoption, to be freed from the *vengeance of eternall fire*, which shall be poured out upon all the world besides, to be raised from the dead, to have *their vile bodies* made excellently glorious, to wear crowns, and to have Kingdomes given unto them (with the like) which are things incredible enough in themselves, simply considered; and much more incredible, when they are asserted to spring from such a root, as the justification mentioned is: 6. That only faith, the alone belief of a saying reported to come from the mouth of God, should interesse a man in such a justification, which is attended with so many transcendencies of blessednes and glory, as were mentioned, yea and many more (all which as we know, are comprehended in the promise of justification, as it stands in the Gospel) all these great and strange things (I

say

say) standing round about the great promise of justification in the Gospel, makes it seem rather (in the eye of the common understandings of men) as some great King or person of honour represented on a stage, then as a promise of sobernesse and truth. The promise of the resurrection, seemed rather matter of laughter, then of consideration (much lesse of belief) to Philosophers themselves; yea to those of the most strict and serious sect amongst them (I mean the *Stoiques*^a) yea the *Sadduces* also, a sect of men professing a knowledge more then ordinary in things appertaining unto God, among the Jews, made little better account of it^b. And (that which is more then all this) some Christians and belevers themselves, who for a season had rejoiced under the belief of it, afterwards looking (as it seems) too narrowly with a carnall eye upon the improbability of it, took a dislike of their own belief in this kinde, and reversed it^c. The promise of having *our vile bodies changed, and made like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ*^d, weigheth yet some grains more in an unlikelihood of performance, then that of the resurrection. It were easie to give instance in many others, as obnoxious to disparagement and contempt from naturall men, as these.

A third particular in the very frame and temper of the Gospel, which might seem in the eye of flesh and blood to prophesie little but rejection or contempt unto it, on every side, instead of a prevailing upon, and over, the world, was the nature of the threatnings, whereby it seeks to terrifie all the enemies thereof, and those that shall oppose, or reject it. It threatens such with being cast *into utter darknesse*, where there shall be *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth*; with *the worm that never dieth*, with *fire that is unquanchable*, or, that never goeth out, *with a bottomlesse pit*, &c. Now the incredulenesse of such threatnings as these, and the unlikelihood that ever they should be put in execution, ariseth from two things: partly from the main occasion or ground insisted upon in the Gospel, why they should be executed upon men, why men should be so punished, as the threatnings import; partly also from the nature, kinde or quality of the threatnings or punishments themselves. To begin with this last; the nature

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^a Act. 17. 18, 22.
168.

^b Mat. 22. 23.

^c 1 Cor. 15. 12.

^d Philip. 3. 21.

or kinde of these threatnings is such, that to those, who are wont to judge according to appearance onely (which is a calamity very incident to flesh and blood) they seem rather like unto the Poetical figments, of such punishments, as they appropriate to their grand malefactors in hell; as to *Sisyphus* his stone, *Tantalus* his apples, *Titius* his vulture, &c. which are reported and asserted by them, not so much to terrifie the consciences of men from evil, as to take the fancies of men with pleasure and delight in the reading of them; I say the threatnings of the Gospel, to men that are apt to judge according to appearance of things, are more like unto such fables as these, then unto any thing uttered by the mouth of the living God, or which is any waies like ever to be really performed. Now there are three things more particularly considerable, in, and about the nature, quality, or kinde of the Gospel threatnings, which with men (as was said) were like to make them of no authority or effect. The first is, the greatnesse of them. Secondly, the strangenesse of them. Thirdly (and lastly) the proportion or agreement which they have (though it be not much) with those poeticall and figmentitious punishments which we spake of.

For the first, The punishments threatned in the Gospel, are so above measure exceeding great and insupportable (in case they were executed) that men can hardly beleve, that God being so full of love and goodnesse and mercy (as mens thoughts generally suggest him to be) should ever deal so severely with his poor creature, the work of his own hands, as these threatnings import (especially for so small an oversight, or miscarriage, as the non-belief, or neglect of the Gospel, as we shall see presently.) It is a generall rule, that, *Tarda sunt magnis rebus inesse fides.* — Reports of great things in their kinde, are hard to be beleved. And this is one thing which (as heretofore upon occasion notice hath been given unto you) that makes the promises of the Gospel so hard to be beleved; I mean the greatnesse of them. But reports of great things to be done and inflicted by God, by way of judgement upon men, have still found opposition and refection, in way of unbelief, from men; yea and this from men, who were the people of God,

Jer 5. 28. 12.
Zeph. 1. 5.

God, and had his Prophets and ordinances, and the ministry of his word amongst them. See *Jeremiah* 5. 11. 12. 13. *Zeph.* 3. 5.

2. The threatnings, or the punishments threatned in the Gospel, are strange or new, as well as great: and this being in conjunction with the other, is apt to harden the hearts of men with unbelief against them so much the more. *The Worm that never dieth, and the fire that never goeth out, and the pit that hath no bottome, &c.* are new, and strange names of punishments unto men; and are more like in the asserting or preaching of them, to please mens humours, in the nature of news, or novelty; then to shake their consciences with fear of enduring them.

3. (And lastly) that proportion or agreement, which these punishments threatned in the Gospel have, or might seem to have, which those infernall punishments, which the Poets generally asserted in their fabulous relations, and which the world had been a long time accustomed to despise, save only for mirth and vain delight sake (for the Poets themselves, when they were serious, professed that they did not beleve their own doctrines in this kinde) this agreement (I say) as little as it is or was, might well be a preparation, as it were, unto the world, to despise the threatnings of the Gospel, when they shall come amongst them. And (haply) *Satan* inspired his Prophets (the Poets) with such notions of punishments in hell, as were mentioned, that so he might harden the world (I mean the consciences of men) against the fear of those punishments after this life, which the Gospel threatens against those that are the despisers of it. For (as we have had both lately and heretofore, occasion to observe) the devil secretly perswadeth, and teacheth his instruments and agents in the world, both to teach and doe, such things, as *Jesus Christ* himself and his members, and agents, have taught, and done; that so the world may be misled, as it were, and at a losse to distinguish and know the one from the other, or otherwise be induced thorow the difficulty of discerning, to reject both the one and the other. And *Satan* comes to a fair market indeed, if he can but procure the things of *Jesus Christ* to be cast out of the mindes,

minde, and cares, and thoughts of men, though his own things be cast out with them. But the truth is, that if the things of *Jesus Christ* be neglected, or cast off by men, though some particular tenets, or practises of *Satan* may possibly be cast off with them, yet the principall things of *Satan* are retained and owned: For that which *Satan* mainly intends and drives at in all his temptations, suggestions and insinuations with men, is to allure and draw them into a contempt, or neglect of the things of *Jesus Christ*; and if he can but get a mans foot into this snare of death, it troubles him not much though he abhors all other religions besides; his maxime in this case is, that of tyrants; *Pereant amici, dummodo & una inimici pereant.* So that Christian Religion, which is his enemy, may but down; he cares not though all other Religions, all false and idolatrous Religions in the world, which are his friends, should down with it. But this by the way. Thus then ye see there are three things considerable in the very tenour and frame of the Gospel threatnings, which rendered them very obnoxious to contempt, and neglect from men.

Adde hereunto (in the second place) the slenderesse of the occasion (as it is apt to seem in the eyes of flesh and blood) upon which the Gospel threatnings (according to the constant assertion thereof) are to be put in execution upon men; and this will seem to disable the authority and credit of them yet much more. We know the Gospel makes the sinne of unbelief, if not the only cause of bringing the vengeance of eternall fire, and all the rest of the fearfull threatnings of the Gospel upon men, yet a very great and main cause hereof, yea from place to place it makes it the cause *sine qua non* (as they call) the cause without which, these threatnings shall not be executed upon any man, for any other cause, or causes, reason, or reasons, sinne, or sinnes, whatsoever. Now that God, being so lovingly and graciously inclined unto his creature, as to be ready to forgive him all the rest of his sinnes how many in number, how grievous in nature soever; yea and not only this, but also to conferre upon him a crown of blessednesse and glory, only upon condition that he beleve the Gospel; that such a God (I say) should for, or by reason of,

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the neglect of such a small service as this, execute the vengeance of eternall fire upon his creature, and make him everlastingly miserable, and that to the height and extremity of what he is able to suffer or endure, in misery, is a saying not like to finde entertainment in the hearts or thoughts of men. Unbelief of the Gospel, certainly was a new, and strange kinde of sinne to the world, when it was first so called and asserted by the Ministers of the Gospel; it was a sinne which men had not heard of till then: Therefore to make this the great condemning sinne of the world; or any such provocation in the sight of God, that because of it he should bring all mens other sinnes upon their heads in everlasting torments and miseries, seems in the eyes of naturall men, to be a saying no waies worthy to be received, except it be with rebuke, and scorn.

Thus you see of how little credit or authority, the threatnings of the Gospel were like to prove amongst those, to whom the Gospel was preached, when it first went forth into the world. Now how great a disadvantage this was unto the Gospel, to obtain that crown, which it ran for, which was belief, and acceptation, and subjection from the world, may easily be conceived upon these two considerations. First, because any part or passage in a relation, or report, which men suspect in point of truth, is to them a ground of jealousie that the whole is of little better constitution; and to be suspected also. The Scripture proverb taketh place in this case also: *a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump.* If so be the threatnings in the Gospel, be, either in their nature, or in respect of the occasion upon which the execution of them is asserted, or upon what ground soever, of little or no authority or credit with men, they must needs incumber and prejudice the authority of the Gospel in all other the parts and carriage of it. Secondly, the threatnings wherewith the Gospel is armed against all the despisers and neglecters of it, is one part, and that not the least considerable, of that strength which it hath, and claims to have, whereby to make its way, and to awaken the consciences of men, to hearken unto the promises of it, and to consider and to inquire after the truth of them. Some talk much of legall preparations, and being humbled by the

law; but the Gospel hath other manner of instruments or engines for the work of humiliation, to shake the proud and secure hearts and consciences of men with fear and trembling, then the law hath any (as some years since upon occasion, we shewed more at large, in the hearing of some of you.) The threatnings of the Gospel, which are to follow in the rear of the *great and precious promises* thereof, and to cause the despisers of them, through fear to face about, and to turn towards them (if it may be) are upon true account, and in a spiritual eye, full of efficacy and power that way; and consequently, must needs be (as hath been said) a very considerable part of that strength, whereby the Gospel was to prevail, and to raise up a Kingdom for it self amongst men. It is the nature and property of men yet unconverted unto God (yea and of those too that are converted, in a great measure; as *Austin* long since observed) as to desire the enjoyment of things which they apprehend good for them, so to desire an escape from things they apprehend evil, *much more*. The fear which often seizeth upon men of suffering evil, is of a more forcible operation upon them, to ingage them upon a course of means to escape it, then the love or desire of a proportionable positive good, is to act them suitably for the obtaining of it. The reason whereof I conceive ariseth from the servile and base disposition which is in men. Persons of a slavish, and servile condition, which condition (commonly) soon transformeth the minde and spirit also *into the same image* (I mean of slavishnesse and servility) being exercised and taken up with little, but with fears of being punished, of what they may possibly suffer and endure, if they follow not their work the better; and having small, or no hopes of obtaining any positive good; hence it comes to passe, that desires of such good as we speak of, are very faint and inefficacious in them; but desires of that negative good we mentioned, keeping their backs from stripes, these are potent and operative enough with them, in as much as they have hope by being diligent at their work, to compasse this. So is it with the generality of men, especially whilst they are yet meerly naturall, and carnall; when they hear of heaven, and the glory and great things of the

the world to come, on the one hand; and of hell, and damnation, and *the vengeance of eternall fire*, on the other hand; their fears of being damned in hell, doe commonly prevent and fall to work within them, before their hopes of being made glorious in heaven; yea it is very observable, that even the greatest part of those, who doe in some measure beleve (or at least seem to doe so) manage their religious ingagements, and their course of devotions, more with an eye unto and out of a strength of desire to escape hell, or to be saved *from the wrath and vengeance to come*, then out of any strength of desire to lift up their heads with the Saints, or to reign with *Jesus Christ* in glory for evermore. The jaylours first question, being awakened, was, *What he should doe to be saved* (Act. 16.) And those that were pricked at the heart at *Peters* Sermon, Act. 2. though they did not expresse themselves altogether so farre, yet the intent of their question certainly was the same. *Men and brethren what shall we doe?* &c. viz. to be saved from destruction, and the wrathfull hand of God; as in part appears by *Peters* answer unto them. So now the great labour and travail of the souls of poor Christians, the perplexity and distresse that often is upon their consciences and spirits, is not formally or precisely through fear of loosing *the great recompence of reward*, the glorious benefit and blessing of heaven; but through fear of gaining the inestimable damage and misery of hell. This then is a second consideration, wherein the Gospel was much disadvantaged (as men count disadvantage) by the unlikelyhood of any reality or truth, in the threatnings thereof; and so that which otherwise could not but have been one very considerable instrument, or help to it, to magnifie it self in the hearts and consciences of men, was by this means much infeeble and disabled as to action in that kinde. Thirdly, and lastly, the unlikelyhood of truth and certainty in the threatnings of the Gospel, was in another respect very disadvantageous unto it; at least in comparison of what an apparent, yea or probable truth in them, would have been. For had the threatnings been such, that they might readily or without much inquiry, have been beleevd; then would the promises also have hereby gained a good degree to be beleevd

too; and that not only upon this ground, because cleer nesse or probability of truth in one part of a relation, somewhat counteranceth and caseth the relation in such other parts of it, which are suspicius and doubtfull; but much more upon this (which the Gospel it self layeth as a foundation or corner stone of its own building) viz. that there is no middle condition for men or women to be adjudged, or put into by God, for eternity, but either the shame and torments of hell, or the everlasting blessedness and glory of heaven. Now of the two, simply considered, it is much more easie to beleeve, that God will not everlastingly torment his creature in hell, then that he will everlastingly glorifie it in heaven. So that the more credible or easie to beleeved, the Gospel threatnings concerning Gods casting men into hell, there to endure torment for ever, for sinne, are, by vertue of the said principle, the promises of the Gospel concerning the eternall salvation of men, must needs be so much the more easie to be beleeved alio.

4. The Gospel was much disadvantaged as to matter of acceptance or belief in the world, from the frame of it, in regard of those frequent abasements, and vilifications of all worldly excellencies that are found in it: it poures contempt upon the head of the world, and all the glory of it; it throws down all the mountains of earthly honour, riches, pleasures, wisdom, and of whatsoever is called great under heaven, and fills up the valleys with them, and makes all but a levell or plain. It takes away all difference between *Jew and Gresian*, between *bond and free*, between *male and female*: and so between rich and poor, honourable, and despised, &c. making all to be but *one in Christ Jesus*. The meaning is, that it invests all those, without exception, who receive and subject themselves unto it, in an estate or condition, so super-abundantly glorious and blessed, that nothing, any waies relating or appertaining to their present condition in the world, whether on the right hand, or on the left, whether convenience, or inconvenience, privilege, or dis-privilege, honour, or dishonour, riches, or poverty, strength, or weaknesse, health, or sicknesse, is any waies considerable, or much to be regarded, in comparison thereof. It

is only in the time of the night, when *one starre differeth from another in glory*: when the sun ariseth in his might, he presently dissolveth all those distinctions of first and second of fifth and sixth magnitudes between them, swallowing them up as it were into victory by that abundance of light, which he still brings with him into the world. In like manner, the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ brings that excess of blessedness and glory unto men, which drowns all consideration and thoughts of such differences in their outward estates and conditions, which before seemed to distinguish them into mountains and moulhills, into men happy, and men miserable: even as the vastnesse of the globe or body of the earth, causeth the *Mathematician* (who yet useth to be very exact and punctuall in his demonstrations) not so much as to mention, or take any notice, either of the highest mountains, or lowest valleys, in his account concerning the figure of it; but pronounceth it perfectly sphericall, or round, these notwithstanding. Now Kings and Princes, and the children of the greatnesse of this world, who (as the Scripture speaketh) *make their nests amongst the starres*, and please themselves with their prerogative estates and conditions in the world, were not like to endure any such doctrine or spirit which were ever and anon magnifying themselves against their beloved interests, of greatnesse, pomp, and power in the world; representing also their persons as miserable, as despicable, as the poorest of men, unlesse they submitted themselves, and all their earthly glory to the Scepter of Christ which was as the shadow of death to such men.

5. (And lastly) the Gospel in respect of the frame of it, was like to suffer neglect, and rejection from the world, by reason of those seeming contrarieties and crosse passages, which at first hearing (especially) seem to thwart, and fight one against another. We shall not need to instance in such passages as these; we have done it formerly, once and again upon occasion; and once (I remember) in the prosecution of the doctrine in hand. We shall now only in a word lay before you what disadvantage the Gospel was (in reason) like to sustain, in point of acceptance with the world, in respect of these civil warres which it seemed to have in its own bowels, those

those passages (I mean) which seem to rise up, and to destroy one the other. We have a common saying; *mendacem memoriam esse oportet. i.* A liar had need have a good memory, viz. least he interfere in his relation, and speak one thing which doth not agree with another, and so looseth the credit, which he desires should be given to it. For there is a *genius* or aptness in the nature of man, not to believe any thing reported unto him by another, who is either unknown to him, or known to be a loose speaker, unless he knows, at least apprehends, better reasons why he should believe what is spoken by such an one, then only the credit or opinion he hath of the speaker. And yet much more backward and averse are men from believing upon such terms, when they either know, or apprehend, reasons why they should not believe. Now amongst all the reasons or grounds which a man is likely to apprehend to hinder, or take him off from believing, what is reported unto him, there is none generally more forcible or prevailing (especially with considering and understanding men) then when that which is reported, is found, or apprehended, to be inconsistent with it self. That of *Solomon*, Eccles. 10. is well known: *Dead flies canseth 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.* In like manner though a relation or report, hath many things in it worthy consideration and acceptance, simply considered, yet if there be a *little* of the *folly* we speak of, apprehended in it, any thing that is incongruous and inconsistent with its fellows, it is enough to make the favour of the whole relation to stink in the nostrills of apprehensive and considering men. How much more apt and inclinable are men to take hold even with greedinesse, of the least appearance of such an exception as this, to reject such a doctrine or report, which otherwise is burthenome and offensive unto them, as the Gospel generally is unto men, who are yet but naturall and meerly carnall? Thus then we see under what disadvantages the Gospel went forth into the world, in respect of the very frame and constitution of it (and that in sundry particulars) and how unlikely it was, in regard of these, to finde intertainment or belief amongst men. This for the

Eccles. 10. 1.

first

of those four disadvantages, which seemed (as was said) to threaten the Gospel with a generall repulse by the world, when it first went forth to subdue it.

The second was the deep and desperate opposition, or contrariety in the natures, in the hearts and spirits of men against it. The laws, and the precepts and injunctions of it, being all holys, spiritnall, and heavenly; and the frame of mens hearts, unclean, sensuall, and earthly; there must needs be a violent antipathy, a fierce contrariety in these against it; and so much the more, because these holy, spirituall, and heavenly injunctions or laws of the Gospel, are backed, seconded, and strengthened with those terrible penalties or threatnings we spake of, and that with authority. Men, who have a long time been like *wilde asses* accustomed to the *wildernesse*, and to *snuffe up the winde at their pleasures*, have walked (as the Apostle saith) in the *vanity of their mindes*, and done little else all their daies but *fulfill the lusts of the flesh*; cannot endure to hear of a yoke of righteounesse and true holinesse, to be put about their neck; much lesse, that for kicking at it, or casting it off, they should be everlastingly tormented; such things as these are *very swords* to them, which *pass through their souls*. He that *doth evil*, our Saviour saith, *hateth the light*, neither cometh he to the *light* (nor willingly suffereth the light to come to him) *lest his deeds should be reprov'd*. Certain it is, that men naturally doe not love to have either their deeds, or themselves reprov'd; 1. because they are jealous of their credits, and reputations; and a reproof seems to carry some dishonour and disparagement with it. And 2. men love to have a good opinion of their waies and practises; otherwise their consciences would be troublesome unto them. Now the proper tendency of a reproof, is to bring men out of love with such waies and practises, for which they are reprov'd: and these being such, which they are no waies willing to relinquish, the reproof of them must needs be a secret wound, a soar and deep cut to them; and consequently, the Gospel must needs be hated in the highest unto those, that walk in such waies, because it is the sharpest and sorest reprover of them under heaven. For it both manifests and discovers the vilenesse, and

Jer. 2. 24.

Job 3. 10.

Luk. 2. 13.

guilt of sinne to the uttermost, farre beyond any discovery that can be made by another means, or light whatsoever; and then also threatens it with a punishment, which in torment and grievousnesse to be endured, exceeds all punishments whatsoever, if it be not repented of, and reformed. Which two ingredients must needs make a reproof of the sharpest, and least sufferable constitution, that can be. That contrariety in the hearts and spirits of men against the Gospel, which we now speak of, the Scriptures and Gospel it self take full knowledge of. *The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsell together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying; Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* This combination and league, wherein the Kings and rulers of the earth conspire against God and Christ, proceeds from nothing else, but that deep antipathy, or contrariety in their natures unto the Gospel; as clearly appears from the latter verse of the two; *Let us break their bands, and cast away, &c.* They were, the *bands and the cords, i.* the holy laws, and righteous precepts, the directions and injunctions of the Gospel, wherewith God and his Christ, and in his Christ, sought to binde them to their good behaviour, and to make them subjects unto heaven, that thus enraged them, and occasioned this *consultatio magna*, this great and generall consultation, not onely to *break* them *asunder, i.* (I conceive) by laws and edicts, and cruell threatnings to forbid the preaching of the Gospel, and to suppress it, once, and again; but also *to cast them away from them; i.* to make sure, if they knew how, never to be troubled with it more; however this they attempted, by seeking to make havock and desolation of all that was called *Christian* upon the face of the earth, by most barbarous and bloody persecutions.

Nor did this fierce opposition and contrariety to the Gospel, work only in the breasts and spirits of *Kings, and rulers of the earth*; though here (it is like) it was boiled up to the greatest height, and strength, and shewed it self from hence with the greatest terroar, and pomp of indignation; but the spirit we speak of, wrought effectually also in persons of lower rank and quality. They were not *Kings*, but *Citizens* (for so they

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are called) who plainly said, *We will not have this man to reign over us*, Luk. 19. wherein they clearly expressed the absolute contrariety in their natures to the Gospel, by which the Lord Christ seeks to reign over the hearts, and souls, and consciences of men. So those that from time to time *beat the servants*, which the Lord of the vineyard sent to receive of the fruits thereof, and at last *slew his sonne*, when they had first *cast him out of the vineyard*; were not *Kings or Princes*, but are called *husbandmen*. They that cried out against the Lord Christ, *away with him, away with him; crucifie him* (Joh. 19.) and so they that cried out against *Paul*, that *it was not meet he should live* (Act. 25.) for preaching the doctrine of the Gospel, were no *Kings*, but a mixt multitude of the Jews. So that evident it is, that not only persons of some speciall rank or interest in the world, but men of all sorts and conditions, even the whole world, ruff and branch, head and tail, were full of enmity against the Gospel. And if that of the Lord and Master be true, that *he that doth evil (i. whosoever doth evil) hates the light*; and that of the disciple true also, that *the whole world lay in wickednesse, or evil*, when the Gospel went forth into the world; and that common saying be partaker of truth with them both, that *quem quisq; odit, perisise expetit*, whatsoever a man hates, he wilhes the death or destruction of it; it directly follows from all these, that the whole world, generally, desired the ruine and downfall of the Gospel. Now under what greater disadvantage is it (almost) imaginable that the Gospel should attempt the conquest of the world, then this; to have no man (to speak of) a friend to it, or that was willing to assist it, in this great enterprise; but to finde the whole world (in a manner) up in arms to oppose it, ready to destroy the life of it? Never was there any enterprise undertaken by man upon the like terms of disadvantage; and yet how gloriously did this undertaking prosper in the hand of those to whom it was committed? A great part of the world in a short time was taken, and led away in captivity by it.

The third (and most considerable) disadvantage, under which the Gospel undertook the redumption of the world, was the slender and weak arme of flesh, which it had to stand by, and

Luk. 19. 14.

Luk. 10. 10.
Joh. 19. 15.
Act. 5. 24.Joh. 3.
1 Joh. 5. 19.

and take part with it, to protect it against the rage and fury of so many potent adversaries, as magnified themselves against it (almost in every place) and to carry on the work of it in, the face of that fiery and puissant opposition, which was made by the world from all the quarters thereof. Who, or what were the men with whose assistance and help, the Gospel undertook that great and glorious undertaking we so often mention, the spirituall conquest of the world? What were their numbers? of what familie, descent, and blood? of what educations, accomplishments, or endowments, were they? were they a numerous, and potent host, or army, that could bear down whole nations and kingdoms before them, and by force of arms, give laws to what state or people they pleased? and plant their doctrine by the terrour of the sword? No, they were at first but twelve men; and if they had been twelve times twenty thousand (especially such as they were) what had this been for the conquest of the world? Nor were prisons, or swords, or such like weapons and engines of the flesh, chosen by them, or by any direction from them, for Church officers, or for a life-guard to the Gospel (though now they have this honour cast upon them) nor was the favour of earthly Princes, or civil magistrates coveted by the *Apostles*, either for the support of the honour and dignity of their calling, or by way of advantage for the planting or propagating of the Gospel, though they were no more in number, but twelve men. Well; but though their number was inconsiderable, yet this (possibly) was recompensed by the quality, or interest of their persons. These twelve (may be) were the sons, or else of the house and lineage of those famous Kings and Princes, who were adored by the world, as gods, having been their great benefactors, as of *Jupiter*, *Hercules*, or the like: and by reason of their relation in blood to such Progenitours, as these, the world might more willingly come in unto them, and receive the doctrine and laws, that they should bring unto them, and desire them to accept. No, they were the most of them (if not the whole number) persons of mean and ordinary parentage, poor fisher-men, unknown both they and their parents, and progenitours unto the world; yea they were

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were of that nation, and family in the world, of which neither *Jupiter*, nor *Mercury*, nor *Hercules*, nor any other of their gods, either great, or small, were ever reported to have come. But it may be they were men of choice education and parts: they had some rare accomplishments of learning, arts, sciences above other men; and so might take the world by craft, or subtilty of devise; by magique charms, incantations, delusions, or the like. Indeed *Julian* the *Apostate* said that *Peter* and *Paul* were the most expert in magique of any that ever lived: and that *Christ* wrot a speciall book of this profession, and dedicated it unto *Peter* and *Paul*; and that by this means they enchanted the world. But alas! the *Apostles*, were children of no such education or breed: they were so farre from any excellency or depth in any humane science, or learning, that their adversaries themselves discovered them to be ignorant, and unlearned men (in respect of any such learning.) They were brought up in the trade and imploiment of fishing, several of them, all their daies, till they were called to be *Apostles*; yea after three years converse, and more, with *Christ* himself, even till his death, notwithstanding those many rich and blessed opportunities they had of gathering knowledge in abundance from his lips, who was ever and anon speaking the words of eternal life unto them, yet it appears by their questions and demands, that they had learned very little of the mystery of the Gospel; yea by some expressions that came from them, it might reasonably have been thought, that they had been utterly incapable of the knowledge of it. That knowledge or learning, which they had afterwards, of what kinde soever it was, the world neither knew whence it came, nor whether it went, or was like to goe. Thus then you see, the Gospel went forth in that great expedition to subdue the world, under the greatest disadvantage that lightly could be, in respect of any collaterall help, or strength from men also.

Adde hereunto (in the fourth and last place: for we shall passe by the first particular mentioned, viz. the seeming contradictions in the Gospel, as having spake somewhat to these formerly in the point) the consideration of those numerous and potent enemies in every kinde, which every where stirred

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Ac. 4. 13.

themselves, made head against the Gospel, to keep off the dirt and stroke of it from themselves, and all those, with whom they had to doe; and then by means of this, and the three former considerations, you will have an opportune standing to behold the success of the Gospel in the glory of it, when it advanced first out of *Jerusalem*, upon that most honourable and blessed designe, to subdue the folly and madnesse of the world, and to give laws of life and righteousnesse, and true wisdom unto it. There were two sorts of enemies more particularly, which as they were (more generally) fuller of enmity and of an hostile spirit against the Gospel, then others, so had they opportunity above others to act this enmity of theirs with greatest danger (at least, with greatest likelihood of danger) to the Gospel, having indeed the generality of the world between them at their command, easie to be drawn by them, to give their assistance unto any thing, wherein by these men it should be desired. The first of these, were *Kings and Rulers of the earth*, men armed with secular authority and power. The latter, were *Philosophers* and oratours, the wise and learned and eloquent men of the world. We spake somewhat of the former of these in another consideration: now we are to look upon them, as persons rising up in their might, and acting with an high hand in every place against the Gospel, to keep it out of their respective dominions, and consequently out of the world. So that as God upon the fall of man, set an *Angel with a flaming sword, to keep the world out of his Paradise*; so doe the world set many *Angels*, many *Kings and Princes*, as it were, *with flaming swords*, to keep God himself (in his Gospel) out of their *Paradise*, I mean their earthly kingdoms, and dominions. That which *David* spake long before by the spirit of Prophecie, concerning the *Kings of the earth* setting themselves, and the *rulers taking counsell together against the Lord and against his anointed*, was fulfilled, when the *Lord Christ* first set out upon his *White horse* (the Gospel) to subdue and conquer the world. This the Apostles themselves, took knowledge of, when they began but to publish and preach the Gospel openly in the world. The powers of the earth were presently up, as it were, in arms

to oppose them in their way, taking it grievously (as the text saith) that they taught the people, and preached through *Jesus* the resurrection of the dead. Yea they presently laid hands on them, and put them in hold, or in prison; and calling them before their tribunal, they straitly commanded them that they should in no wise speak or teach in the name of *Jesus*. Upon occasion whereof, the Apostles, amongst other *Christians* praising God for bringing them off with their lives and liberties, mention that propheticall passage of *David*, which we spake of. And when they heard it (saith the text, viz. in what danger *Peter* and *John* had been, in regard of the high displeasure of the councill, and how God had brought them off) they lifted up their voices to God with one accord, and said Lord — who by the mouth of thy servant *David* hast said, why did the heathen rage &c. Again in the following chapter, the chief Priests with their complices, were filled with indignation against the Apostles for preaching the Gospel, that (as the text saith) they took counsell to slay them. As the Princes and rulers amongst the *Jews* began, and led the way, so did the Kings and rulers of other nations for some hundreds of years together follow, every where magnifying themselves with all their power and policy, with all cruelty and blood, against the Gospel, making severe edicts and laws against those, that should either preach, or professe it; yea prosecuting and pursuing them up and down the world, with slanders and reproaches, with spoilings and confiscations of goods: with imprisonments, with banishments, with deaths, and those the fullest of shame and torment, that they could devise; and all, to secure their palaces, their towns, their cities, their kingdoms against the Gospel, that it might not get within them, or at least might soon be cast out, rush and branch, from amongst them, if at any time, notwithstanding all their diligence and watchfulnesse, and way-layings, it should come in unto them. They made partition walls of fire, and swords, and blood, between their territories, and the Gospel; to keep the one from coming at the other. It would be a long work, and take up much time to relate particularly what the Scriptures themselves intimate, and other histories of the primitive times relate, concerning

concerning the subtle, politike, the violent and bloody practises in every kinde, that were set on foot, and managed with all industry and diligence, by the *rulers of the earth*, and their officers and agents, to keep the Gospel down; that it might not propagate, nor lift up its head in the world. We have given you an account of these things in the generall, and shall content our selves herewith for the present; leaving the particulars to your own inquiry, and consideration. Again

2. The other sort of enemy, as desperately bent against the Gospel, as the former, and having as much (if not more) advantage in his way, to set the world at the greatest distance from it in their affections, is the generation of the wise and prudent, of the learned and eloquent, of the great *disputers of this world*. The Gospel was as great an offence, and matter of indignation unto these men, as unto the other; and these by means of their endowments of wit, learning, eloquence, &c. were unto the others, as drums and trumpets are to soldiers, when by their warlike notes and sounds, they fill their breasts with martiall courage and resolution, against their enemies. So did the heathen oratours and Philosophers, the one by their eloquence, the other by their arguments and disputes, cast oyl upon the flames, and made that enmity and hatred against the Gospel, which was already kindled in the breasts of Kings, to break forth into a raging and devouring fire. *Lactantius* reports of a Philosopher in *Bithynia*, who writing against Christians, poured out himself in the praises of persecuting Princes. Many such passages there are upon record in ecclesiasticall histories.

Nor had they by the means aforesaid, this potent influence upon Kings and Princes alone, to set them on fire against the Gospel; they had the like, or greater opportunity to way-lay the Gospel in the judgements and apprehensions of the generality of men, by representing it unto them, not only as a doctrine, that would expose them to the displeasure of their Princes, and be the crushing and undoing of them, and their families and posterities in that kinde; but also as a doctrine of vanity, that had no ground-work in reason for the bottom or foundation of it, as a doctrine incumbered with a thousand absurdities,

absurdities, and impossibilities, a doctrine more like unto a *devised fable*, then to a substantiall truth; and in this respect, not more generally, then deservedly, rejected and abhorred by the world. It is no hard matter for men of parts, learning, wit, eloquence, &c. to declaim against any thing how excellent soever; and to represent that, which is simply, and in it self, unblamable, as notoriously monstrous and foul: as it is easie for a cunning Painter to make the foundest and firmest timber that is, look like rotten wood, by colouring it accordingly; or to disfigure the best countenance and fairest face, into a meer deformity. Especially when such men as we speak of, men of wit and eloquence, have to doe, either with men that are weak and injudicious, and inconsiderate withall; much more, when they have to plead, or to promote such a cause, which suits with the desires and inclinations of those, to whom they address themselves in this kinde; and most of all, when their task is, only to perswade men from that, which if they doe embrace, or own, they know, or at least have great cause to fear, will be destructive to their peace and comfort, yea to their very lives and beings in the world; I say when men of wit, and learning, and parts otherwise, are to deal with the judgements and affections of men upon such terms of advantage, as these, it cannot in reason be thought, but that they may very easily prevail, and carry their desire and designe in this case, cleer before them, whatsoever it be. Now the heathen Oratours and Philosophers we speak of, who were desperate enemies unto, and opposers of the Gospel, had generally all these advantages, to take off the judgements and affections of the world from it, yea and to turn their hearts against it. For first, the men of the world, with whom they had to doe in this kinde, were (generally) weak and low in understanding, at least in such things, which tended to the honour, credit, and countenance of the Gospel; and in respect of such things as these, inconsiderate withall. Secondly, the disparagement of the Gospel, as being a fable, or a lying doctrine, was agreeable to their corrupt natures, and sinfull desires and inclinations of their souls. Men (generally) were marvellously disposed and inclined so to judge of it; and desirous to have

reasons and grounds, upon which they might with confidence and securitie, so judge of it. Thirdly, and lastly, the men whom they sought to possess with hatred and enmity against the Gospel, knew very well of what evil consequence it was like to be unto them, if they did own it, or make profession of it: that it was like to be the ruine of their peace, and comfort in the world. All which considered, it is a wonder of wonders, duly considered, that ever the Gospel should get footing, much more, that ever it should run, and be glorified (as the Apostles expression is) in the world; and that, what between the bloody rage and fury of Kings and Princes on the one hand, and the bitter and subtle disputes and oppositions of Philosophers and orators on the other hand, *inter astutiam suadendi, & duritiam sciendi*, (as Tertullian hath it) it should not, as between two millstones, have been ground to powder. But behold the finger and mighty power of God. This Gospel, which was so mightily disadvantaged in it self, I mean in the frame and constitution of it, having so little therein (as we have seen) to commend it unto the world: which had so little help from men, so slender an arme of flesh (as we heard) to stand by it, or promote the cause of it in the world; nay, which had so many great and Potent enemies to oppose it, who dealt furiously on the one hand, and subtilly on the other hand, against it; yea which had (in a manner) the whole world, as one man, up in arms against it; this Gospel (I say) hath made its way through the midst of all their fierce and fiery oppositions, hath thrown down mountains on the right hand, and mountains on the left, and hath built her self a throne in the midst of the earth, and rules the nations with a rod of iron. The Apostle Paul in his time took special knowledge of the wonderfull successe of the Gospel, in every place whether he carried it, against all oppositions and gainsayings of men. Now thanks (saith he) be unto God which alwaies causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the favour of his knowledge by us in every place. Paul alwaies, and in every place, triumphed in Christ, or, as the originall imports, *καὶ βουλευόμενοι ἐν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ* who causeth us to triumph, or, who carrieth us in triumph, in, or through Christ, i. we never come

2. Cor. 7, 14.

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to preach the Gospel in any place, or to any people, but, as on the one hand, we meet with enemies and opposition, so on the other hand we still conquer and subdue, and are made honourable, like those that ride in triumph, by the spoils we take from Satan, by rescuing some, either a greater, or lesser number of souls, out of his hand and power, and lead them captives unto Jesus Christ. And there is little question but that the rest of the Apostles triumphed in like manner in their respective quarters, where they were engaged in the same warfare. So that the three pecks in which the leaven of the Gospel, was hid, i. the three parts of the world (being all of it that was then known) Asia, Europe and Africa, soon came to be leavened with it. Alas! the Kings and rulers of the earth, as well they that ruled it by power, as they that ruled it by wit and subtilty, when they consulted the obstruction of the Gospel, they imagined (as David saith) but a vain thing. Their consultations were but flesh, and their horses and chariots were but flesh: but the counsells, by which the Gospel advanced in the world, were spirituall; and the guard of it were chariots and horses of fire in the mountains: so that it laugh't all that pomp and terrour of opposition, wherewith it was resisted by the world, in the face to scorn. It took no knowledge of the leopards, or lions, or bears, that were in the way of it: and Leviathan-like, it esteemed iron, as straw, and brasse, as rotten wood. The bloody edicts of Emperours and Kings could not make it flee, or keep back: and fire and sword were turned with it into stubble. It leaped over the walls of their cities, it brake into their forts and castles, yea it found a way into the palaces and chambers of Kings and Emperours themselves, and took hold of those that stood at their right hand, even whilst they were breathing out fury and death against it. When they let it alone it prospered; when they persecuted it, and that unto death, it prospered yet more; in so much that they were at their wits ends, what to doe with it; or how to break the course and proceedings of it. One while they would give it rest and peace, as it were, to see whether prosperity would not slay it. Well, this would not doe; therefore another while they fell upon it with the whole weight of their bloody fury, and they would

Mat 13, 43.

Job 41, 27.

P p 2

would

would destroy it at once, rush and branch, *from under these beams.* But when they cast three into the fiery furnace, they saw four walking in their stead; The blood of Christians which they shed, made the places where it fell, more fruitfull, yea abundantly yeelding of Christianity. In so much that within forty years after the first going forth of it into the world, the Gentiles themselves confessed that *the branches of this congregation* (I mean, of Christians) *were spread over all the World, and began to put in fear the very Roman Emperours themselves* (as Tertullian recordeth) yea, after they had fought by four most bloody persecutions to root out the name of *Christ*, and *Christianity* out of the earth, and in the midst of the rage and heat of the fit (for about this time *Tertullian* lived; which was within the second century, or hundreth of years, after *Christ*) this authour, in an *Apology* which he writeth to the *Emperour* and his officers, in the behalf of Christians, expresth himself thus (by way of answer to that common objection against Christians, which was then, it seems, on foot, as it is at this day, *viz.* that Christians were enemies and traytours to the state and dignity of the Emperour) *Sinem & hostes exortos &c.* If we had a minde to be your open and professed enemies, and not to revenge our selves secretly, have we not numbers of men and sufficient strength for it? *Externi sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus.* — we are but strangers, and yet we have filled all your Territoires, your Cities, your Islands, your Castles, your towms, your counsells, your tents themselves, your tribes (or families) your offices, your palace, your senate, your market, or pleading place. We leave only your Temples free for you, and void of our company. And a little after: *Suffudisset usq; dominationem vestram tot qualiumcunq; amissio civium, &c.* If we should have but Withdrawn our selves from amongst you, the losse of so many citizens would have made the glory of your dominions asbamed. Yea certainly you would be afraid at your silitineesse; and through the silence and stilnesse of all things in your city, as if it were dead, you would or might, have gon to look for such, over whom therein to bear rule: with much more to this purpose. By all which it appears, that neither tribulation, nor distresse, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakednesse, nor perils,

nor

nor sword, nor death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, was able to separate between the Gospel, and a most triumphant succeſſion in the world: it got into the hearts and consciences of millions of men, notwithstanding the way was hedged up against it with thorns and briers, with swords and spears, and torments, and deaths in every kinde: it taught the flesh to forget her tenderneſſe and weakneſſe, and to think her strength, like the strength of stones or mountains. And may we not by this time, taking all into consideration that hath been delivered in the point, say concerning it, as *Nicodemus* said to *Christ*. *Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can doe the miracles, or wonders, which thou doest, except God be with him?* Have we not foundation and ground in abundance from the mighty and wonderful works which the Gospel wrought, in, and upon, the hearts of such infinite numbers, both of men and women in the very face, as it were, of such astonishing and devouring oppositions, to build this conclusion, with the greatest confidence that may be, upon; that certainly this Gospel comes from God; and that no doctrine under heaven could doe the works, which it hath done, except God be with it? Had not God stood by it, when it was at work, and helped it to pull, could it ever have drawn to it the hearts and mindes and affections of so many millions of men and women, rich and poor, old and young, as we have heard it hath done, against such potent detentions, and pullings back; against so many mighty ingagements of flesh and blood, all drawing and haling a contrary way? If a man should see a vessel or a ship runne swiftly upon the waters, quite against the tide, and stream, and a strong gale of winde, would he not presently say, that there is an invincible force or power, greater then that of the tide, and stream, and winde, put together; that carrieth her along, and gives her this motion? In like manner, the Gospel bearing up with a swift and irresistiole course, against the natures and dispositions, against the fury and bloody persecutions, against the policy and subtile oppositions of the world, it cannot reasonably be conceived, but that the *starres* in their courses carried it

Heb 21, 13.

along with them, and that the power of the Almighty wrought with an high hand in the progressive motion of it, upon such terms. The Scripture (speaking of *Abraham*) saith, that *there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the skie in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable*. So may it be said concerning the Gospel; it was at first but as a *dead doctrine*, in appearance, having neither spirit, nor life, nor power of generation in it: yet have there sprung from the loins of it a generation of sons and daughters so numerous, that both heaven and earth are replenished with them.

But here it may be objected and said; that neither is a speedy, nor yet a large-spreading propagation of a doctrine, or Religion, any argument of assurance, that either the one, or the other, is of a divine originall, or from God: for then the *Turkish Religion*, the law or doctrine of *Mahomet*, might claim this honour, of being from God too; for this also ran, and propagated, and made *profelytes* in abundance in the world; drew in many nations, and Kingdomes, into a subjection and obedience to it; as is famously known at this day. To this I answer,

That the weight and strength of the argument last insisted upon, to demonstrate the divinity of the Scriptures, did not simply stand, either in a speedy, or plentiful propagation of the Gospel; but in these, under such and such circumstances, against all those disadvantages, and unlikelihoods of success, which were mentioned. So that though neither the one, nor the other of these, simply considered (I mean, neither the speedy, nor yet the abundant spreading, or propagating of the Gospel) be any argument necessarily concluding the divine authority of the Scriptures; yet either of them (and much more both together) being in conjunction with such and such circumstances, may be sufficient to evince, and reach, such a conclusion. That *Christ* was born of a woman, doth not prove any thing miraculous, or above the course of nature, in his conception: but that he should be born of a woman, which was a virgin, and had not known a man, this evinceth it. That the *Israelites* should walk safely upon dry land, did not prove
any

anything more, than an ordinary hand, or presence of God with them, but that they should walk upon dry land safely; in the midst of the sea, the waters standing like a wall on the right, and on the left hand, this did abundantly prove it. In like manner, though the fruitfulness of the Gospel in begetting sons and daughters in the world, was neither in respect of the saddeness, nor of the abundance hereof, any sufficient proof of any peculiar relation in it unto God; yet the coincidence of such circumstances, as have been expressed, with these, may together advance a sufficient, yea an abundant, proof in this kinde. And if the doctrine or religion of *Mahomet*, could plead a fructification in the world upon the like terms, which the Gospel doth; doubtlesse the proof or demonstration would be unpartiall, and evince the one as well as the other, to be from God. But great are the differences on the one side, and on the other.

1. The doctrine or Gospel of *Mahomet*, was fitted to the naturall inclinations, lusts, and corruptions of men; it every waies comported with men in these; whereas the Gospel (as we heard) handles these with all severity and roughness; ever and anon injoining the crucifying, and prohibiting the fulfilling of them; urging and pressing upon men, with all authority and power, things that are of the most cutting nature, and sharpest contrariety unto them. The story saith, that *Mahomet* set on foot his new religion, to bring light unto the *Gentiles*, and to mitigate to the *Jews* and *Christians* the severity of the law, and of the Gospel. He considered (it seems) where, and in what particulars, the Gospel suffered disadvantage, in respect of the generality of men; what it was that made the doctrine of it so offensive to the greatest part of the world; and all such things as these, he either left out, or altered the nature or property of them in his law, and substituted things pleasing to corrupt nature in their stead. He gratified men in his law, with plurality of wives, to what number they pleased; gave them liberty to put them away, and exchange them, as oft as they pleased: made it lawfull for men to revenge injuries: taught that men are not bound by their oaths before God, except they swore from their hearts; with many other
like.

like things of a wicked confederacy with the vile and sinfull hearts of men. So that whereas, God, the authour of the Gospel, for the compofure and frame thereof, did, as it were, goe round about the corrupt hearts and natures of men, telling, and observing all the inordinate affections, corrupt inclinations and sinfull propenfions and difpofitions thereof, that fo he might make and temper his Gospel to meet with, and ftrike at them all; *Mahomet* on the contrary, took cognizance of them, that in the compofure of his Gospel, he might accommodate them, and fpeak to their hearts.

So that if *Mahomet's* Gospel prevailed farre and near, and made the world to wonder after it, there is no great, no ftrange thing in it: it went along with men in the waies and defires of their hearts; and what fhould hinder, but that they fhould goe along with it? when *two are agreed*, it is no ftrange thing to fee them walk together. As the Apofle fpeaks of fome men, who though they cannot endure found doctrine, are yet apt enough to heap up teachers to themfelves, according to their luft; fo likewise is a doctrine, or teacher, that is unfound, likely enough to heap up auditours, and followers in abundance, according to their luft and fancies; I mean, thofe corruptions and loofe opinions, which are held forth, and taught by them. But as it was a greater thing, and a more demonftrative argument of the extraordinary power and prefence of God, that one man fhould be conceived and brought forth by a virgin; then that all the men that have been in the world befide, fhould be brought forth in the ordinary way of propagation; fo that any one, or the fmalleft number of men, fhould be made true profelytes by the Gospel, and cleave unto and follow that in the world; is a far greater and more considerable thing, and more demonftrative of the gracious and powerfull prefence of God with it, then that the doctrine and law of *Mahomet* fhould draw the whole world (in comparifon) after it. The Law of *Mahomet* is carnall, and the world is carnall, fo that there is a symbollicall quality, a principle or compliance in this law with the world: but the law of *Chrift* in the Gospel is fpirituall, and fo in reafon like to prove nothing, but hatred and enmity unto the world.

2. There

2. There is this fubtile and carnally politique device in the law of *Mahomet*, to make profelytes of men laden with divers luft and vanities (efpecially being injudicious, and inconfiderate withall, which was the condition of the greateft part of the world when this law moft prevailed;) First there are in this law, many precepts and injunctiions unto things morally vertuous and good, which are apt to commend it much to the, naturall confciences of men: as prayers unto God, faftings almof-deeds, juftice, temperance, &c. and againe many fins againft the light of nature, as covetoufneffe, drunkenneffe, adultery, deceit (efpecially prafticed upon Orphans) and fo fwearing and forefwearing, with fome others of like nature, are forely threatned with the difpleafure of God, and fire of hell. Thus far the naturall confciences of men are charged and burthened with this Law; which charge notwithstanding is none other, then what lay upon them before, in thofe naturall impreffions of things morally honeft and difhoneft, which God hath planted in them. But then fecondly, though this doctrine of *Mahomet* thus chargeth the confciences of men, and threatens tranfgreffours forely yet it hath a way very pleafing to flefh and blood, to exonerate and difcharge them againe, when they fhall tranfgrefse and do contrary to the things commanded; viz. certain carnall penances or compensations that are more eafie and neare at hand (wherein the religion of Rome much sympathifeth with it,) as for example, about the cafe of perjury, there is this declared, that they that firfwear themfelves, fhall have no good thing in the world to come. But elfewhere this burthen is eafed by fuch a provifo, or claufe of mitigation as this; that to redeeme an oath (as the law calleth it) i. e. either to purchafe a liberty to aft contrary to an oath, or to redeeme a mans felf from under the danger or guilt of having broken an oath, they muft feed or cloath ten poore men, or faft three daies. Other instances of like nature might be produced, but we cannot infift upon particulars. Generally to goe into the wars, and to be valiant and couragious there, is made an univerfall attonement for all fins; and carries their paradife planted with all fenfuall delights, and pleafures, with a ftrong hand before it, againft

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all wickednesses and villanies whatsoever. Now such a constitution and temper of a doctrine or law, as this, *viz.* wherein there shall be some things commanded, which are apt to commend it to the consciences of men, as just, and holy, and good; and other things againe prescribed of an easie purchase or procurement to relieve and ease the consciences of men, under the stroake of the guilt of sin, must needs be conceived very apt and likely to take with the generality of men, and to carry the sinfull, sensuall, and ignorant world before it, because it gratifies both conscience and concupiscence at once in such men; yea and that part of it wherein it gratifies conscience, I meane wherein it commands things agreeable to the morall impressions in the consciences of men, is a confirmation by way of comfort unto them, that that part of it also wherein it gratifies concupiscence, and gives men hope of escaping punishment, without mortification of their sins, is a truth approved of, and assented unto by God. So that in this consideration also the doctrine of *Mahomet*, had a maine advantage and likelihood of propagating it self in the world, which the law of God, and of Christ in the Gospel, had not. This law admits of no carnall or fleshly attonement for sins committed: nor doth it give any hope of the pardon of sins from the hand of God, unto those that have committed it upon any attonement whatsoever, without the mortification of it *in our members*, at least in some degree. Therefore in this respect also the great prevailing of the doctrine of *Mahomet* in the world, doth no waies shadow or obscure, the demonstrative force of this argument (to prove the royall descent of the Gospel from Heaven) the great and marvellous successe, wherein it reioyced over the world.

3. It was the spreading and prevailing of the Gospel upon the world, as it did, that occasionally (partly through the weaknesse, partly through the wickednesse of men,) promoted that great prevailing of the religion of *Mahomet* in the world. This it did occasionally two waies: First as it had acquainted the world with, and made familiar amongst men, the knowledge (or at least the discourse) of all those particu-

culars in that religion which are any waies considerable, before the doctrine thereof did so much as look forth into the world. Secondly, As by reason of the neglect of it, and the unworthy walkings of men under it (now generally prevailing upon the world) God was provoked to give up the world, to a reprobate or injudicious minde; a judgement which made them incapable of receiving the impression of any doctrine or Religion whatsoever that should be brought unto them, though never so erroneous or inconsistent with reason it self.

For the first of these; It is no waies like that the doctrine or law of *Mahomet* should ever have bin so readily, or so generally received and submitted unto as it was in the world, had not the Gospel and the knowledge of the Scriptures, prepossessed the minds and apprehensions of men, with many of the principall and most considerable things, (at least with some kind of notions or broken ends of these things) which are propounded and taught in this law, as *viz.* concerning God as being the Creatour of heaven and earth, concerning *Christ* as a great *Prophet*, and the son of *Mary* a virgin; concerning the immortality of the soule, the resurrection of the dead, eternall pains or torments, immortall felicity and blisse, with severall other such things as these which are asserted in the said law; The world having generally drunk in before hand; though not the steady or grounded belief, yet a kinde of generall and loose credulity of such things as these from the Gospel, so that they were no waies new or strange unto them, when *Mahomet* propounded them to be believed in his law, this must in reason needs be looked upon as a great advantage, yea as a preparation in the world to receive such a doctrine or religion as that, which should hold forth these things unto them, especially in conjunction with other things, which were more suitable to the vanity of their minds, and sensuality of their hearts, then other particularities of the Gospel were; yea *Peter Martyrs* judgment in the case is (which with me is very passeable,) that *Mahometanism* is nothing else but an heresie; and the professors of it, how many soever in number they be, a remnant of the *Arrians* of old, only more corrupt, and of a deeper degeneration from the truth;

truth; (which is a thing of frequent observation in a continuation or succession in the line of heresie, the latter brood is commonly the worst.) So then in this consideration and respect also, the doctrine of *Mahomet* had a speciall advantage which the Gospel had not, for the propagating and promoting of it in the world. When the Gospel first set forth, and did that glorious execution, which hath been formerly represented unto you, upon the world, it had no such foundations already laid to build it self; and its acceptation in the world upon; all things (in a manner) which it proposed unto men, were strange and new, not so much as the name of Christ had been heard of in any of those nations and kingdomes, which yet it subdued: the resurrection of the dead by the confession of *Philosophers* themselves, who were the wisest and learnedst men in the world, was a new and strange doctrine unto them.

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There is the same consideration of other the main doctrines of the Gospel, as of justification by faith, adoption, mortification, self-denial, &c. the world had not so much as heard. by the lightest hearing of the care of any of them, when the Gospel came to demand believe of them, and subjection unto them. So that the religion of *Mahomet*, borrowed of the Gospel (or rather stole from it,) a stock of truth formerly received and acknowledged by men, to set up with in the world, but the Gospel set up without any advantage or help at all in this kind; it borrowed not any thing from the doctrine of *Mahomet* (which had no being at all in the world in these daies) nor yet from any other Sect or kinde of learning, doctrine, or religion in the world whatsoever. That great estate of honour and acceptation, which it soon raised unto it self in the world, it raised not by any contribution from other doctrines, but by means of that glorious spirit of light and truth which accompany it.

Again, 2. by that time that *Mahomet* was now ready with his religion and law, to advance with them into the world, the world had in a very great measure withdrawn it self from the Gospel, I meane from that high esteeme of it, which God expected men should have had, and which the infinite

infinite worth of the Gospel it self, in a way of reason and equity, required of them: yea they were generally grown rebellious against the laws and holy precepts and injunctions of it Upon which great provocation of Apostacy, the *soule* of the Almighty tooke not that pleasure in the world, which it had done formerly. *If any man draw back (saith God) my soule shall have no pleasure in him.* Now the world where the Gospel had been formerly preached and received yea and submitted unto, in the holy laws thereof, about and before the times we speak of (I mean of *Mahomet*s coming upon the stage) had drawn back from the Gospel, and were fallen from the love and conscientious practise of it: and in this respect, *the soule of the Lord tooke no pleasure in it; i.* (by the figure *reciproque*, which is, when a little only is expressed, but much intended) *the soule of the Lord greatly abhorred it, and resolved to bring that great sin, which it had committed in the contempt of the Gospel, upon the head of it: Now the judgment by the inflicting whereof God is wont (as it were) of course, to take vengeance upon men for the neglect, or rejection of the Gospel in the truth of it, is the giving of them up to delusions to beleieve lies.* This is evident from 2 Thef. 2. 11, 12. *And for this cause, viz. because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. God shall send them strong delusion, that they should beleieve a lye, that they all might be damned who beleieved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse.* And thus when the Jews rejected their true *Messiah* God avenged himselfe upon them by that very judgment we speak of; viz. by delivering them up to a spirit of that vanity and folly which prevailed with them to believe and follow counterfeit *Messiahs*, almost without end; yea even such, who were so far from giving any such substantiall and demonstrative account of what they claimed and pretended unto, as he who was the true *Messiah* indeed did, both by his doctrine, miracles and conversation; that they rather gave evident signes that they were indeed but counterfeits. Now then when *Mahomet* came to utter the base commodity of his lying religion in the world, he found the world in such a posture and condition to deale with him, and to believe him, wherein

Heb. 10. 38.

2 Thef. 2. 11, 12.

it had never been since the first day it was a world, untill then, viz. under the displeasure of God for contempt of the Gospel; a displeasure of that nature and consequence, that no other displeasure of God (I meane for any other sin or provocation whatsoever) produceth the like strange effects; in, or upon men, to make them preys to every lying vanity. Every spirit of delusion that meets them in the world, under this judgment, may slay them, or doe with them whatsoever it listeth. Yea there is little question to be made, but that had this doctrine of *Mahomet* been ten degrees more rotten, or ridiculously irrationall then it is, it had at that time drawn the world after as it did. Now the Gospel found not the world under any such judgement, or displeasure of God as this; no the day wherein the Gospel went forth to visit the world, was a day of love, and favour, and great compassion, from the most high God unto it; the world from the foundations of it (or however from the fall of man,) had not found the like grace or favour in his sight, as now it had.

4. And lastly, The weapons, whereby the religion of *Mahomet* was promoted in the world, were chiefly carnall, and not spiritual; He taught the world his law, as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth*, I meane, with horns and bribes; and much after the same manner, wherein the *Grand Seignor* of *Rome* procureth quarter for his religion and law in the world, whose chiefe quartermasters were, *fire*, and *sagor*. Kill the unbelievers whom you conquer (saith *Mahomet* in his law) if they will not turne to the law: and the reader or preacher of this law (as a Fryer who sometimes, as himself saith, had bin a student amongst them in the *Vniverfity of Baldach*, reporteth) holdeth a bare sword in his hand, or setteth it up in an eminent place to the terrour of the gainsayers. So that whereas *Christ* went forth in his Gospel sitting on a *white horse*, attempting and making his conquests without striving, or crying, or any mans bearing his voice in the streets: i. with all gentleness and meekness, without offering, or threatening the least outward force or violence unto any, that should oppose him; *Mahomet* on the contrary set forth in his Law,

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upon a red horse, taking a great sword in his hand, wherewith he threatned to take peace from the earth, I mean to trouble, oppress or slay where his law should not be embraced and subjected unto. So that in this respect also the marvelous prevailings of the doctrine of the Gospel upon the world, have a plain character upon them, by which they may be clearly discerned to be from God; and the prevailings of *Mahometanism*, another, as plain upon them, by which they may readily be known to be from the wisdom of the flesh, and from men.

A Third Demonstration and proof (of that kinde we are now upon) that the Scriptures are from God, is the exact and punctuall fulfilling of those predictions and prophecies, which are contained in the Scriptures; as *David* in an holy addressse unto God concerning his providence and interposall about his conception, and first rise of his being, expresseth himself thus; *My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in time were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.* In like manner it appears from the Scriptures, that whoever was the Authour of them, saw as it were, the substance and frame of many great events, occurrences, changings, and turnings of things in the world, whilst they were yet secret, and only in working in the lowest parts of the Earth, and that he wrote down all the particulars of them in his book; which in time came to be fashioned and to receive their being, whilst as yet there was none of them. It would take up more time then you I believe would willingly allow for the perfecting of the demonstration (and perhaps more then is necessary) to insit particularly upon all the prophecies and predictions of future events that are found in the Scriptures and compare them with the events themselves, and shew how particularly and punctually they have bin fulfilled. For certainly there is none of them, whose time and season appointed for the fulfilling, is already past, that hath fallen to the ground, but they have all, from the greatest to the least of them, taken place and received actuall and compleat performance in all particulars whatsoever mentioned

Psal. 139. 17.
18.

Judg. 9. 16.

Rev. 9.
Mar. 12. 19.

in the prediction, and are to this day numbred amongst the famous providences of God, and historical passages of the world. I shall insist only upon some few of them, somewhat more particularly, pointing at others in a briefe and generall way; promising only these two things in two words. First, That the predictions or prophecies of things in the Scriptures, (at least many of them) are delivered in plaine significant, and direct words, without ambiguities and doubtfullness of sense in the expression; and secondly, that they are of such events and things, whose effecting or coming to passe, in respect of second causes, depended only upon those that were merely contingent, as (for the most part) upon the wills and actions of men, and not upon such which act uniformly, and with necessity of causation: which kinde of events, may be foreseen (at a good distance of time) by an eye of reason, enlightned only with the knowledge of natures course, motions, and workings. We shall have occasion to touch upon these two particulars afterwards, but to our purpose: The Scriptures record severall promises made unto *Abraham* that great and famous Patriarch of the Jews, which were as so many prophecies, or predictions of things that were future: we shall instance but two of these. amongst many The one was concerning his having issue whenas yet he had none, nor was any waies like ever to have any, yea when he despaired and was out of all hope of having any, *Behold* (saith he unto God) *thou hast given me no seed, wherefore loe a servant of my house shall be mine heyre:* Before he had the promise and word of God that he should have issue, he did consider his own body, as being now as good as dead, being almost 100, years old, and the deadnesse of *Sarahs* womb too, and judged of things accordingly though (it's true) when once God had told him he should have a childe by her, he considered neither (as the Apostle informeth us, *Rom. 4.*) But how unlikely soever it was in a way of reason, or experience that *Abraham* ever should have a childe especially by *Sarah.* yet the propheticall promise of God miscarried not (no not in the least) the womb of that was not dead, it brought forth that which was conceived in it, at the time appointed, for *Sarah* conceived (saith

Gen. 15. 3.

(saith the text) and have *Abraham* a son in his old age, at the same season that God told him; Here was both substance and circumstance of what was foretold, performed. The other propheticall promise made unto *Abraham*, was, concerning the going down of his posterity into *Egypt*, and of the time of their servitude, and the manner of their deliverance from thence. This particular was foretold 400. years (at least) before it was performed; and that at such a time, when there was not the least appearance or intimation of a likelihood of it: Know of a surety (saith God to *Abraham*) that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them 400. years: And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge, and afterwards they shall come out with great substance. Now how exactly this prediction was in all points fulfilled, as well for the time prophesied of, as for the judgement executed upon the Egyptians, and deliverance of *Abraham*'s posterity, with that substance mentioned in the prophecy, is plainly and distinctly laid down in the book of *Exodus*; and besides is not only avouched and constantly beleevd by the Jews themselves at this day, who yet were bitter enemies to Christianity, but is acknowledged by heathen writers themselves and particularly by *Porphyry* (in his 4th book against Christians) who yet was one of the ablest, and withall the most malicious enemy that Christians ever had.

Gen 21. 2.

Gen. 15. 13, 14.

Another famous prophesie, was that uttered by *Jacob* being now ready to leave the world; *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from betweene his feet until Shiloh come: and to him shall the gathering of the people be.* This prophesie, as touching the fulfilling of it, i. the compleat fulfilling of it, was suspended for well nigh 2000^d years; though it's true for a great part of this time viz. (as *Josephus* testifies) from the entrance of the government into the tribe of *Judah*, in the person of King *David*, untill the going out of it again in the person of *Hircanus* whom *Herod* slew; but when the time appointed was fulfilled, the prophesie it self was fulfilled also; which was, when *Herod* a stranger, and of another nation, cut of the house and line of *Judah* from the government of *Jury*; about which time (as the New Testament it self

Gen 49. 10.

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declareth)

declareth) the *Shiloh* spoken of in the prophesie, *i.* the long expected *Messiah* (as all interpreters I have met with, expound it) came. Now there are in and about this prophesie, some particulars of marvellous importance and weight for our present purpose.

First, When this prophesie was uttered by *Jacob*, there was no likelihood at all that the nation of the Jews, *i.* the posterity of *Abraham* by *Jacobs* line, should ever come to have any scepter or Kingly power amongst them in any of their tribes whatsoever. For now the sons of *Jacob* were very low, and poore, and but few in number, in a strange land; out of which they were never like to depart, or to become a distinct nation by themselves.

2. In case such a thing should come to passe, I mean, that they should fairly get out of *Egypt*, and grow into a distinct people by themselves, and come to have a scepter or government among themselves; yet there was very little likelihood, that ever this scepter should come into *Judahs* hand; or the Government fall into his tribe; because he had three elder brothers, *Reuben*, *Simeon* and *Levi*, who according to the law of nature, and custome of all nations, were likely to enjoy the dignity before him.

3. When *Moses* recorded and put in writing this prophesie (which was some hundreds of years after it was uttered) there was lesse appearance or likelihood of truth in it, then was at the time of the uttering it. For *Moses* himself was now in actual possession of the Government, (who was of the tribe of *Levi*) and was put into it by God himself: yea, and *Josua*, designed by God for his successour, was not of the tribe of *Judah*, but of *Ephraim*. And this consideration (by the way) is a notable evidence for the truth and certainty of this, that the prophesie we speake of, was uttered by *Jacob*; it being no waies like, that *Moses* would ever have put such a prophesie in writing, to the disparagement of his own tribe, or to the offence or provocation of the three tribes, *Reuben*, *Simeon*, and *Ephraim* (two of which as hath been said, were in privilege of birth before *Judah*, and the third immediatly designed by God himselfe to the government;) and perhaps of the rest of the tribes

tribes also, had it not been generally received amongst them for a truth, that *Jacob* their father had spoken it.

4. In the daies of *Samuel*, who was the last of the Judges, and about 400. years after *Moses*, there was yet no appearance of any life or truth in this prophesie; in as much as the government had not yet so much as look'd upon, or towards the tribe of *Judah*. At last, when God, upon the importunity of the peoples desire, granted them a King, he chose *Saul*, who yet was not of the tribe of *Judah*, but of *Benjamin*: and besides, had severall children, who were likely, one or other of them, they and their race, to have succeeded in, and inherited the kingdome. So that all this while the prophesie we speake of, lay as if it had been quite dead, without breath or motion; as if there had been neither life nor soul in it. At last it began to open the eyes a little, when *David*, a poor young shepheard was chosen out of the tribe of *Judah*, to be King, and to stand as it were upon the feet, when the government and scepter were established to him, and his posterity. Yet,

5. We know that ten tribes of the twelve, at once revolted from *Judah*, and never returned to their obedience again; but combined and conspired with the Gentiles and enemies on every side, to overthrow and extirpate the said Kingdome, and government of *Judah*.

6. Many of *David's* race and posterity themselves, who succeeded in this Kingdome; sinned against God with as high an hand (if not with a farre higher) then *Saul* had done, whom God rejected, with his posterity, from the Kingdome. Yea,

7. The glorie and power of this Kingdome, was given by God into the enemies hand, and was made tributarie to other States and Kingdomes, for many years together; as first to the *Caldeans* or *Babylonians*; and afterwards to the *Romans*; and yet,

8. And lastly, the spirit of Truth in this Prophesie wrought through all these difficulties and improbabilities, brake in sunder all these barrs of iron, and first brought the scepter and government into, and then maintained and kept it in the hand of *Judah*, till *Shiloh* or *Messiah* was ready to come: or (which is the same) till *Jesus*, who is called *Christ*, was now

ready to be born into the world. Evident it is from *Iosephus*, and other grave Historians of those times, that it was a very little while before the birth of *Christ*, that *Herod* made that bloody massacre of the tribe of *Judah*, (so much spoken of) and slew *Hircanus* the last King of *Dauids* race.

A third very remarkable Prophecie recorded in the Scriptures, is that concerning *Cyrus*; which was given out by *Isaiab*, above an 100. (some say, near 200.) years before *Cyrus* was born. You have it in the latter end of the 44. and beginning of the 45. chapters of this Prophet: *That saith of Cyrus* (speaking of God) *he is my shepheard, that shall performe all my pleasure, even saying to Ierusalem, thou shalt be built, and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid, &c.* Now,

1. That a man should be call'd by his name an 100. years and more before he was born (it is like, long before his Parents were born, who were at liberty to call him by any other name.)

2. That it should at such a distance of time be said (and that with truth, as the event famously known, declared) that such a man should conquer so great and potent a monarchy, as that of *Babylon* was at this time.

3. That he should build again the Temple of *Ierusalem*, which others of his own religion had destroyed, &c. and that he should doe it indeed, accordingly; these things (I mean, predictions and events compared together) certainly are the undoubted characters of him, who with one view overlooketh the long tract and whole duration of time which extendeth it self from the beginning of the world, to the end thereof, with all the motions, occurrences, and events, of things that rise up, and fall, and come to passe within the compass thereof.

Nor can this prophecy of *Isaiab*, be any waies suspected of forgery, or supposititiousness in any kinde; in as much as it was pronounced openly, as other prophecies were, in the hearing of all the people, and so divulged into many hands before the captivity: and then also carried into *Babylon* and *Chaldea*; where it is no otherwaies like, but that it was dispersed, seen, and read of many, many years before the accomplishment of it, yea whilst as yet it look'd like a cloud without water, or a

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parcell of words, that neither had weight, nor worth of truth in them.

And for the event of the thing, as 1. That there was such a man as *Cyrus*; 2. That a man called by this name did conquer *Babylon*, and vested himself with the Monarchy thereof; and 3. That the same man did restore the captivity of the Jews, and furthered the building of the temple of *Ierusalem*, with large contributions of his own money therunto, heathen Authors themselves, and generally they that write the histories of those times, do attest and confirm.

To passe by many other particular prophecies, in other parts of the Scriptures, how many are there in *Daniel* alone, very strange and wonderfull (compared with the nature, and truth of their correspondent events) as, 1. That concerning the destruction of *Belshazzar*, foretold unto him in the midst of his great jollity, and triumph, and in the hearing of all his nobles. 2. That delivered to *Darius the Mede*, in the beginning of the second monarchy of the *Medes* and *Persians*, which foretold him, how many Kings should reigne after him; and how the fourth, who was to be the last, and *Darius* by name too, should fight against the *Grecians*, and be overcome by a *Grecian King* (which was *Alexander* the great.) and 3. That also concerning the kingdom of the *Grecians*, as that, after *Alexanders* death, it should be divided, and torn in pieces by his Captains, and not passe to his posterity (which last is confirmed by many heathen writers.) 4. That great prophecy, concerning the four great Monarchies of the world, which are so lively and distinctly described, as if he had lived in them all, and had had that experience of them all respectively, which the world since hath had. 5. That concerning the fight between *Darius* and *Alexander*, under the names of, the *sierce Goat* with one horn, and the *great Ram*. But to passe by these, with divers others of like consideration, in the writings of this one Prophet; yea and a 1000^d more in other parts of the Scriptures; I shall only further insist upon some few particulars of those many prophecies, which are found in the Old Testament concerning *Christ*; and particularly upon those which relate to such things about *Christ*, that are recorded and acknowledged by those,

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who

Dan. 5. 15, 26,
&c.

Dan. 1. 1, 2.

Dan. 7. 3, 4.

Isa. 44. 18.

45. 1, 2, &c.

who are no friends, or favourers of *Christianity*, as well *Jews* as *Gentiles*.

First, There is a great concurrence of Scripture prediction in the old Testament, that *Christ the Messiah*, was to be God. We shall not need to instance for the proof hereof, the Scriptures being (generally) so well known to us in this behalf. The ancient Jews, and particularly the holy *Rabbine* (as the Jews call him) who lived not long after *Christ*, were clearly of this faith. The expressions of some of them to this point, are marvellously remarkable; but it would be too much to burthen you with the particular records of them. *Philo the Jew*, the most learned of this nation since the Prophets, and who lived in the same time with *Christ*, having mentioned a tradition amongst them, which saith, that before their return from banishment, they must expect the death of an *High Priest*; professeth this to be his opinion concerning this *High Priest*, viz. that he shall be the very Word of God, which shall be void of all sin, voluntary, and involuntary, whose Father shall be God; and this Word shall be that fathers Wisdom, by which all things in the world were created. The *Sybilline Oracles* likewise, written in Greek verse, by certain women *Prophetesses* among the Gentiles, long before the Incarnation of *Christ* (as *Constantine the Emperour* long since fully proved, in a learned Oration recorded by *Ensebius*), clearly deliver and assert the same thing. One of these *Prophetesses* begins her Greek meeter thus: Know thy God which is the Son of God; And *Iosephus*, a learned Jew and Historian, who was born a very short time after *Christ*, though he doth not expressly acknowledge *Christ* to have been, God, yet he seems somewhat tender of calling him a man, i. a meer man. The tenour of his words, as to this purpose, is well known: There was (saith he) at this time one *Jesus*, a wife man, if it be lawfull to call him a man; a Worker of most wonderfull miracles, and a master and teacher of all such men, as were willing and content to embrace the Truth. And a little after: unto those who loved him from the beginning, he appeared the third day, (viz. after he had been crucified) according to what the Prophets divinely inspired, had, besides many other miraculous things, foretold concerning him, that were to come to passe.

2. The Scripture Prophecy which went before of the *Messiah Christ*, predeclared likewise unto the world, that he was to be the Son of God. The tenour of this prophesie also concerning him, is attested both by Jews, and Gentiles. For the former: The ancient Jewish Expositours more generally (and some of the later also) both hold, and prove by Scripture, that *Christ*, or the *Messiah*, was, and is to be the very Son of God. Multiplicity of quotations in this kinde, would but overcharge the discourse. Take the first fruits in stead of the harvest. *Rabbi Kimhi* proverth by a long discourse, that the word, *Sbiloh* (in *Jacobs* prophesie concerning *Christ Gen. 49. 10.* formerly mentioned) significeth as much as, *Filius eius*, his Son; that is, the Son of God. The holy *Rabbine* (lately mentioned) cabalizeth thus, upon the place of *Ieremy* even now cited, where he findeth the *Messiah*, to be called, *Jehovah*. Even as (saith he) the letter η He, in *Jehovah*, is compounded of two other letters, viz. \daleth Daleth, and ν Vau (as appeareth by their forme) so shall the *Messiah*, who is signified by the word *Jehovah*, be made of two natures, the one, divine, and the other, humane. And as in *Jehovah*, there is twice η He, and consequently two \daleth s, and two ν s, contained therein; so are there likewise two births, filiations, or childhoods in *Messiah*, the one, whereby he shall be the Son of God, the other whereby he shall be the son of a virgin, which *Isaiah* calleth, the *Prophetesse*.

As for the later, the attest of the Gentiles, to the truth of this prophesie; we lately cited this testimony from one of the *Sybilis*; wherein she thus speaks unto the world; Know thy God, which is the Son of God; There are many other passages in these *Sybilline verses* of like import. Besides in the fragments of those ancient writers, *Zoroastres*, *Hermes*, *Trismegistus*, and others, which are yet extant, and recorded by somewhat later Authours, there is frequent mention made of the Son of God; as also in the writings of *Orpheus*, *Hesiod*, and others. Besides, the *Platonique Philosophers*, speak much of the Son of God, in their writings also. He that desires satisfaction herein, may readily obtain his desire, if he please to read either what *Origen* anciently wrote against *Celsus*; or what *Cyril* in his first book against *Julian* the Apostate.

Isa. 7. 14.
Jer 23. 6.
Jer 33. 16. &c.

Rabbi Hacca
dojeb.

Ad calcem lib.
de vita Con-
stantini.

Iosephus Anti-
qu. Iudae.
l. 18 c 6.

Isa. 9. 6.
Isa. 27. 12. &c.

Gen. 3. 15.
 * Isa. 7. 14. 15.
 &c.
 Isa. 9. 6.
 Isa. 42. 1, 2, &c.
 Dan. 9. 16, &c.

3. It was further prefignified concerning *Christ*, by the Scriptures of old, that he should be man: ^a and consequently (the two last particulars taken into the consideration) that he should be both *God, and man*. This we heard lately attested by that famous *Rabbi* (among the Jews) *Rabbi Haccadosh*: who yet further (to this point) after the words mentioned, immediatly subjoyns thus: *And as in Jeboziah the letter ה He, is twice put, and yet both Hebs do make in effect but one letter, so in Messiah there shall be two distinct natures, and yet shall they make but one Christ*. It is famously known how plainly and particularly the forementioned writings of the *Sybills* speak of the birth and incarnation of *Christ*. *Josephus* (of whom mention hath been made more than once) a *Jew*, as well by Profession, as by nation, went as neare the acknowledgment of the verification of this prophesie (*viz.* that the *Messiah* should be both *God and man*) in the person of *Christ*, as neare might be, without a plain and right down acknowledgement of it indeed; in the words formerly related: *There was at this time one Jesus, a Wise man if it be lawfull to call him a man, &c.*

4. The *Messiah* according to Scripture prediction, was to be born of a virgin. This we have heard lately asserted in plain terms, by the Jewish Doctours themselves: yea all the *Sybills* in like manner make special mention of the mother of the *Messiah*; that she should be a pure and most holy virgin; and it is sufficiently known, that those professed enemies of Christianity (the *Turks* I mean) do generally acknowledge this to be true in the person of *Christ*. And some histories report, that *Simon Magus* (that *primogenitus Diaboli*, first born son of the devil, as one of the fathers called him) to gain a beliefe amongst men, that he was the *Messiah*, affirmed himself to have been born of a virgin.

5. Concerning the house and family out of which the *Messiah* was to come, the Scripture long before particularized the house of *David*. And this point of prophecy the Jews themselves without all contradiction acknowledge to have been fulfilled in the person of *Christ*; it being recorded in their *Talmud* it self, that *Jesus of Nazareth crucified, was of the blood royall*

Isa. 7. 14.
 Jer. 31. 22.
 He that desires to see more testimonies from the Jews, up to this point, may please to read *Morn: us de veri ate religionis*, (a worthy and learned tract translated long since into English) cap. 28.
 * Isa. 11. 1.
 Psa. 86. 36. 37.

royall from *Zorobabel of the house of David*. And besides that lamentable and bloody massacre, which (as both *Pbilo* and *Josephus* themselves record) *Herod* made of all the nobility and chief men of the tribe of *Judah*, to secure himself in the kingdome of *Judaa*, together with that false and forged pedigree which he caused to be drawn up, and divulged, where-in his descent of the tribe of *Judah* was avouched, do sufficiently testifie, that it was the generall and confident perswasion of this nation, that their *Messiah* was to come of this Tribe.

6. The Scriptures of old, plainly foretold the rejection of the *Messiah* by his own nation and people, ^a when he should come, together with his death, as a malefactor, ^b yea and gave cleare intimation of the manner or kind of his death. ^c How truly the first of these was (and is too, at this day,) accomplished in the person of *Christ*; cannot be unknown unto those who understand any thing of that obdurate and inveterate spirit, wherewith this whole nation, though scattered up and down the world, hath allwaies been, and still remains possessed against *Iesu Christ*, and Christian Religion. As concerning the manner of his death, which was, by crucifying, we lately cited a plain record, and acknowledgement hereof out of the *Talmud* it self. And the *Acrostick verses*, (as they are commonly called, and famously known amongst learned men) of one of the *Sybills*, the initialletters of which verses make these words, *Iesu Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Crosse*. doe with no lesse evidence joyn in that testimony. The two last of these verses, (in English) speak thus; He that hath bin here described by our *Acrostick verses*, is an immortall Saviour; and a King that must suffer for our sins.

7. (And lastly, to omit many other particulars) concerning the time, wherein the *Messiah* was to come into the world, and to suffer, the Scripture long before had described it by certain characters and signes, limited and bounded it with certain great and very remarkable events and occurrences of Providence in the world. As first by the departure of the Sceptre or government from the tribe of *Judah* ^a a little before

* Isa. 53. 7. 2.
 * Isa. 53. 9. 12.
 Dan. 9. 26.
 Deut. 21. 23.
 1 Sa. 27. 16.
 &c.

Gen. 49. 10

^a Dan. 9. 26.

^b Dan. 9. 25,

26.

^c Dan 9. 27.

before; 2. by the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and of the second temple, ^a a little after. 3. by the contemporaneity of the fourth and last (*i. e.* the *Romane*) Monarchy with him. 4. And lastly, (and which is more then all the rest) by the punctuall determination of the very year it self (^b yea of the part of this year) ^c wherein he should be crucified, *viz.* in, or about the middle of the foure hundred eighty and third year after the edict of *Cyrus for the building again of Jerusalem*: Concerning which year, though there be some variation amongst *Chronologers* and *Expositours* in the preciseness of the account, yet according to the general currant of (well nigh) all the computations made, it falls into the raigne of *Tiberius* who succeeded *Augustus* in the *Romane* Empire. Now that all these signall properties or distinguishing characters of time were found in that very part of time or season, wherein *Iesus Christ* accomplished his pilgrimage on earth, is abundantly acknowledged by the Jewish Doctours themselves who generally pitch upon that narrow compass of time, whereunto all the said particularities agree for the time or season; wherein their *Messiah* was to come and appeare unto them. For brevity sake I omit particular citations from them, for the confirmation hereof: if any man doubts of the truth of what is asserted in this behalf, let him read the 29. chapter of the forementioned learned treatise entituled of *the trueneesse of religion*, for his satisfaction: here he shall find a very great and remarkable conjunction of the judgments and learning of this nation in the asseveration of this truth.

To give instance in many more particulars of Scripture prediction besides these, as well in relation unto the person of *Christ*, and other things appertaining to him, as otherwise, which hath been countenanced from heaven, and honoured by God, with futable events, is matter of a very easy undertaking: and the performance (I conceive,) would be more burthenome to the reader, to peruse, then to the undertaker to accomplish. The truth is, that the body of the Scriptures is enlivened with the spirit of prophecy (almost) throughout: and if we were capable of, or narrowly intent upon such observations, we might (I conceive) be able upon sufficient ground to say, that

that there is scarce any day passeth over our heads, wherein some remarkable prediction, or other, contained in the Scriptures, doth not bring forth, and is delivered of some Truth of importance, and concernment unto the world.

Let us then briefly consider, whether the demonstration in hand, be any whit beneath that great conclusion, the prooffe and evidence whereof, is the prize for which we run. *viz.* that the Scriptures issue and flow from that inexhaust fountain of wisdom and knowledge, which is, by interpretation, *the only wise God*.

Let them bring forth (saith God,) expostulating with his people about the vanity of *Idolls*) and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the end of them; or declare us things for to come. ^{1st. 41. 23.} Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that yee are Gods &c. clearly implying, that to be able to foresee, and positively to declare events and occurrences, of things meerly contingent: (for such as are necessary are as good as present in their causes) at a long distance of time, before they come to passe, argueth speciall communion with him, who from the mountaine of eternity taketh a prospect of the whole tract and extent of time at once, with all that infinite variety of motions, actions, generations, corruptions, and of whatsoever riseth, or falleth, or that any waies, or upon any terms cometh to passe, within the whole compass and continuance thereof. This is no more then what the more ingenuous and considering sons of nature themselves doe acknowledge. The *Platonique* Philosophers generally teach and confesse, that the foretelling of things which are yet afar off, cannot be done either by art, or by nature, but only by inspiration from God. This is the expresse doctrine of *Porphyrius* himself (that first-born enemy to *Christian* Religion) It is true, sometimes by the just judgment of God upon those, who out of vanity of minde, and contempt of himself, will needs be the Devils customers for the commodity, which God will not afford them, knowing it to be no waies usefull or beneficiall unto then (I mean; the knowledge of things to come, relating to their condition in this present world,) the Divell is permitted either to doe or

to procure execution to be done upon such persons, according to the tenour of his own predictions unto them. An instance hereof we have in the history of *Saul*, who making the witch of *Endor*, his *Mediatrix* to the *Devill*, to learn from him what should become of him, being now upon an engagement in battle with the *Philistines*, received from him first the knowledge of his sad disaster approaching, and the day following, what disaster it self. In the *French* history we read of a wizard, who foretold Duke *Beron* of his death by a *Burgundian*; and did the execution himself. As for the usuall answers, (surnamed Oracles) given out of old, by the *Devill*, (called by his Prophets and Clients, by the name of *Apollō*) being compared with the Prophecies recorded in the Scriptures, there appears (one saith) as much difference betweene them, as is betweene the discretion of a wise man, and the riddle sattle of a foole. Yea the ambiguities; amphibologies, crosse-sensednesse, and volatile meanings, continually found in these answers, occasioned the giving of the by-name, *Δολίχος* i. Thwarter, or crooked-speaker, unto the *Devill*-god, the authour of them, by the heathen themselves. And if we shall measure, or judge of these Oracles or predictions of the *Devill*, by a rule in *Aristotle* (and this very rationall and streight) which saith; that, *το μὲν σημαίνειν, ἕθεν ἐν ἑνὲν ἐστίν, ἢ, not to signifie one thing*, (determinately) is to signifie nothing at all; then were they neither Oracles, nor predictions indeed; but only confused noyses, or sounds of words, without sense or signification. As for the prediction of *Astrologers*, and of all those who have made profession of the Prophetique art upon any other terms, or grounds whatsoever, they have long since, through the long experienced vanity in them, exposed their Authours and professors partly to the neglect, partly to the just censures of all considering and understanding men. Whereas the spirit of Prophecy, which hath now for some thousands of years together, spoken out of the Scriptures unto the world, gaineth interest, Reverence, and authority in the judgments of such men, daily more and more.

What may be taken in by knowledge, and given out in predictions, by the help of nature, and the narrow observation of

of her motions and course, in all her respective waies, before she brings forth, is of no consideration at all, to check the evidence and power of the Demonstration in hand: Because such events, which depend upon naturall causes, working by the known rules of necessity, are interpretatively present, and not future, when their causes are in being and before us. And besides, such events as these, being, nothing else but the issues and productions of nature, are of a quite differing nature, and consideration from the greatest part of those, the propheticall discovery whereof, the spirit of prophecy in the Scriptures, thought worthy of himself: whose chiefe engagement in this kind is, plainly and distinctly to foreshew, such particularities of events, which depend, partly upon the will of God (otherwise secret, and inaccessible to the understandings of men) partly also upon the wills of men; and this, many years before they do so much as bud, or begin to put forth, from any cause producing them. An experienced and skillfull gardiner, may possibly, upon the first and smallest appearance above ground that can be imagined, of severall kinds of hearbs from their respective seeds, sown in your garden, tell you what manner of herbs, and of how many kindes you may expect for your use, by such or such a time, or season of the year; which another man who hath not been versed in such observations, cannot doe: but if you bring this gardiner, as skillfull as he is, to a bed, or peece of ground not yet sown, your self not yet resolved with what kindes of seeds to sow it, all the skill he hath will not enable him to tell you, what hearbs you shall gather from thence: he that shall clearly and upon grounds informe you of this before hand, had need be *Mary Magdalens gardiner* (spoken of *Joh. 28. 15.*) In like manner, when events of things naturall, begin to work in their causes, though at never such a distance from the full production and accomplishment of them, an exact naturalist, who for a long time together, hath with much intention of minde, and cleer nesse of observation, accompanied nature in her retired and secret progresse and paths, may prophesie of many of her works, some considerable space of time before she bringeth them forth, to the admiration (haply) of ordinary men, whose educa-

tion, and course of life have looked quite another way. Yea morall Philosophers and wise statists, who are well studied in the actions, manners, dispositions and tempers of men, and have conversed (in history) with the most understanding and knowing persons of all ages, and of all countries and nations, about all the memorable occurrences, changes, and of affairs, that took place in their respective generations, together with the specialties of occasions and means producing them; may possibly, from a prudentiall contemplation partly of the present juncture of things in a state or Common-wealth, partly of the inclinations, and humours, most predominant in the generalitie of the people, foresee, in a way of pregnant conjecture, and such as seldome miscarrieth, what will befall this State or Common-wealth; either to the advancement, or to the detriment of it, within such, or such a time. But to predeclare particularities of events, whilst there is yet nothing at all in being, any waies likely to produce them, or to contribute towards their being, yea such events, which depend upon the meere motions, and acts of the wills of particular persons yet unborn, and to the effecting whereof, when they are born, they cannot be led, neither by any common principle or suggestion of reason, nor yet by any evill inclination, or corrupt principle incident to the natures of men; to predeclare (I say) and give perfect and distinct knowledge unto the world, of such events of these long before their coming to passe, is an undoubted and indisputable character of *one greater then Solomon* in wisdom; even of him, who was able to read the long roll of time from the one end of it unto the other; whilst it was yet folded up; and whose knowledge prevented all, and all manner of beings whatsoever, but his own. Now this kind of prediction being frequently found in the Scriptures, and accordingly justified by a constant correspondency of event (both which have been sealed for truths in the former part of this Demonstration) doth it not make it plain *robbery* either for men, or Angels, to count or claime themselves the Authours of them?

A Fourth Demonstration or Argument (of that head we are now upon) to prove the Scriptures to be from God, i. the

the consideration of the great and wonderfull effects, which God hath formerly, and continues still daily to produce and work in the world by the Scriptures, and particularly by the Gospel, and the ministry of it. We spake somewhat to this point, in laying down our Arguments of the first kinde, when we opened that inward vertue and power of the Scriptures, to work upon the hearts and consciences of men: somewhat likewise of a like tendency and import was delivered, in the unfolding of our second argument of this latter kinde, when we spake of the wonderfull successe which the Gospel had, against the wickednesse and unbeliefe of the world, in the first expedition whereof we shall be the more briefe in our present demonstration. But doublelesse great and marvellous are the works, and effects, which the Gospel (or if you will, which God by the Gospel) hath both heretofore wrought, yea and still continueth working from day to day in the world; you have heard how gloriously it hath triumphed, over the darknesse of this world, with all the power thereof; the old, inveterate, and rooted superstitions and idolatries, the wickednesse and impieties, the prophanesse, Atheisme, and unbelief, which ruled and raged with an high hand, in all places of the world amongst the sons and daughters of men; yea how it hath magnified it self in the hearts and consciences of men and women, against the faces and frowns of the *terrible ones*; against the most cruell and bloody edicts of Emperours, Kings, and States, yea, and against the most furious executions of them.

We shall (for the present) insist only upon three things, to give authority and strength to the Demonstration in hand. First, we shall shew you what those great and marvellous works are (or at least, some of the principall, and most considerable of them) which the Gospel at this day worketh in the world. Secondly, we shall consider the frequency of them. Thirdly, (and lastly) we shall ponder the nature and quality or greatnesse of them, that so we may the better see or judge, what evidencing or demonstrative power they have, in respect of that great conclusion, the Truth whereof we labour to evince and evidence unto you. Eitst.

Rom. 1. 5.

First, The great and marvellous works, which the Gospel, or God by the Gospel, performs, and produceth from day to day in the world, are these (with their fellows) First the subduing of the hearts, and mindes, and consciences of men, to a settled persuasion and beliefe of the Truth of supernaturall things: of things which are very remote from the common thoughts and apprehensions of men, and which are very difficult to be beleaved; (the beleeving whereof the Scripture calls, *obedience unto the Faith*) as for example; that *Iesus Christ* should be both God and man in one and the same person, that he should be born of a virgin, that he should be willing to die, especially upon those terms of shame and torment, for the benefit of others. That he should rise againe from the dead the third day; that believing these things concerning him, should be a means of the justifying of a sinfull man, in the sight of God, and so of bringing him into an estate of immortal blessednesse and glory (with some others of like consideration) the Gospel (I say) fights against the naturall unbelieve of these things in the hearts and judgments of men, and breakes the stiffness and stubbornesse of their diffidence, into a rational, free, and willing consent unto the truth of them. Many who despised and rejected the great things of the Gospel, formerly, as things devised by men; now imbrace them as the oracles of God. The Gospel anoints mens eyes with such a precious and soveraigne *eye-salve*, that it makes them able to see cleernesse of truth in those things, wherein they saw nothing but darknesse and doubtfullnesse (yea falshood and untruth to their apprehensions.)

2. Another work of the Gospel great and marvellous also (as we shall shew presently) is, the taking off of mens hearts from the world; the cooling and quenching of the inordinate heat, wherewith men naturally, and according to the course of the world in every place, are wont to burn in desires after the things of the earth, and the contentments of the outward man. When the heart of a man and the world are so close knit and incorporated, as it were, together, that they are become one flesh (as the Apostle speaks of the adulterer, and adulteresse, in reference to the

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act of their wickednesse) the Gospel many times comes and gets in betweene, divides, and separates the one from the other, throws the one one way, as it were towards the East, and the other, another way, towards the West: and so keeps them asunder for ever. It falls upon the heart and soule like lightning, and melts down the great mountaine of the world there, and makes it become a plain. It dissolves the sorceries and enchantments, wherewith the world is wont to bewitch the mindes and affections of men, and to binde the facultyes and powers of the soule, so that these shall act nothing to the recovery of them from this miserable bondage. The spirit which is in the Gospel being *greater and stronger, then he that is in the world, takes away his weapons from him*, and binds him, and then *divideth his spoiles*. This kinde of work, it wrought upon *Zachaus*, when it so far loosed those iron chains, wherewith his soule had of a long time been fast bound to this present world, that at once he gave away unto the poore, *the one halfe of his Kingdome*; I mean, of those *goods*, which he had been long in getting and gathering together; yea and further offered and engaged himself to make a foure-fold restitution, of whatsoever he had unjustly wrung from any man.

Luk. 19. 8.

3. Another great work of the Gospel is, it makes men self-deniers. Men naturally are deniers of other men, yea and of God and Christ; but great confessours and zealous assertours of themselves: they stand naturally so deeply and intirely devoted and affected to themselves, and the promoting of their own good (as they call good) that in the prosecution and pursuance hereof, they take little, or no notice of, but tread and trample upon, the due interests and rights, both of God and men; as if they were dead, or not in being, and so had no right to any thing, and as if themselves were only alive. This I mean, by denying God, and other men, and by confessing or asserting themselves. But now the Gospel, when that comes upon men in the power of it, it batters in peeces, and grinds to powder this principle and inclination in them; and makes them deniers of themselves, and confessours or acknowledgedgers of God and men, yea of all men: it makes them able and willing, to neglect and trample upon their own in-

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terests,

terests, ends, and desires, when they cannot be promoted and carried on, with the preservation of all the rights and privileges both of God and men. It teacheth men to seeke themselves and their own good, not in opposition to (which naturally they are inclin'd unto) but only in conjunction with the glory of God, and good of all men. By the tenour of which practise and course, they loose, or hide themselves as it were in the croud, and drown their own interests in the interests and good of many. This operation of the Gospel was clearly seen upon Paul. *Even as I* (saith he) *please all men for their good, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved.* When he saith, *not seeking mine own profit*, he doth not mean or imply, that he did not please himself, or seek his own profit, simply, or not at all; but he sought not his own profit by it self, or apart from, or out of the way of the profit, that great profit of other mens salvation. For certainly Paul pleased himself, to the highest degree of pleasure and contentment that he knew how to doe, in pleasing all men, and seeking the profit of all men; and had an eye to his own benefit and profit, as well as to the profit of all men: as he expresseth himself elsewhere: *And this I doe* (saith he, speaking of that very course of his we speake of, viz. his pleasing all men, or seeking the profit of all men,) *And this I doe for the Gospel sake, that I may be partaker thereof with you;* ἵνα συγκαίωμεν ἅμα ἡμῶν. Paul had a desire to partake himself of the benefit and blessednesse of the Gospel; as well as that other men should partake of them. But this was his glory and crown, that he did not desire to partake of them alone, but in conjunction with other men; yea his desire to partake of the Gospel upon these terms (I mean with company, and in conjunction with others) was so strong & potent in him, that he made orts (as we use to say) of all his inferior interests, and contentments, in the world, and which related to his outward man, for the promoting and obtaining of it.

4. Another great work of the Gospel, is the changing of mens hearts and dispositions; the turning as it were, the course and frame of nature upside-down within them: the fulfilling of those and such like prophecies in *Isaiab* (in a spirituall sense) where he saith that *in the wilderness, waters shall*

shall breake out, and streames in the desert: that the parched ground, shall become a poole, and the thirsty land, springs of waters; that in the habitations of dragons (which commonly are the hottest, sandy, and most barren places) *there should be grasse with reeds and rushes.* And again, *I will plant in the wilderness the Cedar, the Shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oyle tree; I will set in the desert the firre-tree, the pine and the box-tree together.* And in another place, *In stead of the thorn shall come up the firre-tree, and in stead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree &c.* Such a kind of change as these, doth the Gospel make in the natures, and spirits, and hearts of men, When it first comes unto them, it findes them like so many wildernesses and deserts, full of thorns and briars, but no fruit-bearing, usefull, or pleasant tree growing in them; full of distempers, lusts, vile affections, corruptions, and inclinations unto evil, as covetousnesse, uncleannesse, pride, deceit, cruelty, &c. but no holy or righteous affection at all; but the Gospel comes, and makes *waters to breake out in these deserts, makes the firre-tree and the myrtle-tree to grow in stead of thorns and briars, i.* it pours the grace of God, and sheds the influences of heaven upon the soules of men; by means whereof in stead of those distempers, and base affections, of pride, covetousnesse, uncleannesse &c. there spring up holy affections and heavenly dispositions, as of love, meeknesse, purity, chastity, humility, liberality, &c. these take place in men, and fill the soule. This effect of the Gospel, was very visible in the *Corinthians*, as the Apostle describes their different estates or dispositions, before, and after, the Gospel had to do with them. *And such were some of you, viz. fornicatours, idolatours, adulterers, effeminate, covetous, drunkards, revilers, &c. but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.*

5. Another effect of the Gospel, great and wonderfull also, is that which the Apostle Paul, notably describes and sets out, *2. Cor. 10. viz. the pulling down of strong holds, and casting down of imaginations, and every high thing which exalts it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* There are in men, some by

1 Cor. 10. 33.

1 Cor. 9. 23.

Isa. 35. 6, 7.

41. 19.

Isa. 55. 13.

1 Cor. 6. 11.

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

nature, and some from *Sathan*, and some by acquisition from other men by means of much converse in, and with, the world, certain principles or reasonings, certain imaginations, suppositions, or apprehensions of things; which are first said to be *strong holds*; because as men, when they are in *strong holds*, as in forts or castles well made, strongly fortified, and sufficiently provided otherwise, think they are in safety; so whilst men frame their counsells, designs and actions, according to the import and tenour of certaine rules and principles within them, which they confidently judge to be full of wisdom and truth, they verily think they are in a safe and blest condition, they are under protection, and out of the reach of any great danger. And therefore such imaginations or principles as these in men, are called *strong holds*. First, they are strong in their opinion and apprehension; they are confident they will secure and protect them: And secondly, they are strong in respect of that difficulty of gaining them, or the resistance which they usually make against those, that shall attempt the demolishing of them. Again, Secondly, these *imaginations*, principles, or *high things* in men, are said to *exalt or magnifie themselves against the knowledge of God*; because men out of a long-habituated and fearlesse confidence of the truth of them, are hereby strengthened securely to despise the knowledge of God, which the Gospel holds forth and avoucheth for truth, as being opposite unto them; and inconsistent with them. Now the Gospel notwithstanding comes, and encounters, and fights against these *strong holds*, these *high imaginations* in men; and attempts the battery and the shaking of them, first, on the one side, then on the other, discovering and evincing to the judgements and consciences of men, that there is vanity, and extreame danger in them, in this respect, and in that. and in a third, and perhaps in many more: and by this time they begin to shake and bow, and stand more loosely, and weakly in the judgements and mindes of men, and with much more nearnesse to a rejection. But by that time the Gospel and the wisdom thereof, have made a cleer representation of their own principles, in opposition to them, and have argued them thoroughly, and have left no objection or thought against them in the mindes of men un-answered.

answered, nor any place for any more to be made, now are the strong holds pulled down, and the imaginations and high things, which exalted themselves against the knowledge of God, cast to the ground; and every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; Men will deale by their former principles and thoughts, as *Isaiab* prophceyes the *Israelites* should do by their idolatrous implements, when God should open their eyes to see the abomination of Idols. *Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a men-
strous cloath; thou shalt say unto it, get thee hence.* In like manner, when the Gospel by the light thereof, hath discovered and made men able to comprehend the darknesse of these former notions, and conceptions, they deale by them as *Amon* did by his sister *Thamar* (the sinfullnesse of his act only excepted) after he had committed folly with her: the text saith, that he hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater then the love wherewith he had loved her, saying unto his servant, put now this woman out from mee, and bolt the doore af-
er. 2 Sam. 13. 15, 17.

Ic. 3. 2. 22.

An instance of this kind of effect of the Gospel, in one particular, is clearly seen in *Paul* himself. *I verily thought* (saith he) *within myself that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. I verily thought*, here was a *strong hold* in *Paul*, he thought, and he thought verily, i. confidently beleevd without all mixture of feare or doubting, that he ought to doe many things -- i. that it was his duty, and so for the advancement of his happinesse, and obtaining more grace and favour with God, to doe many things contrary to the name of *Jesus of Nazareth*. i. to be active and resolute, to goe on in the face of all opposition or discouragements, to lay the name and honour of *Jesus of Nazareth* in the dust. Even as many amongst us thinke verily that they ought to doe many things, to be very active, vigorous, and resolute, against the deare servants of God, under the names of Schismatics and Separatists amongst us, and never to give over, though they should be seven years in effecting it, till they have laid their spirituall liberties, comforts, and peace in the dust; yea and said unto them.

Aa. 26. 9.

1 Sam. 16. 19. them (in Davids phrase) *go and serve other Gods,* a Doubt- they thinke verily, that they shall ingratiate themselves in heaven by such an engagement as this, and performe a service of a very choise acceptance with God. But as the Gospel and the spirit that works in it, *cast down that imagination* we spake of in Paul, and made it an abomination and abhorring to his soule, yea and planted another directly opposite unto it, *viz.* this, that *he ought to do many things,* yea all he could, for the name of this Jesus: so may there a day of such a gracious visitation down upon the men we speak of, from God, wherein the Gospel shall *throw down* with an high hand, that dark and dangerous *imagination,* by the ducture and guidance whereof, their hearts and their handes are lifted up together (and that to a strange height) to reach the molestation of the Saints, and the ruines of their liberties; and in stead thereof, put another principle into them which will lead them a contrary course, and enlarge them mightily to *build up* the liberties and comforts, which now they destroy. It is said of Abraham, that *against hope* (or rather, *περὶ ἐλπίδος*, besides hope) he believed in hope, whereby he became the father of many nations. My Brethren, let us put our selves, and our hearts to it to the uttermost, to imitate him herein; I mean, besides hope, to belevee in hope, that great work of God we speak of: we may by the means of it, become the sons of such an acceptance and favour with God that we may *prevvaile with men also,* and turne their *gall and wormwood,* into *hony,* and the *hony-comb.* This for a fifth great effect of the Gospel.

6. A Sixth is; the abasing of the proud, the casting of secure, carelesse, fearlesse and prophane men into the den of Lions, into the midst of the raging, terrifying, and devouring fears, and expectations of hell fire. It is an expression of God himself unto Job: *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud, and abase him: Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their places, hide them in the dust together, and binde their faces in secret. Then will I also confesse unto thee, that thine own right hand can save thee.* i. that thou art God, as I am. Now (my Brethren) the Gospel many times casts abroad the rage of its Wrath;

Rom 4. 18.

Job 40. 17, 12,
13, 14.

Wrath; it beholds the proud, disdainfull, and secure ones, that stand in the presence of it, and it doth abase them, and bring them low; it gives them ashes in stead of their beauty, and sackcloth in stead of their joy and gladnesse. It lades their consciences with chains of fears, and transforms their pomp and grandure in the world, into tremblings. As Paul (the poore prisoner reason'd of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix the judge, though sitting upon the seat of his power, with a guard of honour and strength about him,) trembled. But of this before.

Act 24. 25.

7. Lastly, Another great effect and work of the Gospel is; it lifts men up unto heaven, and that sometimes out of the nethermost hell: it rescues the souls and spirits of men out of the hand of violent fears, and the most devouring and raging terrors: it makes the bones, which sin had broken, to rejoyce, and the faces of many to shine like the face of an Angel, which before had gathered the blacknesse of hell. And what (indeed) is the ministry of it from day to day unto many, but *lift from the dead?* The Taylor (spoken of Acts 16.) being surprized with such a desperate fit of fear and astonishment, that he drew out his sword, and was ready to have killed himself with it, was very suddainly, by the vertue and power of Evangelicall applications ministred by the hand of Paul, not only recovered out of the jaws of this death, but in a way of surplussage over and above his cure, had a new addition of spirituall joy made unto him, such as his soul had never known before. But this point also (I remember) we have had in consideration formerly.

Act. 16. 34.

Consider we now (in a word) the nature and import of these great effects, that we may see and understand, whether they do not teach, and that with authority and power, the Scriptures parentage and descent from God. Nicodemus, by considering the great works and miracles which Christ wrought, came demonstratively to conclude, that he was from God. Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man could doe the miracles thou doest, except God were with him. In like manner, if we shall draw neer, and consider narrowly, how great and wonderfull those works are, especially some of them, which (as we have heard) are wrought by the Scriptures, and the Gospel;

Ioh. 7. 22.

we

we may come, nay, we cannot lightly but come, to a stable and grounded certainty and belief in our selves, that doubtlesse they also are from God. For (certainly) no learning, wisdom, or doctrine, could doe such things, *except God were Wish them.*

First How great a thing it is, that the judgements and consciences of men, should be subdued under such mysterious, and supernaturall Truths, so farre remote from the thoughts and apprehensions of men, as many of those are, which are held forth by the Gospel; yea as those are, which are the spirit and life, the heart and soul thereof? As that *Jesus Christ* one reputed a Carpenters son in the world, neglected, yea, hated by the great, the wise, and prudent ones of his generation, despised, scorn'd, ignominiously used, put to death as a malefactor and evil doer, should, all these notwithstanding, be the Son of God; that he should be born of a virgin, that he should rise again from the dead, that by dying he should purchase, not only a perfect remission of sins, but an everlasting estate in blessednesse and in glory, for all those that should beleve in him, &c. that men (I say) should be carried over such a great gulf of fears and doubtings, of objections, of unlikelihoods, &c. into the bosome of such Truths; especially that this should be done with so much frequency, and in so many instances, and examples of those, that have been, and are still from day to day thus carried over, argues the presence and engagement of a mighty spirit indeed, in, and about those truths. How much more, if we shall farther add, that the believing of these things by men, is mightily opposed, not only with objections and difficulties, which very seemingly, and with the appearance of a strong hand, rise up against the truth of them, but by worldly interests also without end, as ease, credit, pleasures, estates, friends, &c. all which are mighty dissuasives unto men, from so much as an effectually searching after them, and the truth of them; and this in two respects; First, as the very time and labour of mind which a man must bestow, and undergoe in such a search after them, is contrary to mens ease, and pleasures, and otherwise like to streighten them, in many worldly occasions. Secondly, as a mans being observed and taken notice of, for being studious and seriously engaged in that kind, is like to bring trouble upon his head, and

and molestation from the world, to gain him the losse of friends, credit, estate, &c. even as much, as if he did seriously and fully belevee, what in this case he is but inquiring after.

Again secondly, If we shall consider those other effects of the Gospel that were mentioned, as, the taking off of mens hearts from the world, the making of men deniers of themselves, the changing of mens tempers and dispositions, *the casting down of their imaginations, and bringing every thought in them into captivity to the obedience of Christ, &c.* these, even every one of them, from the greatest to the least, and much more all of them put together, and laid in consideration with the frequency of their production in men, is as cleer an evidence, and confirmation, that those Scriptures, that wisdom, that doctrine, by which they are wrought, are from God, as the sight of the sun being risen, is an evidence that the night and the darknesse thereof, are past. The glory of such works as these, is as the glory of the word of God. The spirituall and most intimous nature and property of them, sheweth, that means or cause, by which they are produced, to be full of his spirit, who is as intimate and inward with men, as themselves, or their own souls.

All the wisdom, and writings, and learning that ever was in the world besides, cannot shew so much as the appearance, or face of such a generation of profelytes, or children, as the Gospel can; and not so much as one person of like noble principles, and inward parts with thousands of those, who are the genuine and right-born offspring hereof. The tallest and best-grown men, that ever sprang from the root of *Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Plutarch,* or any other of those ancient Fathers of secular learning, were but a race of dwarfes, or pygmies in reall worth, and true excellencie of spirit, being compared with a great part of that heroique progeny, whose hearts and spirits came by the way of a second birth, out of the loins and bowels of the Gospel. Yea the whole fraternity of this parentage, breaths part and fellowship in the Divine nature it self.

A fifth demonstration (of that house we are now surveying) which reacheth, and takes fast hold of the same conclusion

with the former, *viz.* that the Scriptures and the Gospel, are from God, is the consideration of the tenour or manner of the government of the world, and of the workings of the hearts and spirits of men of all kindes and conditions in it. That exact conformity and agreement, which both the one and the other hold with the descriptions, reports and assertions of things in the Scriptures, and in the Gospel, doth clearly demonstrate and evince these to be from God.

1. For the government of the world: How are all things carried, ordered, and managed herein, as well in a permissive, as in an active or executive way, according to the model and plat-forme of the Scriptures?

1. For the permissive part of this Government, how are things permitted and suffered to come to passe, and to take place in the world, with all possible exactnesse according to the representation of the Scriptures in that behalf? This we shall consider chiefly in these foure particulars: First in the frequent infirmities and miscarriages of the Saints. Secondly, in the sufferings of the Saints from the men of this world. Thirdly, in the relapses and declinations of great multitudes of forward, and sometimes seemingly zealous professors, into ways of loosenesse, some of worldlinesse, some of pleasures, yea some into ways of persecution it self. Fourthly (and lastly) in the manifest perishing of the generality, or farre greatest part of men, through the lusts of the flesh, ignorance, and unbelief.

1. We know, and too too frequent experience informeth us, that the Saints, and good men, are oft left unto themselves, to the weaknesse of their hearts, and vanity of their mindes: in which cases they are like *Sampson*, when his hair was cut, who was then *but like other men*; and quitted himself with no more strength or courage against his enemies, then ordinary men did; and was taken prisoner by the *Philistines*. Even so many times it is with the Saints and servants of God themselves; they are overcome with temptations, and faulter and stumble, and do unworthily, after the manner of the world round about them, and not like unto themselves: they step out of the

the ways of grace, into the ways of the pride, the covetousnesse, the unjustice, the uncleannesse, the rashnesse and inconsideratenesse, the fearfullnesse and basenesse of the world. Now such permissions as these on Gods part, answer exactly those permissive dispensations of his, which are held forth in many places of the Scriptures. *Abraham* that great beleever, and *Father* of beleevers, was left unto himself; and then how did he faulter about *Sarah*? And so *Sarah*, when she denied that she laughed, so likewise *Simeon* and *Levi*, how did God leave them in the hand of a bloody and revengfull passion: and how treacherously and cruelly did they deal with the poore men of *Sichem*? And so how were both they, and the rest of the *Patriarchs* their brethren, transported with a passion of envy against their younger Brother *Joseph*? even as many now (we hope Brethren in the faith; as they were both in the faith, and in the flesh too, unto *Joseph*) through envy, that God should give better and richer visions of himself unto their younger Brethren (as they look upon them) then unto them, are ready to sell them into the hands of the *Ismaelites*, I mean to expose them to the rage and fury of the rude multitude. But this by the way, We might instance in many other of the Saints of God in this kinde, as in *Moses*, *Aaron*, *Joshua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, &c. who though they were Saints, yet being left by God to themselves, they did like sinners. This permissive providence of God (as hath been said) manifesteth it self in the world, among the Saints in every place at this day: The greatest enemies the Scriptures have, will be free enough to give testimony unto them in this behalfe.

2. As God sometimes leaves his Saints in the hand of their spirituall enemies, tentations, and they do with them (in their kinde) *even what they list*; so otherwhile doth he leave them also in the hand of their outward, their bodily enemies, evil men, and they doe unto them sometimes even what they list also (in their way,) they injure them, they oppresse them, they crush them, tread and trample them under their feet, as if there were none that look'd after them, or took any care what became of them. Our Saviours expression is concerning *John* the

Mat. 17. 12.

Baptist, that they did unto him, even what they listed; implying, that as Holy, and High in interest with God as John was, yet did not God (as might in reason have been expected he would have done, considering how great a man John was in his fight) interpose in the least, to hinder that shamelesse daughter of Be- lial (Herodias I mean) from having her revengfull will upon him by his death.

After the same manner, we see and heare daily, things acted and done in the midst of us; many holy and faithfull men, are misused and dealt with, according to the will and lusts of men that know not God; they are suffered to goe as farre in mis- using them, as their hearts desire: and there is none that op- poseth them. They revile them, they beat them, they oppress them they spoil their substance, they imprison them, they bring them before their judgment seats, and obtain cruell sentences against them. Yea its more then to be feared, that there will be a more generall leaving of the Saints, to the lusts of their *Antichristian* enemies and persecutours, then hath been yet (at least of late) and that the date of this permissive providence of God, will not expire, till the great deliverer shall appear from the *mount* *Sion* of Heaven. Yea it appears from severall places of Scrip- ture, that any appearance of God on the behalfe of his people in the times of this perfection, will be so rare, that they will generally be at the point, at which they, who were in the ship with *Paul*, in that dangerous voyage at sea, *Act. 27.* were, whenas ne ther Sun, nor Stars, appeared for many daies, and when in regard of the fore tempter that lay upon them, *all hope that they should be saved was taken away.* Nevertheless (saith our Saviour) *When the sin of man cometh, shall he finde faith upon Earth? viz. amongst his Saints; shall he find any expectation, any hope amongst them all, that ever they should be delivered? The expression seems to point at such a time of univerrall trouble and danger upon the Churches of Christ, wherein they shall all seeme to lie covered all over with the shadow of death; So that deliverance shall be thought as incredible a thing to them, as that plenty in the gates of Samaria, which *Elisba* prophcyed, in the time of an extrem famine, was to the noble man on whose hand the King of Israel leaned. 2. Kings. 7. 3.*

And

Rev. 15. 5.
Dan. 9. 21.Act. 17. 20.
Eul. 13. 8.

And as he is not like to finde faith amongst his friends his Saints, so neither is he like to finde feare in his enemies, upon the same ground, though his coming will bring both faith in abundance unto the one, and feare in abundance upon the other. See whether this constellation of truth, be not visible in the Horizon of that Scripture, which the margent poin- teth unto: I dare not stand the unfolding of it, at the present.

3. There is another strange, and sad veine of occurrences in the world, through the permissive providence of God, which is also exemplified and attested in the Scriptures: this is the *looking back* of many, who had put forth their hand to the *plough* of *Christ*; the turning head of many great professors of religion upon their profession. But *many* (saith our Saviour himself) *that are first, shall [or rather will] be last; and the last shall [and will] be first.* He doth not say, that now one, and then one, one in one age, and another in another, who are, or have been looked upon as marching in the very head of professors toward heaven, will wheele quite off, and face about towards hell, but many such (saith he) will doe it; many that have been the *head*, will turn to be the *taile*, of profession. See further what the Scriptures speak in this point, by the light of those other places named in the margent.

Whether the world bringeth not forth children in abundance marked in the very forehead with this black brand of shame and sorrow (I mean Apostacy) I refer you only to the experi- ence of those late daies of trial, which have gone over the head of this nation: Have not the *stars of the Heaven*, (old profes- sours I mean) fallen to the Earth, even as a fig tree casteth her green figs when she is shaken with a mighty Wind? ^a Have not these days been like the days of *Isaiab*, wherein he complains, *that the faithfull city was become an harlot; it was (saith he) full of judgment, and righteousness lodged in it: but now murderers.* ^b The *thorns and briars*, wherewith God of late hath taught this kingdome, have so rent and torn the *sheeps cloathing*, wherewith many great and violent pretenders to religion had garbed themselves, that the wolf is now to be seen face to face. It is true (and the glory of *Christ* appears wonderfully in it.) there is a

Rev. 11. 10, 11,
12.

Mat. 19. 30.

Mat. 24. 20.
13. 10, 11.
1 Tim. 5. 15.^a Rev. 6. 13.^b Isa. 1. 24.

Gal. 1. 23.

Mic. 12. 30.

generation too risen up in the midst of the fire, which to this day burns in the very bowells of the land, a generation (I say) of the blessed Apostasie, wherein the great Apostle went before them, who at last forsook the tents of ungodlinesse, and came to preach that faith, which formerly he had destroyed, ^a that prediction of our Saviour (lately mentioned) *And behold there are last which shall be first,* ^b having brought forth many children unto us. But on the other hand, many also who had declared for the God of Heaven, by a long and loud profession, have now changed masters, and forsaking the tabernacle at *Shilo*, are gone to *Dan* and to *Beerseba* to worship.

4 (And lastly) There is nothing more evident, then that the generality of men perish daily, being taken captive by Satan at his will, and led away by him in the chaines of sin and unbelieve, unto destruction. How doth the world abound (almost) in every place, with those very kinde of sinners, *as fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners!* against whom the holy Ghost hath given this definitive and dreadfull sentence; *they shall none of them, inherit the kingdome of God;* 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

This veine also of the permissive providence of God, is clearly delineated in the Scriptures. *Enter ye in at the strait gate* (saith our Saviour in a gracious advice unto his Disciples) *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that finde it.* Peruse the other Scriptures presented in the margent, you will finde them of like import, besides many others.

Again 2. for the government of the world in respect of the operative, or working providence of God; we shall finde a perfect correspondency and agreement betweene those things which the Scriptures speake concerning it, and the events and carriages, the passages and comings of things *so passe* in the world. This we may consider in a threefold subject, or in things of a threefold consideration, first, in things naturall, secondly, in things morall, thirdly and lastly in things spirituall.

First,

Mat. 7. 13, 14.

Rom. 9. 27.

Job. 5. 19.

First, For things naturall, about which the working providence of God we speake of, is held forth, and reprinted unto us in the Scriptures, they are of two sorts: either first, such as are merely naturall; or secondly, such, which though they be in part, and in a sense, naturall, yet they are in a superiour consideration, *judiciall* also (for we want a better term for our purpose) For the first of these, things merely naturall, we know the Scriptures, even from the daies of *Moses*, who was the first penman of them, gave knowledge as from the mouth of God himself, that there should be seed-time and harvest, *and cold and heat, and summer and winter; and that day and night should not cease.*

Gen. 1. 21.

And elswhere the Scriptures speake of a covenant which God hath made, either with, or concerning, the day, and so with, or concerning, the night, that the one should succeed the other interchangeably, without variation: we see this covenant of God performed without any faulting or failing. It were easy to instance more particulars in this kinde.

Jer. 33. 20.

2. Take we knowledge how the Scripture portraiture that part of the providence of God, we speake of (the executive or working providence of God,) in such things, which I call, *Judiciall*; in which word I comprehend, as well those occurrences and events of things which fall on the right hand, and make mens conditions in the world better, and more comfortable, as those, which fall on the left hand, and are poenall and afflictive unto men.

Ecl 9. 11.

First, Concerning the indifferent befalling, as well of the one, as the other, upon all sorts of men, without the exemption of any (I mean of any sort of men, in respect of some or other particulars in every sort) we know what the Scripture saith. *No man* (saith the wise man) *knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before him* (he means, either the love or hatred of God) *by all that is before him*, i. by any outward condition he is in, be it either a *nest among the stars*, or a *seat upon the dunghill*. Of this his assertion he gives this reason (in the words following) *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked, to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean &c.* The Holy ghost doth not speak this *de singulis go-*

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nerus (as some use to distinguish) but *de generibus singulorum*; his meaning is not that *all things come alike* to all individuall and particular persons; but to all, and every kind of persons, in respect of some particulars in every kinde (as was said.) How doe we see the contents of these lines visibly acted, and put in execution from day to day in the world? If you see a righteous and holy man, one, or more, rejoicing in one place, if you will look but a little about you, you shall see a wicked and prophane man rejoicing in another.

And again if you see a wicked man, mourning or afflicted in one place, you may soone see a godly man in the same posture and condition of sorrow, in another; yea if we consider the particular providences of God in outward things, which are the causes, either of the rejoicing, or of the heaviness, whether of the one sort of men, or other; we shall finde a likeness, or sameness in these also betweene them. Doe godly men prosper and thrive through the blessing of God, in the way of their callings, and gather substance? you may finde ungodly men, that prosper and thrive as fast as they. Do ungodly men decline, and sink in their outward estates, fall from riches to poverty in the world? we know that this is the portion of many godly men also. Have godly men any cause of comfort and joy in their relations, as in wives, children, servants, when these answer the desire of their soules? you may finde men who know not God, that will match them in all these. So again, if you know wicked men that are of infirme and unhealthfull bodies, subject to troublesome distempers, or painfull diseases, as the gout, stone, or the like: you may finde in the generation of the righteous, those that bear them company in these also. Yea and on the contrary, healthfullness, and strength, and activeness of body, is a providentiall commodity or blessing, wherein many of the one sort, and of the other, are partners. And (to instance only once more in this kinde,) is there any strange hand of God, sore and terrible, sometimes laid upon wicked men, in any extraordinary judgment, as in any suddain or untimely death (as we call it) very grievous (it may be) for the manner of it, either upon themselves, their children, or the like? you may finde examples of like providences falling

falling even amongst the tents of the righteous also. Under this head may well be reduced that kinde of dispensation also, which the Scripture expresseth, vers. 11. of the fore-named Chapter. *I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill.* The meaning is not as if the race were never to the swift, or the battell never to the strong &c. no nor yet as if the race were not more ordinarily and frequently *unto the swift*; and the battel, usually to the strong; but only to shew that *time and chance* (as it followeth) *happeth to them all .i.* that God reserveth a liberty unto himself to interpose when he pleaseth, and to umpire matters of event and successe, contrary to the Law, and common rule of second causes; with which notwithstanding he ordinarily concurrereth, and so makes it altogether uncertain unto men, when he intendeth a variation or digression. And this kinde of digressive providence (as we may call it) sometimes ruleth in the affaires and concernments of men that are strangers unto God, as well as it doth at other times, in matters relating unto his Saints. And thus you see, how the providence of God in this particular, *viz.* in an indifferent dispensing of outward mercies and judgments to some of either sort of men, godly and ungodly, acteth and worketh in the world, with all possible exactness, according to the model presented unto us in the Scriptures.

Again secondly, consider we how the same Providence acteth also in the world according to the expresse tenour of the Scriptures in a way of judgment, with the same relation, not to some particulars only of either sort of men (as was shewd in the former branch) but to all of both sorts (at least in some degree to all of both sorts) who live together (as it were) within the sphere of the activitie, of each particular judgment. Our Saviour *Mat. 24.* foresheweth, that before the *end comes* (as he speaketh) *.i.* before the great day of his return unto the world for the judgment of it, *Nation, shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom, against Kingdom; and that there shall be famins, and pestilences, and earth-quakes in divers places.*

Eccle 9. 6. 11.

Mat. 24. 7.

places. We our selves experimentally know that such things as these have been executed, and come to passe in the world some of them in our daies, and in those parts of the world, where we have become. They that are versed in Histories, have the knowledge of many more particulars in this kinde. And how little difference such judgments as these have put between godly men and others, within the line of their respective fallings, and prevailings, I appeal to the testimonies of all those, who have been observers of such things, and most narrowly watched the particular windings, and turnings, the leapings over, and the lightings on, the particular favours, and severities of Providence under such judgments.

Thirdly (and lastly to this) As the Provident of God expresseth it self indifferently, as well in mercies, as in most kinde of judgements, to some of both sorts of men, good, and bad; and again, in some perticular judgments, to all of both sorts within a distance, and in both, moveth regularly according to the compasse of the Scriptures, so also doth it expresse it self with a great deal of variaton and difference, to the one sort of men, and to the other, indifferently considered (I mean taken in the main body and bulk of both) in it's ordinary dispensation; and this too with a perfect agreement unto the Scriptures. These (we know almost in every place, especially in the Gospel speak of the troubles, and sorrows, and sufferings which abide the Saints in this present world; as on the contrary, they give information, that the world shall generally have the better of it, and rejoyce when they shall mourne, *Verely, verely* (saith our Saviour to his Disciples, and in them to all his Saints, in all their succeeding generations) *I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoyce;* meaning, that this should be, not the constant and uninterrupted, but farre the more frequent and ordinary estate and condition of either. Rejoycing amongst the Saints, by reason of their outward condition in the world should be but seldom: and for a short season: their *lucida intervalla*, should be rare, and of a small continuance, and in both respects, inconsiderable; in comparison of the standing prosperity, and the lifting up of the heads of their adversaries (almost with-

Joh. 15. 21.

without hanging down at any time) in the world. The Scripture (we know) hath many more passages and sayings of like import. *Ye and all* (saith the Apostle) *that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution:* i. their more constant and generall condition will be persecution; and consequently the condition of their enemies, the ungodly, will be superiority and strength in the world; or else they could not well be in a case to persecute. Men must have a stock of power and strength to command, that will drive a trade of persecution, to any purpose. So it is said that *it was given unto the beast to make war with the Saints, and overcome them.* God gave this *beast* strength and power, and dominion, where by he was enabled to trouble, vex, crush and ruine, the Saints of God, far and near. Whilest it was the simple profession of Christianity, that exposed men to persecutions, and sufferings from the world (as the case was till the daies of *Constantine*) there were but few hypocrites in the Church, for (as *Austin* well observes) hypocrisy did not encrease among Christians, till Name and profession of Christianity began to be honoured, and highly esteemed in the world. But however, whilst it was the bare and naked profession of Christianity, that drew persecution after it, all that join'd together in the profession of it, whether hypocrites, or sound, held together, expressed love and mutuall affections, one to another: the common hatred and persecution wherein they were joint sufferers from the world, was of a fodering and cementing nature unto them, kept them in love and peace. But when upon *Constantines* coming to the Empire, being a Christian, there was no more persecuting for the profession of Christianity; for some short season, they that were Christians indeed, and who had the power, as well as the form or profession of Christianity, were free from persecution, enjoying the same priviledge in this kinde, with those that were formal and hypocriticall. And this great turn in the world is (I conceive) spoken of, *Rev. 12. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.* Where, upon the great battel that was fought in *Heaven*, between *Michael*, and his Angels, and the *dragon* and his, it is said, that the *dragon* and his prevailed not, nor were there place found any more in *heaven*, i. (I conceive) the devil could never after prevail

2. Tim. 3. 12.

Rev. 13. 7.

Postquam in
tavo ulvaine
nomen cepit
esse Christianus,
crevit
hypocritis.

Rev. 12 7, 8, 9;

with the world, at least not with the *Roman* world (this Empire being elsewhere in this book of the *Revelation* expressed by the name of a world) to persecute the name, or the bare profession of Christianity. So then after a while that *Constantine* was settled in the Empire, the profession of Christianity being now matter of honour and esteem in the world, multitudes of persons changed professions, and would needs become Christians; as we have amongst us multitudes of drunkards, and twearers, and adulterers, and covetous, and persecutors, that will needs be Christians, professors of Christianity, as well as the best; the state wherein they live, favouring a profession of Christianity. But it was not long, before these professors of Christianity, being multiplied to vast numbers, began to taste the different spirits one of another, in their different walkings and applications in the world. Those who were carnall, and worldly, and complied with men in place and power, to be countenanced and preferred in the world by them, were censured and reproved by the holy and heavenly conversation of those, who neglected the great things of the world, and applied themselves close to the principles of their profession, and the great things of eternity, so long, till they were no longer able to bear it; but the wickednesse and hypocrisie of their hearts brake out and discovered themselves, by stirring up the powers of the world (I mean, the civil Magistrate, into whose affections they had wound themselves by undue and unworthy applications) to persecute the other, as being troublesome and dangerous, in, and to, their state. This (I conceive) is cleerly signified, *vers. 17.* of the same chapter, where its said, that *the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make warre with the remnant of her seed. The Dragon* (i. as all Expositours agree, *the devil*; yea the holy Ghost himself so interprets) was wrath with the woman i. with the Church of Christ, indefinitely considered as a body or party of men professing the name of *Christ*, in the world. The devil was wroth with this woman: why? because she had now gained into her party, his greatest vicegerent he had, for the time being, *viz.* the *Romane* Emperour: who till now had been the Son of his right hand, and made havock of Christian profession. But being sorely galled and vexed

vexed at this, by way of revenge, he went (saith the vision) to make war with the remnant of the womans seed. He went *viz.* cunningly or by stealth, and as if it had not been he, (for so the word elsewhere signifies, *Mat. 13. 25.*) to make war with the remnant of the womans seed, i. with that remainder of Christian Professours, who were sincere, and stood close to the rule and principles of their profession. But whether or to whom did he go, to make this war, with this remnant, or smaller part of the womans seed? Doubtlesse to the other part, who were the farre greater part hereof; I mean, to such professors of Christianity, who being now come where the *hony* of this world lay thick upon the ground, gave over the close chase and pursuit of the world to come, and beginning at first only to lick and tast, of this hony; in time they came to love it so inordinately, that they fed foul upon it, yea and surfeted. Now the Devil wisely apprehending that there is no sort of men, likely to make better souldiers for his purpose, when he intends to levy war against those that are Saints indeed, then formall and worldly professors of Christianity, who commonly pretend to Saint-ship with more impatiency of being questioned upon the point, then they; unto these, being now grown numerous, and many of them potent in the *Romane* State, he applieth himself, and by working upon such corrupt principles in them, (as pride, covetousnesse, ambition, and especially that root of bitternesse, that hatred, wherewith they secretly burned against their Brethren, who in uprightnesse and faithfullnesse of walking, were separated from them) which made them obnoxious unto him, in a short time he inflamed them into such a malignity of spirit against that holy remnant (we spake of) of the womans seed, that they consulted hard things against them, and sought their ruine. But of this carnall, worldly and persecuting party, shortly sprang that great and famous enemy of *Christ*, and his Saints, the great persecutour of the righteous generation (sinnamed Antichrist) and he being advanced and gotten up into his throne became like an whore, who made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath (or rather of the poyson or itoxication, for so *Dr. C.* many times signifies) of her fornication and allured the Kings of the Earth

to commit fornication with her: i. to quit the holy commandments, and spirituall worship of *Jesus*, and to imbrace her adulterated religion; inso much that they all, all the ten Kings (for these only he calls the Kings of the Earth) amongst whom the *Romane* Empire in the fall and breach of it, was divided, gave their Kingdomes, and their power to the beast, i. agreed as it were with him, not all of them to professe every article or point in religion, which he professeth (for there is few of these Kings, or Kingdomes, which doe this) but to joyne with him in persecuting, or making war with the remnant of the seed of the woman, who keep the Commandements of *Jesus*. For whilest Kings and States do this, they give their power to the Beast; and support his Kingdom, and justify his proceedings against the Saints; what tenets in Christian religion soever, in the mean time they professe. He can willingly enough give liberty of conscience in some doctrinalls, unto those, who are willing to give the right hand of fellowship unto him in persecuting the Saints, from whose faith only he fears the ruine of his kingdom.

It is true, this *Antichristian* Beast, with his great assistants, the Kings of the earth, in the heat of their bloody expedition, their course of persecuting the Saints, meet now and then with some storms and tempests of blood from heaven falling upon themselves; the seven vialls have been, and are to be all poured out upon their quarters. But as they that came to apprehend Christ, though they met with a sore brush in attempting their enterprize, they were beaten backward down to the earth by the word of Christ; yet would not give over so, but got up again, and went on with their work; So though that *scarlet Whore*, with her complices, who love to make themselves drunk with the Saints, have been once and again forely rebuked from heaven, and have had their own blood given them to drink: yet have not the wages made them out of love with their work, their stocks and stones which they worship and serve, have made them so like unto them (as *David* speaketh) that they cannot see truth in any religion, but only in that, which will be their ruine. But this by the way.

The

The Second kinde of subject, or veyne of matters where-in the Scriptures holdeth forth the operating Providence of God, consists of things morall; or of a morall consideration. And herein also, we may clearly see the same things acted and done in the world, which are presented unto us in the Scriptures. We shall mention only two particulars, and this very briefly, because there is not much in them.

1. We know that the providence of God so ordereth and disposeth between persons and persons, that some are of sweeter tempers and dispositions, and of far better principles in matters of morality, then others. Some are by nature so Cynical and froward, and *Nabal* like, that a man cannot speake to them; others, have that faireness and delightfulness of carriage from God by nature, which *Abolom* had by his dissimulation, from the *Devil*, when he spake every man fair that came to him: So again, nature commends some of her children with gravity and soberness of disposition, witness the Ruler who had kept all the commandements of the second table from his youth; whereas she disparageth others, by setting them forth with a rough and careless temper. Hereof that unrighteous Judge, spoken of *Luk. 18.* who neither feared God, nor regarded man, may yet be a competent witness. The like is observable in many other diversities, and contrarities of tempers.

2. The faithfull servants and children of God, many times speak better, and are more courteously intreated, more justly dealt with, by meere naturall and morall men, and such as are strangers unto God, then by many that are forward and zealous professors of religion. The daies wherein we live, have furnished us with many experiments, and observations in this kinde. How many meere naturall and morall men, scarce pretending so much as to a form in religion, have been shadows to the Saints, whilst many Grandees in profession, have been a scorching heat? with how much more righteousness and equity, hath their cause been judged by meere strangers, then by those who pretend highly to the same household of Faith with them? How hath the wisdom of the children of light, been justified, by the ingenuity of the sons of nature, whilst it hath

been.

Act. 18. 24. 25.
Act. 18. 27. 18.
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a Act 15. 11
b Act. 27. 4.

d Luk. 23. 14
e Act. 3. 13
f Luk. 23. 14. 15
g Luk. 23. 18.
h Mat. 26. 65.
i Luk. 23. 2.
k idem.

l *Quin si forti
pioram, qui in
populo Dei re-
b:lli & contu-
maci impio &
incredulo ver-
santur probè
consideres, sic
est illa compa-
rata, ut non
modo periculum
sit a professis po-
puli Dei hosti-
bus, sed & ab
ipso populo e-
iusdem religio-
nis consorti, qui
multo acerbius
inestatur piis,
a studijs suis ab-
horrentes,
quam qui ex
professo sunt
Dei ac populi
sui hostes. Quare non minus, imò plus periculosa
a loquitur, a reprobâ & contumaci Ecclesia Ichude, quam a Syris, vel Assyrijs.*

been condemned by the superstitious partiality of those, who call themselves a generation of the righteous: Thus did Festus an heathen and Idolater, justify *Pani*, professing that he had found nothing worthy of death that he had committed, when as all the multitude of the Jews, zealous professors of the worship of the same God with them, cried out, that he ought not to live any longer; yea the High Priest himself, and the chief of this devout nation, thought they did God service, in seeking to take away his life, though in a treacherous way. ^a Thus likewise that *Iust* one himself, was pronounced *Iust*, ^b by *Pilate*, an heathen Judg (and by his wife also ^c) and clearly acquitted from all manner of blame touching those things, whereof he was accused; ^d yea this *Pilate* had determined, ^e and laboured it accordingly, ^f to discharge and set him free; whenas the chief Priests, who were looked upon both by themselves, and others, as the chiefe pillars of religion, and the true worship of God in those days, together with the rulers, and great bulk of that zeale-professing people; both falsely and furiously accused him; & charged him with blasphemy, ^h with perverting the nation, ⁱ with forbidding to give tribute unto *Cesar*, ^k and were so exceeding mad in their hatred against him, that nothing could restore them to their wits and senses, but only a sacrifice made of his life upon the service thereof. *Musculus* expounding those words in *Istiah* 8. 12. neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid, observs, that the Prophet and the godly people with him, were in greater danger of the reprobate and stiffnecked Church of *Judah*, then either of the *Syrians*, or *Assyrians*; yea and makes this generall observation, that it is the lot and condition of persons truly godly, who live and converse amongst a stubborn, wicked, and rebellious people, claiming Church-ship and relation unto God, not only to be in danger of receiving mischief, from the professed enemies of God, but from those also, who make profession of the same religion with them; who are wont with farre more bitterness and violence to persecute the godly, who dissent from their courses and ways, then those who professedly are the enemies both of God, and his people ^l.

The

The Third and last generall head, of things mentioned, wherein the working or disposing Providence of God, in the affairs and occurrences of the world, answereth the pattern of the Scriptures, is of things that are spirituall, or of a spirituall consideration. This correspondency or agreement we shall take notice of in five particulars.

1. In the variety or severall kinds of means, by which men and women ordinarily are brought home unto God, and built up in the knowledge of God. 2. In the property or quality of these means. 3. in the manner or terms, upon which men are brought home unto God, and savingly converted unto the faith. 4. in the different conditions, dispositions, practises, of those, who are brought home unto God, before this blessed motion is found in them. 5. (and lastly) in the different growths or statures, as well in knowledge, as in grace, of those that are brought home unto God, after their coming into this estate.

1. For the severall kinds or variety of means, by which men are ordinarily brought home unto God, the Scripture runs much upon three; first, judgements or afflictions: secondly, the excellent carriages and deportments of the Saints in their waies: thirdly, (and lastly) the ministry of the Gospel.

For the first, the Scripture speaks much of afflictions, as of a kinde of ordinance sanctified by God, for the reducement of men unto themselves, and consequently unto himself. Even as *Solomon* speaks of the rod (in the letter, or properly so called) as if it were appointed by God to drive out that childish folly or untowardness which is bound up in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him; In like manner, there is a kinde of folly, appropriate unto men; (you may call it spirituall folly,) a remissness and negligence of soule, to look after the great things of their peace: which the Scripture represents as frequently cured, or driven out of men, by the hand of afflictions. Thus *Elihu* in *Job*, And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions, that they have exceeded, he openeth also their ear unto discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. — So the rod of ex-

Pro. 22. 15.

Job. 36. 8, 9, 10.

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behinde, viz. that they have truly believed, that they are in an estate of grace and salvation, that so they may have a preference, not to endeavour themselves towards that which is before; i. (as the Apostle had expressed it *vers. 11.*) towards the attaining of the resurrection of the dead; meaning (the which elsewhere he calls) perfection. For when Christians are excellent, and full of God, in their lives and ways, they live as it were in the state of the resurrection of the dead; wherein men are no wayes sway'd or acted by the cares, or lulls, or fears of this present world, or by any unworthy dispositions, or distempers of their natures; but live (as our Saviour saith) like the Angels of God. If beleevers would sin more liberally unto the spirit, would put more cost, more of that precious ingredient, the resurrection of the dead, into their lives, the strength of their influence upon the world, (I mean upon the soules and consciences of men yet naturall) would be doubled and trebled; and many more, in an ordinary way of Providence, would be wrought upon, and won to the Faith of Christ by them, then now are. But this by the way.

3. (And lastly, for this) The most common and effectual means of all the rest, which the Scriptures present unto us, as anointed and sealed by God for the gathering in of Christs sheep, into his fold, from their goings astray in the world, I mean, for the effectual conversion of soules unto God, is the ministry of the Gospel, the spreading abroad of the sweet favour of the knowledge of Jesus Christ amongst men. We know the Scripture speaks much to this point: we shall not need to multiply places. Peter by casting the net we speak of, (the Gospel,) out of the right side of the ship, inclosed a multitude of men fishes (as Christ had told him that he would make him a fisher of men) even three thousand soules at once. So Paul to Timothy, Take heed to thy self, and to thy doctrine; continue in them: for by doing this, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee. So that the ministry and preaching of the Gospel, is the great standing ordinance of heaven for the translating of men and women from death to life: for the conveying and carrying them over that great lake or gulf, which lieth between an estate of sin and unbelief on

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the one hand, and a condition of peace and blessedness, on the other; Therefore they who despise, or neglect it, are as great enemies to themselves and their own salvation, as those Pharisees and Lawyers were, who rejected the counsell of God against themselves, in refusing to be baptized by John, Luk. 7. 30. It were easie to make the pile of testimonies, greater in this kinde; but a first fruits in such a case as this, is better then an harvest.

Now we all generally know, and cannot but confesse, that such as the Scriptures are in this behalf, such are the actings and workings and dispensations of the providence of God in the world. Go through the Churches of the Saints, ask of the sons and daughters of God in all their quarters, how and by what means, they came to be partakers of the divine nature, which is in them: doubtlesse they will generally answer you as with one mouth, that it was by that immortal seed of the word of God, sown in their hearts, by some that went out from him to sow it. There is not one amongst many, but will give this account of their translation from death unto life, from the power of Satan, unto the Kingdome of God.

2. The Scriptures hold forth the active and working providence of God (in reference to things of a spirituall importance) as considerable in the property, or quality of the means, by which ordinarily men are savingly wrought upon, and brought home unto God. And that quality or property in the means we speak of, which the Scripture principally eyes, as rendering all the severall kindes of these means, that were mentioned, the more effectull and proper for their ends (the bringing in of soules unto God) is an abundance of God in them; and as little of the creature as may be. Afflictions, the more they have of God in them; and to the lives of the Saints, the more they have of God in them; and especially the ministry of the Gospel, the more it hath of God in it; all these means (I say) of bringing men home unto God, the more they have of God in them, are so much the more effectual, and likely to prosper in their way. First, those afflictions have most of God in them, first, which are more extraordinary and rare, and that either in respect of the nature, and kinde of them,

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them,

1 Tim. 4. 16.
Eph. 4. 11, 12,
13.
Acts 2. 42.

them, or of the degree of them, or of the second means producing them: secondly which have the most manifest sympathy and agreement, or similitude with such sins, one or more, in our lives, for which we have been most reprov'd; either by our own consciences, or otherwise, and notwithstanding have not forsaken them. Thirdly, which strike us (as it were) in the master-veyn of our pleasures and contentments in the world, when the first-born of all our enjoyments and contentments on earth, are as it were singled out from all the rest, and slain, or else sorely smitten, by the hand of God, in the affliction. Fourthly (and lastly) which touch and smite the conscience, without any outward breach made upon men. Such afflictions which have the greatest proportion, of one or more, or all of these properties in them, are the most like of all others to be operative upon men in a way of salvation. If you first search the Scriptures, and the world, you will finde the one answering the other in the truth of these things. Those troubles or afflictions which the Scriptures mention and record, as having wrought occasionally upon men towards their conversion unto God, you will clearly finde to have had one or more, of those ingredients in them which have been described, and that in some considerable degree. We need not stand to examine particular instances. That smiting to the earth, which prepared the Apostle *Paul* to hearken the more attentively to the voice that spake to him from heaven, had much of God in it, in regard of the strangeness and extraordinariness of it, as also of the means producing it, so the fear and astonishment in the *Jaylor* which had a laying tendency in it, by causing him to hearken to *Pauls* preaching of the Gospel, had much of God in it too, in regard of the means producing it, which was the flying open of all the prison doors, and the loosing of the prisoners bands, by means of a great earthquake, (or at least in conjunction with this earthquake,) I forbear any more instances.

I make no question but some of you that are present, can parallell the Scriptures in this point, at least so far, as to confess, that amongst those afflictions, which have befallen you, in the course of your mortal pilgrimage, those which have had most

most of God in them, in some or other of the considerations mentioned, have been most operative and effectually upon you, to persuade you to seek after God. So again,

2. The Scripture presenteth such waies and practises of the Saints, which have most of God in them, as of the most efficacious tendency to prevail with others (at least such as are capable of them) to enquire after God, to engage the world to look after the things of eternity. Now such waies and practises of men have (in the generall) most of God in them, which most excell the common and ordinary waies and practises of men in goodness, or which have the richest strain of some such excellency, which is very rarely, if at all, to be found in any degree, in the waies or practises of the men of this world. And that such waies as these are of the richest tendency, to take the hearts and consciences of naturall and worldly men, and to awaken them to look after the things of their peace, is sufficiently intimated in the Scriptures. *But I say unto you (saith Christ) love your enemies, blesse them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be (i. appear, approve your selves to be) the children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good: and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust: for if you love them which love you, what reward have you? (i. what spirituall service do you unto men, for which God should reward you?) Doe not even the Publicans the same? And if you salute your Brethren only, what doe you more then others, do not even the Publicans so?* The whole carriage of the place is clearly of this importance, that an uniform and constant tenour of such actions and deportments, which in loveliness and honour transcends the line of the common civilities and courtesies of the world, hath an excellent and potent tendency to blesse the world, by occasioning or causing men to conceive honourable and worthy thoughts concerning God, his people and waies: Those passages of Scripture also formerly cited in this argument (and in part explained) *Mat. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2.* shine with a clear light of the same truth.

And.

And if we had the opportunity to converse freely with the hearts and consciences of men, we should meet with many exemplifications of the Scriptures in this particular. For (doubtlesse) there are few, if any, savingly converted, and brought home unto God, whose conversion hath not received, either rise or progresse, or both, from the vertuous and holy conversations, of those who were in Christ before them: nor is there any of these, if they please to recollect themselves a little about the point, but will be able to acknowledge and say, that the nearer they saw Saints walking to the Heavens, the more the work of their conversion was advanced by them.

3. (And lastly) For the ministry of the word and Gospel, the Scripture is yet more cleer in this: viz. that such a ministry, which hath most of God in it, is most effectuall, and for the most part, most fruitfull, either in bringing in souls unto God, or in building up souls in God. Now that ministry hath most of God in it, which hath most of Christ in it, with the least mixture of the wisdom and weaknesse of the flesh: i. which maketh the clearest and richest discoveries of God in Christ, i. of the minde and counsel of God concerning the salvation of men by Christ: and 2. which gives the clearest testimonies, that there is a reality and truth in those things, which it thus discovers, without entermingling any thing, which is apt, or likely, to disabie this testimony in the hearts and consciences of men. I adde this last clause, *without intermixing any thing, &c.* because, though men doe make rich discoveries of Christ, yea and doe argue and prove with some good authority and power, the reality and truth of what they discover in this kinde; yet if they mingle any thing of the flesh herewith, if they attempt to bow, lway or carry any passages of the Gospel, to make them to comply with any worldly end, as to gain, or hold the favour of men, to gratifie the flesh in any the lusts or undue desires thereof, to protect any unfound or weak opinion, because a man stands already declared for it, or the like; any of these things will proportionably incumber and disadvantage their work, and take away from the weight and worth, of what they shall teach otherwise, especially in the judgements and consciences of some men, *To the one* (saith the

1 Cor. 2. 16, 17

the Apostle) *We are the favour of death, unto death: and to the other the favour of life, unto life, (and who is sufficient for these things?) For we are not, as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ: cleerly implying, that look in what degree any man corrupts the word of God, in the ministry of it (i. embaseth it with any mixture whatsoever for the accommodation of the flesh) the lesse sincere, or mindfull he is of the inspection of God over him, whilst he preacheth, he renders the Gospel so much the lesse powerfull and affectionate in his dispensation of it, either for the conviction, or conversion of men: he causeth it to give forth so much the weaker and fainter smell, or favour, either of death and condemnation to the wicked and impenitent, or of life and peace, to the righteous and beleever. When the Gospel is preached sincerely, and as it comes from God, it casts forth a strong sent, and fills the nostrills of the souls and consciences of those that believe and submit unto it, with a most odoriferous and pleasant favour of life, peace, and joy, in the love and favour of God: as on the other hand it sends forth a strong sent or smell of the fire and brimstone of hell, and of the eternall vengeance of a most dreadfull God, into the nostrills of all that are ungodly and disobedient. And in what degree the spirit of it shall be at any time stifled, clogged or allayed, by any carnall ingredient, it loo- seth proportionably of the strength and vigour of either of these operations.*

3. Concerning the manner, or terms, upon which men and women are raviugly brought home to God, the Scriptures represent the case under this difference: viz. that some *pass from death to life*, after some such manner, as Peter informs us that *the Heavens shall passe away in the great day of the Lord, with a great noise*; I mean, with great perplexity tumults, consternation, and astonishment of soule, precedancously ushering in, and sometimes, for a while attending upon, this blessed change. Others again, without so much as the minde in the least disquieted, or a thought troubled. After the former manner, those converts of Peter, Act. 2. 37. and Pauls Jaylor: Act. 16. 27. yea and Paul himself, Act. 9. 4. 6. were brought

brought into the household of faith, God make a preface to the work of their conversion, in thunder. After the latter, *Matthew* Mat. 9. 9, 10. *Simon Peter*, and *Andrew*, his Brother, Mat. 4. 18, 19, 20. and so *Philip*, Joh. 1. 43. and *Nathanael*, ver. 45, 46. &c. and *Lydia*, Act. 16. 14. (to omit others) were taken in to the Ark of life and peace; God came to the hearts of these in a still voice, and this without the harbingery either of whirlwind, earthquake or fire. If there were perfect records, kept and searched into, of the manner, how, and the terms, upon which, the present generation of the Saints, in all the respective members of it, came into the estate of grace, *Wherein they stand*; there is little question to be made, but the one part of them would be found to have come after the one manner specified; and another, according to the other. God shakes the foundations of the hearts of some, and makes all that is within them to quake and tremble, when he is about to remove them: others he removes with so gentle and soft an hand, that it cannot be perceived, that so much as the least hair of their head is shaken in the translation.

4. Concerning the different dispositions and practices of persons, before their reconciliation unto God; the Scripture presenteth some, vile and abominable above measure, in both Others without any notorious blot or foulness in either: some very conscientious in ways and practices, of a grievous provocation in the sight of God; others without all sense or regard of God in their impieties. The Prodigal in the parable, (Luk. 15. 13, 18.) the repentant Malefactor upon the cross; *Mary Magdalene*, severall amongst the converted *Corinths*, (1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. besides many others) are of the first presentment. Of the second, *Matthew*, *Andrew*, *Peter*, and generally the Apostles, together with *Mary*, the mother of *Christ*, *Nicodemus*, *Joseph of Arimathea*, the Eunuch baptized by *Philip*, *Lydia*, &c. Concerning whom, we hear of nothing memorable in any way, or practise of sin, before their turning unto righteousness. Of the third, the Apostle *Paul* himself is an instance, in stead of a thousand; who before his blessed Apostacy, from *Satan* unto God, *thought verily that he brought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth*: and did.

did accordingly, *shutting up many of the Saints in prison, punishing them throughout all the Synagogues, compelling them to blaspheme, and persecuting them, even to strange cities*. Ag. 26. 10.

(Of the fourth and last representation, are the *Ephesians*, who were dead in sins and trespasses, wherein in times past (i. before their conversion to the truth) they walked according to the course of this world, after the Prince that ruleth in the aire, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; being without *Christ*, and without God (i. without either the sense, or knowledge, either of *Christ* or of God) in the world. And doubtlesse there are in these our days, and have been in those past, persons both men and women, under all these respective characters, baptized into the spirit of faith, and holiness by the Gospel. The draw-net of the Gospel, at this day gathereth fishes, of all these severall kinds, and makes them good, and fitting to be gathered into vessels. A little observation of, and inquiry after, the manner of the lives and principles of those before their new birth, who are from time to time begotten of the immortal seed of the word, will abundantly satisfie, in this; that the tenour of Gospel delineation, and of Providentiall acting in that behalf, do answer one the other, as *face answereth face in the water*.

5. (And lastly) for the different growths, and statures, as well in knowledge, as in grace, of persons raised from the dead (in sin and unbelief) by the Gospel, such doth the daily experience of the world exhibite them also. If the Churches of *Christ*, were diligently surveyed, here will be found spirituall disproportions and inequalities, answerable to those in civill States and Common-wealths; *high and low, rich and poor, one with another*, some sitting upon the throne and reigning, others lying in the dust, and complaining; some, clothed with scarlet, others with rags; some, *eating the fat, and drinking the sweet of the Gospel*; others, only dipping their morsels in the vinegar thereof; and some again fed with *bread convenient*. They who travell the Scriptures meet with *babes in Christ*, in one place, and with strong men, in another, with carnall believers in

one place, with spirituall in another, with men enriched by *Christ* with all utterance, and with all knowledge in one place; with persons dull of hearing, *alwaies learning*, and never able to come to any clear knowledge of the truth, in another. Here are of the race of *Oligopists*, or little-faith'd Christians; and here are also of the generation of the *Plerophorists*, whose faith laughs heights, depths, life and death, things present and things to come, yea, every creature in the face to scorn. And who knoweth not but the household of faith, at this day consists of all these constitutions, tempers, and conditions of men?

Having thus opened and confirmed the consideration, or argument in hand, as to the truth of it; Let us (in one word) consider the efficacy, and weight of the relation of it to our purpose, and whether it doth not mightily evince and prove the Scriptures to be from God. When our Saviour asked *Philip*, whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? the Evangelist adds, that this he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do. If our Saviour some time before the working of the miracle (the feeding of five thousand with the 5 barley loaves, and two small fishes) should have told his disciples, or any other, that there would such a number of men as five thousand repair shortly to him; and that they should sit down upon the grasse, and be all entertained, and fully fed, with no more, no other provision, but only of five barley loaves, and two fishes (which it seems by the Evangelist he could easily have done, knowing what he meant, and withall what he was able, to do) would not those persons, whoever they had been, to whom he should have signified this before hand, have absolutely concluded, when they had seen the thing done, the miracle wrought accordingly, that he himself was the worker of it, or at least had his information and knowledge of the thing, before it was done, from him, who was the doer or worker of it? In like manner, when we see such a modell or map of the Government of the world, as is presented and held forth in the Scriptures, made long agoe, which answereth in all points those dispositions, dispensations, and events of things, which are observed and found daily in the course of providence,

and

and the government of the world, how can we but infer and conclude that certainly he that could describe the manner of the government of the world, in regard of such a variety of contingent and casual events, as come to passe from time to time, so long since and before their coming to passe, either is the governour of the world himself, or at least received his instructions from him, who is the governour of the world, how to write? either of which is sufficient to evince the original of the Scriptures to be from God. It is true, men out of long observation, and experience either of their own, or other mens improvements by contemplation, and a rationally inquiry and search into the reasons and causes of things, may describe and set down long before many naturall events, and such particulars relating to the government of the world, which are wont to come to passe in a regular, constant, and unaltered course, and whose causes are necessary; such as the motions of the sun, moon, planets, and other stars, the times of their risings, and fallings, eclipses, and such like; but for such things, such events, which depend upon voluntary or free-working causes, which are wont to act, sometimes one way, sometimes another and have no law of uniformity imposed upon them by God: he that shall draw up such an exact platforme of such actions, and proceedings of these, as that which hath been presented unto you, must needs be the governour of the world himself, or at least have his directions for the work from him (which is of the same importance for our purpose) Never was there any booke or authour heard of, besides the bible and those that ploughed with this beifer (I mean, that tooke the substance of what they wrote from hence) who either represented the sufferings of the Saints, and those that should live godly in *Christ* *Jesus*, from the world, or displaied that great variety that is, and allwaies hath been, found amongst *Christians*, in respect of their spirituall condition, after any such manner, or upon any such terms, as the Scriptures do. It is true, *Juvenal*, *Tacitus*, and some other Heathen Authours, mention some remarkable ragings of *Neroes* cruelty against the servants of *Christ* in his time; and further intimate a generall odium or hatred of men against this generation: but such veyns of relation as these,

found in the bodies of such Authours, do rather add unto, then take from, the divine Authority of the Scriptures; asserting the truth of what they assert in these, by asserting the truth of such *hypotheses*, or particular examples, which do abundantly confirm the same. But concerning the greatest part of those things which we called *matters of a spiritual consideration*, and which are things of choicest observation in the government of the world, there is profound and deep silence in all authours and writers whatsoever, those only excepted, who have drawn their waters *out of those wells of salvation*, famously known amongst us, by the name of, the Scriptures.

This for this fifth Demonstration, or argument, of that kinde, we are yet upon, *viz.* such acts or passages of Divine providence, whereby God plainly owns the Scriptures as his, and from him.

Arg. 6

We mentioned a sixth particular, under this head (which was the last) The tenour of this was, the remarkable judgements that have been executed and inflicted by God, upon those, that have been the chiefest enemies of the Scriptures, and of those, who have professed the religion and worship of God, commanded and taught in them. We shall not insist upon any explication, or traverse of this argument, because the confirmation of the truth of it depends altogether upon history, and may be had in abundance, by perusing the Ecclesiasticall records of all ages, partly before, but especially since, the days of the coming of *Jesus Christ* in the flesh, into the world. I make no question but many of you, have read the volume of Church-hitory, intituled, *Acts and Monuments*, published many years since by Mr *Fox*, in the english tongue. You that have read this history cannot but know, that God hath broken out of heaven like a lion out of a thicket, from time to time, with great terour and exemplarinesse of judgement, both upon particular persons, and whole states and kingdomes too, who have magnified themselves, in the greatest height of hatred, and enmity, and furiousnesse of proceedings, against the Scriptures, and the religion contained and commanded therein. And as God threateth that he would make *Jerusalem* a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when
they

they should be in seige against *Judah* and *Jerusalem*; and again that he would make *Jerusalem* a burdensome stone for all people: telling them, that all that burthen themselves with it, shall be cut in peeces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it; So hath he done, and is in doing by all States and Kingdomes in the world, that have and do oppose the Scriptures or the truth contained in them, or that afflict, oppress, and exercise cruelty upon those, who hold forth the truth of them, with greatest power and advantage unto the world, Those persons, States, and Kingdomes, who thirsting after the blood of the Saints, made way by a strong hand of violence, oppression and cruelty, to come at it, and drank of it; found it a cup of trembling, and astonishment unto them: though the tast of it was very sweet, and as hony in the mouth, and in the going down, so that they thought they had had a sovereign cordiall of it, and that which would have bred the best blood that ever ran in their veins; yet when it got into their bellies, it wrought terribly, it made them cast up all the sweet morcells of the pleasures and contentments of this world that ever they had devoured, it either brought present death, ruine, and destruction upon them, or else exposed them to shame and misery in the world. And as sometimes it comes to passe, that he that heaves at a stone that is too heavy for him, and seeks to take it up, and bear it away upon his shoulder, is thrown back and dash't to peeces, by the weight of it; So have many, both persons, and kingdomes, heaved at the Scriptures, and those that held them forth, attempting the removal both of the one, and of the other, out of the world: whose enterprize hath recoild upon them, with such violence, that their bones have been broken, yea they and their kingdomes dashed in peeces by it.

If we speak of states and kingdomes, God began that exemplarinesse of judgement we speak of, with *Egypt* (in the letter) and hath done somewhat, and will proceed further very shortly, yea and will conclude with *Egypt* in the spirit (or *Egypt* spiritually so called) I mean that scarlet whore, that mother of abominations spoken of in the Revelation, who makes her self drunk with the blood of the Saints. Concerning
Egypt

Egypt in the letter, it was foretold by him that put the thing into execution, and did the deed afterwards, four hundred years before it was acted, that he would judge this state and kingdom for their opposing and attempting to suppress the truth, or true worship of God (now held forth in the Scriptures) in the persons of those, in whose hearts and lives only it was then written. *Know of a surety* (saith God to Abraham) *that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve, (viz. in afflictions, oppressions, and sufferings) will I judge, viz. with most exemplary and remarkable judgements indeed, as is to be read at large in Exodus.* So now the same God, having stretch the same line of judgement and destruction over many other States, nations, and kingdoms by the way, in the succeeding generations of the world, hath at this day, *spirituall Egypt in chase*, that Antichristian state, which troubles the Christian world in blood, who is active by her prophets, agents, and instruments *in sheeps clothing*, and who have his mark, not in their foreheads, where the world might take notice of it, but in their hands, which they shut, and so keep the mark therein secret from the sight of the generality of men (though the Saints know it to be there by their actings and workings) that antichristian state (I say) which is active by such agents as these, in making war, against that remnant of *the seed of the woman, who keeps the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus*, God hath in chase, and is in pursuit hereof, with his judgements; and though sometimes he seems to make a default, and to be at a losse of his game, yet he will soon recover, and follow closer then ever, the sent of the *blood of his Saints*: yea he will not give over the chase till he hath hunted, this great *Nimrod* himself, this *mightry hunter* of the Saints, and of the testimony of *Jesus*, into the pit of destruction even the *lake that burneth with fire*. Of old he anointed but 3 swords, to destroy Idolatry and Idolaters, out of *Israel*, the sword of *Jehu*, the sword of *Hazael*, the sword of *Elisha*, and foretold, that he that escaped the first, should be slain by the second, and that he that escaped the second, should

Gen. 15. 13, 14

should be met withall and be slain by the third, by which also it appears that he gave many of them times of ease and respite between a space or spaces, wherein to repent, before he cut them off; but yet went on, with the course of his judgement notwithstanding, and did by the second and third sword, make short work (as the Scripture phrase is) at last, with those who did not repent. But to destroy that great Idolatry, and Idolatrous state out of the world, he hath consecrated seven *golden vials, full of his wrath*; and hath appointed so many *Angels*, to pour them out one after another, though not presently or immediatly one after another, but with some competent space of time between, to try the working of them respectively, upon that State or generation of men, on whom they are to be poured: and the great quarrel which the glorious God hath with this Idolatrous or antichristian State we speak of, for the pleading of which he hath prepared the seven *vials of wrath* mentioned, is their hatred against the *testimony of Jesus*, as it is held forth, acted, and contended for by his Saints, and servants, that are faithfull unto him, and to his crown and kingdom. For this (by the way) is to be known and considered, that though it be flesh and blood, or the persons of men and women against, or upon whom, the enemies of the truth, or of the Scriptures, utter and expresse their bloody hatred and enmity, and the oppression and murder of the Saints, be mentioned as one of the principall sins, that arms the right hand of God, with fury and vengeance against them, yet it is not simply flesh and blood, or the persons of men, which they to hate and persecute, but the Scriptures, and that in the truth and holinesse of them, as being received in, and given out again, in soundnesse and sincerity of profession, by waies and conversations in such men, suitable to them. If they could separate the truth, from the men, and take them off from waies and practises confederate with it, their hatred and indignation against them would soon be allayed and cease. And this the Holy Ghost himself implies, *Rev. 12. ult.* where he saith that *the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keeps the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus* *Rev. 12. 17.*
Christ;

1 Kin. 19. 17.

Rev. 17.

Christ; clearly implying that all the quarrell the *dragon* had against the *womans seed*, was only this: these were conscientious and faithfull in a practicall observation of the commandments of God, and held forth the truth and purity of the doctrine of *Christ*, and of the *Gospel*, by a zealous and untainted profession.

It is true, the *Beast* himself professeth, and that with great vehemency of contestation, that he and his children are they that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of *Jesus*; But what commandments of God are they, which they keep? or what testimony of *Jesus* is it, which they have? they keep such of the commandments of God, or rather so much of the commandments of God, as they conceive necessary to cover the nakednesse of their hypocrisie, whilst they carry on an earthly design of secular greatnesse for themselves, under a pretence and colour of advancing the spirituall interests of *Jesus Christ* in the world: but for such of these commandments, which rise up in their might (as many of them do) against the horrid impiety of their proceedings, they tread and trample them under their feet, like clay and mire in the streets. And for the testimony of *Jesus*, they have it in ink and paper, in their books: but in the fleshy tables of their heart, they have a law of hypocrisie written in defiance of it, and whensoever *Christ* in his testimony opposeth them in their interest (as at every time almost he doth) they say unto *Christ* in his testimony, as *Christ* sometimes said unto *Sathan* in his disciple, *Get thee behind me, for thou art an offence unto mee.*

Now then this is that which I say, (and I speak it as from the mouth of the Lord, both for your comfort, and mine own, and of many others engaged in the same honourable cause with us) that whatsoever we shall suffer for righteousnesse sake, or for the holding forth any part of the testimony of *Jesus*, unto the world, whether it be unto losse of life, liberty, name, or estate, or in what kinde soever, god will call those to a severer account for it, for whom and by whose means, we shall suffer, as he hath called to account (in part) for our brethren, who have suffered from the same spirit, or generation of men, upon the same terms,

terms, before us. There have been already, three of the seven vials mentioned, by the consent of all our interpreters (upon the matter) if not four, poured out upon that antichristian state, and generation of men, who persecute the Saints: and though God suffers them to take breath a while between vial and vial, and gives them opportunity, to fall afresh again to their work of persecution, after some discouragement and interruption; yet we may assure our selves, that if they will not give over their occupation in blood, neither will he give over his of taking vengeance: the rest of the seven angels, whose vials are yet unpoured out, stand in his presence, waiting but for the direction of his eye; which shall be given unto them in due time, and then what the three or four former vials have left of this spirit and power in the world, those that remain will, when they shall be poured out, abolish and destroy utterly. Then shall be fulfilled, that which is written: *They shall not hurt or destroy, in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord: sufferings for the testimony of Jesus, shall then be swallowed up into victory.* O persecution where is thy sting? O ye sons of blood, where is your victory? Women that are any thing masculine, in their spirits and courage, though they may have some sorrow as well as others, when their hour comes (as our Saviour speaks) yet if they could be confident, that a man should be born into the world, by their labour and travail, and that they should live to see, and enjoy the comfort of it, they would not be much troubled at any pains they might endure, upon such terms.

Therefore let us not forget the encouragement that speaketh unto us. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer.* For if we travail we shall the second time bring forth that man-child who shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, yea immediately upon this birth, he will rule them upon other terms of power and glory, then he hath done to this day. As a woman can have no child or son, likely in time to protect her, or to be an honour unto her, unless she first travails and suffers pains in bringing him forth: so neither must the Church of God expect to have *Christ* present at any time in power and height of protection with her, or to be a glory unto her, in the sight of

Ia. 65. 25.

Job. 16. 21.

Reva. 10.

the world, unless the first groans and labours under persecutions, which are as proper a means to bring him forth upon such terms, as the pains or throws of a woman in travail are, to bring forth the child that is yet in her womb. But this by the way.

Let us (in a word) weigh the strength of this consideration also, and see whether it will not contribute liberally as all the former have done, towards the relieve of our consciences, against all jealousies and fears, least the original and authority of the Scriptures should not prove *divine*. Behold (saith God unto his Church and people) *all they that were incensed against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded, they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not finde them, even them that contended with thee; they that war against thee, shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.* Doth not God, by speaking these things to a particular people, or generation of men, and acting accordingly for them, and in their vindication, plainly declare a peculiar relation to them, and that he had *chosen them*, (as he had said a little before) from amongst *all other people*, and formed them (as he saith elsewhere) for a peculiar people to himself? and that all other people and nations, for whom he never did, nor intended to doe, any such things as these, were but strangers to him, in comparison? In like manner, God having risen up in all ages, and from time to time, to plead the cause of the Scriptures, and of those who professed the faith, and practised the doctrine of them, and that with *great jealousy* and wrath, against such who appeared in enmity and opposition, either against the one or the other, having done no such thing for any other kinde of writing, or for the lovers or professors of any other kinde of learning, or doctrine whatsoever, against their enemies: doth not this plainly demonstrate and evince, that he owns the one, the Scriptures, as peculiarly his, and formed by himself, and that he rejects all the rest, as touching such a relation. For as the Apostle evinceth the excellency of Christ above the Angels, as being the son of God, by demanding or rather reasoning thus. But *to which of the Angels said he at any time, sit at my right hand, until I make*

mine

thine enemies thy footstool? implying, that he had so said unto Christ; so may we clearly enough evince and prove, the excellency of the Scriptures, above all other writings and doctrines whatsoever, and their peculiar relation unto God, by such a demand (reason-wise) as this: Did God say unto any other book or doctrine, or to the professors of them, *Lift up your heads; maintain your authority and interest in the hearts and consciences of men in the world, until I make your enemies your footstool?* Or hath he not said thus (in effect) to the Scriptures and the true professors of their doctrine? hath he not given their enemies from time to time: *as the dust to their sword? and as driven stubble to their bow?* Hath not the world begun to fall before them? and shall it not fall altogether? Thus hath it been done, and thus shall it be done still, to that doctrine, to that religion, with the true professors of it, *which God will honour*: but it neither hath been, nor shall be so done unto any other. And thus we have done with our sixth and last of the first sort of arguments, to evince the divinity of the Scriptures, under the second generall head, which we called, extrinsecall. These arguments were such passages or acts of Providence, whereby God plainly owns the Scriptures as his, and as proceeding from him.

The latter kinde of arguments contained under the same generall head, consists of such, partly doings, partly sayings of men, which are so far confederate with those providences of God, as to joyn in testimony with them in the behalf of the Scriptures. We shall be very briefe both in the proposall, and arguing of these, though they be both the one and the other of them, of as large a consideration, as any of the former.

First, There have been, and are daily acted and done by men such things, which cleerly prove the Scriptures to be from God. These again may be divided into two sorts: they are either 1. such actions, by which the predictions or propheticall carriages of the Scriptures (I mean, some of them, and such as eminently considerable) are fulfilled, or else, 2. such by which the doctrinall, or sententious passages of the Scriptures, and these likewise very remarkable, are verified and asserted.

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For

For the former. The actions of men, by which that spirit of prophecy, which speaks in them, is justified, *i.* by which the things predeclared and foretold by this spirit, are accordingly performed and done in the world, doe give testimony unto the Scriptures, that they are divinely inspired, and from God. Thus the act of *Judas* in betraying *Christ*, and the Apostles flying, those actions of the souldiers in crucifying *Christ*, and those martiall actions of the *Romans*, by which they conquered *Jerusalem*, defaced and demolished the temple, not leaving one stone upon another, all these did abundantly demonstrate the Scriptures to be from God.

The *Christians* worlds wondring after the *Beast*, so long together, the *ten Kings*, in giving their Kingdomes unto the *Beast*, the *Beast* in making war with the *Saints*, with many other actions of men, prophetically foreshewed in the book of the *Revelation*, do the like. At this day (amongst our selves) they that expresse hatred against the *Saints* (godly men) for *Christ's* sake, *i.* for that of *Christ* which is in them, their godlinesse or holinesse; so again, they who act as men, that cannot, or will not, endure sound doctrine (*viz.* such doctrines or truths, though never so agreeable to the word of God, which crosse their carnall ends or humours, or temporall designs but after their own lusts will heap up unto themselves teachers) *i.* will seek out and follow, they care not how many teachers, that will comort with them, and strengthen their hand, in their sinfull and unworthy waies; they (I say) who do such things as these, do by such actions, confirm and seal the divine originall of the Scriptures, though they intend nothing lesse. As *Paul* sometimes said of the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, and their rulers, that because they knew not *Jesus Christ*, nor yet the words of the *Prophets*, which are read every *Sabbath day* amongst them, they fulfilled them in condemning them. So may it be said of many the inhabitants of *London*, and of their rulers, that because they know not *Jesus Christ*, nor the words of the *prophets* and *Apostles*, though they be read yea and preached unto them every *Sabbath day*, yea and oftner too, they fulfill both in condemning *Christ*, both in many of his servants, and in many of his truths; and consequently by walking

A. B. 13. 17.

walking contrary to the Scriptures, they assert the Scriptures, and secure their authority from above. So againe those amongst us, who having been formerly *sons* and *daughters* of *Belial*, full of all unrighteousnesse, and all manner of abominations, but have now through the grace of God, so far remembered themselves and the extreame vilenesse and sinfullnesse of their former waies, that they build up with both their hands the honour of *Christ*, and of that religion, which before they pulled down, marching in the head of the *Saints*, and out-running those in the race of holinesse, who had set out long before them; such persons as these also, by such waies and actions as these, do make the crown of divine authority upon the head of the Scriptures to flourish, because they give accomplishment to that remarkable and propheticall saying, that many that are last shall be first, as on the other hand, they who having been first, but are now become unfavoury, good for nothing but to be thrown upon the dunghill, and trodden and trampled under feet by men; who were sometimes like shining stars, of the first magnitude in the firmament of religion, but are now fallen to the earth, and move according to the course and motions of this present world, practising enmity and hatred against the *Saints*, against the ways and truths of God, such as these likewise, even by these waies and works of abomination, plead the same cause with the former, the royall parentage and descent of the Scriptures from God; inasmuch as they plainly attest and keep from falling to the ground, such a saying of prophecy in them, which otherwise might seem but a dead letter, without any spirit of life and truth in it, and so might pollute or endanger the credit and authority of all the rest; this I mean, that there are many first, which shall be last. The truth is, that the Scriptures are so framed and contrived, that let men walk which way they will, let them set their faces, and fall in their practices, either to the East, or to the West, to the North or to the South; let them be righteous, or unrighteous in what degree they please: yea let them set themselves with all their might, and with all their strength to oppose them, yet they shall doe homage unto them: yea their fiercest contestations, and most fierce oppositions against them, shall and will, will.

Mar. 10. 31.

will or nill they, turn unto them for a testimony, and that of their heavenly originall, and proceeding from God. For this is that which we mentioned.

In the second place; *viz.* that men do not only give testimony unto, and assert the divine authority of the Scriptures, by a ting the propheticalls thereof, but the doctrinalls also, *i.* by acting either those graces, those noble principles and perfections on the one hand, or those lusts, and base principles and corruptions on the other hand, which the Scriptures declare to be in those two great divisions of men in the world. As for example, when men live and act out of that noble principle of faith, as if they took all for granted, and most unquestionably true, which the Scriptures report concerning *Jesus Christ*, and the freeness of the grace of God in him, and the great things of the world to come, and hereupon shall speak unto the world daily, as the Lord Christ spake unto *Sathan* (in *Peter*) World, get thee behinde mee, and be no offence unto mee; and so to their pride, frowardnesse, revenge &c. in all their waies, and with all their might, plying their heavenly interest, and laying up for themselves treasures without end, there, *where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.* Men (I say) by such actions, and waies as these, do give a testimony full of power, and authority to the Scriptures, that they are not of humane but of divine inspiration, and that God himself put of his own wisdom and knowledge unto them. So again when men shall act out of those base and vile principles, which are discovered to be in the hearts and natures of men, only by the Scriptures, as (*vers. 8.*) out of an hatred unto *Jesus Christ* and his Saints, out of a contempt or neglect of that great salvation, which is brought and tendered, and as it were laid down at their feet, by the Gospel, and in the very face and presence of life and mortality on the one hand, and of the vengeance of hell fire on the other hand, shall be covetous, unclean, proud, lovers of themselves, unjust, unmercifull, &c. as we know thousands amongst us are, such waies and practises of men as these, will not suffer the mindes or thoughts of any considering man to have any rest, but in the acknowledgement, and perfect
believe

belief of the procedure of the Scriptures from God; because they speak ever and anon of such things as these; and present them, with the characters and stories, or examples of such persons as these; like unto which there are none to be found in all the world, where the Scriptures have not been preached, or known. The pride, covetousnesse, uncleannesse, hatred, malice, injustice, oppression, cruelty, &c. which reign in the territories of hell, amongst persons, who have not had the opportunity of converse with the Scriptures, nor so much as heard of the gracious proposalls of the God of glory in these unto the world, are finnes indeed of the same name, and nature (as touching the letter of sin) with the pride, covetousnesse, uncleannesse, &c. which are acted in the presence of the powers of the world to come, and by persons, unto whom the great and blessed *Inhabiter of Eternity*, expoeth himself in Scripture vision, to be seen (as it were) *face to face*; yet as touching matter of iunfulnessse, or demeritousnesse, which is the spirit of sin, and that which is so potently operative in it to the everlasting ruine and destruction of the creature, they are finnes of a farre more innocent and harmlesse nature, and import; yea they are scarce finnes, comparatively. The sins of heathens are but *grasshoppers*: it is the sinne of the Christian which makes the *gyant*. As there was no creature could make a devil, but an Angel: so neither is there any circumstance or opportunity that can make a sinne so dreadfull above measure, and devouring, as the promise of life and immortality before the face of the sinner in the committing of it. This briefly for this argument. Great sinners under the Gospel, rightly interpreted, are notable assertours of the Divinity of it.

The latter proof or demonstration of the Divinity of the Scriptures, of the two last mentioned, was the consideration of such passages of speech, or sayings of men, whether in their writings, or otherwise, which reflect the light of that divine authority upon them, which hath been asserted hitherto. This argument, should we traverse it in the full extent and compass of it, would, I conceive, be more prolix, and take up more time, in the explication and prosecution of it, then any, yea I suppose then all the former have done. But I have promised you a

conclusion of the whole, in this sermon; and therefore for this promise sake, shall present you only with a first-fruits, instead of the harvest, confining my self to a few particulars, amongst many. Nor shall I insist upon, or so much as mention, any of those sayings or passages of speech, which fall ever and anon from the lips of men in these daies; no nor yet upon any thing found in books or writings either of a modern date, or whole authours are suspected as supposititious and counterfeit, though out of these three quivers, there might many arrows be drawn, to slay the unbeliefe of men, concerning the divine original of the Scriptures; but I shall only produce some speciall testimonies out of some ancient writers, of the best credit and authority within their line and sphere, yea of far better with many than the Scriptures themselves.

First, then (in the generall) this is considerable, that though the penmen of the Holy Ghost, do *not receive the testimony of men*, (as our Saviour himself speaks in a like case) i. doe not need, or stand upon the *testimony of men*, for the avouching or confirmation of the truth of their writings, but are confident that what they write will gain authority and credence in the judgements and consciences of men upon other terms, though the testimony of men, should fail them; yet God desiring that men, who do believe them, should believe abundantly, *that so the heirs of promise might have every waies strong consolations*, hath so provided that most, or all the principall, the most strange and wonderfull things recorded in the Scriptures, should be reported also and confirmed by Infidels, Pagans, Gentiles, and Heathen writers themselves, and such who are enemies unto the Scriptures, and to the religion, which is recommended in them unto the world.

This in generall: For particulars, by which the truth of the generall will fully appear, there are so many of them taken notice of, and drawn together in the books and writings of Christian authours, who have laboured in this argument, both heretofore, and of later times, that the time would fail us (as the Apostle speaks in a like case) yea and strength too, to rehearse them all particularly.

First, Concerning the creation of the world by God; this

is one of the greatest, and most wonderfull things asserted in the Scriptures, the serious and effectuall believe whereof must needs make such a breach upon the judgement, reason, and understanding of a man; that this being once entred and gotten in, other things reported in the Scriptures, will hardly keep out. All the miraculous and wonderfull things of the Scripture besides, are but as sparks of that flame of infinite power, which shone to the cleer manifestation of it self, in the creation of the universe. And yet this great and most considerable piece of Scripture, (the creation of the world by God) how great a concurrence hath it from amongst the heathens for the confirmation of the truth of it? He that shall peruse, what *Mercurius Trismegistus* (one of the most ancient writers amongst the heathen) hath left in those fragments of his works, which are preserved, and to be found in other ancient authors, concerning the subject we speak of (the creation of the world by God) will be half persuaded, that he had teen *Moses* text, and meant to write a kinde of comment upon it: *Moses* speaks of *darknesse upon the waters*; this *Trismegistus* represents in his commentaries, *a dreadful shadow hovering on the moist nature*, as it were brooded by the word of God; *Moses* saith, that *God spake*, and that forthwith things were made: *Trismegistus* acknowledgeth and bringeth in *Gods word shining*, whereby he created the light, and made the world, and all that is therein. And so he goeth on, as it were hand in hand with *Moses*, a great way together, paraphrasing upon his expressions. I might here add the testimony also of *Orpheus*, one of the ancientest of the *Greeks*, who (as himself reporteth) had been in *Egypt*, where he said he had learned, that there was but one God, and that the *Air*, the *Heaven*, the *Sea*, the *Earth*, and *Hell* with all things in them, had dwelt or harboured in the breast of this God from eternity (with many other high and excellent expressions of himself in this point) It were endlesse to cite the testimonies of all those authours, famous for wisdom and learning to this day, who plainly taught and avouched the creation of the world, and all things by God; as of *Empedocles*, *Hesiod*, *Parmenides*, *Sophocles*, *Aeschilus*, *Euripides*, *Pythagoras*, *Thales*, *Anaxagoras*, *Plato*, with many others.

Again secondly, For the long lives of the first patriarchs, and those that are storied in Scripture, to have lived in the first age, or ages of the world, as some seven, others eight, some nine hundred hundred years and more (of which, some it seems, make a grand objection against the truth, and consequently against the divinity of the Scriptures) yet diverse heathen authours confirm the relation of *Moses* herein: as *Manethon* an Egyptian writer, and *Berosus* a Chaldean, *Moschus*, *Hesiodus*, and others, who write the Phœnician story. *Yea Hesiod, Hecateus, Acusilaus, Hellanicus, and Ephorus*, consent unto the relation, affirming moreover, that they were ordained to live so long, that they might study sciences, and invent arts; especially that they might discover the motions, of the heavens, and enrich the world, with the knowledge of Astronomy; wherein (they say) they could have done little good; if they had lived lesse then six hundred years: because the great year (as they call it) is so long in going about, and coming to a period.

Concerning *Noahs* flood; what nation (saith *du Pleſſis*, a learned Protestant writer) hath not beleev'd it? and what authour hath not spoken of it? Among the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romanes, nothing was more common. And because they had heard, that it had been most ancient, and fallen out towards the beginning of the world, being ignorant of the account of the times; therefore every writer assigned it to such a time as he thought to be of greatest antiquity. The Theban writers referred it to the time of *Ogyges*: the Thessalian, to the time of *Deucalion*: and proportionably others. And by the reports of travailours, the belief of it is at this day common in *Braſile, nova Hispania, Florida, &c.* who likewise affirm, that the inhabitants of these countries, doe generally impure it to the sin of man, and to the wrath of the highest, poured out upon mankind.

Concerning *Noahs* Ark; though the heathens had not the story as perfect as *Moses* had, who ploughed with a farre better heifer then theirs, and had his knowledge hereof by the revelation of the Spirit of God; yet some of them, as *Alexander, Polybius*, and *Abidens* by name (very ancient writers) relate

relate the story in their writings thus; that *Saturne* foretold unto *Xisuthrus* the flood ere it came; and that he mad: him an ark to save all cattell with him: that he preserved his holy writings by engraving them in certain pillars in Egypt; and sayl'd in his ark towards Armenia; that after certain daies he sent forth certain birds, which found no dry ground, &c. Their speaking thus of *Saturne*, answers the fabulous notion and conceit of the Greeks, who supposed the Jews to have worshipp'd *Saturne*, because they kept holy the seventh day. And for the name of *Xisuthrus*, it may well be that in the Assyrian language it signifies as much as *Noah*; who (as *Josephus* reports) had divers names, in divers places. *Yea* and *Plutarch* speaketh expressly of the dove, which *Deucalion* sent out of the ark to seek dry land.

Concerning the building of the Tower of *Babel*, and the confusion of tongues, some of the foresaid authours write thus. The common opinion is (say they) that men being bred of the earth, and trusting in their own strength, would needs in spite of the Gods, goe rear a tower up to the Sun, in the same place where *Babylon* now is: and that when they had raised it very high, the Gods overthrow it, and cast it down upon their heads with a great winde; and that at this time began the diversity of languages: whereupon the Hebrews called the place, *Babel*.

It were easie (as before was intimated) to make this pile farre greater, and to fetch in credit and authority in abundance from forreign authours, such as they afford, to strengthen and enrich all other the relations of Scripture, with reputation of truth; and particularly those which seem most obnoxious. But this having been so copiously, and with so much faithfullnesse performed to my hand, by the forementioned worthy and learned authour, *du Pleſſis*, in his book, *De veritate Religionis*, i. of the truennesse of Religion, not onely extant, but of easie procurement also in the English tongue: I am willing to discharge my self from any further engagement in the argument in hand, upon his account: only transcribing that famous record of *Josephus* concerning him, who is the grand theme and subject of the Scriptures, and whom they count it no robbery to make equall with God.

In the time of Tiberius there was one Jesus, a wise man (at least if he was to be called a man) who was a worker of great miracles, and a teacher of such who love the truth, and had many, as well Jews as Gentiles who clave unto him. This was Christ. And when Pilate, upon his being accused, by the chiefe men of our nation, had sentenced him to be crucified, yet did not they who had first loved him, forsake him. For he appeared unto them the third day alive again; according to what the Prophets, divinely inspired, had foresold concerning him, as they had done an innumerable number of very strange things besides. And even to this day, both the name and kinde of persons, called Christians, so named from him, remain. This Josephus was a Jew, as well in religion, as by nation; though he wrote in Greek. He was born about five or six years after the sufferings of Christ, and wrote the history, where the record mentioned is found, about twenty years after the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by Titus.

For a conclusion: As the Evangelist John saith, that truly Jesus did many other miracles in the presence of his disciples, which were not written in his book: but those he did write, were written, that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Sonne of God, and that believing they might have life through his Name^a: implying, that though he recorded not all things, which were subservient to his main end in writing, that he had opportunity to write; yet he wrote what he judged compleatly sufficient for the procurement and obtaining of this his end; So I acknowledge, that there are many other considerations and arguments, besides those held forth and managed in this treatise, strongly assertive of that conclusion and truth, the demonstration whereof is the great prize, that hath been mainly contended for in this long race; but judging these, which have been proposed, argued, or insisted upon, to be abundantly evictive of this important truth, that the Scriptures are from heaven, and not from men. I was willing to gratifie both you, and my self, with silence in the rest: And to this determination I was led also by the hand of this consideration, that as (according to our Saviours determination) they that will not bear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be per-

^a Joh. 20. 30.

perswaded though one should rise from the dead^b: neither is it in any degree likely, that those, whose judgements and consciences will not bow down unto, and acknowledge the Divinity of the Scriptures, at the instance and command of all those pregnant and important demonstrations, by which it hath been asserted in this present discourse, would yeeld, or be perswaded to take upon them the yoke of this blessed subjection, though an Angel from heaven should bring it unto them; or though as many books were written in confirmation thereof, as the whole world were able to contain. Aristotle in setting out the work and part of a Rhetorician, asserting it to be, *ἡ πρῶτη ἀναγκαῖα καὶ ἀναγκαῖα λέγειν, ἢ, not to perswade, but to speak things pertinent and proper to perswade*; drew with the same stroke of his pensill an happy character also of the proper work of a Minister of the Gospel. To overrule the judgements and consciences of men in the great things of eternity, appertaineth to him, that rideth upon the heavens: they who dwell in houses of clay, quit themselves to the utmost point of their line, by proposing and pressing such things upon men, which have a sufficient potencie of reason and argument to perswade, where there is no barre of wilfull neglect, frowardness, or resistance in the way. God perswade
*Prophets, and he shall dwell
 in the tents of
 Shem^c.*

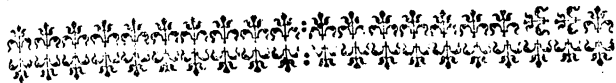
^b Luk. 16. 31.

^c Gen. 9. 17.

* *

F I N I S.

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Texts of Scripture, unto which some light is given in the Treatise; besides many other cited occasionally.

GENESIS 19.5



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Levit. 11. 44, 45. *Ye shall therefore be holy: for I am holy, &c.* p. 67.

1 King. 19. 11. ---but the Lord was not in the earth--quake--nor in the wind--nor in the fire. p. 142.

Psal. 2. 3. *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us, &c.* p. 236. & p. 238. & p. 284.

19. 2. *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.* p. 44.

19. 7, 8. *The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever.* p. 80.

113. 5, 6. *Who is like unto the Lord God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things in heaven, and on earth?* p. 40. 212.

119. 96. *I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy Law is exceeding large.* p. 78.

Prov. 22. 2. *The rich and the poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.* p. 39.

Eccle. 7. 13. *Consider the work of God: for who can make that strait, which he hath made crooked?* p. 38, 39.

9. 1. *All things come alike unto all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked, &c.* p. 337, 338, &c.

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- 9.11. I returned, and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, &c. but time and chance happeneth to them all. p.339.
- Zach. 4.10. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about — and a burthen upon every stone for all people. p.361.
- Matth. 5.29.30. And if thy right eye offend thee pluck it out — for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. p.113.
- 5.44. But I say unto you, love your enemies: blesse them that curse you, &c. p.353.
- 10.37,38. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. p.110.
- 10.39. He that looseth his life for my sake shall finde it. p.110.
- 11.3. Goe and shew John again those things, which ye doe hear and see: The blinde receive their sight, and the lame walk, &c. p.135.
- 13.5. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepnesse of earth. Ep. to the Reader.
- 13.9. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. p.34.35.36.
- 17.12. --- And they have done unto him, even what they list. p.334.
- 19.30. But many that are first, shall be last, and the last, first. p.335.
- Mark 10.38. But Jesus said unto them, ye know not what ye ask. p.136.
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- the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. p.129.
- 10.18. I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. p.232.
- 18.8. --- nevertheless when the son of man cometh, shall he finde faith on earth? p.334.
- Joh. 3.6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, &c. p.219.
- 3.16. So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c. p.196.
- 3.20. He that doth evil hateth the light, &c. p.283.
- 6.68. Lord, to whom shall we goe? Thou hast the words of eternall life. p.36.
- 10.17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. p.166.
- 14.12. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that beleeveth on me, the works that I doe, shall he doe also; and greater works then these shall he doe, &c. p.152.
- 16.21. --- ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoyce. p.346.
- Act. 2.24. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible he should be holden of them. p.173.
- 2.37. And when they heard it, they were pricked in their hearts, and said --- men and brethren, what shall we doe? p.139.
- 13.22. --- a man after mine own heart. p.155.
- 14.17. Neverthelesse he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, &c. p.184,185.
- 26.8. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? p.137.
- 26.9. I verily thought, that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, &c. p.327.

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- Rom. 1. 14. *I am a debtour both to the Grecians, and to the Barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise.* p. 108, 109.
1. 9, 22. *Because that which may be known of God is manifest unto them.---For the invisible things of him, are manifest from the creation, &c.* p. 100. & p. 201.
1. 21, 22. *They became vain in their thoughts---professing themselves wise, they became fools, &c.* p. 79, 80.
1. 24, 26. *Therefore also God gave them up to uncleannes, to vile affections, &c.* p. 143.
2. 4. *Or despiest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?* p. 186.
3. 5. *Is God unrighteous? God forbid.* p. 180.
3. 19. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* p. 201.
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4. 25. *---and was raised again for our justification.* p. 174.
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6. 23. *For the wages of sin is death.* p. 180.
7. 9. *For I was once alive, without the law; but when the commandement came, sin revived, but I died.* p. 121. & p. 140.
8. 3. *God sent his Son in the similitude of sinfull flesh, &c.* p. 214.
8. 32. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him, freely give us*

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- us all things?*
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10. 19. *But I demand, have they not heard? y^es verily their sound went into all the earth, &c.* p. 83, 184.
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- 1 Cor. 1. 24. *We preach Christ, the wisdom of God, and the power of God.* p. 171. & p. 215, 216.
2. 13. *Which things we also speak, not in words, which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spirituall things with spirituall.* p. 31. 32.
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3. 1. *And I (Brethren) could not speak unto you, as unto spirituall, but as unto carnall.---* p. 131.
3. 13. *Every mans work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it: because it shall be revealed by fire.* p. 44.
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9. 19. *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made my self servant unto all men.* p. 108, 109.
9. 23. *And this I do for the Gospels sake, that I may be partaker thereof with you.* p. 324.
10. 10. *The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto Devils, and not unto God.* p. 89.
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- 14.24. But if all prophecy, and there come in one who believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, &c. p.118.119.&127.
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- 2.COR.2.14. Now thanks be given unto God, who alwayes causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. p.292.
- 2.15. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. p.175. &p.355.
- 4.3.4. If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes.&c. p.16.17.&p.216.
- 4.4. --Who is the image of God.&c. p.220.221.
- 5.19. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.&c. p.198.
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- Col.1.24. ---and fill up that which is behinde of the affliction of Christ in my flesh for his bodies sake, &c. p.167.
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- 1.Tim.3.16. And without controversie great is the mystery of godlinesse, &c. p.84.85.
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- 3.15. --which is the pillar and ground of truth. p.243. 244.
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- 11.17. By faith, Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac, &c. p.50.
- 1.Pet.1.18. --forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but by the precious blood of Christ, &c. p.68.69.
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- 1.Joh.3.20. If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. p.124.
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