A SUPPORT FOR
the sinking Heart
in times of distress.

OR
A SERMON PREACHED
in London, to uphold hope
and allay fear, January 4th. Which
was a day of great trouble and deep danger in the City.

By Simeon Ash.

Prov. 25.11.
A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold, in pictures of silver.

London
Printed by G.M. and are to be sold by Thomas Vnderhill, at the signe of the Bible in Woodstreet near the Counter, MDCXLII.
To the Christian Reader.

The seasonableness of this Sermon occasioning warme workings in the hearts of many who heard it preached, the Author of it was persuaded to print it: but he judging it unworthy such public-like view, returned a denyall unto those desires of his friends. Afterwards understanding that a Coppy taken by short hand from his mouth, would be made common, he rather chose to peruse and correct it, then to expose himselfe and the reader unto greater wrong. Here-upon sundry phrases are filed, and some A 2 Scriptures
To the Reader.

Scriptures layed more open, other additions or amplifications are not very many, but thou now hast the body of the Sermon, both for matter and method, as it was first delivered. When thou meetest with wants and weaknesses, remember that not the confidence of the preacher, but the importunity of some of his hearers, hath made this discourse thus publike. If by means hereof thy soule shall receive any spirituall edification, and grow more able with hope and comfort, to thrust through straights in Heaven way; give God the glory of all his gracious workings upon thy spirit by Jesus Christ.

Marty.17. 1641.

It is this day ordered by the Committee of the House of Commons in Parliament concerning Printing, that this Booke, intituled A support for the sinking heart in times of distresse, be printed.

JOHN WHITE.

GENESIS
Gen. XXII. XIV.

In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Interpreters call this Text a Proverbe, the interpretation whereof is to be fetched from the occasion of it.

God by way of tryall did put his servant Abraham upon a sad taske, a dead service, commanding him to make a burnt offering of his sonne, his sonne Isaac, the sonne of his age, and the sonne of God's promise.

Take now thy sonne, thy only sonne Isaac whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering.

How heavy this worke was likely to be upon Abraham's heart, I leave it to the judgement of any affectionate father, when he hath seriously perused the law of the Lord concerning burnt offerings.

The offering being slaine it was to be cut in pieces, the wood being laid upon the Altar fire was to be put under, the parts, the head, the fat were to be laid in order upon the wood, the inwards and the legs being washed in water, all were to be burnt on the Altar.

When the good old man had chewed this bitter pill for the space of three dayes, towards the end of the third day, he lifting up his eyes saw the place afarre off where his dearest
dearest sonne must be sacrificed.

Being come to his journeyes end he builds the Altar, binds his sonne, and layes him thereon. What patheticall conference passed betweene them two, the Holy Ghost revealeth not. But what it was each affectionate heart will make conjecture. When the father (no doubt with a heavy heart) had taken the knife, and lifted up his hand, and was ready to give the deaths blow to his beloved Isaac, now imagin you what were Abrahams straights.

Is it not probable he might have such reasonings as these? If I kill not my sonne God will be incensed because he is disobeyed; If I doe, how will the world clamour and ceniture, being ignorant of my warrant, and therefore apt to judge my act both impious and unnaturall.

Now in the Mount is the Lord scene, divine providence sweetly and gloriously appeareth two wayes.

1. In that Abrahams sonne is spared.

2. In that a fitting sacrifice is prepared, and both unexpected. Abraham, Abraham hold thy hand.

How welcome were these words to the working warme heart of Abraham, being ready to let forth the life of his welbeloved sonne? The execution is checkt, Isaac is not killed, and yet the intention of his obedience herein is graciously accepted: yea and as an addition of mercy, he is aslied by Chrift the Angell of the covenant, that God accounted him one that truly feared his name. Now I know thou fearest me.

This unexpected providence might worke in the good mans heart willingnesse to tender unto the Lord an offering in way of thankfullnesse, that his Majesty might have some hommage in the same place where he had shewed so much favour. And though speedy provision of that kind was so farre from Abrahams thoughts, as the preservation of his sonne, yet when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold behind him a ramme caught in a thicket by the hornes. And Abraham Went and tooke the ramme and
in times of distress.

and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his sonne, and Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh. In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

I will not trouble you in reporting the various readings of these words from the original. In short, the English of my Text is this, Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Or if you would have my Doctrine in other words, take it thus:

In the Mount, in the midst of straights it hath beene the manner of the Almighty, mercifully to manifest himselfe for his servants comfort.

There are two things that I shall desire to speake too in the prosecution of this point, purposely pitched upon because of this dayes perplexity.

1. Confirmation, that it may be strongly beleived.
2. Application, that it may be seasonably improved.

The Confirmation of the Doctrine I will give in.

1. By Scripture.
2. By Reason.

The Scripture proofs you shall have under two heads.

1. The Promises of God.
2. The experiences of the godly.

I will mention only two precious Promises, because they are sufficient, being both pregnant and pertinent, speaking both fully and punctually to the point in hand.

The former is in Psal. 72.12, where the sweet dispensations of Christ's regall authority being tipically foretold by King Solomon's government, we have this recorded. He shall deliver the needy when he cryeth, the poor also and him that hath no helper. You may doe well to marke the fitnesse and fullnesse of the Promise.

1. When Christ finds his people in themselves poore and needy, destitute of abilities to shelter themselves from wrong and violence.

2. When in regard of others it is thus with them, viz., not only that they have weak helps, or few helpers, but when they have no helpers, none at all.

3. When
3. When in this distresse they cry out as persons in an undone condition, then, though not till then will he deliver.

The other Promise is registred in Deut. 32. 36. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himselfe for his servants when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none sent up, or left.

The language is large, and hath much in it, but because the proffe in it is apparent to every eye, I will leave it.

The experiences of the godly which I shall produce you may please thus to consider:

1. Of Single Persons plunged into deepe dangers.
2. Of companies, whether few or many, compassed about with devouring perills on every side.

For Single Persons, I will instance in foure Examples.

The first is of Daniell, wherein foure circumstances are remarkeable.

1. He was cast to Lyons, not only one but many, the number we know not.
2. He was put into the Lyons den, and the doore was shut, a stone was brought and layed upon the mouth of the den that he might not get forth from those beasts of prey.
3. The King sealeth it with his owne signet, and with the signet of his Lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniell.
4. In this darke den of deadly danger he continued a whole night, and in this great straight the Lord by his Angel, shut the Lyons mouthes that they did his servant no hurt at all.

The second Example is that of David; 1 Sam. 23.

from the 25. to the 28. Saul pursued after David in the Wilderness of Maon, and Saul went on this side the Mountaine, and David and his men on that side of the Mountaine, and David made haste to get away for feare of Saul, for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them. But there came a messenger unto Saul saying, haft thee and come, for the Philistines have invaded the Land, where-
in times of distress.

Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David.

In this Example these things are considerable.

1. It was no lesse then David's life that now was endangered.

2. The Ziphites who were acquainted with David's holds, combined themselves also against him.

3. All this strength did not only in a warre-like way take up armes to meete him, for then by flying backe he might have made an escape, but they compassed him round about.

4. His strength was not sufficient safely to breake through these blood-thirsting forces: Now in this straight, an unexpected providence procures his preservation: In this Mount was God seen gloriously.

The third Example is that of Paul, which you have in the 21. Acts 30, 31, 32. All the City was moved, and the people ranne together, they bound Paul, drew him out of the Temple, and forthwith the doores were shut, and as they went about to kill him, tidings came to the chiefe Captaine of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproare, who immediately tooke Souldiers, and Centurions, and ranne downe unto them, and when they saw the chiefe Captaine and the souldiers, they left beating Paul.

Herein you may note:

1. The generall Insurrection, All the City.

2. Their violent Opposition, They drew him out.

3. Their bloody Intention, It was to kill Paul.

4. Their entrance upon execution, They were beating him to beate out his life: Now in this straight commeth tydings, leave him there is something else to doe: Thus was God in the Mount seene, and Paul's life preserved.

The fourth Example is of Peter, Acts 12, 4, 6, 7. where-in note:

1. That Herod intending to kill him (having done execution upon James, ver. 3.) had apprehended him, and imprisoned him.

2. In prison he was committed to the custody of foure quaternions of souldiers, that for every watch both day
and night there might escape, and 4. looking to him to prevent escape.

3. The night before he was to be brought forth, he was bound with two chains, and two soldiers had him betweene them. And now that night, and in that straight, he was delivered by the Angell of God.

The experiences of God's people in combined companies, come in the next place to be considered, and for brevities sake I will only suggest three.

The first is of Shadrack, Meshech and Abednego, wherein their Persons are not so many as the particulars notable in their deliverance; Dan.3,19,20,21,22,23 &c. Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the forme of his visage was changed against Shadrack, Meshech and Abednego, therefore he spake and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated, &c.

From these words their extreme perill with which they were besieged, appears in five circumstances.

1. Their death is determined by the King, who had authority to command both their tortures and executioners.

2. The most mighty soldiers were appointed to bind them, and doe execution upon them.

3. The furnace being heated seven times more hot then ordinarily, did burne to death them who undertooke their burning.

4. These means were cast not only into the mouth, but into the midst of the furnace.

5. They fell down bound in the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Now in this condition, conceive how little hope could be expected of life to be continued, and yet it is affirmed by the Holy Ghost, that they had no hurt, upon their bodies the fire had no power, nor was the hair of their heads singed.

The next is of Israel when they came out of Egypt, recorded, Exodus 14. Wherein these things set forth Israel's extremity.
in times of distress.

1. The forces prepared against them, The heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and he made ready his Chariot and took his people with him, and he took six thousand chosen Chariots, and all the Chariots of Egypt, and Captains over every one of them.

2. The pursuit made after them, They pursued after the children of Israel, and the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and Chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and his army.

3. The dreadfull apprehensions raised in the hearts of the Israelites, (viz.) that no lesse than their death was intended. Why haft thou taken us away to dye? Had it not beene better for us to serve the Egyptians then that we should dye.

4. The particulars whereby they were further straightned. 1. The Egyptians overtooke them encamping by the Sea. 2. The Sea if they went forward threatned to devour them. In this distress God discovers himselfe, and delivers them. For observe the words, Moses said unto the people, fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day.

To day, even just now and not before, helpe comes from Heaven. Herein this farther circumstance hath it's weight, that Israel at this instant was provoking God, by murmuring and distrustfull fears.

The last is of Israel in the reign of Jeroboam sonne of Joash. The Lord saw the affliction of Israel that it was very bitter, for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel, and the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under Heaven, but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the sonne of Joash.

All these passages propounded from sacred records, may abundantly satisfie us in the truth of the doctrine now under hand: (viz.) That in the Mount of the Lord it shall appear, Mans extremity is Gods opportunity.

In case you inquire the Reasons of this divine dispensation, I returne answer
That God thus worketh in reference to Himself, His people, and their enemies.

1. In reference to himself. The prayer and glory of his own blessed Name designed in all his works, is the supreme end aimed at in this Providence. This God bringeth in as the cause why his hand carried Israel to the very side of the Sea, into the mouth of death before deliverance should appear. I will be honoured upon Pharaoh and upon all his host, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.

Exod. 14:4. Upon such occasions the Attributes of the Lord break forth in glory. His Wisdom is most manifested when it worketh beyond means, above means, that humane reason cannot find out divine footsteps. His Power triumphs when all opposition shanketh before his wondrous workings. The like might be shewed concerning his other excellencies. The event of God's dealings with Daniel, and the three young governors in the times of their straights, discover that this was God's intent in those providences. For marke how Nebuchadnezzar and King Darius did trumpet forth the praises of the God of Shadrach, Mešach, Abednego and Daniel, when they were eye witnesses of those two glorious deliverances which were wrought on by omnipotency. Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, blessed be the God of Shadrach, Mešach and Abednego, who hath sent his Angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the King's Word, and yielded their bodies that they might not serve, nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Mešach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dung-hill, because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort:

Dan. 3:18, 29. Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my Kingdom, men tremble and fear before
in times of distress.

fore the God of Daniell, for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signes and wonders in Heaven and in earth. Who hath delivered Daniell from the power of the Lyons. By both these instances it is evident, that the Lord did appear in the Mount for his owne sake, to get and toke himselfe a name in the world.

2. God doth thus work in respect to his own people. And here I will note only foure particulars.

1. Sometimes that he might discover to his servants for their encouragement, both the truth and strength of his owne graces in them. This was the reason why God thus tryed Abraham, that he might manifest that holy feare which was planted in his breast. Hereupon God putteth him to it, and carrieth him into the Mount, leadeth him into distress by degrees, acteth him on to build the Altar, to lay the wood in order, to bind his Isaac, to lay him upon the Altar, upon the wood, yea to take the knife, and to stretch forth his hand to slay his sonne, before he did appeare for his comfort, in giving order for the lengthening of Isaac's life. And now when there seemed to be but one minute of time unto the effusion of Isaac's blood, heare the good newes from Heaven, Abraham I know thou fearest me.

2. Sometimes to manifest the feeblenesse of some grace in their hearts for their humbling, Peter thought himselfe full enough of courage to come to Christ upon the sinking seas if he might have a call. Well! marke the issue, Christ calleth him, come out Peter, but when he saw the windes boysterous, and when his footing failed, he began to sink, then he was afraid and cryed out, here-upon observe Christ's answer, O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?

3. That he may set the graces of his Spirit in exercise, both for their increase, and for the enfeebling of contrary lufts. We know that habits are strengthened by exercise, and grace is augmented in it's measure, by

...
being put forth vigorously in its operations. And by how much any grace gathereth strength, by so much the opposing corruption becometh feeble in a Christian breast. And that the Lord hath this end in this kind of working, it might be evidenced by manifold instances, but for brevities sake, I will only point at one, in one single experiment.

As holy affiance in God is confirmed, so by such like dispensations creature confidence is abated in holy hearts, 2 Cor. 1:9,10. But we had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. Men in straights see the strength of creature helps shunke up, and withered, whereupon they dare lean to them no longer; but Gods irresistible power, profound wisdom, abundant goodness, and other glorious attributes in such difficult cases being clearly discovered, the soule is encouraged confidently to cast itself into his armes for future times.

4. That their deliverance might be more sweet to their spirits, and consequently that their joyes might the more readily runne out before his Majesty in holy thankfulness. When we expect that now our houses shall be fired, the City sack't, our estates wafted, our wives abused, our children cruelly murdered, our Sab-\nbath and weeke day meetings interrupted, our Parliament dissolved, and our Kingdome desolated. Now to see these clouds to blow over, and our Sunne to break forth againe, oh how sweet will this glorious change be to our now-dropping hearts! Davids experience speaks to this purpose, Psal. 34.1,2,3. A Psalme of David when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed. I will bleffe the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soule shall make her boast in the Lord, the humble shall have thereof and be glad, oh magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Psal.86.12,13. I will praise thee O Lord
Lord my God with all my heart, and I will glorifie thy name for evermore. For great is thy mercy toward me, and thou hast delivered my soule from the lowest hell. But more fully and fitly may our Kingdom concerns be expressed by : Psal. 124. if our God be pleased now to appare in the Mount for London, for England, in this day of our deep danger, and exceeding, exceeding great feare. And our desired deliverance from present perplexities, may with joy of soule be expressed by the words of that Psalme. If it had not beene the Lord Who was on our side, now may England say, if it had not beene the Lord Who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick. When their Wrath was kindled against us, then the Waters had overwhelmed us, the streame had gone over our soule, then the proud Waters had gone over our soule. But blessed be the Lord Who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth, &c.

3. God thus worketh in regard of his peoples enemies, both the Divell and divelish men. In regard of the Divell, that he might stop his black and flanderous mouth, which is upon all occasions wide open in wayes of calumny, calting flanderous accusations upon Gods good servants. When all Job's estate was removed in a day, all his children knockt dead at one blow, God commending Job faith thus to Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered and said, skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will be give for his life; put forth thy hand now and touch his bone, and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. Hereupon God bringeth Job into further straights, for this very purpose to silence Satan. And whereas those malignant spirits continue to be the accusers of the Brethren, and are still apt to provoke his Majesty against them, suggesting, that if his providence put them to pinches, they will then fly out, and manifest their carnall fleshliness.

ver. 4, 5
Rev. 12. 10.
fleshliness in the profession and practice of Religion: Hereupon God puts them (as it were) into the stocks, and sets them upon the rack, and causeth them to be besieged with difficulties to prove Satan a notorious lyar.

2. In regard of divellish men. Partly to fill their hearts with the more vexation: Partly to chaine down their violent spirits, that they may not breake forth with further fury against his cause and people, and through the power of strong conviction, to work some change in their lives and courses.

1. To fill their hearts with the more vexation. The Lord doth indeed rejoyce in the misery of the wicked.

I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh: yea it is a comfort to his highness to powre forth fury upon them: I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted. And the Psalmist seems to give in this, as a reason why God causeth it to be midnight with his servants before light peep forth, why they are in deep danger before day-light appeare, Psal. 112. 9, 10.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darknesse, his heart is established, he shall not be afraid: until he see his desire upon his enemies, his house shall be exalted with honour, the wicked shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash with his teeth and melt away. It cutteth a wicked man to the heart, when he thinketh he shall have the day in the downfall of the righteous, and yet the godly they rise, and get ground, and gather strength. We have a pregnant proof of this in the example of Haman; who expecting that Mordecai should be hanged, when Mordecai was advanced to great honour, then Haman mourned and hanged down the head: And thus it will be with the popish and prophane, who this day rejoyce in our dolefull straights, when God shall appeare in the Mount for our deliverance.

2. That chains of restraint might be laid upon their hearts and hands, by Gods strange and amazing providences. When they see that God from Heaven doth give testimonials of approbation to his poore persecuted servants
servants and service, being plunged over head and cares in the floods of deepest calamity.

This is made good upon Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore **Dan.3.29**.

I make a decree, that every people, nation and language which speake any thing amisse against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dung-hill, because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. Then the King promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babilon.

In like manner the defeat of Haman, and the deliverance of the poore jewes devoted to destruction, proved the same effect upon many of their enemies. And truly notwithstanding this dayes feares and straights, we will hope to see some such effects upon the hearts and lives of some who deride and oppose our desired reformation. Thus much for Confirmation of the doctrine. Application followeth. There are foure uses to be made which are both naturall and seafonable.

Hence it followeth, that people have no ground at all to suspect their own gracious standing in reference to God because of their straights. Deep and devouring dangers may be ready to swallow up the righteous, God may bring an Abraham into the Mount, unto great difficulties, Gods people may travell through the red sea in the way to Canaan, seas of trouble, bloody times may overtake them who are most deare to God. This I rather note because Gods people are apt to dash upon this rock, and to doe themselves much wrong by thus reasoning. If God did love me, or had been graciously respective to my humiliations and prayers, I should not have seen so black, so dark a day. My selfe and mine, our peace and Parliament, our persons and possessions had never been in such danger, if the Lord had bin favourable to me in seeking better times. Herein David failed: **Psal.73.13,14**. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vaine, and washed my hands in innocency, for all the day long have I bin plagued, and chastened every morning.

Now
Now to keep us from adding guilt to our grief, that we may not provoke God to be angry, while our enemies are filled brim full of blood-thirsting fury. I will briefly suggest foure considerations, to preserve us from this mistake.

1. By this error actd, we deny the perfection of the word of God, because therein there is no such rule to judge by. Yea the Scriptures openly and evidently speake the contrary, Eccles.9.1.2. No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them. All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked. And certainly if we shall dare to adde our devices to Gods word, he will be angry. Adde thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a lyar.

2. Thus people beare false witnesse against themselves, by palling unjustifiable sentences against their own soules. Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour. To detract from our neighbours credit and comfort, is a breach of Gods law. And truly it admits many aggravations, when we deale thus injuriously with our selves.

3. We express much ingratitude to God, the God of all our mercies, calling his love into question, and overlooking or undervaluing all former favours, because of present presurlres and approaching dangers. Let Israels miscarriage in this kind be your looking-glasse to shew the soule face of this fault, that you may take heed of this deformity. When Pharaoh pursued them, and the roaring seas threatened to devour them, their deliverance out of Egypt (though wrought on by many miraculous providences) was accounted a misfortune rather then a mercy, for observe their language, Exod.14.11. Wherefore haft thou dealt thus with us?

4. By this mistake we reach a wrong to others, Psal. 73.15. If I say I will speake thus, behold I should offend against the generation of thy children. Our carriage in this particular may cast sad discouragements upon the hearts of
of many care to God, causing them to question their spiritual state, because of outward straights. Hereby also we seem to suspect their wisdom who uphold their hopes, and maintain their comforts, notwithstanding their manifold heavy afflictions.

Censure not others to be rejected or abhorred by the Lord, because you meet with them in the Mount, you see them in straights, in extremities. Beloved, the words of the Psalmist are considerable. Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble, the Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. As you desire favourable dealing from God in the time of your personall calamity, learne to judge wisely and charitably of them who are in extremity. The Barbarians did censure Paul to be a man under some black note of infamy, fastened upon him by the Lord, because of his sudden and unexpected danger. Acts 28.4. And when the Barbarians saw the venemous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer. Marke their confidence as well as their uncharitableness, no doubt he is a murderer: And why no doubt? because though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth him not to live, for a venemous viper, a death threatening creature now did hang upon his hand. Beloved when we looke upon men arrested by credit-killing accusations, and pursued with death-threatening charges, and constrained to hide themselves from the bloody hands of violence, let us take heed of adding to their sorrow by our censures. That practice which was well becomimg Barbarians, will be very uncomely for us Christians. Two things consider to keep you from this fault, which I will propound without much enlargement.

1. The sinfullnesse of this censoriousnesse.
2. The dangerousnesse of it:

1. Being forbidden by Christ, judge not, that you be not judged; judge not, that is, not rashly, groundlessly, uncharitably.
2. Arguing want of love, for truth and strength of love maketh faire and candied construstions of all occurrences which concerneth them whom we love. Charity doth not behave it selfe unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinkest no evil, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.

3. Weakning love, for affection is enfeeled by our looking upon our brethren through the glass which presents them as unlovely, while we think them persons disregarded by God, our respect to them is diminished.

4. Hindering prayer, the Apostle knew this, and therefore I pray you consider by what an argument he presseth the Hebrews to pray for him, pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly. If you be well persuaded the afflicted in regard of their pious frame, you will be the more willing to let out your hearts for them in a way of prayer. But when men thus think, the Heavens frown, and God is angry with such an one, and therfore it is a vain thing to bellow time and breath in prayer for him, this office of Christian love is interrupted. By these particulars you may perceive that this censoriousnesse is very sinfull; sinfull in the root, and sinfull in the fruits, sinfull in the heart, and sinfull in the life, checking grace, and hindering duty.

2. Consider the dangerousnesse of it.

1. God is much incensed, You remember how Eliphas and the other of Job's friends, loaded him with their heavy censures, concluding his hypocrisy from his extremity. Now when God had done with Job, having schooled him out of the whirlwind, and had wrought him to his own bent, observe what followeth, The Lord said to Eliphas the Temanite, my Wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath. Therefore my beloved if you would not suffer under Gods frowns, nor smart under the expressions of his displeasure.
in times of distresse.

Sure, if you would not have the sparks of God's wrath to kindle upon you, take heed of cenfuring any of God's worthies that have bin instrumentall for good either in Church or commonwealth, because for the present under a black cloud, because exposed unto any disgrace or danger, by reason of some sad providence.

2. Our censoriousness may in our suffering times add much weight to our own heavy pressures. If I cenfure others, and thereby add affliction to their bonds, I may expect that God will add gall to my wormwood, when the bitter cup commeth to my hand, and I must per force take down a displeasing and distastfull draught. Judge not, that you be not judged, for with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you againe. These meditations made use of, may I hope through God's mercy, prevent our sinning against God, others and our selves, by uncharitable cenfures cast upon our distressed brethren.

It concerneth all of us to prepare for a journey into the Mount, to make ready for tryalls by extremities. Beloved, this day the Heavens are black over our heads, and our feares are not few, for ought we know God will have us into the Mount, my meaning is, it may be the Lord will thrust us into such extremities, as we never yet met with in all our lives.

There are two things that I will plainly speake to in the enlarging of this use.

1. What may quicken us to prepare for straights.
2. What course must be taken that we may be prepared for such a condition.

To perswade our preparation, consider two motives.

1. That we are all exposed unto perplexities.
2. That we are all subject to manifold miscarriages in such a state.

1. We are all subject to a distressed condition, let him that denieth it bring forth his superedias, and say here, I have that from Heaven signed and sealed, which doth secure me I shall never come into adversity. Beloved, be-
leve it, whatsoever afflictions have feized upon any of 
Gods worthies formerly, may overtake you and me be- 
fore we dye, and we cannot tell how speedily. You 
have heard what befell Israel, and why may not the like be 
side England, you have heard what befell Abraham, 
David, Daniel, Paul, and why may not we looke for the 
like.

Secondly, Subject we are to many miscarriages when 
God in his providence bringeth us to extremities: I will 
only hint this in a word or two.

1. Extremities doe expose us unto unbeliefe, A grie-
vous sinne it is to suffer our soules at any time to be ta-
ken from an holy adherence, and firme dependance up-
on our God, and yet thus we are in danger to dihonne
his highnesse, and wrong our own soules in times of 
distresse. Davids example doth evidence this fully.
What more faire promise can any man imbrace, then that 
which God made to him particularly, that he should be 
the King of Israel, and yet when David was in a straight, 
you heare of his distrust from his own confession, I was 
gratly afflicted, I said in my bost all men are lyars, Nathan a 
lyar, and all others who told him of succeeding Saul 
in the Kingdome of Israel, they were all lyars. And why? 
because he saw not a faire and ease passage to the crown. 
The like also is recorded concerning him, when wea-
ried out with the bloody pursuit of envious Saul. And 
David said in his heart, I shall perish now one day by the hand of Saul.

2. In distresse we are disposed to strange impatience 
and discontent of spirit, which distemper doth wo-
fully disguise our hearts, and disgrace our profession. It 
is a wonderfull thing that ever a heart furnished with 
grace, should flye out as Jonah did. First, he thought he 
had lost his reputation, because Niniveh by him threat-
ned was by the Lord spared. Well, he goeth out, and 
then the Sunne annoyed him in regard of his body, but 
God provided a shelter, and the man was calme, after ward 
the gourd being worme-caten and withered, Jonah he 
chafes.
chases and frets. The Lord checks him by this interrogation, *does* thou well to be angry? Marke and be warned by his answer, *I* doe well to be angry even unto death. The history of patient Job also proves this plentifully.

3. I might adde, that we are subject to sinfull feares, which dismay and torment the heart, check duty, weaken joy, and interrupt our sweet communion with God. Take notice of this distemper in Gods own people, for which his majesty chideth them, *And who art thou that fearest a man that shall dye, and the sonne of man that is but as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and hast feared continually every day, &c.*

4. Apt we are to use sinfull shifts betaking our selves to unworthy practices to safeguard our selves in times of extremitie. Observe this in Peters practice, his Master is apprehended, violently carried away, likely to suffer death as a grievous malefactor. Now he seeth himselfe surrounded with them that oppofe Christ, and this distrefle drove him upon a dangerous rock, a three-fold denyall of his dearest Master: Let this move you and me, to prepare that we may not in like manner misse it, if God shall be pleased thus to prove us.

These things I beleive doe affect your hearts, whereupon in probability you will desire direction. Attend therefore and I will give you some counsell briefly: There are fix things which I shall commend to your consideration and practice.

First, You must labour to make sure your propriety in God: *When David upon service had bin abroad, Zigiad* the place where he left his wife and children was burnt, when he commeth home, there was no house to entertaine him, no wife to welcome him, no children to be a comfort unto him, they all were carried captive, here- upon he with the rest, *wept till they could weepe no longer, &c.* *But David encouraged himeselfe in the Lord his God.* Heede here the ground of his support and consolation, not the Lord God, but the Lord his God, deity and...
and propriety hold up his heavy heart, for the good man enjoying God, might thus refresh his drooping spirit. What though I have not an house to dwell in? thou art my dwelling place, my habitation, a place of sweetest rest and safest refuge. What though I have not a Wife? I have more in God then a youk fellow could have afforded. What though I have not a Child? there is more then the comfort of a numerous posterity in the blessed Deity. The soldiers cannot batter down this castle, the pilfering people pillaging, cannot possibly steal away this treasure, the troops of robbers, the desperate Cavaliers cannot deprive of this possession: This might be much enlarged both seasonably and profitably, but I must not insist upon any thing. But this is my request, that you would without delay endeavour to clear up your interest in the almighty, that your dejected hearts may not abide disconsolate in the dayes of your distress.

Secondly, Acquaint your selves with God, and labour to be familiar with his Majesty by constant and frequent communion through Jesus Christ. Men desire to know the utmost worth of what they have in possession, and what improvement may be made thereof if need should so require. We read in the Parable, that he that had bought a piece of ground, must needs goe to see it, and therefore he must be excused if other things be neglected. If we were thus wise for our soules, we would seek to know, and to improve our God who is our inheritance, yea our all, unto our various advantages in the times of our greatest need. Seriously therefore ask thy selfe this question, What have I in having a God? What have I? I have infinite wisdome to advise me in all difficulties, infinite power to carry me through all straights, abundant goodness to supply all my wants, the tenderest bowells to commiserate me in my most doe full condition, yea I have sufficiency to fill me brim full, and running over unto satisfaction. I added converse with thy God. He that would have comfort from Physisitians.
in times of distresse

sitions in time of sickness, gaineth and maintaineth acquaintance with them in time of health. If you and I shall dare to keep at a distance from God in a way of estrangement from his Majesty in summer days, and in sunshine seasons, when the Heavens are clear, and the City is peaceable, and the Parliament promising, and our hopes flourishing, we shall want comfort through communion with God, when the sun sets, winter approacheth, Parliament breaketh, and misery threatens on every side. Being in haste I shall here lay heads confusedly on heaps, whereas I should distinctly have discovered three things.

1. How God is revealed in holy writ for our comfort in the worst of times.

2. By what courses Christians should gain, and maintain communion with their God.

3. What fruitful improvements may be made of God by such employments. But I shall leave these things to your private care, having suggested this course by way of friendly counsel to make way for your comfort in the day of distress.

Thirdly, Walk exactly. Take heed of making breaches upon your consciences, by willing and willful sinning against the God of your comforts. Beloved, beloved you know that those who have had bruises and broken bones, they will feel aches in hard weather, and certainly if you will in time of prosperity dare to sin against conscience, it will add sorrow to your hopes, and gall to your wormwood, when God commeth upon you in a way of bitter calamity. Sinful and all surfs upon sweet morsels, will breed wringing pains, and painful vomits. The sons of Jacob were in a great straight when they were taken for spies as the story reports. What did now wring them? The remembrance of sinne, though many years since committed, ah our brothers blood, our brothers blood; we would not pity him when he made his moane, and now God will be avenged of us. Alas, alas, we were hard-hearted to-
wards a brother, and therefore no wonder that we meet with harshness amongst strangers. Whereas the maintaining of a clear conscience, o what a comfort will it be when all shall be blackness, and blood about us. See it in Paul and his companions. When they made no other account but to dye, what faith Paul, This was our rejoicing, (that was strange, rejoice when the next day they might expect to goe to the stake?) well faith Paul our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world. Beloved, believe it that you cannot lay in a better cardiall, to comfort and to stay your hearts in fearful; fainting, distressing, dying times, then by exact walking with God before the storme fall. The Apostles experience puts a probatum est unto this prescription. For ought we know, the day is at hand wherein we shall hear the warre-Horses neighing, the murdering Cannons roaring, the little Children skreaking, and the fearfull Women skritching: You know not beloved, how soon you may see your City flaming, your own houses burning, your goods wafting. It will be a sad sight to behold your Wives barbarously abused, your Husbands bloodily butchered, and your Children cruelly tormented. I beseech you, I beseech you, consider now what will yeeld you comfort then. When Hezekiah did daily expect to dye, take notice, unto what he berooke himselfe for solace and support: Remember now o Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. In like manner may we raise up our sinking hearts in such heavy times, if we can truly thus speake unto the soule-searching Majesty. Lord while times were peaceable and prosperous, when I was surrounded with comforts on every side, thou knowest I had a heart to walke with thee humbly, to observe thy Sabbath holly, to use thy worshipes purely, and to aime at the honour of thy name sincerely. This, this will cheare you both living and dying. You know that nei-

3. Cor. I. 12.

Haa. 38.3.
other the lowd windes, nor the black clouds, nor the
great showers, nor the flashings of lightning, nor the
hideous claps of thunder, doe so much affright us, as an
earthquake. But when some vapours are got into the
hollow places, the bowells of the earth, and the foun-
dation of the world shakes, this is terrible, this is ter-
rible indeed, though the Sunne shine, and no cloud ap-
peare in the skie. In like manner it is not so much an
outward affliction as guilt within, guilt within which
causeth the heart of man to rocke and quake through feare
within him. Therefore take heed, stop all the passages
into your foules, keep the heart with all diligence, that
no knowne guilt be admitted into it, as you desire a
stable, firme frame of spirit, prepared for the strongest
storms, the greatest straights wherewith divine pro-
vidence may possibly prove you.

Fourthly, If you have made wounds and bruises in
your consciences, seeke an healing plaister by sound re-
pentance suddenly. A bone broken being well set (they
say) becomes the stronger. David had gashed his con-
science grievously, both by uncleanneffe and murther, in
the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah. Notwithstanding
by means of Nathans plaine dealing being wrought to
deepe sorrow, the wound was healed, and the fame
mouth which cured him by a corrosive, gave him this
comfort, God hath forgiven thy sinne, thou shalt not dye.
Now after this, according to the threatening of Nathan,
God raised up evill against him out of his own house,
and he was in a wonderfull straight, Absalom was up in
armes against him. This distresse occasioned the third
Psalme, as the title tells, wherein he expresseth his per-
plexed condition. Many are they that rise up against me,
many there be that say of my soule there is no helpe for him in
God. Now here is a straight indeed, many imagining,
that Heaven could not helpe him: yet if you will by his
phrase of speech, judge the frame of his heart, you shall
find as much confidence in him now, as ever in all his
life: Take notice of it. But thou o Lord art a shield for

2 Sam. 12,17.

ver. 11.

Psal. 3. 1, 26

ver 3.
me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Yea this is added, I laid me down and slept. Consider in his supposition, 1. The number of enemies, viz. ten thousand. 2. The manner of their opposition, though they should rise up in a warlike manner against me. 3. Their advantage against him, and his danger to be apprehended by them. It is not though they come to meete me, or though they make after me, for then by flight he might hope for safety, But though they should beset me round about, &c. David having made his peace with God, though now in a very great distresse, yea although (remembering God threatening) he might reade his scandalous sinnes, in this heavy affliction, yet his confidence, courage and comfort is very remarkeable. If any of your consciences now wring you upon the remembrance of such a sinne, or such a sinne, (I name none, but leave it between God and your own hearts to consider of it) goe home repent, repent and make your peace with God to day, without any further delay, that you may be fit for a straight if it should come to morrow.

Fiftly, Mind and trade your experiences. God hath done already as much for England as is yet to be done, to set all things right and in order againe amongst us. Not many Months since, our dayes were as darke, our feares as great, and our enemies as many as now. Let us therefore remember ourselves, the Lord lives, the Almighty is in Heaven, he still is mindfull of his covenant, and changeth not. The holy Scriptures yeeld us plentiful proofe of improving former experiences, to arme against future feares. That of David is notable, Thy servant slew both the Lyon and the Beare, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Beare, he will deliver me out of the band of this Philistine. When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher then I, for thou hast bin a shelter for
in times of distress.

and a strong tower from the enemy. In like manner the Apostle improves his deliverance from Nero, that persecutor. No man stood by me, but all forsooke me, notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lyon. Consider the words, Paul was not only in the Lyons denne, not only within the reach of the Lyons chaine, nor only under the Lyons paw, but in the Lyons mouth. Now his inference is observable, And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom. Again note, We had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God which raiseth the dead. Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us. Here for your helpe, I will hint one experience still fresh in our mindes, God settled peace between us and Scotland, when after great preparations for warre, the armies were set in battell array, the onfet given, the skirmish begun, blood drawne, many slaine, the two Kingdomes ready to be broken in pieces, the one against the other. Consider what great things God hath done, and trade your experiences for your future profit.

Sixthly, Cleere up your evidences for Heaven, and keep them so faire, that in the darkest day they may be legible, ease to be read without hacking and hesitancy. The usefulness hereof in evil times appears in the Apostles experience, For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction that is for a moment, worketh for us a farre more exceeding and etenuall weight of glory. Mind the ground, For we know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, etenuall in the Heavens. The heire apparent of Heaven, may hold up head and heart, and in this manner expresse himselfe: come the worst that can come, though my state shall decay, my soule and body part, my selfe and dearest naturall friends.
friends he plucked asunder, yet I have in Heaven, a better and more enduring substance: more and better friends, sweeter and more satisfying communion. If they take away my trash, the true treasure, that is out of their reach. What if they take downe my tottering tabernacle of clay? I shall have a glorified, a beautified body to all eternity, in sight of hell and earth combining against me. What if they drive me out of house, and City, and Kingdom, the best is, they cannot expell me from my God, nor deprive me of a mansion, an abiding place in the City of God, the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is a ground of sweet joy, and strong encouragement unto us, notwithstanding our present state which is darke and dreadfull. Here we may reasonably with comfort call to mind that strange apparition unto Moses: A bush burning with fire, and yet the bush was not consumed. Beloved, what flames of fury are now kindled in the bosomes of many, threatening to burne downe all our hopes? Yet let us pluck up courage, for though our innes have made us combustible matter, yet may we hope that our God will not consume us. Let us cheare our selves against the jeares and insolencies of the Malignant party with the words of the Church, Rejoyce not against me o my enemy, when I fall I shall rise againe, when I sit in darkenesse the Lord shall be a light unto me. Some interpreters conceive, Abraham had this deliverance hinted before hand, and therefore first told his servants, I and the lad will goe yonder and worship, and come againe to you: and afterward going to the place where Isaac was to be sacrificed; when the child said, father, father here is the wood, but where is the burnt offering, he answered, my sonne God will prepare one, and this held up the good mans heart, encouraging him thus to resolve, I will goe on, I will see what God will doe, I will put him to it. We are in straights at this day, I need not tell you, and who knowes but that to day in the Mount God will appeare for our comfort. Much I cannot
not speake through want of time to this use, yet dare I not altogether be silent, considering the season. Under two heads I will briefly assist your sinking spirits by way of advice.

1. Learne aright to make way for desired comforts in times of distresse, that you may have this Texts, and this Sermons encouragement at hand, not only now, but hereafter when you may stand in need.

2. Improve the particulars comprised in this title Jehovah, held forth for our use in the Text now handling, I may not now speake under these heads, both unto our Nationall and Personall concerns distinctly. For the former, way is made for our refreshing in the worst of times that can possibly overtake us.

1. By studying the qualifications to which favour is promised.

2. By using the meanes of our good which by the Lord are prescribed.

First, Every one may not challenge propriety in the privilege of the Text. Every loose-liver may not come out and say, well! in the Mount God will be seen, and therefore I will fear no colours. No, no, for there is a peculiar gracious disposition to be found upon the hearts of them who may expect that God will appear in the Mount for them, for their consolation.

1. Your soules must be so seasoned with God's fear, that having his command, you will not draw back from any service put upon your hands, how hard, how heavy soever. Marke it in Abraham, Abraham now I know thou fearest me, and how doth his fear discover it selfe, 

Upon divine commission he sets upon a service, the doing whereof, was against heart and hate, repugnant to reason, without all president, against the streame of natural affections, crossing the conceit and opinion of the world. Can you imagine if Isaac had bin slaine, and the fact known, what a hubbub would have bin in the Country? how many mouths would have bin opened, in reporting Abraham's strange and unheard of cruelty? Isaac is killed.
killed, and his own father, father Abraham, that religious man, he himselfe hath killed him, how would this have rung in every corner? Doe but thinke what Mother Sarah would have said upon her Husbands returne home, Husband where is Iaack? and conjecture with what a sad heart he might have made this answer, Wife I have killed him, and I have burnt him before God as a sacrifice. Beloved, neither these things, nor any other which might be cast in as discouragements, did take him off from duty. The feare of God carried him above all discouragements, both from his natural affections, his wives frownes, and the worlds clamours. And to this man, thus fearing God, God appeares in the Mount: Minde this I pray you, and labour herein to be like this gracious man, thus devoted to Gods feare.

2. You must not dare to adventure upon any known sinne, though it be to safeguard your persons, your estates, your places of favour and honour, your any thing, your all things under the Sunne. A man of this make, is one who may expect to meet with the Almighty in the Mount. The proofe of this is faire in the experience of Danieell. The decree was signed, he must not for thirty dayes pray unto his God, if he did, he must be throwne into the Lyons den, well faith Danieell, let the Lyons make a meale upon my body, I am resolved I will not forbeare this worship due to my God, I will not thus interrupt my communion with my heavenly Father. The like you have in the three young Governours, the King he would have them fall down and worship the image he had set up. If you will not, you must into the furnace. Marke their answer, Our God whom we serve is able to deliver, but if not, be it knownne unto thee, we will not serve thy gods. And the proofe of the point reported how God appeared in the dayes of their distresse for their deliverance, unto these experiments I might addde Promises. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoake, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity, and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfie the afflicted soule. The meaning

Dan.6.7.

Dan.3.

Iza.58.9.

ver.10.
ning is, if you will betake your selves to courses of piety and mercy, contrary to your former wayes of wickednesse and violence, then shall your light breake forth in obscurity, and your darknesse be as the noone-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfie thy sole in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters faile not. If iniquity be in thy hand put it farre away, and let not wickednesse dwell in thy Tabernacle, for then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, yea thou shalt be feedfast, and thou shalt not feare. What encouragements should these be to perswade us to reforme our selves, and to endeavour the amendment of one another. Therefore goe home now, and thus say to God, and to your selves seriouly and sincerely, I am resolved I will leave my cheating, and cozening, my oathes, lying, my hypocrifie and pride, and all my other known sinnes. Away with these and all other discovered abominations, promise God for future times to betake your selves unto a better course of living, as you desire the sweet and seasaonable discoveries of God, in the time of your greatest need.

Secondly, The meanes of your good must be used, and they are,

1. Civill.
2. Sacred.

For Civill meanes, You must not say we care not whether we have any more watch in the City, night or day, we will trouble and charge our selves no further in this kind. But you must hold on in being serviceable to divine providence, otherwise you will tempt God. There is a notable example of Joab in this case both commendable and imitable. When Joab saw the front of the battle was against him, before and behind, he chose all the choice men of Israell, and put them in array against the Syrions, and the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of his brother. And he said, if the Assyrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt helpe me, but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee then I will come and helpe thee. Now be of good courage, and let us play.
play the men and fight for God and our country, and the Lord doe that which seemeth him good. Remember we have by solemn protestation bound our selves before God to doe our utmost in wayes lawfull for the honour of our King; the liberty of the Protestant Religion, for the peace and welfare of the three Kingdomes, and for the priviledges of our Parliament, and keeping within the limits of our callings, to oppose Popery, and popish innovations. Therefore every man according to the lawes of God and of the land, must unweariedly be industrious, night and day, for the Kingdomes good, in the use of meanes, both defensive and offensive, as necessity may require.

2. There are meanes sacred, Teares and Prayers are the Christians best weapons, this munition let us make use of. Jehoshaphat surrounded with danger, when Moab, Ammon, and the children of Mount Seir came out against him, what course doth he betake himselfe to? he feared, and set himselfe to seeke the Lord, and proclaimed a fast. And David being in danger to loose both his Kingdome and his life, by the insurrection of Absalom, b'tooke himselfe to prayer, to breake the neck of Achitophels crafty counsell, and also to secure himselfe from the hand of violence, now stretched forth against him. Beloved, as Gods command, and the practice of his people, doe guide us unto this imployment, so Gods prectious promisses, and our own glorious experiences, touching the prevalence of this ordinance, should perswade our perseverance herein in these times of scare and danger.

Secondly, What is the improvement of the original word here used, In the Mount Jehovah shall be seen. This title hath much in it, a great deale more then I may mention. Thus much I have observed from holy Scripture, that it both,

1. Advanceth God.

2. And advantageth a Christian in times of straights.

Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea let the exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name, extoll him that rideth on the Heavens by his Name Jah, and rejoice
rejoyce before him. Four things there be hinted in this title Jehovah, and they are all useful for our present purpose.

This title holdeth forth the Lords,

1. Soveraignty.
2. Independancy.
3. Immutability.
4. Fidelity.

1. It suggesteth the Lords unlimited Soveraignty, his absolute and undoubted authority over all things. Jehovah he is the most high, not only high, or higher than many, or more high than the most; but the most high over all the earth. It is Jehovah that ruleth Kings, and ordereth Crowns, joy in him, he can rule both the Kings heart and counsell, he governeth in the Country and in the City, at Westminster, and here within the walls: Therefore still rejoice in him, for he is Jehovah, the all-governing Majesty.

2. It noteth his independancy. All creatures for their continuance have a kind of dependance upon one another. As the grass and plants upon the earth, the bruites upon the fruits of the earth, and our nutriment is from inferior creatures. But our Jehovah dependeth upon none, he is of, and from himselfe, he needeth no servant, no service. In him we all live, move and have our being, but his Majesty is beholding to none, either men or Angels, either for being or wel-being. Thus much God intended to teach by his speech to Moses, and God said unto Moses, I am that I am. We think verily that we shall be utterly undone if the Parliament break up, or if our King divide himselfe from this his body representative. Beloved, my soule maketh out to God for the prevention of this sad faction. Yet I beseech you remember this, whatsoever falls out, that whereas all men, and all ordinances, Kings and Parliaments depend on God, yet our God Jehovah is an independent Majesty.

3. It intimateh Gods Immutability. All other things change, As a snow ball melteth by our handling it, and the flower withereth by our smelling it, so these sublunary contentments walt and ware away by our using them.
But in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strength, or as the original language expresseth it, The Lord Jehovah is a rock of ages, he abideth the self-same, strong, unalterable, unmoveable God throughout all generations.

Mind this (my beloved) that though England Ireland like should be wafted, although there should be sad changes in Church and Common-wealth, in City and Country, in Towns and Families: Yet still our Jehovah continues in himselfe, and unto his people the self-same All-sufficient, All-satisfying God. Surely we who pitch our hearts and hopes upon this unchangeable foundation, the Lord Jehovah, may abide steadily in our spirits and comforts in the midst of the worst alterations that can overtake us.

Exod. 6. 3.

4. It expresseth Gods fidelity. And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the Name of God almighty, but by my Name Jehovah was I not known unto them. The true meaning is, that whereas God had manifested abundantly his power by many glorious providences in former times, now he intended to prove himselfe mindfull and careful of his promises made unto his people. Now let us make improvement hereof for our comfort. Search divine records, consider the various precious promises annexed by the Almighty unto the covenant of free grace and mercy. Choose out of those Gospell treasures, such pearles as you put the highest prizes upon, Collect those particular promises, which you conceive most pertinent for your condition, and most full for your satisfaction. And from this sweet title Jehovah, you may comfortably and confidentially inferre this conclusion.

Whatsoever Promise is registred in the book of God, either in the old or new Testament, that this Jehovah will set all his attributes on work, for the full and reasonable accomplishment thereof unto his own people by speciall covenant. Therfore having evidenced your propriety in Gospell Promises through Jesus Christ, from this bottom build your comforts, in the darkest and most dolefull times. It is Jehovah the all-governing, the independing, the immutable and faithfull God that will be seen in the Mount for his servants deliverance.

FINIS.
GOOD COVRAGE DISCOVERED,
AND ENCOURAGED:
IN A SERMON preached before the Commanders of the Military Forces, of the Renowned Citie of London.
In the Parish Church of Great St. Helens.
May the 17. 1642.

By SIMEON ASH, Preacher in London.

DEUT. 20. 2, 3, 4.
And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the Battell that the Priest shall approach, and speake unto the people.
And shall say unto them, Hear ye Israel, you approach this day unto Battell against your Enemies: Let not your hearts faint, be not afraid, neither be you terrified because of them.
For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

LONDON.
Printed by John Dawson for John Burrough's, and are to be sold at his shop at the golden Dragon neare the Inner Temple-gate in Fleet-street. 1642.
TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL,
the Aldermen, and Commoners,
unto whom the Militia of the City of London is committed, the Serjeant Major General, the Colonels, the Lieutenant Colonels, Serjeant Majors, Captaines, and other officers of the trained Bands of the said City.

Right Worshipfull,

Ornelius, Centurion of the Italian Band is thus commended by the Holy Ghost, that he was a devout man, and one that feared God. And I may report thus much to your honour and to move others to make imitation; that you have begun, and hitherto carried on your Martial affairs religiously. For having put the City into a posture of defence; before the execution of the Militia; you joyntly sought God by Prayer for good success.
The Epistle Dedicatory.

The Lord heard your Prayers, for you went forth, and returned home, without the least touch of danger to your selves, or your Companies. This remarkable Providence called you again together, to praise the God of Salvations, the God of your mercies.

Hereupon you were pleased to appoint me (very unworthy) to assist you in the Service of Thanksgiving: A service not unseemly for the House of Heaven.

This Sermon, which upon that occasion I preached, through the Constructions of your Love found such acceptance, that you commanded it to come abroad to doe you further service.

And seeing you gave it good entertainment, as it was first presented, it makes bold to waite upon you without change of habit, expecting your Protection.

Although I somewhat suspect, that sundry amplifications in the Sermon which affected the Auditors, may not be so pleasing to the Judicious Reader, yet your desires to have it printed, as it was preached, makes me to run that adventure.

The Lord of Hosts guide, guard, and encourage you in all your good undertakings for peace and truth, and make you carefull to put Christian references upon all your services, for the honour and safety of our King, the welfare of his Kingdomes, and the continued Prosperity of this famous City. This your prudent and pious perseverance in the worke so well begun, will draw forth many prayses to God, many prayses for you, and much rejoicing in the hearts of all them, who sincerely affect you, of which number, I beseech you account him one who is

Your Servant, in, and for Christ,

Simeon Ash.
GOOD COURAGE DISCOVERED, AND INCOVARGED.

P S A L. 31. 24.

Be of good Courage.

Ight worshipfull, and worthy Gentlemen, (whose desires, and whose service of thanksgiving, I am now attending,) I hope you are come hither with an intention; First, to honour God for preservation enjoyed, through his providence, to whom you prayed. My Text lookes back unto such a businesse; The Lord preserveth the faithful; therefore let the
the faithfull upon such experiences in way of prayse, in
way of requitall learne to bee of good courage.

Secondly, I beleeve you are come together in expecta-
tion for the future, to receive further favours from the God
of your present prayses; and my Text lookes forward to
that, Bee of good courage, and bee strong, and strengthen thine heart,
and wait I say on the Lord.

My Text is short, the words in our translation are not
many, in the originall, there is but one word, ἀνεχθείτε, The
Septuagint renders the Hebrew word, וביהשל, Quit
your selves like men; Viriliter agite, play the men, Robo-
amini, bee yee strong.

The Counsell here given is for all Christians, at all times
needfull, but for you, and at this time, most reasonable.

Bee yee courageous. First, The Counsellour was, a Wor-
thy, a Souldier, a Warriour, a Commander, a King: David, as the title tells you, Hee calls for courage.

Secondly, The Persons counsell'd, they are Saints, faith-
full ones: O yee Saints love him, his manner is by his spe-
ciall providence to preserve you; Therefore bee yee of good
courage. The point lies faire, which I conceive pertinent,
and now purpose to prosecute,

Doctor.

Gods people must bee of good courage.

I shall briefly suggest the Scriptures proofe, in a threefold
gradation, wherein good courage is called for:

First, Saint Paul an Apostle with Apostolical authority,
perlwades to it; 2 Cor. 16. 13. Quit yee like men.

Secondly, Iehosaphat a King, with regall authority
commands it, 2 Chron. 19. ult. Deale courageously.

Thirdly, The great God of Heaven and Earth, putting
himselfe under a warlike notion, as the Lord General of
all the forces in the World, the Lord of Hosts. He perempt-
orily presseth it; Haggie. 2. 4. Now bee strong & Zorobel-
bel saith the Lord, and bee strong, as Joshua, the Sonne of Ioze-
dick the High Priest, and bee strong the people of the Land

faith.
the Lord, and work, for I am with you faith the Lord of Hosts.

Three things there be, that I shall speake to, in the prosecution of this point.

First, The explication of the vertue, the grace called for, wherein I will endeavour to discover what this courage is.

Secondly, The confirmation of this truth by reasons, from which this Doctrine may undeniably bee concluded, and by which you may all bee fully convinced, that there is aboundant cause, why all Gods people should bee courageous.

Thirdly, The application of all, by way of use, that my Sermon may be the more serviceable.

Christian courage may thus bee described, It is the undaunted audacity of a sanctified heart in adventuring upon difficulties, and undergoing hardships for a good cause upon the call of God.

There are six things considerable in the description that I have given, which I will particularly point at, and prove.

First, the Genus, the common nature of it: it is an undaunted audacity. This Animosity (as some phrase it,) it is common both unto men, and to some bruits. The Lion, Prov. 30. 30, is said, to bee the strongest among beasts; that turneth not away from any.

And there is an elegant description of the warre horse, in regard of boldness, Job 39. 19. &c. Hast thou given the horse strength hast thou cloathed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grass-hopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible, hee paweth the valley, and rejoyseth in his strength, hee goeth out to meete the armed men. Hee mocketh at feare, and is not affrighted, neither turneth hee back from the sword. The Quiver ratteth against him, the glittering speare and the sheild, hee swallowes the ground with fiercenesse and rage, neither belieueth hee, that it is the sound of the Trumpet.
And this boldneffe that is in bruits, it is spoken of, as a piece of this fame courage that God is pleased to give to men; Ezek. 3:9. this is the Lords promise. As an Adamant, harder then the flint, have I made thy forehead.

The word harder, is the fame in the Hebrew, that is here in my Text, Fortisera petra; The Rock, that is not afraid of any weather, Summer, or Winter, Sunne, and Showres, Heat, and Cold, Frost, and Snow, it blusseth not, shrinkest not, it changeth not it's complexion, it is still the fame; Such alike thing is courage, in the common nature of it.

Secondly, Consider the subject; it is the Heart, the Castle where Courage commands, and exerciseth Military Discipline; (shall I so say) its within the bosome, it is the Soule of a valiant Soldier.

Some conceive, our English word Courage, to bee derived from Cordis altius, the very acting of the heart.

A valiant man is described, 2 Sam. 17. 10. for to bee a man whose heart, is as the heart of a Lyon. And sometime, the originall translated, Courageous, as Amos 2. 16. may most properly bee render'd, a Man of heart.

Beloved, valour doth not consist in a piercing eye, in a terrible looke, in bigge words, but it consists in the metall, the vigour that is within the bosome. Sometimes, a Coward may dwell at the signe of a roaring voyce, and of a sterne countenance: whereas true fortitude may be found within his breath, whose outward deportment promiseth little, or nothing in that kind.

Thirdly, Note the qualification of this fame subject; I said a sanctified heart: for I am not now speaking of fortitude, as a morall vertue, whereof Heathens, that have not God, are capable; and for which many among them, that are not Christians, have beene worthily commended.

But I am now discoursing of Courage, as a vertue Theological, as a gracious qualification, put upon the people of
of God by speciall covenant. And there are three things that doe characterize it, and which doe distinguish it from the morall vertue of fortitude.

The Roote, whence it ariseth;
The Rule, whereby it is directed;
The End, to which it is referred.

The Roote, whence it ariseth, is love to God; All the Saints of God that love the Lord, bee of good Courage.

The love of Christ constraineth mee to make these bold, and brave adventures, faith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 14.

The Rule whereby it is directed, is the word of God: what the Lord hath pleased to leave on record for a Christian's guidance in holy pages, 1 Chron. 23. 12. 13. The Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, that thou maist keepe the law. If thou take heed to the statutes, and judgements, which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong and of good courage, dare not, nor be dismay'd. Bee a man of mettall; but let thy mettall bee according to my mind, according to this rule.

And the End, to which it referres, is God. For every sanctified man, being a selfe-denying, and a God-advancing man; his God is his Center, wherein his actings, his undertakings rest, and his Soule is not, yea it cannot bee satisfied but in God.

The fourth thing considerable in the Description is, the natuall, the formall, the immediate operations, that doe flow from this gracious, audacious frame of heart, they are two:

There is an adventuring upon difficulties;
And there is an undergoing of hardships.

First, There is an adventuring upon hard services, It is said, 1 Sam. 31. 12. The valiant men rose and went all night, and tooke the body of Saul, and the bodies of his Sonnes from the wale of Bethlaham, and came to Gabea, and burnt them there. When the Philistins had taken their bodies and were gone away Conquerours, and fastened them there, as
as Ensignes of victory, brave blades, well metalled men, went by night, and fetched them back againe: an hard, and a brave service.

And by reason hereof there is an enduring of hardships: Those Worthies of whom the world was not worthy, who are said to be men valiant in fight, Heb. xi. 34. This, testimony is given of them, that They endured torturings, the tryall of mockings, or cruel mockings, of scourgings, of bonds, and imprisonments, of stoning, of being sawne asunder, of being slaine with the sword, of wandering up and downe in sheepe skins, and goats skins, being men destitute, afflicted, and tormented.

Fiftly, in my description, I cafte in the cause, which true courage undertakes to doe, and suffer for, the object it workes upon, the prize it adventures for, it is a good cause, 1 Cor. 16. 13

Matters of faith, stand ye fast in the faith, quit ye like men. It is a Gospel peice for which I am to jeopard a joynt, to hazard alimbe, to adventure life, 1 Cor. 6. 13, or matters of fact: I must be of good courage for my conscience, that I may maintain an evennesse of spirit in reference to my rule, in relation to my God, 1 Pet. 3. 14. If yee suffer for righteousness sake happy are yee, be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. It is a noble, a Christian resolution in any man, if hee thus determine, rather then I will make a wound upon my conscience, a breach betweene God and my soul; rather then I will violate a sacred vow, and tranfgresse the command of my God, I will run the greatest hazards in outward regards that can be imagined.

The goodness of the cause (Divines say) for which a man suffers, makes the Martyr: In like manner, it is the warrantableness of the worke, wherein the soldiier, the man of metall appeares, that gives him the credit, the honour of this title, to be accounted a valiant man.

Sixtly and lastly, I added that good courage makes the foresaid adventures upon the call of God. Have not I commanded thee, be strong and of a good courage: If the Lord
please to beat up the Drum; If the Lord please to bid
them arme, and come abroad, his call is sufficient. Now God
calls either by his precept, or by his providence. Either God
calls his Champions for to undertake dangers, or hee com-
mands dangers to over-take them; and hereupon being
led forth by the Lord of hostes, they expresse their
valour: For this they know, that whether
it be estate, or peace, or life, or liberty, or Religion, or
whatsoever else they hope to defend, they are all tallants
that God hath entrusted them with, and that therefore
only upon his Commission signed, and sealed by his own-
hand they may come forth, and must come forth bravely,
and shew themselves couragious in reference thereto.

Now for a man in an impetuous, giddy, neady way, to
breake himselfe unwisely in his reputation, liberty, estate,
and himselfe knowes no other reason: but because his spi-
rit moves him, and his humours stirre in him, or some pas-
soonat inconsiderate persons provoke him, this (my beloved)
is not to be couragious. Wee read in the Gospel, of a man
possessed with an evil spirit, that did often cast himself into
the water, and into the fire to destroy himself. And truly it
nearly concerns many men of daring spirits, to consider
seriously what spirit it is that acts in them: These things
we must marke, that the true nature of courage may be
understood.

This description of good courage I judged meet to pre-
mise and to explain briefly, that we may understand the duty
in the text, the duty, the seasonable duty, which God calls
for, and I plead for.

Bee of good Courqe.

The second thing I propounded in the prosecution of
this point, is the reasons wherefore a Christian should bee
couragious: And my doctrine is built upon a fowrefold-
ground.

First, Gods people should bee of good courage, in refe-

Courage discovered, and encouraged.

ence unto the condition, unto which God hath called them. God hath appointed all Christians to be soldiers. A Sacrament is a soldiers oath, when we were baptized we tooke prest money, and vowed to serve under the colours of Christ, and as manfull soldiers to fight against the world, the flesh, and the Devil: and as oft as we have beene at the Sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord, wee have renewed our Solemn, and sacred obligation in that kind, in reference to Christ, who is called The Captaine of the Lords host, 10s.5.16. and the Captaine of our salvation, Heb. 2.10. Insure hardnesse ( faith the Apostle ) as a good soldier of Christ, 2 Tim.2.4. Epaphroditus my fellow soldier, PhiL.2.25. Beloved, wisdome is not more necessary for a Counsellor, nor eloquence for an Orator, then courage for a soldier. Soldiers we are, wee must therefore, be of good courage.

Secondly: the weighty services wherein the Lord of Hosts is pleased to imploy us. Men imployed in peculiar services are commanded to put on fortitude: As Joshua who was a Commander to guide, and governe the host, the armies of the Israelites in their passage to Canaan, 10s.1.7. Bee thou strong and very courageous, that thou maist observe to doe according to all the Law, which Moses my servant commanded thee, turne not from it, to the right hand or to the left. And Ezra, in regard of his office, is thus spoken unto: Arise, for the matter belongeth unto thee, bee of good courage, and doe it: and common Christians, in respect of services required of them, are to be courageous in their places, 10s.23.6. Be yee therefore very courageous to kepe, and to doe all that is written in the booke of the law of Moses, that you turne not aside therefrom, to the right hand or to the left.

Shall I hint some services that are charged upon all our consciences

The worke of mortification, to pick out our eyes, to chop off our hands, to cut off our feet; doe you thinke that a milke sop, a man that is not a man of a stout spirit
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

will doe this. Now to massacre fleshly lusts, is (as it were) for a man to mangle, and dismember his owne body, it is a worke painefull and grievous, as for a man to cut off his owne feet, to chop off his owne hands, and to pick out his owne eyes, as Christ and the Apostle Paul doe express it.

Besides this, there are in Christians bosomes, strong holds to be battered, fortifications to be demolished: there are high hills and mountaines, that must be levelled with the ground. ther are trenches to be made, vallies to be filled. O beloved, I may not mention the hills that lye before us in heaven way, which we must climbe up; and craggy rocks that we must get over: and without courage certainly the service put upon our hands will not be discharged.

There are also the walls of Jerusalem to be repaired, and the Temple to be reedefied: If Nehemiah had not beene a man of a brave spirit, hee would never have gone through sotch with that Church worke, those weighty services which hee did undertake. How this is applicable to us for the present time, the time of our begun reformation, I speake not; but rather doe referre it to your considerations: I befeech you to reade Neh.4 17,18. They which builded on the wall, and they that did beare burdens, with those that laded: Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the Builders every one had a sword girded by his side, and so builded, and he that sounded the Trumpet was by us. While they were at worke they were all ready for warre.

Thirdly, Christians must bee couragious, in reference to the 3. huge Armies, with which they are assaulted.

Of Devils.

There are armies Of Lufts.

Of men and women in the world, that doe wage warre with every Christian, that in good earnest makes out after his God in heaven way,

C

For
For the Devils, it is the argument of the Apostle, and from thence I took it, Ephes. 6. 10. Brethren, be strong (faith hee,) for we wrestle not against flesh, and blood, but against principalities, and powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this world, against Spiritual wickednesses in the heights. Marke for the number they are many, Our name is legion, for wee are many: How many thousands, neither you nor I know. There is strength in them, they are Powers, Principalities, and they are Rulers, they have very great authority in the Darkness of the World; in Midnight men, Darke men, Men who love not Sunne-shine light, but rather delight to lye in holes and caves.

I meane, in regard of the Darkness of their minds, and their wilfull ignorance of the things of God. And they are in the height; they fight with much advantage (as some observe,) being over our heads. And they are Spirits, they work invisibly, and they fight against our Soules, they labour to keepe our hearts in thraldome, they seeke to beggar and to undoe us in regard of our grace, and Spiritual joyes.

The Holy Apostle Peter sayeth, The Divell your adversary, goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom hee may devour. An Adversary, and a Devill, and a strong one, as a Lyon roaring, and then hee is active, hee walkes about, and hee is full of malice, ready to devour: These things touched upon, doe tell us, that wee, who are always surrounded, besieged by such enemies, have need of courage.

5 Pet. 2. 11. There are armies of lusts, I know not how many. The Apostle faith, Fleshly lusts that fight against the Soule. These foes lye within us, and they strike at the head, and the heart,endeavouring to let out the precious life of our immortall soules.

3 King 21. As the Captaines of the King of Syria, had a command to fight against, neither small nor great, but the King of Israel. And the Apostle faith, that lusts in his bosome were
such enemies, as still carried him captive, and haled him as a prisoner. (You know the expression, Rom. 7. 2.) Beloved, doth not experience oftentimes prove thus much, that pride, passions, unbelief, hypocrisy, earthly mindedness, creature confidence, sensuality, doe take up armes against our precious Soules. Alas alas lusts, deceitfull lusts, many deceitfull lusts, are still, still tyrannizing in our bosomes, which of us hath not cause to complains with the Apostle, when I would doe good, they are at hand present with mee: strong in mee, ever stabbing, and striking, and poysoning, and wounding; if I would but pray, or weeps, or amend. These Rebels raise their strengths, and combine their forces to hinder mee: and no sooner can Sathan hold up finger, and temptation shew it selfe; But they are ready furiously to march out against Christ, his government, graces, glory. Beloved, I appeale to your consciences, whether in regard of this black guard, maintaine within us, wee have not need to bee of good courage.

Thirdly, the armies of people: The Apostle Paul saith, hee fought with men who were as beasts, Beasts after the manner of men, i Cor. 15. 32. David tells you they were Dogges, and they were Tygers, and Wolves, and Beares, and Buls, and Lyons, so in the Psalmes hee phraseth them. I promie you, a man that is so beset, thus assaulted, if hee bee not a man of courage what will become of him? There are Sanballens and Tobiah's, men of malignant, mischievous Spirits, to doe us mischief in Heaven way, had wee not need in that regard to bee courageous? And truly, women if they cannot use weapons, they will cast, and fling stones, shoote their arrowes even bitter words. David met with opposition in that kind, from one that was neare, and should have beene better. Michol hee jeared him in his righteous, and holy zeale, in reference to God; you know the story, and therefore I report it not. And doubtlesse, had not hee beene a man of an
Heroick Spirit, hee might have beene daught out of countenance and baffled and cooled in his zeale, because of her reproachfull language.

There are those that are ready to performe ill offices, Sheba-like, to blow a Trumpet of sedition, of contention; to cast coales, and kindle strife betweene the head and the members, the King, and his Subjects; to set all on a flame in the Kingdom. In this regard, wee had need to bee steale to the back, that wee bee not disheartned. From all these three particulars, I might apply that passage, 2 Sam: 10. 9: 12. When Joab saw the front of the bataille against him before and behind; bee sayed bee of good courage, and let us play the men: His speeches did sparkle Spirits, he herein proved himselfe a man mee a to bee a warlike Commander, for danger and difficulties did addde heate.

My Masters, you see our case, let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God. Beloved, you perceive by that which I have pointed at, that our enemies are more and worse, we are beset before, and behind, above, and below, without and within; not onely our Cities, but our Soules are opposed, endangered. Hell and Earth, Men and Devils, yea and our selves are Adversaries to our selves. Therefore there is good reason, why wee should put on Courage.

Fourthly and lastly, Wee have need of Courage, because of the various afflictions to bee expected. For ought wee know, heavy things may befall us, and must bee borne by head, and shoulders by us, before wee get to our Castle, our place of refuge, our rest in Heaven, how stony, how thorny, how deep, and how dangerous our ways may prove, before wee get to our journeyes end, wee cannot tell. It may bee, wee must travaile through bloud, through our owne bloud, and therefore wee need Courage.

After our Saviour had suggested to his Disciples, Mat: 10. 21. Brother shall deliver brother to death; the Father the Child, and the Child shall raise against the Parents, and
cause them to be put to death, and you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; Hereupon he adds, verse 26. Fear not, verse 32. Fear not. Beloved, we know not what may be our portion here on earth, before we come perfectly to enjoy God our portion, and be happy in enjoying of him for ever. Wee may live to see the Citie fired, our estates wasted, our wives abused, our children torne in pieces limbe-meale, piece-meale before our eyes: beleive mee without courage, these sights will be hard and heavy to be beheld, such like sights will cause us to fownd away, to sink into the dust, if we provide not courage. Thus have I run over my reasons, and now I request you all, seriously to consider, whether in all the fore-mentioned regards, we have not abundant cause to endeavour, to get the grace the text commends, and to doe the duty that in the text God calls for.

Be of good courage.

I come now to the application of all that hath beene delivered by way of use. The uses of this point that I shall speake to, they are but two.

The first Reproofs; The second Exhortation.

For Reproofs, hence I have occasion for to blame both unworthy cowardliness in some, and wicked audaciousnesse in others: both vices contrary to this vertue, both extremes, opposed by this practice of Christian fortitude, which my text perswades.

First I must check an unworthy daftardlinessse, which discovers it selfe three wayes in the bosomes of men.

First, when men by reason of pusillanimity, & lownesse of spirit, dare not appeare in the cause that they are convinced, to be the cause of God. There were some, ob. 13: 43: who, though they beleued on Christ, yet they durst not profess him for feare of the Pharifees, Left they should be excluded. The coniences of many tell them, that
that such a way is the way of God, doubtlesse this is heaven road; surely these are the courses to be taken to enjoy God, and communion with him, and yet for feare of I know not what, scornes, mocks, losse of friends, or the like; they dare not be seene. It may be they will goe to Christ with Nisbodemus in the night, for feare too many eyes observe them, and take notice of them in such un wounded paths, exercises which seeme to proclaim strictenesse and precisenesse. You see I am in haste, and therefore cannot instance in particulars.

Secondly, others by reason of cowardlinese soone grow discouraged in sad and weighty undertakings, because they find the way to heaven craggy, the duties diffi cult, the services something hard; and because they have not expected successse on a suddaine; here upon their spirits fhrinke up; I have reference in this expression to the original word used to this very purpose, in Num. 21. 4. And the soul of the people was much discouraged, because of the way. Their spirits were shortned (as it is in the Hebrew) they run up by reason of distress, and al vigour gave in. As a Cravant begins to looke pale through feare; his spirits fly to the heart, you shall see no blood in his face: O did he think to be mocked, and to be pursuyanted? and did he expect to be imprisoned? and did he conceive to bee put on such a dead taske, and to worke himselfe downe in his strength, respects amongst men, and other outward comforts, and reape nothing but the wind. Much hath bee done, and much hath beeene endured, many weeks, moneths, yeares, are run up, since hee expected a good crop, of increase and comfort: but hopes being frustrated, and expectations disappoynted; hee fits downe dejected: Because Reformation is driven on heavily, things stick in the birth, therefore many are disheartned.

Thirdly, those that under darke clouds and showres of sufferings lye grovelling on the ground, through disconsolenesse: He that faints in the evill day, his strength is small.
Prov. 24.10. There is mention of some, Isa. 2.11, when the wind and tyde went against them; when the victory was carried on the other side, it is said, their hearts melted, there was no more courage in them: The melting of the wax is the fevering of part from part: The confirming of the parts together, is the strength of it, the loosening of the parts weakens it: a mans soule runs out through fainting feares, as water; whereas it should be confirmed, as a piece of steele. Christians should be magnanimous, and Fortitude will fortifie, and corroborate the soule. As the originall word suggetts thus much, so the conjunction of strength, and valour in the holy Scriptures doth import it: Be strong and of good courage. Thinke of this, and take heed I pray you of daftardly dejectednesse, and disnaying feares, in sad, suffering times, because thereby both soule and body are much feebled, and much prejudiced.

The second thing reproved, is wicked audacionsnesse: This branch of the reprehension is needfull, for certainly, there is in some men a kind of fire, that riseth out of hell, or rather some mettall, which is digged out of the bottomlesse pit, which is called Courage, and so accouted in the world. My meaning is, that there is a devillish, wretched resolutenesse in the bosomes ofsome to hold on in sinne, notwithstanding divine reprehensions, convictions, threatnings, and executions; which is as much opposite to true courage, as the greatest cowardlines in the world. I told you before, that true courage is for good, upon a Command from God. The Apostle checks the Corinthians, because they had so much boldness, as that they did dare to doe that which was offensive, viz. to goe to law one with another, and that before Infidels, you dare doe it faith he, you have so much boldness, 1 Cor. 6. & the Apostle Peter checks men, They are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities. The Psalmist brings in bad men thus resolving, Our tongues are our own, and we wil speak, and who is Lord over us.

Some there be, who though the Minister flash the very fire
fire of hell in their faces, discovering the danger of their evil courses; yet like unto the warre-horse, they will adventure further, let the consequence prove what it may: yea, although God be on them in ways of heavy affliction, with one rod after another, and one blow bigger then another, though his providence pinch them in their persons, impoverish them in their estates, crush them in their credit; and it may be they suffer much in their yoke-fellows. Children and neere allies; yea, though the often recoyling of their consciences, cause earth-ques in their owne bosomes, yet on they will still to doe wickedly. These are the men of whom the Prophet complains, Who make their faces harder then the Rock, and refuse to returne. Men of this make are common in every place, and their way of living is much to be bewayled: and now I am necessitated to speake unto them, because their flurdinesse in refusing to stoope unto God in reformation, is reputed courage.

To crush these wretched conceits, I heartily wish that the Scriptures may be perused; where you shall find, that those who are commended for the most valiant Champions, and the stoutest soldiers in the Campe of Christ, that they were the most timorous in matter of sinne, and most cautious in references to God, that they might not in any kind offend His Majesty. David, that durst take a Lyon by the beard, and durst adventure upon a Duell, a single combat with Goliab, yet thus bee expressteth himselfe to God, My flesh trembleth for feare of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements. And Nehemiab, who had many ways worthily expressed his magnanimity for God and his cause, yet no man was ever more awed with the feare of God. Hee perswaded himselfe, and others thereunto. Ought not wee to walke in the feare of God? And againe compleyning of the governours, who were his Predecessors, that they were usurious, and very injurious in their places; hee addeth but so, Did not I (I durst not) because of the feare
of the Lord my God. I am confident, that this position is full of truth, you may trust to it, as sound and orthodox: That there is no more Christian courage, then there is Christian fear in our hearts. There is no more true valour in God's account, in confiding with difficulties, and stout standing under heavy pressures, then there is a cautious, and timorous circumspection, left sinner of any kind should be committed to the dishonour, and provocation of God. Shall I think that a man that will swear, and roar, and curse, and pox, and plague (I should not have defiled my mouth with these words) shall I think that this man of Belial hath Christian courage? Hee may have moral magnanimity, as an heathen, as a Romane, but he wants the courage of a Saint, that courage which my Text calls for. Beloved, I pray you believe it, (I speake as a Scripture man; and I speake to men that must labour to be men valiant, as becommeth Saints) hee that rules his owne spirit, doth more then hee that overcomes a Citie. That man who takes downe his untamed lusts; and that man who bridles the unruly member the tongue. Hee who conquers the rebellious mutinies in his owne bosome, and who notwithstanding all avocations, is carefull still to keepe close to God, this is the valiant man indeed, God himselfe, by Solomon's pen, gives such a one his Letters testimoniall to be magnanimous. And for my part I will aduenture that which is dearest unto my selfe in this world, in the hands of this man, if in the hand of any, in regard of valour, and holy, hearty, heroicke resolution. But I put off from this reproofe, wherein my zeale hath made mee bold, to speake my mind: For I had rather counsell then reprehend: and before I goe forward, I with that my checks lighting on ungracious hearts may make kindly and deepe impressions on them, for their amendment. And God grant that you that come to prayse God, as becommeth Saints this day, may learne also hereafter to be valiant as it becommeth Saints, according to the directions of sacred Scripture.
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

The last use, is an use of exhortation; (I feare, I have more to say then my time, and your occasions will suffer mee to deliver.) It is onely this, to perswade you all (my beloved,) I say all, without exception, Colonels, Captaines, other Officers, Souldiers, yea all the Servants of the Lord, to yeild to the word of exhortation, and in your places to endeavour Christian courage: This use most usefull my heart desires to enlarge, wherein I faine would,

1. By Arguments perswade it.
2. By Directions helpe you in it.

I have Arguments of two kinds, God grant they may come with some strength upon your hearts, to move you to endeavour to bee truly valorous.

First, From the consideration of the rich commodities, that are the undoubted consequences of Religious fortitude. Of the booties, & the boones, & the benefits, that Christians may enjoy in the way of Christian valour: I will point at 6, and I shall doe little more then point at them.

First, It will wind, and worke you into the bosome, and favour of God; Be of good Courage, and hee shall strengthen thy heart. Put thou thy selfe forth in a way of bold adventure for him, and his providence shall bee sweetly exercised for thy good. A worthy Commander, how carefull is hee of a brave blade, a man that will fight at a Cannons mouth. Doth hee heare from him, that a bone is broken? Send for the Bone-fetter: Is hee like to bleed to death? call for the Surgeon, let him post away to prevent that perill; Doth hee grow weaker and weaker? Is there any thing in the Camp, that may restore his Spirits, withhold nothing; nothing is too good, too costly, would hee cate gold, hee should have it.

Thus it is with God, O what letters of commendation doth hee give in manifestation of his owne love to them
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

in Pergamus, upon this very ground: Thou, faith the Lord, Rev. ii. 13. thou hast held forth my name, and not denied it even in those days, when Antipas my faithfull Martyr was slaine, even where Satan dwelleth. Thou didst fight for Christ in the Cave, where the Devill commanded, thou didst stand and appear for him, when other men did lose life, and blood. Here is a man that God will owne, such a one, shall have Gods heart and hand to doe him honour, to yeild him comfort. And therefore I appeale to your consciences, is not this Courage worth the having? worth the seeking?

Secondly, Your Courage will hearten you in the weightiest and difficultest adventures, which the cause and glory of God, the welsaire of his Church, the honour of the King, the peace and prosperity of the Kingdom may put you upon. Heber was a woman, yet valiant. Must I to the King for my people; If I perish, I perish. I will take my life in my hand and adventure: Nehemiah, had a hard taske to undertake, truly a dead peice of service to set upon, yet notwithstanding being a couragious man, hee will hazard his All, to obey the command of his God, and to serve the necessitie of his brethren. This is recorded for the everlastinge credit of some of the Servants of God, the Priests, 2 Chron. 26. 17. 18. And Azariah the Priest went in after him, and with him 4. score Priests of the Lord that were valiant men; and they withstood Vzziyah the King, and said unto him, it pertaineth not unto thee Vzziyah to burne incense to the Lord.

Men of brave Noble Spirits will speake, whatsoever it cost them, upon a call from God, men of valour will appeare according to Gods command in services sad, and heavy. Wee say, that a well metled horse, will take forward, and draw at a standing tree, but that I shall speake of in the next.

Thirdly, It will make us unwearied in our worke, though desired, and expected succeffe bee denied. You see
Courage discovered, and encouraged.

it some time; (My similitude is a plaine one, but beloved, it fully evidenceth the thing I speake to,) A Carre-horse of good mettall, will plucke, and fall on his knees, and up, and take forty pluckes at a sticking load, whereas a Jade, if it come not at the first twitch, goes back, back, and you cannot get him forward. Just thus is it with a Coward, if hee have not victory at the first skirmish, hee will hardly make a second assault; if hee bee knocked downe, once, twice, or thrice, hee gives up all as lost, and is ready to runne away; but a man of a stout Spirit in such a case, will pluckt up heart, fight againe, so long as hee can either stand or stirre. Thus Moses hee goes, the first, and second, and third, and tenth time to Pharoab, notwithstanding brow-beatings, repulses, threatnings. Thus saith the Lord, let my people goe. That was his message, either it must bee granted, or hee will not cease his importunity. Israel hee comes for, and Israel hee will have with him, or else, hee will not leave Egypt.

My beloved, let us bring this downe to our selves: Many prayers wee have made, and many fasts wee have kept for Sion: and before our deliverance bee compleat, wee know not, how many plucks wee must yet have, and how many shall wee take to repaire the walls, and to reedifie the House of God, in case, God give us this mettall, which I am commending.

Fourthly, Courage will bee a means to keepe us from conscience-waiting, and scandalous miscarriages. What had become (thinke you) of Shidrack Mesheek, and Abednego? or what had become of Daniel, if they had not beene men of undaunted hearts? The one had given off doing his duty, presenting his indebted homage to his God, hee must not pray for the space of thirty dayes to his God. The other three must bow downe in way of Idolatry to an Idoll. But marke the Sparkling of their Spirits; Bee it knowne unto thee o King, wee know God can deliver us, but if hee will not, wee will not fall downe, nor worship that
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

Image which thou hast set up. They were by Courage kept out of the briers, and off the Rock, which might otherwise have torn and broken them woefully. And Daniel was preserved from the neglect of his devotion to his God, by the same means.

Fiftly, Believe it, that our Courage will daunt our Adversaries, and drive them away; The Captaine of that black guard, (the Devill I meane) will give back, if stoutly withstood: Resist him, and hee will flee, stand to it, and hee will runne away. In like manner, will those, who march under his colours against Gods people. It is said expressly 1 Sam. 4. 5. 7. when the Philistines heard the Israelites shoute, O say they their God is among them, wo unto us. Without doubt, the very valour of Protestants will bee the daunting of the Papists. Let those who appeare for Reformation, maintaine their ground, and the enemies thereof, will bee discouraged, vanquished.

Lastly, I might adde, that our Courage will encourage, I know not how many, One bold leader, will hearten hundreds. O faith Paul, my bonds, and sufferings are famous, they are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the Brethren by reason of my bonds, Wax bold, and speake the word without feare, Phil. 1. 12. 13. 14. If you would know what word? It was the word of Christ, who was denied, derided. Now to speake for a Christ when Paul is in prison, and in bolts, and fetters for the word of Christ, was an act of Manhood. And Pauls valour made them thus bold. The Cities Courage will make the Countrey couragious.

This true valour that I speake for, may have influence I know not how farre, through the Kingdom in way of benefit, and advantage. Therefore looke you to it, Ques yourselves like men, Be of good Courage.

The second motive, is taken from the consideration of the sad consequences of cowardliness.

First, A mans personall discredit, call a Souldier a cra-
Good Courage discovered, and incouraged.

vant, and how doe you disgrace him? They would faine, (saith Nehemiah,) Put me in feare, that they might have had somewhat to reproach mee; Nehem. 6. 13. A Captaine, and a Coward, what a shame is it? If you desire to maintain your honour and reputation, in City and Countrey, hold up your hearts, Be men of valour.

Secondly, This is another a fad consequence of cowardlinesse, it may tend to make us unprofitable, and unserviceable in our places; I was afraid, and bid my talent, for I thought, thou wast a hard master. You know whose speech it was. When a man hath both opportunities and abilities to doe, God and the King, the Parliament and Kingdom, good service. God hath bestowed a good head-piece, much wisedome, an able body and healthfull, a strong arme, a vast estate, a great command; and yet notwithstanding, when the welfare of Church and Common-wealth, call him to make appearance, hee drawes back, dares not bee seene, all his talents are tied in a napkin, there is nothing traded for God, because hee is a Coward, and dares not looke out of dores. There will bee a heavy reckoning for that man, Take him, bind him hand and foote. Cowardlinesse makes men, though able, yet unprofitable, therefore take heed of it.

Thirdly, The good causes, which men owne and favour, may receive a great deale of dammage, and prejudice by the pusillanimitie, the poorenesse of the Spirits of them, that appeare therein. There was a notable piece of policy, in the endeavour of the rayling wretch Rabsbecab, to affright the Souldiers of Hezekiel, 2 Chr. 32. 18. This they did, that they might make us afraid and take our City. Cowardlinesse ties a mans hands behind him, that hee can doe nothing in the World, hee cannot keepe his ranck, and place, hee neither knowes when to charge, or discharge; his hands quake, his eyes cannot see, hee cries where am I? and what must I doe? Thus all is lost, because of cowardlinessse, it is a mighty disadvantage to bee a daftard. Certainly,
tainly a man under the power of dismaying, in feares is
taketh a man in the use of his intellectuals.

Fourthly, What sad breaches cowardliness, may make
upon us, both in regard of sinne, and judgements. I know
not. The sad example of Saint Peter is here considerable,
O what a wound did hee receive, by reason of his unwor-
thy fearfulness; It cost him deare before the cut was cu-
red. You know his threefold denial of his Master, with
the black aggravations thereof; O I know him not, I am
not any of them, you are mistaken in mee, &c. But before
that breach was, made up, it cost him hot water, He wept
bitterly.

Beloved, beloved, consider what I say, many a man doth
that under the command of cowardliness, which is paine
and anguish in his heart to his dying day. God is won-
derfully incensed, when men shrinke from him, because of
difficulties and dangers, Fear not least I say thee. Bee not
dismayed at their faces (faith God to Jeremiah,) lest I con-
found thee before them, Jer. 1. 17. When God calls often,
and calls loude upon men to take part with him, and yet
they shrinke and draw back, believe it, the danger is not
little. You know whose speech it is; If you will deny mee Marke 8. 38;
before men, I will deny you before my Father, which is in hea-
ven.

A valiant Captaine, when the field is fought, and the
victory is got, bids, bring in that cravant, that milke-fop,
who did runne away: Hisse him, turne him out of doores,
as the shame of his Countrey; when Christ shall come
and call, and say to some White-livered men, you were:
ashamed to appeare for the strict observation of the Lords-
day, and you would not bee seene to favour the Reformation,
which by Englandes Parliament, at such a time was
endeavoured, and you would not labour to have the san-
quary swept from all pollutions, and you would bee at
no cost, to have Christ's coine, bear his stamp alone, to have
his ordinances pure without mixtures, but you would ra-
ther
ether Jsaia-like, lye under burthens, then struggle for deliverance. You were afraid what might bee the issue of your boldnesse in such businesse, if the times should turn, and the tyde run another way, and matters change in such and such a manner. And hereupon you sneakingly left me, and my cause and glory in the open fields. Beloved, this will be an heavy hearing to the cowardly Apostate at the last day, when theseaefull, and the unbelieving must be sent into the lake which burneth with fire & brimstone. Therefore I intreat you againe, and againe, to consider well of this matter.

Lastly, how farre cowardliness may tend to discourage others: I wish you to consider: I here remember, that when Israel of old, was to goe forth unto battaile, God commanded the officers to speake thus unto the people, what man is there, that is seaefull, and faint hearted, let him goe and returne unto his house, lest his brethren hearts faint (or melt) as well as his heart.

Gentlemen, God forbid that you who are come hither to day, to acknowledge your selves bound to God for your estates, lives, and liberties, & to have the word of truth, preached and pressed upon you for your soules good. God forbid (I say) that you who give good examples in many other kinds, should doe any thing which may tend to weaken the spirits, and to dampe the courage of any, who shall enquire, what doe they in London?

Having thus farre perswaded you, to pluck up your hearts, as it becommeth Saints: I now intreat you, to give me leave to counsell you, what course to take, that you may be courageous, and I promise to doe it, as with sincere reference to God, whose servant I am, so with unfained faithfulness to you whom I now serve.

What shall wee doe, that wee may bee courageous?

My directions are in number ten, I will not belong in any one of them, because I would not be tedious, I humbly beg your best attention, desiring to speake to your soules
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

soules, and I beseech the Lord to speake to my heart, and yours.

The first helpe to Christian courage (which makes way for all the rest) is this: Labour clearly from Scripture grounds to evidence your propriety in God.

When David was utterly undone in outward appearance at Ziklag, being strip'd of all outward comforts, and expected that his brains should be beaten out with stones, (They talked of stoning him) David encouraged himselfe (he confirmed and strengthened his heart) as the original expressed it, in the Lord his God: Is there not more in God, My beloved, I pray you put this question upon serious debate in your owne bolomes, my God to hearten mee, then in mine enemies my greatest, my worst enemies to dismay mee? Take the improvement of this point in two particulars.

1 Gods omnipotency.
2 Gods Omnipresence.

Is there not more ability in God, then power in all the world, if combined together. Bee strong, and courageous, 1 Sam.30.6. (faith Hezekiah) Be not afraid, nor dismayed, for the King of Assyria, nor for all the multitude, that is with him; for there be more with us, then with him: with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to helpe us, and to fight our battaies. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah, King of Juda. At this time Senacherib had rayed a very great Army, as holy History reports: And rayling Rabshakeh was confident, that Israel's God could not deliver; yet you see, that this thought. The Lord our God to helpe us, did Steele and strengthen their hearts.

The knowledge of Dietie, and Propriety, will increase magnanimity in a fearefull heart, what are huge armies, strong fortifications, weapons of war, the strength, stoutness, skill, or experience of common soldiers, or warlike Commanders against the Lord Almighty? look back to the history last mentioned, where we read, that one angel in one night
night killed five thousand men in the host of the King of Assyria. By this example, guess at the ability of your God, having made sure your interest in him; and from thence gather courage.

2. As the ability, to the presence of God by the efficacy of his all-ordering providence, may hearten all them, whose God hee is by speciall Covenant; Have not I commanded thee, be strong, and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithsoever thou goest. The Lord is with us, by the presence of his speciall favour, in all our good undertakings whithsoever wee goe. The Christian carries his commander, his refuge, his Castle, his God along with him, whether hee keeps in the Citie, or goe forth into the country; whether hee serve by land, or by sea, his God is still at hand. Assurance therefore, that the al-sufficient, al-present God is ours, will lay a good foundation for good courage: Those who adventure upon any service without God going along with them, may expect defeats; notwithstanding all means of defence: and therefore no marvell, if they tremble: But God taking part with his people, they may confidently from his presence expect deliverance. If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, they had swallowed us up quicke, &c.; but blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us, as a prey to their teeth. God and his people make one side; and because their help standeth in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth; therefore they have abundant caufe to be of good courage.

Secondly, make sure, that the cause you appeare in, is the cause of God. If a man marching to looke his enemies in the face, and being about to begin the battaile, should feele the earth to shake under him, and the ground to sink, every foot hee set forward: O how would this daunt him, and how would his heart recoyle, and give in within him? Obeloved, I beseech you, be you well confirmed in your owne hearts, that you doe serve for God. It is that
which was added to give Courage to them in Iehosaphat's time, when they were surrounded, with Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir, as if we should say, with Lee-\nmarke and France, and Papists at home. Well, faith the man of God, Hearken yee all Judah, and yee Inhabitants of 2 Chron, 20; Jerusalem, and thou King Iehosaphat; Thus faith the Lord 15, &c. unto you: Bee not afraid nor dismayd, by reason of the great multitude for the battle is not yours but Gods.

Beloved, hee that hath a bad confidence, and a bad cause, ever fights as a Coward, and is ready at every stroke to lay downe his weapons and runne away. A true man will stand to it, come who may come, for his cause is justifiable, and hee may with boldnesse owne it; but thieves, if they heare any noife, any whispering, they cry one to another, let us hast and bee gone, for they know, their adventure's unwarrantable. When a man thus thinkes with himself, being beset with dangers and difficulties, what if I should dye in this businesse? could I with confidence owne it, at the Barre of Iesus Christ? The incourage-\nment of his owne conscience, will much embolden him. But if a mans owne heart tell him, that adventuring and dying in a such cause, e shall sink into Hell, because he opposeth the Commands and Government of Iesus Chri\n\st; the liberties, the comforts, the prayers of Gods people, how is it possible, that hee should play the man, and bee truly courageous?

Thirdly, Consider seriously, the many weightie conse-\nfquences of the good cause, which from good grounds, you undertake to maintaine. Sit downe and sadly thinke what will the issue bee, if you desert your Protestation, whereby you bound your selves, to stand for the true Protestant Religion, the honour of our King, the Priviledges of Parliament, the Lawes of the Land, and welfare of the Kingdome. Here it is notable, how the Philistines heartene\nd one another, in the day of their deepe danger, 1 Sam: 4. 9. Be strong, quit your selves like men & Philistins, that
you bee not Servants to the Hebrewes; Quit your selves like men and fight; Either pluck up your hearts, and fight now, or bee slaves for ever; that is the argument.

And I pray you, observe how Joab pleads, *When bee saw the battell before and behind.* 2 Sam. 10. 12. Be of good Courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God. And that passage, Nebem. 4. 14. It is considerable, as either of the former; Bee not afraid, remem-
ber the Lord which is great and terrible, and fight for your Brethren, for your Sons, for your Daughters, for your Wives, and for your Houses.

Marke it, my beloved, and make application, what if the Papists should get the upper hand? What if the Par-
liament should bee dissolved? What if the malignant par-
ty should effect their mischievous desires? Oh how darke and dolefull, how black and bloody, would our times prove, we are all, many wayes obliged to stand for the go-
vernment and worship of the Lord Christ: for the safety, and honour of our King, for the welfare of his three King-
domes, for the Priviledges of our Parliament, and for our rights by Law; All these are to bee prized at an exceeding high rate: our happinesse will bee great in the enjoying of them, and our misery not small, in the want of them. Eve-
ry man according to his Relations and engagements, should reason the case with himselfe. What adventures should I make, and what hazard should I runne, that my selfe may not bee enslaved, that my Wife may not bee abu-
fed, my Children massacred, and (which is above all,) that Christes holy Religion may not bee corrupted, and that Popery may not bee introduced and established in Eng-
land. Thus meditation upon the worth of the things to bee maintained, will bee a speciall means to quicken and to augment Courage.

Fourthly, *Kepe Christ your Captaine in your eye.* For true valour, there never was, nor ever shall bee any like unto him. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy*
Good Courage discovered, and incouraged.

thy glory and Majesty; and in thy Majesty ride prosperously, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things; Psalm 45.

3. 4. How valiant a Champion was the Lord Jesus! Hee endured the Cross; and despised the shame; Hee went on, though dogges did barke, and Lyons did roare, though men reproachfully reviled him, and the Devils endeavoured to devour him; though the earth (as it were) did shake under his feete, and the Heavens were black and thundering over his head. Although when his profeffed enemies had conspired his death, Judas did betray him, and his other Disciples did forfake him, yea although his God and Father did hide his face from him, when Hee answered Divine Justice for our sinnes, yet hee shrunke not, hee drew not back, from the glorious works undertaken. When outward dangers encompassed him, and the sorrowes of Hell tooke hold upon his Soule, though hee was apprehensive, and sensible of all, unto the utmost, and therefore both complained and prayed to his Father, yet was hee not discouraged. Hee did not found, when hee saw his owne bloud, yea although his body was wet all over with a bloudy sweat, but hee worthily did wade through the floud of his appointed passions.

Consider him, consider him, (beloved,) that you may not faint in your minds; when a souldier sees his Captain content to take up with poore provisions and undaunted, though hee meet with hard services, harsh usages, sore affronts, hee thereupon growes the more resolute: For thus hee reasons within himselfe. My worthy Commander, for his diet, takes up with a crust of course bread and a little water, hee hath not beene in bed these many nights, but still, either watcheth, or else, hee lies upon the ground, the cold ground, no wayes, no weather discourages him, Winter, Summer, wet, or dry, scorching heate, the pinching frost, are alike unto him: Ballets, blowes wounds, bruises, broken bones, doe not caufe him to found a retreat, to give back, and shall I shrinke? Beloved, if
Christ had shrunke when Heaven frowned, and men deserted, and Devils opposed him, what had become of you, and mee? Is this Christ my Captain, and hath hee Captain-like, Champion-like for mee both done and suffered thus worthily, thus incomparably, and shall not I put on Courage, and shew my selfe a man, a valiant man for him? I beseech you, consider this frequently and affectionately.

Fiftly, I commend unto you, mutuall Christian communion, as a speciall means of Christian Courage. In the Prophet Malachi his times, when wickednesse was grown to a great head, and the power of godlinesse was discountenanced in them, then those that feared God, spake often one to another.

When Paul after Shiprack, saw the brethren, who came to meete him, bee took Courage. And also, upon a strong dispute with some who opposed Christ, when Silas and Timotheus were come, Paul was pressed in Spirit. God bee thanked for that unity and love which is amongst you, amongst you, the Aldermen and Commons of this City, unto whom the Militia is committed; God continue it, God knit your hearts together more fast, and firme from day to day: God give you when you meete to consider seriously what may heat, and hearten your Spirits in the way of Christian valour, according to that which this day I have preached, and according to that, which this day wee all need.

Wee read in Isay 41. 6, of a Company of Idolaters, animating each other, in promoting Idol-worship. They helped every one his Neighbour, and every one sayd to his brother, Bee of good Courage. So the Carpenter encouraged the Gold Smith, and hee that smootheneth with the hammer, him that smiteth with the anvil, &c.

Doubtlesse, at this day, those who envy our hopes, and oppose our peace, doe meete and hearten one another, both by words and actions. God forbid therefore, that wee should
Good courage discovered, and encouraged.

should be more regardleffe of one another, having a better cause, and more encouragements.

Sixly, set faith on worke in the promises of the Gospel. The worthies in the primitive times, waxed valiant by means of faith; *Hebr. 11. 34.* You may do well to informe your selves, what the Lord is pleased to speake in the word of truth for your comfort. By the bond of his owne rich unchangeable grace, he is become your detour to doe more then I can possibly express. Three things I thought to have spoken unto, under this direction.

First, The promise of Gods assistance, *Bee of good Courage, and bee will strengthen thine heart.* The sweet Psalmist saw much sweetenesse in this, and therefore doth mention it, once and againe when the Soule faith, I am ready to fall downe, yet taking courage, to march forward, it shall renew strength, it shall receive an addition of new strength, *Esa. 40. 31.* And that speech of Solomon, *Prov. 10. 29.* is very remarkeable. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright.* They goe on and gather strength in going, they walke from strength to strength, *Psalm 84. 7.* Truly this is an heartening consideration.

Secondly, The promise of good successe. Beloved, Christians maintaining the cause and minding the glory of God, are as sure of victory as if now they were singing the triumph, and going away as Conquerours. This is most certaine, for truth it selfe hath spoken it; *In the World* *Ioh. 16. 33.* yee shall have affliction, bee of good cheer, or bee bold, I have overcome the world. The Devill hath his deaths wound. Corruption hath (as it were) the knife at the heart of it, and the power of wicked men is broken, they are but sprouting and striving for life.

By this argument, the Lord heartened his servant *Iosua;* *Bee strong and of a good Courage, for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance, the land which I sware unto their Fathers to give them;* *Jofh. 1. 6.* As though
though the Lord had thus spoken; although thou mayest fight many batailles, receive many foylees, loose many of thy souldiers, yet bee not dismayed, for certainly as a Conquerour, thou shalt bring the people to Canaan.

Thirdly, Then the recompence assured upon all them, who stouly stand to the cause of God, is more rich and large, then I can relate. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with mee in my Throne. And from this assurance, the Apostle Paul encourageth the Corinthians. Therefore my beloved Brethren, Bee ye stedfast, and unmoveable alwayes abounding in the worke of the Lord, for as much, as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord. God will require all paines taken, all sorrowes suffered, and you that have lost houses, or land, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, for Christ, and his cause, besides that inward peace, and tranquillitie and joy, which an hundred fold exceed all sublunary contents, to bee enjoyed here, you shall inherit hereafter everlasting life. And againe, feare none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold the Devill shall cast some of you into prison, &c. Be thou faithfull unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life. Feed on these promises, for Cordials flow from them to cheere your drooping hearts, and to strengthen courage.

Seventhly inlarge your loue. If those hearts which now doe but drop love, might flow forth streames of love upon Gods cause, our Kings honour, and the Kingdomes welfare, how wonderfully would our courage be increased. Both reason and religion, will give in manifold strong arguments to augment our love to our Prince, our Parliament, our peace, our priviledges, our posterity: and doubtlesse our love and valour, will grow together.

Love will adventure farre: Women are the more feele, the more fearesfull Sex, and yet love in a tender mother will produce bold adventures to save the babe of her wombe. The timorous mother, who is wont to tremble at the report of a Musket, will almost come to a Cannons
nons mouth to save her Child from being broken in pieces: Love doth it.

Have you not in the countrey sometimes seen an Ewe, in defence of her lambe, to turne head upon a mastive dog, and to stampe, although at other times, the barking of a little whelp, will make a whole flocke of them to runne away. O, love doth it. And the poore Hen, shee will fly at the Kite to save her brood; Love doth it. O that you and I had this Love; Love to Zion, to the Gospel of peace, Love to Christ, and the pure ordinances of grace: Love will make brave and bold adventures.

And as it will adventure farre, so it will endure much, and long. The Apostle faith, Charity beareth all things, endureth all things, Iacob though he had tedious dayes, and weary nights, a great service under a fowre Uncle, a churlish Matter, yet he served seven yeares for Rachell, and they seemed unto him, but a few dayes, for the love hee had to her. Love is strong as death, many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drowne it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be commended. What if one should come to a woman, and make this motion, be content that your child be torn in pieces, and here is a thousand pounds for you. Her answer would be ready. Not for a thousand worlds: yea, shee would almost spit in his face, who should presse such a proposition, what rend my child in pieces? There is nothing can conquer love: so it would be with us, in reference to Gods commandements, the liberty of Gospel ordinances: No promises, no threats, no means, payre, or fowle would take us off from appearing in the defence of them, if our hearts were more enflamed with love.

Eighthly, Walke exactly, keepe your consciences cleare. Notable is that direction of the Lord, Deut. 13, 8. Ye shall keep all the commandements which I command you this day, that you may be strong: Suppose a man, who hath a wound, or
an impostu mated swelling on his body, should goe into the Campe, if any touch him, hee skritchet, and hee cries, come not near me, you know the reason, and the applica-
tion is familiar and easie to the point in hand, wounds in our consciences, will make us timorous and cowardly; but The Righteous is as bold as a lyon: He that walks up-
rightly, walks boldly: Take a man who hath no broken-
enelle, no boyles, no blanes, no bruises, handle him, shake him, crush him, crowde him, thrult him, call him: not-
withstanding he can better beare all this rugged usage; then another can a fillip with the finger. I beseech you mind the application of this, for the Lords take take heed, make not inroads, and breaches upon your consciences, goe not against your light, for guilt will make you cowardly. Adam as soone as hee had sinned hee runs and puts his head in a bush, what was the matter? hee heard a whistling wind, and hee runs away: What hast thou sinned, faith God? I, that is the matter. For if Adam had kept his heart found, if hee had not sinned, hee would with boldnesse have en-
countred with any approaches, either of the creatures, or his Creator.

Ninthly, Improve your experiences. It would bee of
singular use to us, to bellow many houres, both together, and asunder, in recounting the many great things which the Lord hath done for us, both in former times, & of later; we have nationall deliverances Citie deliverances, Family
mercies & personal mercies to improve providence: Give me leave to call to mind two most seasonable now to be re-
membred, considering the end of our assembling at this time: I am credibly informed that your selvs who are here to ho-
nour God for your health continued, peace maintained, lives lengthened, had that day when you were abroad, two no-
table experiences of Gods providence for your preserva-
tion: 1. There were muskets broken in the field, and yet nei-
ther the Muskettiers, nor any neare them received the least harme, although the throng of people was very great.
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

Might not some mens eyes, limbs, or lives have been lost, by such accidents; if the all-ordering hand of the Almighty had not prevented such like dangers. The other passage of divine providence is more remarkable.

2. God's hand turned aside graciously, and strangely, a kindled match which was cast towards a basket full of Gunpowder, which stood in the field for that dayes service. From what malicious heart, and by what mischievous hand this match was cast, the Lord he knoweth, whom we this day magnifie, as the God of our salvations.

Beloved, the remembrance of such like providences, should encourage our adventures for the Lord, whose hand hath diverted many unseen, & unexpected dangers. But I had almost forgot to give in my proof, that the improvement of experiences increaseth courage. I pray you observe it in 10. Thos. 25. And I said unto them fear not, nor bee dismayed, be strong and of good courage; for thus shall the Lord doe to all your enemies, against whom ye fight.

Our God hath many times disappointed the designes of our enemies: many of them who hated us, and endeavoured our undoing, and desolation, have beene discovered and brought to shame, the Lord hath trampled upon them gloriously. These meditations enlarged by particular pregnant instances, I commend unto you, as means to increase your courage.

Lastly, when ever you have occasion to shew your courage, goe out selfe, denyingly in the strength of your God, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Ephes. 6. 10. Through God we shall doe valiantly, Psal. 60. 12. David was a man, as in other kinds, so in this imitable; when hee came against Goliab (who threatened to pluck him in pieces, as a Faulkoner doth a bird,) his words are very obser-vable. Thou commest to me with a sword and with a speare, 1 Sam. 17. 45; and with a shield but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of host, the God of the Armies of Israel, whom thou hast despised. Let these be the breathing of your rules. Some trust in Chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of. E 2
Good Courage discovered, and encouraged.

The Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright. Save Lord, let the King hear us when we call.

Thus be careful to make addition of prayer, unto all the other means of Christian courage. Pray heartily, self-denyingly, and believingly. Advance God, and plead his promise; and expect assistance according to his promise. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all you that hope in the Lord.

FINIS.

It is ordered by the Committee, of the House of Commons in Parliament concerning printing, that this Booke intituled, Good Courage discovered, and encouraged, be printed.

[26. May, 1642]

John White.
THE BEST REFUGE FOR THE MOST OPPRESSED,

A Sermon Preached to the Honourable House of Commons at their Solemn Fast, March 30. 1642.

By Simeon Ash Minister in London.

Published by Order of that House.

E S A. 26.1.
In that day shall this Song be sung in the Land of Judah, we have a strong City, Salvation will God appoint for Walls and Bulwarkes.

L O N D O N,
Printed for Edward Brewster and John Burroughs, and are to be sold at the Bible on Fleet-Bridge and the golden Dragon near the Inner-Temple-Gate, 1642.
TO THE HONORABLE HOUSE of COMMONS now assembled in Parliament.

He several Creatures, according to their several instincts, seek the preservation of themselves. Nature hath taught those which are void of reason, to make use of such shelters as common providence hath provided. The Conies (saith Solomon) are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rock. And the Psalmist telleth us, that the high hills are a refuge for the wild Goats.

Men in like manner acted by different principles be- take themselves to different ways of defence. The rich man's wealth is his strong City, and as an high Tower in his conceit. Some shroud themselves under the authority of great ones, as Birds build in the branches, and Beasts seek shadow under the boughs of high and spreading Trees.
When Abimelech encamping against Thebez had taken it, all the men and women fled into the strong Tower that was within the City.

But the regenerate being raised by the spirit of grace above the world, they are carried beyond all things, on this side God, for the securing of their comforts and safeguarding of their persons. The name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe. Unto this refuge (which is above all others, and better than all others) my Text and my Sermon directeth God's oppressed people. This Text was judged seasonable when I preached upon it, for then the times began to be lowering: the improvement of this Doctrine, is now become more necessary, because our dangers are increased, and some suspect that England is threatened with a shower of blood.

The words of the Prophet Nahum to Nineveh are notable. All thy strong holds shall be like Fig-trees, with the first ripe Figs if they be shaken they shall even fall. And therefore our souls should say, some trust in Chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. When God had delivered David from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, he still resolves to have stedfast reference...
The Epistle Dedicatory.

To his Majesty for future defence. The Lord is my Rock and my Fortresse and my Deliverer, my God, my strength in whom I will trust, my Buckler and the horne of my Salvation, and my high Tower, I will call upon the Lord. How much more doth it now concerne us (being surrounded with dangers) to make haste to Heaven for deliverance. For our help is in the name of the Lord who made Heaven and earth.

By speedy Repentance we run to God, and if we return unto the Almighty, he will be our Defence.

By a firme fiduciall adherence unto the word of promise we make our abode with his highnesse. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall lodge under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord he is my Refuge and my Fortresse, my God in him will I trust, hee shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wing shalt thou trust, his truth shall be thy Shield and Buckler. The Magazine and Militia of the world is in this Castle with the Lord of Hosts, and it is exercised by the prayers of his people. Prayers draw forth the Armies of the living God. I can pray to my Father (faith Christ) and he shall presently give me more then twelve legions of Angels. 1. The Hosts sent from Heaven upon prayer are Angels, which

Ps. 124:8
Job 22:23, 25
Ps. 91:1, 2, 4

Mat. 26:53
which excell in strength. For one of them in one night killed a hundred fouerscore and five thousand valiant men. 2. No lesse then twelve legions are set on worke by meanes of prayer: A legion is judged to be six thousand Foot and seuen hundred Horse, according to which computation this Army of Angels raised by prayer is exceeding great. 3. This great Army is by prayer dispatchd from Heaven in an instant, and he shall presently give me, &c.

Luther called his groanes and prayers Guns and instruments of Warre. Christians in the Army of Marcus Aurelius by prayer prevailed with God both to give raine to refresh the Army and to cast downe haile with thunderbolts upon the enemy, whereupon they were honoured with that title, Legio Fulminatrix. David seemeth to suggest some such consequences of his prayers in times of danger: In my distresse I called on the Lord, &c. then the Earth shooke and trembled, the Foundations also of the Hills moved and were shaken: There went up a smoake out of his nostrils and fire out of his mouth devoured. The Lord also thundred in the Heavens and the highest gave his voyce, haile-stones and coales of fire, yea he sent out his arrows and scattered them, and he shot out lightenings and discomfited them. Preces & lachry-
lachrymæ sunt arma Ecclesiae, and with such weapons (most Noble Senators) I am persuaded you be as well guarded, as ever any Assembly in the world. The hearts of many thousands do daily put you into the arms of omnipotence, and into the bosom of the Lord of Hosts. This one thought (which is much inferior unto many other encouragements) might be sufficient to heare up your spirits above all difficulties, which can encounter you in attending upon the welfare of this Church and Commonwealth. Your selves have tasted the first fruits of Fasting and Prayer in many-fold experiences: Be confident there is a full Harvest behind, which will abundantly recompence all your great labours and adventures for God and his people.

Many of my Reverend Brethren, have presented you with their rich gifts, with which they served you at your monthly Fasts: And now I humbly tender my two Mites. Your acceptance is my satisfaction, and if this my poore labour of much love and duty, shall contribute any whit unto the publick good (at which I levelled in it) it will be no small addition to my joyes.

The Lord direct your Counsels by his wisdome, protect your Persons by his power, and
The Epistle Dedicatory.

prosper all your, worthy endeavours by his blessing, according to the riches of his glorious grace in \textit{I E S V S C H R I S T}, in whom I am

Your Servant in all faithfulness,

but in much weakness

\textit{Simeon Ash.}
A SERMON PREACHED
At the late Fast before the Commons
House of Parliament.

PSAL. 9.9
The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a re-

fuge in times of trouble.

His Psalm is almost altogether
Eucharisticall, for it containing
twenty verses, onely three of
them are spent in prayer, v. 13,
19, 20. the other 17. are bestow-
ed in thanksgiving.

And certainly there is much
Christianity, much Christian po-

cicy in weaving and working praises and prayers into
each other. For as God is highly honoured by prayer,
Ps al. 116. 13, 14. What shall I render to the Lord for
all his benefits towards me (faith David) his answer
followes, I will call upon the Name of the Lord.

B
So Prayer proves the more prevalent, being accompanied with prayses; because when glory is returned unto God for favours formerly afforded, his Majesties great designe is served and his expectation satisfied. *I will deliver and thou shalt glorifie me*, whereupon the thankfull Petitioner may most hopefully expect the speeding of his great petitions at the throne of grace.

Let us learne this pious policy, this religious Rhetorick in our addresses unto God, (viz.) to preface, to put on our suites of greatest concernment with thanksgivings to the Lord, for the great things already done amongst us, by his apperant and remarkable providences.

The Occasion of the praises in this Psalm presented (as it is generally conceived) was some glorious general deliverance from some very deep and desperate danger. And some Interpreters conjecture, that the killing of Goliath and the overthrow of the Philistines, as a consequence of that victory, occasioned this part of holy Scripture.

One ground of this conjecture, is, from these words in the title set before the Psalm, *Vistori super Muth-Labben*, or *super morte Labben*, To the chiefe Musitian upon Muth-Labben. For Muth in Hebrew signifies death, and Labben they take to be the name of that Champion, that Giant, that Monster of men, who defied the host of the living God.

From hence note by the way two things,

1. That the enemies of Gods Israel are put to flight by the downfall of their Champions. An Antichristian party may better be plucked downe, if the heads of that faction be removed.

2. That
2. That the death and downfall of Israel's enemies draweth forth praises from the righteous.

In this Psalme, David that sweet Singer of Israel, praiseth God, both in regard of the beautiful, useful excellencies, which he espied in him, and also in respect of the renowned Acts which had beene wrought by him.

It may be some here present, because of this which I have spoken, begin to question my discretion in the choyce of this Text this day. For how unseasonable (may it be objected) is a subject of Thanksgiving, for the service of heart humbling. Give me leave therefore (Right Honourable) before I proceed to prevent this prejudice.

Whereas the three chiefest services of this day are,
1. Heart humbling.
3. Conscientious Covenant renewing. All these are much promoted by such a subject.

For the first, what meditations more melting to thaw downe the icy, the frozen spirits then Gods mercies, what considerations can more kindly, more thoroughly breake the sinners heart then the excellencies and kindnesses of that God who hath beene by sinne dishonoured.

For the 2d. what arguments will more forcibly draw forth the soul in holy suites before the Lord, then his abilities to bestead us in all concernments, and our experiences of his readiness to lay forth himselfe for our comfort in former times.

For the 3d. How shall a Christian be sooner conquer-red, to give up selfe unto the most High by solemne Covenant, then by the apprehension of the full satif-
My Text contains one entire Proposition. The Lord will be a Refuge for the oppressed in times of trouble.

Wherein 1. The Subject. 2. The Predicate are considerable.

The Subject hath in it much lowrenessee, for it suggesteth unto us, God's owne people in a sad, in a suffering condition, oppressed and in trouble.

The Predicate comprizeth more sweetnesse, for it propoundeth Almighty God as the happiest harbour for his poore people to put into in stormy weather, or rather (that I may hold to the Metaphor in my Text) it directeth the oppressed foule unto the safest refuge to run into in daies of ruinating dangers. The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

My Text holdeth forth two Truths, open and appa- rant unto every eye.

1. That trouble and oppression may be the condition of God's owne peculiar people.

2. That the Lord will be a refuge unto his oppressed people in times of trouble.

My purpose is to prosecute both these points at this time, being both profitable and reasonable, I shall say the lesse of the former, because onely implyed; but I will be larger in the latter, because openly expressed and chiefly intended. The first truth which craves your attention is this, That oppression and trouble may be in this world the portion of God's children.

In the handling hereof, I shall, 1. Interpret the words. 2. Confirm the Doctrine. 3. Endeavour to put all into practice by application.
There are 2 words to be opened.

First, Oppressed. The original word here used is "Vix&iopprefled". I find translated in holy writ

1. Broken down. Thou hast Ps. 44:19.

sore broken (or broken us downe) in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

2. Sore broken. I am feeble and sore broken, I have Ps. 38:8.

roared by reason of the disquietnesse of my heart.

And the fulnesse of its signification, may be fetched from the root, whence it is derived, which is variously rendered in sacred Scripture.

1. To crush.

His children are farre from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them. Job 5:48

2. To crush under feet.

To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the Earth. Lam. 3:34

3. To smite downe unto the ground.

The enemy hath persecuted my soule, he hath smitten my life downe to the ground. Ps. 143:3

4. To breake into pieces.

They breake in pieces thy people O Lord. Ps. 94:3

All these are applyable, to express the sad condition of Gods servants in regard of oppression; they may bee crushed by intolerable loads laid upon them, they may be throwne into the dust by the hand of violence, they may be sore broken, broken into pieces in regard of all their outward comforts, by the prevailing power of cruell enemies.

The 2d. word to be interpreted is Trouble, which I finde translated,

1. Affliction.

In all their affliction, he was afflicted. Isa. 63:9

2. Adversity.

As the Lord liveth who hath redeemed my soule from all adversity. 2 Sam. 4:9

3. Tri-
3. Tribulation.

Go and cry unto the gods whom you have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

4. Distresse.

In my distresse I called upon the Lord.

5. Anguish.

We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, &c.

6. The pangs of a woman in travell.

There are my loynes filled with paine, pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth.

And it is derived of a root which signifieth to besiege, and is so renderd in holy writ.

All these words, tell us, what foere troubles may overtake and take hold on the people of God. Many and heavy may be the the afflictions of the godly. They may be pursued, overtaken, trampled upon, grievously pained, filled with inward anguish, and besieged on every side with tribulation and distresse.

The proofe of the point followes, 1. By Scripture.

2. By Reason.

By Scripture.

First more generally. Take notice of the complaint of Gods Church. Wherefore hidest thou thy face and forgettest our affliction and our oppression. For our soule is bowed downe to the dust, our belly cleaveth unto the earth. And the Psalmist reporteth thus much.

Secondly and more particularly. The servants of God may be troubled and oppressed.
before the Commons House of Parliament.

1. In their credit by false and injurious accumulations, Davids adversaries charged him with murderous and traiterous designes. Because of the voice of the enemy, Ps. 55.3. because of the oppression of the wicked for they cast iniquity upon me. False witnesses (or witnesses of wrong) did rise up, they layed to my charge, things that I knew not.

2. In their outward estates and persons, as by heavy impositions and sore exactions, so by the oppressing sword, and bloody warre.

The Prophet Amos cried out in his times, of them who oppress the poore, and crush the needy. Who sold the righteous for silver, and the poore for a payre of shoes. Who layed themselves downe upon cloathes layed to pledge.

And the Prophet Jeremiah often speakes of the oppressing Sword reaching Gods Israel. Arise and let us goe againe to our owne people, and to the Land of our Nativity from the oppressing Sword: For feare of the oppressing Sword they shall turne every one to his People.

3. In their soules by violent persecutions, driving them from the house; and worship of God. David he sitheth forth this sad complaint when by the malice of blood-thirsting Saul, he was driven into the wilderness when faine hee would have convers'd with God in his holy place. Why goe I mourning ( faith he) because of the oppression of the enemy.

The fore-going verses tell us that at this time David was banished from the publick Ordinances of God formerly enjoyed. And in the following Psalme he maketh the like complaint upon the selfe sameground.

Why goe I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy,
enemy. O send out thy light and thy truth, let them bring mee unto thy holy Hill, and to thy Tabernacles.

Our owne times have given in too many instances of grievous oppressions of all these kindes, which have pinched the people of God, and therefore I shall not need by way of proofe to say any more.

The Grounds whence it is that the condition of God's dearest servants may be thus calamitous are two. From God sharply correcting them for their evils, Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his People, And he gave them into the hand of the Heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

That passage in the Prophecy of Esaiah, I may not passe over in silence, because it is so pregnant to the point in hand. This is a People robbed and spoyled, they are all of them snared in holes, and they are bid in prison houses, they are for a prey, and none delivereth, for a spoyle and none faith Restore. Who gave Jacob for a spoyle, and Israel to the Robbers, did not the Lord against whom we have sinned? for they would not walke in his wayes, neither were they obedient to his Law: Therefore he poured upon him the fury of his anger and the strength of battle, and it hath set him on fire round about.

Reaf. 2. 2. From malevolent mischievous men maligning them for their goodnesse. For thy sake are we killed all the day long, and we are accounted as sheepe for the slaughter. Why must Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego be cast into the fiery fornace? because they would not idolatrously bow to the Image that was set
set up. Why must Daniel be thrown into the Lyons Den; because he would not draw backe from doing homage and devotion in ways of holy prayer unto his God.

The Application of the Point followeth, and it may sundry ways be seasonably serviceable to our soules.

Hence we may guess at the hainousnesse of sinne, for which we come to be humbled this day at the foot of the Lord.

Should we see a wise, patient and a loving father cast his child to the ground, bruise his flesh and break his bones by blowes, we would be confident the offence was foule; such a Father is God unto his People, and yet thus he sometimes deals with them, as the Scriptures already cited doe evidently and abundantly witness. Herein consider the carriage of divine Providence towards Job, though he was the Phanix of the world for Piety, none like him upon Earth, a man perfect and upright, who feared God and eschewed evil; yet was he oppressed in his estate, broken in his Posterity, blemish'd in his credit, bruised in his body, and wounded in his spirit. And yet marke in this his deplorable condition what was spoken for his humbling. Know this that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth.

This meditation may be of singular and seasonable use to helpe forward penitentiall heart-ake for our sins this day. Had we spoken, or done somewhat inconsiderately for which the high Court of Parliament might justly by imprisonment confine our Persons, by fines ruinate our fortunes, by setting us upon the Pillory expose us to reproach and derision, or by painfull
racking, torment our bodies, how would blushing cover our faces and our knee bones knocke one against another: Now my Beloved our sinnes, personall sins, Family sinnes, City sinnes, Country sinnes, K Ing-dome sinnes, Pride, Passion,Prodigality,Hypocrify, Oaths, Blasphemy, polluting Gods Ordinances, Sacrilegious lavishing our holy time, doe expose us to much more misery then I can mention, unto more heavy oppressions then my language can reach unto: and shall we not be deeply humbled before divine Majesty from whom such sad things have many thousand wales, and more then many thousand times beene deserved.

Use 2.

2. This Doctrine somewhat discovereth the exceeding exceeding sad condition of the wicked, for doubtlesse their case is much more uncomfortable then the worst estate that Gods owne People can possibly be cast into: Holy Scripture doth hold forth this inference, Behold the righteous shall be recompenced in the Earth, how much more the wicked and the Sinner?

Prov.11. 31.

1Pet.4.17

The Apostle Peter speaking of the fiery tryall, which the faithfull in those times were put upon, he argueth in this manner. The time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God, and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them who obey not the Gospell of God. And is there not abundant reason to make good this conclusion.

1. If God a friend, a Father affliet thus severely, what will he doe, when as an enemy he commeth armed with fury. Upon the wicked he shall raine shares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible (or burning) tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup.

2. If the Lord having his justice satisfied doth deale thus
thus roughly with his owne People endeavouring
their good, what will he doe (thinke you) when as
an angry Judge he commeth in extreme rigour, to take
vengeance, and to make men miserable. If I whet my
glittering Sword, and my hand take hold on judgement,
I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward
them that hate mee, I will make mine arrows drunke
with blood, and my Sword shall devour flesh, and that with
the blood of the slaine and of the Captives, from the be-
ginning of revenges upon the enemy. You whose con-
sciousnesse tell you, you have fleighted Gods govern-
ment, obscured his excellencies, dishonoured his
name, I beseech you be persuaded from this which
hath beene spoken to repent, and to amend this day.
Remember that God is angry with the wicked every
day, if he turne not he will whet his Sword, he hath
bent his Bow and made it ready, he hath prepared for
him instruments of death, he ordaineth his Arrows a-
gainst the Persecutors.

I conclude this Use with the Caveat given by the
Psalmist. Now consider this, yee that forget GOD;
lest I teare you in pieces, and there bee none to de-
liver.

This meditation may be of speciall use to flanch
murmuring, and to strengthen Patience under our
present Pressures. The author of the Epistle to the
Hebrewes maketh this improvement of this Doctrine.
Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great
a cloud of Witnesses, let us runne with patience unto the
race that is set before us. The witnesses to whom hee
hath reference were with their sore sufferings pointed
at in the preceding Chapter.

And the argument will come home with strength
upon our hearts, if we take notice of a double difference between our selves, and those sufferers in the Primitive times.

1. Our Pressures are lighter.
2. Their Graces were higher.

First, Their grievances were heavier then any that we through Gods long-sufferance as yet lye under: For they bad tryall of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonments, they were stoned, they were sawne asunder, slaine with the Sword, they wandred about in Sheeps-skins, Goate-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

Secondly, Their worth was greater, then our modesty will suffer us to say we have yet attained: Of whom (faith the Apostle) the world was not worthy. Those who were beyond the worlds worth, yet were thus inhumanely, thus barbarously dealt with. Let this be thought upon withall seriousness; for though Christian Patience be alwayes needfull and commendable, yet most beautifull and seasonable when humiliation is professed and expressed before the Lord, as we doe this day. The humbled hearts will accept the punishment of their iniquity.

The thought of the many distressing troubles which Gods people are exposure unto in this world, may serve to abate in our hearts the immoderate desire of long life on Earth.

Mistake me not, for I know that long life is a desirable Blessing.

Yet should we all labour to fit loose, both in regard of the means of bodily livelihood, and life itself.

And doubtfull our God endeavours to weane us from
from the world, by applying wormewood (as it were) to the full Breasts of our sweetest sublunary contentments.

The Apostle Paul, by his prison and bonds was brought to this bent, to be willing, at a little warning, to come away from all enjoyments under the Sunne.

I desire to be dissolved.

Here I think it needfull to give in a double Caution, that we may escape a double Rocke, upon which many dash and bruise themselves in desiring death.

1. Doe not desire to dye in passion and discontent.

Herein the Prophet Jonah missed it very much, when he conjectured that his credit might be somewhat eclipsed, and himselfe reputed a false Prophet, because Nineveh was not destroyed. And when the heat of the Sunne annoyed his Body, He wished in himselfe to die, and said, it is better for me to die then to live.

2. Be not weary of life, through discouragement of spirit, because of difficulties and dangers encountering you in doing duty.

In this kind Elijah was too blame.

When Iezehell resolved to take away his life, he sat downe under a Juniper tree, and requested for himselfe (or for his life) that hee might die, &c.

(Right honourable) The Lord I believe hath given you more masculine, more Heroick spirits, then to offend in these kinds: Therefore instead of enlarging the Cautions, I will give in two Directions, to guide your practice of the use under hand, in both which, you have the blessed Apostle Paul for a glorious patterne.
1. Let nothing so much as love to Jesus Christ carry your hearts out of the world.

Ph. 1. 23. I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is farre better.

And there is good reason for it, in reference to the Point now prosecuting, because perfect liberty from the worst oppressours, and heaviest oppressions is one-ly to be enjoyed in the bosome of our blessed Saviour.

2. When your longings after rest with Christ are boyled up, are raysed to the greatest height, even then in love to Christ, be content for a time to be without him in Heaven, that you may still be serviceable to him in his cause, and the comforts of his people here on Earth.

Neverthelasse to abide in the flesh is more needfull for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of Faith. That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, by my comming to you again.

Now here (Right Honourable) give me leave to speake one word to you, and beare with it, though you account it a digression. If the good Apostle could contentedly keepe from Heaven for a time, yea from Christ the Heaven of Heaven, that he might doe his servants some more service in the world. Then be you willing to be with-held from many accommodations in your owne countries, yea in a sort to be estranged from Wives, Children, Neighbours, delightfull enjoyments, that you may serve both Church and Common-wealth in England, that you may honour Jesus Christ in the happy worke of Re-
formation now in your hands, and in the hearts of all Gods people through the Kingdome.

It admonisheth us all to take up our thoughts sometimes with tart troubles and heavy oppressions.

Abundant cause we have thus to see, and we shall confesse thus much, if we consider,

1. How Heaven (the God of Heaven I meare) is incensed against us, by our continued and multiplied abominations; we still heare profane, bloody Oaths, Curses, Blasphemies ringing in our eares; wee still see brutish drunkenesse reeling and spewing in our streets; The Lords-day is commonly profaned before our eyes; yea though this City be famous for Religion, yet the streets are filled with vain walkings and the fields with profane sportings, even during the time of publick worship, And shall I not visite for these things, saith the Lord?

2. How hell and earth are combined against us, because we endeavour Reformation. The Devil roares, because his Kingdom is battered. Papists and Atheists rage, because Popery and profaneness is opposed.

And certainly if that Prince of the ayre, who also worketh inthe hearts of the children of disobedience can worke any mischiefs, raise any stormes, cause any confusions, we shall now be sure to be oppressed with them.

3. How Ireland is oppressed and wasted, because it professeth the Protestant Religion. Religion, Religion is the root of the quarell, of the warres rai-

fed there. And doubtlesse the Papists, those Ly-ons, those Beasts of prey are of the same spirit, as greedy after Protestant bloud in England, as in Ire-

land. They are birds of a feather, though they roost in divers nests.

But
But you will ask me, what is your meaning? Wherefore would you have us mind tribulation & oppression.

I answer, This I humbly request for a double reason. 1. That such a condition may be prevented. 2. That we may be prepared for what in that kind must be endured.

First, That we may be moved to seek the prevention of such troubles and oppressions as are ready (for ought we know) to press to rush in upon us suddenly.

1. By an humble submission unto the good pleasure of our God, in an open ingenious acknowledgement of our provocations.

Malefactors who refuse stubbornly to take a faire legall tryall, according to the Lawes of our Kingdome, must be pressed to death. This course God held with David, he did set him, as it were, upon the racke, where he roared till he resolved to confesse. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. The Lord make us wise for our owne ease and comfort in this regard. Let us particularly without partiality acknowledge our offences against our God, and submit our selves. And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned, doe thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee.

2. By a speedy Reformation. Acknowledgement without amendment will be no prevention of wrath, but rather a further provocation. Wheres repentance may make way for our escape, when judgement is at the doore: And they put away the strange gods from among them, and Gods soule was grieved for the misery of Israel. They turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said he would doe. Whereas if this be not done, the Lord will lay
lay on more weight, he will punish seven times more, and seven times more, and seven times more, and seven times more, and seven times more. The passages in *Leviticus* speake fully God's purpose in this particular against the impenitent:

I beseech you, I beseech you (Right Honourable and Beloved) let not this my counsell be disregarded on this great day of our Humiliation before the Lord.

Secondly, That we may make provision, for the better bearing of the heaviest loade which man can or God will cast upon us.

We daily see in this City that Porters prepare themselves instruments, that they may carry their loade more easly, yea Carriers provide for their horse-backs Saddles and such like things, that those Creatures may beare their burdens without bruising, and shall we be careless?

But how shall this be done?

1. By endeavouring to make and maintain all sound and whole within.

The sincere heart will well stand under great pressures because sound. Being pressed above measure, the Apostles did joyfully beare the load by meanes of sinceritie. Whereas if a bone be broken, or if the flesh be torn, yea if the skin be rub'd up, and the place abide raw, the laying on of the lightest load will cause paine and shrinking.

In like manner will it be with our soules. As *Job* while he maintained his gracious frame of heart, he was calme, though impoverished by the hand of oppression, though made childlee by an heavy accident; but when by fretting he had galled his heart, how
durst he lye downe, desire to dye and fly out shamefully under the load.

2. By seeking interest in God through Christ. 

*unto me (faith our Saviour) all yee that are heavy laden.

Whatever our loads are, whether inward, outward, heavier, or lighter, we must make to Christ for ability to bear them, for he adds and abates weight at pleasure: Hee also augments and withdrawes

strength according to his pleasure. 

*Without me (faith Christ) you can doe nothing, neither without him can we endure any thing. And he onely can support the sinking soule under the most smarting troubles and heavy oppressions. Under his wing we shall be sure either of preservation or supportation. I will conclude this Use and this first Doctrine, with the counsel of the Psalmist. 

*Trust in him at all times, ye people, and pour out your hearts before him, God is a Refuge for us. Selah.*

Now this lets in the second part of the Text to be prosecuted, which I called the Predicate in the Proposition, wherein God is by a Metaphor both made knowne and made over to his owne people, as their defence and deliverer.

*The Lord will be a refuge in times of trouble.*

In the handling whereof. 1. The words used are to be interpreted. 2. The Truthes infolded in them are to be considered.

The Hebrew word here rendered Lord is Jehovah, a glorious title of our God, the only true God, used in holy Writ. 1. Both to advance his Name. 2. And also to support and solace his people.

*Exalt him that rideth upon the Heavens by his Name Jah, and rejoice before him.*
The Original word translated, Refuge, is derived of a root, which (as it is rendered in our translations) doth signify.

1. To set on high.
   I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. Ps. 91.14.

2. To exalt.
   Behold God exalteth by his power. Ps. 36.22.

3. To exalt to safety.
   To set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety. Job 5.11.

4. To defend.
   The name of the God of Jacob defend thee. Ps. 20.11.

And I finde the word in the Text divers wayes translated in the old Testament.

1. A strong Tower.
   The name of the Lord is a strong Tower. Prov. 18.10.

2. A strong refuge.
   Thou art my strong refuge. Ps. 71.7.

3. An high wall.
   The rich mans wealth is his strong City, and is an high wall in his owne conceit. Prov. 18.11.

4. An high Tower.
   The Lord is my rocke, &c. my buckler, the horn of my Salvation, and my high Tower. Ps. 18.2.

5. High Fortresse.
   And the Fortresse of the high Fort of thy walls shall be bring downe, &c. Esa. 25.12.

   The Lord is my Defence, &c. Ps. 94.22.

Times. The word signifies the tempestivity, the season of time. The Septuagint renders it right, εὐεργετικόν. In good seasons. And thus we sometimes finde it expressed in sacred records.
The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season, so him that is weary.

This Explication of the words being premised, this Predication, this part of the Proposition in the Text, holdeth forth 3. useful truths.

1. That the true God is Jehovah.

2. That God Jehovah is an incomparable Refuge to his oppressed people.

3. That the Lord Jehovah will be an incomparable Refuge to his oppressed people in the fittest seasons.

The limits of time set for the bounding of my Discourse will not allow me to speake unto these observations severally, and therefore I will only fasten upon the 2d. being the principal: in the prosecution whereof I shall take in some things considerable in the two other, as the Lord shall direct.

That God Jehovah is an incomparable Refuge to his oppressed People.

There are 2. Branches in the Doctrine.

1. That God is a Refuge.

2. That he is a Refuge incomparable.

In the handling hereof, 1. I will prove both the branches distinctly, 2. I will apply them joyntly.

The Lord will be a Refuge. The Greeke, the Latin and the English word, all hold forth the same thing. A place to fly backe unto.

The Metaphor seemes to be taken from the Camp, from warre, where it is the manner of Souldiers being beaten backe by an over-powring enemy, to retire unto some place of security and defence.

Now such a thing is God Jehovah unto his poore people,
people, overpowered and oppressed by the strength and violence of their enemies. He is a Castle, a Fort-
tresse unto whom they may, unto whom they must re-
tire, repair for defence and safety.

For the general proof of this first Branch, you may
please to observe,

1. That God himself promiseth to be the refuge of
his oppressed people.

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the
 needy; now will I arise, saith the Lord, I will set him
in safety from him, that puffeth at him (or would en-
snare him.)

2. That his oppressed servants claime and chal-
lenge thus much from his Majesty.

O Lord my strength and my fortresse, and my refuge in
the day of affliction.

Thou art my hiding place, thou shalt preserve me from
trouble, thou shalt compass me about with Songs of Delive-
rance. Selah.

More particularly, it may be of good use for us to
consider that the holy Scriptures doe give more full
witness unto this truth, discovering unto us. That
God is a refuge unto his Servants in regard of all kinds
of annoyances which molest, all dangers which threa-
ten them.

1. When clamours and out-cries are made after
them. When they are wondred ar, as Owles by
the chirpings and chidings of other birds.

I am a wonder unto many, but thou art my strong
Refuge.

2. When infectious killing diseases are scattered
round about them. I will say of the Lord, he is my Refuge
and my Fortresse, he shall deliver thee from the noysome pe-
stilence, &c.
3. When bloody persecutors are stirred up against them.

When David by the violent pursuit of Saul was compelled to take Covert in a Cave, (hee faith) I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soule, I cryed to thee 6 Lord, I said, thou art my refuge.

Persecutions are sometimes compared to the scorching heat of the Sunne (Matth. 13. 6.) and in that case God is a Refuge to shadow them.

And sometimes Persecutions are compared unto tempests or stormes (Matth. 7. 25, 27.) in that case the Lord is a refuge to shelter them.

Thou hast beene a strength to the poore, a strength to the needy in his distresse, a refuge from the storme, a shadow from the heate, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storme against the wall.

The 2d. Branch of the Doctrine remains to be illustrated, That God is a Refuge incomparable. We may well call this Refuge, Non-such. For certainly there is not any other like unto it. He is a refuge and a refuge. A refuge for excellency, as the fullness of the Originall word (explained) doth intimate.

And this may appeare in 7. particulars; three whereof are hinted in the word Iehovah.

1. He is the higheft, the All-commanding refuge. Iehovah is most high over all the Earth. In laying open the Originall word here rendred Refuge, you heard that it signifies, An high wall, an high Tower, an high Fortresse.

All high Towres are over-topped, and all Castles are commanded by this Refuge: The greatest Mountaines
taines are as Valleyes, as Mole-hils under the Lord Jehovah. No long Ladders can scale this high wall. No Arrows of the strongest Archer; no Cannons of the mightiest Warrior can reach this high Towre. Under the shadow of thy wings (saith David) will I make my refuge, untill these calamities be overpast. And he addeth, I will cry unto God most high. Be thou exalted o God above the Heavens.

And the Prophet in his description of the Lord, Esa.40.22, hath these expressions. The Inhabitants of the Earth are as Grasshoppers. He bringeth the Princes to nothing, he maketh the Judges of the Earth as vanity. He shall also blow upon them and they shall wither, and the whirlewind shall take them away as stubble.

2. He is an independent Refuge. The glorious title Jah, tells us, that our God is the God of beings, having his being of and from himselfe. What would you thinke (Beloved) of a Castle which could not be prejudiced, though all foyle should be digged up under it, though no waters should be suffered to flow unto it, though the passages for all provisions should be block’d up from it, though no Sun, no Showers, no influences of Heaven should fall upon it. Now such a refuge is our God Jehovah, for he can neither be damnified nor advantaged by any creature, any course, any combination whatsoever. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou beest righteous, what givest thou him? or what receivest he of thine hand.

3. He is a never-falling, a never-failing refuge. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, or as the Originall imports, In the Lord Jehovah is the rocke of
ages. No batteries can beat downe or weaken this Fortresse. The longest tract of time cannot demolish or ruinate this place of defence. Here the words of Moses the man of God are considerable. Lord thou hast beene our dwelling place in all generations (or as the Hebrew expresseth it) in generation and generation. What our God hath beene at any time to his distressed, endangered people, that he is and will be without alteration: For he is a strong, stable, ever-standing, unmoveable, immutable refuge to secure and safeguard them, who are his by peculiar Covenant.

4. He is the most capacious refuge. Gods immensity is roomy enough to receive all commers.

Job 11.7. Canst thou by searching finde out God, Canst thou finde out the Almighty unto perfection, It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou doe, deeper then Hell what canst thou know. The measure thereof is longer then the Earth, and broader then the Sea. Whereas Castles on Earth may be so crowded with companies, that the last commers are compelled to lye out of doores, as Beeshang out of the Hives mouth on heapes, through want of roome within. Although many millions more then ever will make unto the Almighty, should creepe into his bosome, yet no one could have occasion to complaine of being straightned in him. The Earth is not so vaft to entertaine more Inhabitants, as our God, who is infinite and beyond all dimensions, to give shelter unto all those who flocke unto him in dayes of danger. Doe not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord.

5. The passage to this Refuge is most safe and passable. Although our sins had blocked up our way
to God, and had made such a separation betwixt his Majesty and our poor souls, that our approaches to him might have beene perilous to all eternity: Yet now we have boldnesse (or liberty) to enter into the Holie by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vaile, that is to say, his flesh. In whom we have boldnes and access with confidence, by the faith of him.

The Lord our Saviour hath cast up such a causal way (as it were) to Heaven, that we may well travell thither from all Coasts and corners of the Earth: we may safely saile through Christ's blood into the bosome of the Father. There are no boggs, no sands to sink us, no Armies to cut us off in our approaches unto God for safety in stormy, troublesome times.

6. God is a refuge, ever and every where at hand. God is our refuge and strength, a very present helpe in trouble. Which is not only to be understood concerning the presence of his Essence, but of his special providence for their protection.

My Texttells us that he is a refuge for the oppressed in the seasons of trouble: God is not only once, but alwaies seasonably present with his oppressed people, for mark the words, In the times, not at one time only, or only many times, but in the times, in all times, all seasons of need. This consideration the Church of God took comfort in. O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble or in the season of distress:

Whithersoever God by his Providence carrieth his people, there he will undoubtedly be a refuge to them, both for protection and provision. Thus saith the Lord, although I have cast them farre off among the Heathen, and although I have scattered them among the
Countries, yet will I be to them a little Sanctuary in the Countries where they shall come.

And the Apostle Paul reporting Gods dispensations towards old Israel, speaketh in this manner. They dranke of that spiritual rock that followed them (or went with them) and that Rocke was Christ.

Some glossing upon these words, say, that the waters which flowed from the Rocke did in a stremme follow the Israelites in their journey for their refreshing. But this I take to be the true meaning of the Scripture. That in all their removals, according to their various necessities, the Lord was still at hand for their supply and safety.

Gen.17.1. 7. He is the best furnished refuge. The Lord is El-shaddai, God All-sufficient, perfectly able to satsisfe all soules with all contentments to all eternity.

That which fully answereth unto all accommodati- ons and comforts whatsoever, is to be found in God our Refuge. Here the Promise to the upright man, recorded by the Evangelicall Prophet is very considerable. He shall dwell on high (or in the heights) his place of Defence shall be the Munitions of Rockes, bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Are not the words both fit and full to express and prove the particular under hand.

In this harbour the heart hath the goodliest pro- spects, the fullest provisions, the safest protections. Here the soule feedeth upon the sweetest Cordials, taketh the quietest, most refreshing rest, ô the Bowers, the Walkes, the Gardens, the beds of Spices, the All-delights, which the spirit enjoys in the bosome of the Almighty.

Ps.73.25. Will you heare Davids judgement, Whom have I in Heaven
Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth, that I desire beside thee, God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

In the best situated Castles in the world, there is some defect in something needfull or desireable: either the ayre, or the water, or the soyle, or the neighbourhoold doth annoy; either food, or feewell, or friends, or somewhat else is scarce or wanting. But in God there is no darkness, no discomfort, no disease, no death, no defect at all.

By these 7 particulars (which I have briefly pointed at, and which your owne meditations may profita-bly enlarge) I hope you be well satisfied and settled in the truth under hand, That Ichovah is an incomparable Refuge unto his oppressed People.

The Application of this Dostrin, now calls for your attention. In the making whereof I shall faithfully endeavour to be serviceable unto your soules by a four-

fold Use, of

\begin{align*}
\text{Admonition.} \\
\text{Reprehension.} \\
\text{Consolation.} \\
\text{Exhortation.}
\end{align*}

1. Admonition. It warneth all men to take heed of oppressing. Wise King Salomon suggesteth the naturalness of this inference. Rob not the poore because he is poore, neither oppresse the afflicted in the gate. For the Lord will pleeze their cause, and spoyle the soule of those that spoyled them.

And the teasonablenesse of this Caveat will be confessed, if the duty of this day, and the quality of my Auditoris be considered.

We are assembled to keepe a religious Fast. And, Is not this the Fast that I have chosen (saith the Lord) Esa. 58.6.
to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed goe free, and that yee breake every yoke.

The persons to whom I am preaching are men of high place, great power and much authority in the severall parts of this Kingdom, whose temptation it is to be oppressors.

In the enlarging of my dehortation from oppression, I humbly crave leave to give in, 1. Some aggravations of the sinne. 2. Some dissuasions from it. I shall briefly aggravate the sin of oppression under 5. heads.

First, from the persons oppressing. 1. When they are those who herein offend against the light. Although they know divine prohibitions and menaces against this evill, yet they act it. You remember the words of the Apostle here applyable. Knowing the judgement of God (that they who doe such things are worthy of death) yet doe them. Therefore art thou inexcusable o man_whosoever thou art.

2. When such oppress their inferiours, who doe much complains of oppression from others. There are Country Gentlemen, who cry out of heavy oppressions in Westminster-hall, and yet they themselves doe grinde the faces of their Tenants by racking rents and fines at home. Unto these I will only report the judgement of the Apostle Paul, Therefore art not thou inexcusable o man, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe, for thou that judgest, doest the same things.

3. When men designed to doe Justice by vertue of their callings, yet deale injuriously. The Psalmist aggravates the injustice of Judges by this circumstance. How long will ye (ye who fit to judge others) judge
before the Commons House of Parliament.

unjustly. They know not neither will they understand, they walke in darkness, all the foundations of the earth are out of course. And that passage of the Prophet Isaiah, is remarkable, The Lord looked for Judgement, but behold oppression, for Righteousnesse, but behold a cry.

The Hebrew word translated oppression, signifies a Scabb or a wound, and Piscator gives this note upon the place, *Judices in stirr Scabiei molestis sunt oppressis.* When the oppressed people petitioned the Judges for reliefe, they caused their condition to become more painefull and grievous.

Secondly, from the persons oppressed. 1. If poore, the Item of Salomon is observauble, *Enter not into the fields of the fatherlesse, for their Redeemer is strong, he will plead their cause with thee.* In Nathans Parable that oppression is judged very grievous, when he who had an herd and a flocke of his owne, yet tooke from the poore man his one, only, single Ew-lambe. It is an heavy oppression, when poore men are necessitated to sell their working tooles and to pawne their beds and wearing apparrell.

2. If godly. They eat up my people (faith the Lord) as men eate up bread. Utro the palates of some, no morsels are so sweet as the bloud of the Saints. And God will give them bloud to drinke for they are worthy.

3. If the wrong reach many, They oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage, faith the Prophet. Our Patentees, Monopolists & other men of that make, may justly be cast under this loading aggravation.

Thirdly, From the quality of the things wherein people are oppressed. The Apostle faith expressly, *That no man should oppress or goe beyond any other in any thing.*
A Sermon preached at the late Fast

thing. Yet are there aggravations to greaten the sin of oppression, from the worth of the matters wherein the wrong is offered. 1. It is a cursed course to crush people in their outward estates. Cursed is he that removeth his neighbours Land marke, and all the people shall say, Amen. 2. But to overthrow mens civil liberties, and to bring them into slavery is a farre greater injury. Men with great summes of money (or long service) obtaine freedome. 3. How heavy then is that oppression which extendeth to the bloud and lives of men. Their sinne is hainous, who hunt for the precious life of a man Skin for skin and all that a man hath will he give for his life. 4. The worst oppression of all other, is that which pincheth upon the immortall soule. That accusation charged upon Babylon, for making merchandise of the soules of men is most intolerable. And how farre this fault is chargeable upon such who poyson or starve soules by imposing Popish Innovations, polluting Gods Ordinances, inhibiting Sermons, &c. I referre it to your judgement.

Fourthly, from the ends aimed at in oppression. Men doe noe despise a thefse (saith Salomon) if he steale to sattisfe his soule. But if a man shall oppresse others, to sattisfe his owne lufts, this circumstance maketh an addition of very much guilt. 1. When through covetoushesse, a thirst after money, a man doth oppresse to increase riches. 2. When through brutish Sensuality, to please the palate, and to fill the guts, they oppresse the poore saying, bring and let us drinke. 3. When men transported by the spirit of revenge, oppresse others, purposely to ease their stomackes, and to poure forth their gall upon them. As it was with Haman, it
before the Commons House of Parliament.

seeking to crush not only Mordecai, but all the Nation of the Jewes. Thus men make provision for the flesh, to satisfy it in the lusts thereof, which is a practice shameful and abominable.

Fifthly, from the manner of managing this sinne of oppression. If men oppress only in secret, as being ashamed to owne their injuriouſnesse (as the threes who steals in the night) the fault is lesse hainous, then when they are corrupt and speake wickedly concerning oppression, speake lostily, and set their mouth against the heavens, undertaking to satisfie and maintaine actes of unrighteousnesse. When Lawyers at the Barr plead for oppression, Judges on the Bench justifie it, Ministers in the Pulpits preach for it, and Doctors in the Universities dispute and determine to defend it.

And here I humbly referre it to your wisedomes to consider, whether our Prelates have not been (of late especially) the grand oppressors of the Kingdome, according to most, if not all, the aforenamed aggravations. Have not they been great oppressors both in Church and Common-wealth? What County, what City, what Towne, what Village, yea what Family, (I had almoſt said) what person in the Kingdome, hath not in one kinde or other, in some degree or other, at one time or other, beene oppressed by them? They and their officers, by citations, censures, exactions have been Catholike oppressors. How many wealthy men have been cruſhed by their cruelty? How many poore Families have been ruined by their Tyranny? And I beseech you to consider, whether the most pious, both among Preachers and people, have not met with the hardest measures from their heavy hands. Alas, alas! How many faithfull Ministers have they silenced?
silenced! How many gracious Christians have they excommunicated! How many Congregations have they starved or dissolved in this Kingdom! For the proof of all this, and of more than all this, I appeal unto the many Petitions presented to this honourable Parliament. And these are no small aggravations of these and other like their oppressions, that they call themselves the Fathers of the Church, and are accounted more knowing men than their brethren.

I have done with the aggravations of oppression. The dissatisfactions from oppression follow; some of which I shall briefly suggest under 2. Heads:

1. **A Commodo.**

2. **Ab Incommodo.**

First, the eschewing of oppression will be comfortable. 1. It may be some evidence of a regenerate estate. Gods people are called *His mercifull Ones* (For so the Hebrew word usually rendered Saints, in the booke of Psalmes doth properly signify) because the tender mercies of the Almighty shed forth abundantly upon them, doe leave a compassionate frame upon their hearts. The Apostles Argument is pregnant to my purpose. *As the elect of God, holy and beloved,* put on bowels of mercies. And the example of the Gaoler expresseth thus much. How did the coming in of conquering grace change the man, from churlish and cruel, to kinde and compassionate. 2. It will administer boldnesse unto us, both before God and men. The Prophet Samuel is a good president to prove it. Behold here I am, witnessse against me before the Lord, whom have I defrauded, whom have I oppressed, &c. And they said, thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us. 3. It may hopefully interest us in the speciall providence.
providence of God for our protection and provision in the times of our need. For observe how divine promise speaks, He that despiseth the gaine of oppressions, he shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be the muntions of rocks, bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.

Secondly, the fruits of oppression are many and bitter unto them who practise it, I will point at some of them. 1. It fastens a blacke marke of gracelessnesse upon them who use it. That passage of the Prophet is considerable. He is Canaan (so I render it from the Originall with the approbation of good Interpreters) The ballances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress. You know by what expression Ezekiel suggesteth the condition of men unregenerate, Thy birth and thy nativity is of the Land of Canaan: And such (saith Hosea) is the estate of men, of Merchants Practitioners in oppression. 2. It exposeth unto the many and heavy judgements of Almighty God. This (saith Job) is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty.

In these words, first oppressors are branded for wicked ones, as was before touched. But passing that, let us enquire what this their portion is, which they must inherit from the punishing hand of God? I will in few words propound it, from the following verses: God will cast upon him, and not spare. He would faine flee (or in fleeing he would flee) out of his hand. In his estate. Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare rayment as the clay. He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver. In his posterity. If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword, and his off spring shall not be satisfied.
34 A Sermon preached at the late Fast

Ver. 14, 18 He buildeth his house as a Moth, and as a Booth, that the Keeper maketh. In his person, both inward terrors, and outward ruine. Terrors take hold on him, as waters, a tempest stealth him away in the night. The East-winde carrieth him away, and he departeth, and as a storme hurleth him out of his place. In his credit amongst men. Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hisse him out of his place.

Ver. 20, 21 These offenders cannot be concealed: For as their sinne ringeth in Gods eares, and calleth for vengeance. Behold (faith the Apostle James) the hire of the Labourers, &c. cryeth, and the cries are entred into the eares of the Lord of Sabaoth. So the Lord himselfe undertaketh to give in evidence against them. I will come neare to you in judgement, and I will be a swift witness against those that oppress. And will it not be sad, when the Judge shall be a witness against the prisoner at the Barr.

Ver. 23. At the last day, the sentence against the oppressors will be unspeakably heavy. You may guesse at it, by an Argument, a minor ad majus, if you reason from the lesser to the greater, from those words of our Saviour, Mat. 25. Then shall he say to them on his left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill and his Angels, for I was hungred, and ye gave me no meat, &c. And these shall goe away into everlasting punishment. Marke my Argument (my Beloved) from this place. If not succouring, not supplying, not solacing, not supporting Gods impoverisshed, imprisoned, oppressed people will procure punishment perpetual and unsupportable, what will the condition bee of them who have been their cruel oppressors? The Apostle James faith, They shall have judgement without mercy who shew no mercy. The Lord let these considerations home upon
upon your hearts to affright from oppression.

For reprehension of 4 sorts of offenders against the truth in hand.

If God promise to be the refuge of the oppressed, then those deserve blame, who imagine that seeking to the Lord in times of trouble is labour in vain. 1. Job bringeth in the wicked thus breathing their Atheistical conceits. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him? And doubtlesse many among us are of this opinion, as their neglect and sleighting of holy prayer doth undesirably discover.

But (my Beloved) our present employment doth prove that we are better principled, and our grounds are solid and satisfying (viz.) 1. God's promise. 2. Our owne experiences. For the Lord hath not said as he seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain. And we have reaped such fruit of our prayers, that we may say with the Prophet David. We sought the Lord and he heard us, and delivered us from all our feares.

2. Much more are they worthy sharp rebuke, whose profaneness is so great, that they deride those who under pressures and in days of dangers, give themselves to prayer. The Psalmist mentions this, as the practice of Atheists. You have shamed the Counsell of the poore, because the Lord is his Refuge. In like manner, in these times, how many doe discoffe at the people of God, for their frequency and unweariedness in Prayer and Fasting, expecting deliverance by such endeavours. Thus rayling Rabshekeh reproached Hezekiah and Israel, but the Lord accounted his language blasphemous, as holy Story doth witness.
Let not us be discouraged in improving God our Refuge by unceasing suits, because of mens scornes and derision: but rather imitate the Psalmist, who upon the report of the jeares of the wicked in this kinde, in the next verse breatheth forth prayer. O that the Salvation of Israel were come out of Sion, when the Lord bringeth backe the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad. With the change of some few words, the same suit may be seasonable for us. O that the deliverance of England and Ireland were come out of Syon, when the full Salvation of Ireland, and the perfect Reformation of England shall come from Heaven, then Ireland shall rejoice and England shall be glad.

3. My Doctrine checketh them, who in wayes of Creature-confidence betake themselves unto other Refuges, and not unto the Lord Jehovah. Mistake me not herein I pray you, for I disswade not the use of meanes to prevent and remove trouble: but my meaning is, that God must be blessed for meanes, eyed in meanes, and at him the soule must looke above and beyond meanes, when most promising.

There are two Rocks upon which men are in danger to dash in dayes of trouble, either to tempt God by difusing meanes, or to provoke his Majesty by idolizing them: and this second sin I now reprove, as crosse-whetting upon my Text, and dangerous unto them who doe commit it. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh bis arme, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

Woe unto them that goe downe to Egypt for help, and stay on Horses and trust in Chariots, because they are many, and in Horse-men because they are very strong.
We looke upon you our Parliament worthies, as the Horse-men and Chariots of England, we bless you, and we bless God for you, but we may not, we dare not depend upon you, lest at once we incense the Almighty both against you and our selves.

4. The sharpest rebuke belongs unto them, who goe downe into hell for help in dangerous times, who rather make the Divell then God their Refuge: Such I meane who betake themselves unto sinfull shifts for the procuring of their safety, when they see a storme comming. Such who will take courses contradicting their consciences, their Covenants, their engagements both to God and man, to secure their comforts, to save their own heads. How farre are these men from believing the truth of my Text, which tells us, that the Lord will be a Refuge for the oppressed, a Refuge in times of trouble. I shall wish such persons seriously to consider the word of the Lord. Because ye have said we have made a Covenant with death and with Hell are we at agreement, when the overflowing scourge shall passe through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made Lyes our Refuge, and under falshood have we hid our selves. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Judgement will I lay to the line, and righteousnessse to the plummet, and the haile shall swepe away the refuge of Lyes, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

For Consolation, unto all them, unto whom God undertakes to be an helpe and shelter. Happy is he that hath the God of Iacob for his helpe, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

In the amplification of this Use, there are two things usefull to be enquired.

1. Who may hopefully expect helpe from Heaven.
2. What
2. What considerations concerning God their Refuge may make unto their comfort? For brevity sake I will not passe the bounds of the 145. Psalme in returning answer unto these two demands.

First, God will be their helpe, who enjoy him as their God. This is manifest from the 5. and 40th. verses, Whose hope is in the Lord his God: The Lord shall reaigne for ever, even thy God. Now to make the Lord our God, it is required that with highest estimations, most vigorous affections and utmost endeavours, we bestow ourselves upon him; That in the Scripture phrase, men are said to make that their god, upon which the heart flowes forth with the highest tide or the fullest affections. Hence it is that covetousness is called Idolatry, and the Epicures are said to make their bellies their gods. Reflect therefore upon your selves most seriously and ask your hearts in the presence of the soule-searching Majesty, what you place the highest in your bosomes, for what you are resolved to make the greatest adventures: And if upon examination you finde that the Lord Jehovah hath the throne, the command in your breasts and lives, then doe not question your interest in his Highnesse, as your helpe and refuge.

Secondly, This Psalme holdeth forth foure truths concerning God, which may administer matter of much sweet support and joy unto them, whose helpe and hope he is.

1. His Omnipotency expressed in the worke of Creation, which made Heaven and Earth, the Sea and all that therein is. There is much marrow in this one consideration to refresh a disconsolate spirit in these drooping times: I shall helpe you to it in five Correlaries
relaxies or consequences, which naturally flow from this truth, (vid.) That God in whom our helps lies made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, &c.

1. Therefore God can easily succour and safeguard his people: As by the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the breath of his mouth. By his word he can command deliverances for Jacob. And by spreading forth his hands, as he that swimmeth, he bringeth downe the pride of Moab, and the fortress of the high forts shall he bring downe, lay low and bring to the ground. Now the motion in swimming is easie, not strong; for strong violent strokes in the water would rather sink then support. And therefore by this expression the Holy Ghost would manifest with what facility he can subdue the stoutest adversaries of his Church.

2. Therefore the Lord can without prepared matter raise up his owne designs. As he made the world without any pre-existent principles, first he made the Chaos out of nothing: and then out of a confused heap, he framed the curious structure of the world, wherin all creatures in an admirable harmony serve each other.

This particular brought home to our concernments may be profitable. Although we looke upon ourselves, as an unpollished people, to doe any great matter either in Church or Common-wealth. Although the Philosopher say, Ex nihilo nihil fit, and we complain of self-nothingness, yet faith tells the soule, that God made the things which are now seene out of things which doe not appeare.

3. Therefore the Lord can accomplish whatsoever he undertakes without assistants, for he had neither tools
tooles nor co-workers, when he reared the glorious Fabrick of Heaven and Earth. When there is no helper, none to uphold, then the arme of the Lord brings Salvation. What though there be few, very few who favour the worke of Reformation, in comparison of the Malignant Party, who oppose our hopes and welfare, yet may we pluck up our hearts with comfort from this consideration, That our helpe standeth in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.

4. Therefore God can effect his designes, notwithstanding the vastest distance betwixt the terms from which, and unto which he workes; for in the Creation he wrought from nothing to all things, from the Earth which was without forme and void, unto the perfecting of the world, in which worke nothing is defective, nothing redundant. We looke at a setted peace with perfect Reformation, as a great, great way off, espying millions of impediments, difficulties and oppositions in the way on this side it: yet this meditation may encourage.

5. Therefore the Lord can dispatch his mighty Acts speedily, For in six days he created the Heaven and the Earth, with all the host of them.

2. His Fidelity, who keepeth truth for ever, ver. 6. Our God in whom our helpe is, is a Covenant keeping God. Had the words runne thus; who dealeth with people according to their deserts for ever, then our hearts might have fainted in us, and our hopes have perished for ever. But seeing his Majesty hath bound himselfe to keepe truth, the truth of the Promises of his free grace, this consideration may hold up heart and hope together. When Satan and our owne consciences cast in sad discouragements
ments, yet we may animate our selves by the words of the Church unto her God. Thou wilt performe the truth unto Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our Fathers from the days of old.

3. The variety of Offices which the Lord undertakes in the behalfe of his people, according to their several necessities. The particulars specified in the Psalme I shall only name, without interpretation or enlargement. He executeth judgement for the oppressed, giveth food to the hungry, the Lord looseth the prisoners. The Lord openeth the eyes of the blinde, the Lord raiseth them that are bowed downe; the Lord loveth the righteous, the Lord preserveth the stranger, he relieveth the fatherlesse and widow, but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. The summe of all these expressions amounts to thus much. That the providences of the Almighty are always sweetly and seasonably exercised for his people, and against their wicked oppressours.

4. The perpetuity of his government. The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God o Syon unto all generations, ver. 10. Beloved we know that things went very ill with Israel, when there arose up a new King over Egypt which knew not Joseph. And certainly, if the busineses of the world, should be transacted by any other supreme authority, then of our God the Lord Almighty, then might our condition be deplorable and miserable. But this is no small comfort unto us, that the God of Israel is the God of England, that his Kingdom still doth and ever shall rule over all Kings, Commanders, creatures and concernements whatsoever. The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoice. Thy God Psa. 97.1. o Syon reigneth unto all generations, praise ye the Lord.

G The
The last Use, the Use of Exhortation followes, which is to be divided into various branches. In the prosecution whereof I shall presse 5. duties which belong unto all without exception, and afterwards shall make bold to direct one exhortation by way of humble Petition unto the worthy members of the high and Honourable Court of Parliament.

Exhortation 1. To returne praise unto the Lord our Refuge, for that defence and those deliverances which hitherto we have had in him. Nationall and personall experiences should be perused, and for all the God of our salvation should be honoured. If we of this Kingdome cast backe our thoughts unto late providences, wee shall see cause to breake forth in the words of the Psalmist. The Lord remembered us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever.

His Majesty commandeth and expecteth glory. I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorifie me. Yea he doth abundantly deserve it, for all that patience, widsom, goodnesse, power and truth expressed upon us in our continued peace and safety. Therefore I pray you, Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. And how well may it become us every one in particular to resolve with David. I will sing of thy power, yea I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning, for thou hast bin my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Vnto thee my strength will I sing, for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.

This debt I believe will readily be acknowledged, but the question will be, how must it be payed? Praises are due debt, but how must they bee tendered?
1. My answer is at hand, and it shall be but short.

2. God's special providence must be observed and proclaimed. It shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow and from thy fears, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve. That thou shouldst take up this Proverb, &c. How hath the oppressour ceased, the Lord hath broken the staffe of the wicked. Noble Senators, we honour you as our instrumentall Saviours in a great degree, and God forbid, but we should study to requite your labours and adventures for the Kingdomes welfare. Yet we must looke beyond you, and you beyond your selves in admiring the most high God, in what hath beene already wrought unto our admiration.

2. Our religious vowes must be performed. What our vowes were in the dayes of our feare and deepe danger our consciences will report, I onely press the payment of this debt. Offer to God thanksgiving and pay thy vowes unto the most High. Praise waiteth for thee in Syon, and unto thee shall the Vow bee performed.

3. Our obedience in all the branches of it should be bettered. Practicall praises are the most acceptable. Our lives must witnesse the gratitude of our hearts: In this case I cannot propound a better patern for your imitation then David, who upon enquiry, what thank-offering should be tendered, breakes forth into this Resolution. I will walke before the Lord in the Land of the living. Wherein three things are observabe and imitable.

1. His purpose to make a progresse, I will walke.

2. The sinceritie of his course, Before the Lord (q. d.)
I will take every step, undertake every duty, as under God's pure and piercing eye. All acts of holiness and righteousness shall be discharged as before him.

3. The constancy of this care, *In the land of the living* (q. d.) so long as I live. Such a present of praise (Beloved) would please the Lord better than an Ox or Bullock (as the Psalmist hath it) that hath both horns and hooves.

4. God's publick worship should zealously be promoted. This was the first thing determined in Moses his Song, upon the unexpected continuance of Israels safety. *The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation, he is my rocke and I will prepare him an habitation.* It concerns us all upon the recording of our personal and National Deliverances, from oppressions either felt or feared, to lay forth our utmost strengths of authority, opportunity, interests and ability, both to purge and settle the holy worship of God, that his Majesty may enjoy a fixed habitation with content and glory amongst us.

*Exhortation.* To make sure our title unto God, as our peculiar refuge and protection, that we may not be reputed intruders, when we shall have occasion to throng into him for shelter in tempestuous weather. David's suit may be reasonable for us all to joyn in.

*Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort.*

To quicken your care in this kind, many things might be mentioned. 1. Our dangers are great, whether we consider our owne deservings from God, or the designes and indeavours of Syons enemies against our peace and welfare.

2. The insufficiency of all Creature succours and shelters,
shelters, how faire and how promising foever. There
is no King saved by the multitude of an host, a migh-
ty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse
is a vaine thing for safety, neither shall he deliver any
by his great strength.

3. The Al sufficiency that there is in the Lord
in every kinde to be the end of every endangered
soule, which enjoyeth him, as was fully discovered
in the illustration of this Point now in prosecu-
tion.

More Arguments I shall not need to use to move
your looking after the Lord, that he may be your Re-

fuge when ruine is ready to rush in upon you. But to
guide your course that you may possesse God, as your
place of Defence, I will commend unto you 3. Short
Directions.

1. Labour by the knowledge and contemplation
of Gods glorious, incomparable beauties, to let forth
flouds of the strongest love upon him. Because he hath
set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, I will
set him on high, because he hath knowne my name.

2. Endeavour from activity of pure love to his Ma-
jestye, more to awe your hearts, with the feare of his
frowne, then of any, then of all combined oppositions
which doe or can surrond you. Say ye not a confe-
deracy to all them to whom this people saith a confede-
eracy, neither feare ye their feare, nor be afraid. Saneti-
ifie the Lord of Hosts himselfe, and let him be your feare,
and let him be your dread: And he shall be for a San-
ctuary.

3. Seek to be enriched with that righteousness
which is true Evangelicall. For Salomon assures us,
that the name of the Lord is a strong Tower, and that

G. 3

Ps. 33. 16, 17.

Ps. 91. 14.

Ec. 8. 12, 13, 14.
the righteous runneth into it and is safe (or set aloft.)

Now if you ask me, who are righteous according to the Gospels construction?

I return answer, from the description given of Zachary and Elizabeth. They were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless. From which testimoniall three notes of Gospel-righteousnesse may be suggested.

1. The rule regulating their course, is that which God hath commanded and ordained.

2. The latitude of their obedience, which in their ayme and endeavours is as large, as Law divine. They mind Commandements and Ordinances, yea all Commandements and Ordinances.

3. The continuation of this course. They did not only now and then take aturne in the way of obedience, but they werepersons walking, such who held on in obedientiall references unto God.

In these things, I beseech you, bestow your best houres and abilities, even as you desire, that the Lord Jehovah may be your Refuge in the times of trouble, in the seasons of distress.

Exhortation 3. To improve our propriety in God (having made him our Refuge) for safety in stormy and perilous times. I should not need to perswade this practice, if self-love was rightly ordered in us, seeing our selves, both greatly need the Almighty, and might reap abundant fruit by making improvement of him. The unreasonable creatures, by a naturall instinct, betake themselves unto places of defence, when dangers doe threaten them.

The high hills are a refuge for the wilde Goates, and the Rockes for the Conyes.
We know by observation, that the little Bees will hast to their Hives, and the Pigeons will flock to their holes, when the storme is rising. I will forbeare to enlarge this Exhortation, either by Gods Precepts and Promises, or by the practices and experiences of his people, taking this course in all ages.

This unto me is a commanding Argument, that we shall in a great degree take Gods name and excellencies in vaine, if we labour not to live upon them by a fruiteful full improvement, and so consequently, we shall at once, both displeas and dishonour God, and damnifie and endanger our selves.

If you demand, how you should make your use of God, as your incomparable Refuge? I shall direct you unto David for an Answer, 1. Trust in him at all times, ye people, 2. Pour out your heart before him, God is a Refuge for us. Selah.

First, by true trust in God, we betake our selves unto him as a Castle of Defence. The words immediately following my Text declare thus much. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for thou Lord hast not forsaken them who seek thee. Such who apprehend sure safety to be had in God, they will seek him, by placing their affiance in him. The practice of David makes this more apparant: for he by way of appropriation, speaking thus of God, My Fortresse, my high Tower and my Deliverer, my Shield (he addeth) and in whom I trust. As by diffidence the soule keepes at a distance from God, so by confidence we draw nigh unto him.

Now to encourage your fiduciall approaches unto God, I will only mention 3. things, which your selves must enlarge and apply unto your own hearts seriously.
1. Consider the irresistible and immutable strength of the Lord. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

2. Acquaint your selves with precious Promises, whereby his Majesty desires to draw the disconsolate soule unto him. God willing more abundantly to shew into the heyres of Promise the imputability of his Counsell, confirmed it by oath, that we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us. In the Lord (faith David) I will praise his word, in the Lord I will praise his word, in the Lord I have put my trust.

3. Review and husband your experiences of Gods protecting providence in times past. In the day when God had delivered David from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, thus he speaks, The Lord is my Rocke and my Fortresse, and my Deliverer. The God of my Rocke, in him I will trust, &c.

Secondly, by holy Prayer we haft unto God for helpe in times of trouble I cried unto the Lord (faith David) I said thou art my Refuge, Attend unto my cry, Deliver me from my Persecutors. Here for the guidance of your prayers,you may take notice of these briefe Directions.

1. Your cries must be cordiall, and not only vocall. Pour out your hearts before him. And lift up a Prayer (faith Hezekiah) It will not be sufficient to say a Prayer (as the world is wont to expresse it) or to word it before the Lord, but we should rather heart it before God in holy prayer,that we may receive help from him in times of need.

2. Your hearts must behave themselves humbly before
before the Commons House of Parliament.

fore the throne of grace, when you petition deliverance from the devouring oppressors. Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, and thou wilt cause thine care to beare. To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the Earth may no more oppress.

3. The soul should have sincere references, to the glory of God, in seeking selfe-safety. Thus David desiring deliverance from many mighty Persecutors, he adds. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy Name.

4. Plead the wickedness of them who doe oppress and would devour, They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood, but the Lord is my Defence and my God is the Rocke of my Refuge, and he shal bring upon them their owne iniquity, and shall cut them off in their owne wickedness, yea the Lord our God shall cut them off.

5. Wait upon God unweariedly and resolve to continue praying, whatsoever delayes, checks, or oppositions may encounter you. In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

Because of his strength I will wait upon thee, for God is my Defence. And certainly if we rightly consider 1. Our distance from God in worth and degree. 2. Our dependance upon him, together with our undone condition if he desert us, we shall tarry the Lords leisure, attending upon his Majesty, for the answer of our supplications, when besieged with dangers on every side.

Exhortation 4. To cast off all cowardly fears of
our oppressours, how potent, politick and prevailing
soever they be. The people of God have frequently
gathered courage from this consideration. Truly my
soul waiteth upon God, from him commeth my savat-
on, He only is my Rooke and my Salvation; he is my
defence I shall not be greatly moved. How long will ye
imagine mischiefe against a man, ye shall be staine all of
you, as a bowing will shall ye be, and as a tottering
fence.

God is our Refuge and strength, a very present helpe
in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the Earth
be removed, and though the Mountaines be carried in-
to the midst of the Sea, though the waters thereof roare
and be troubled, though the Mountaines shake with the
swelling thereof, &c. The Lord of Hosts is with us, the
God of Jacob is our Refuge. Selah.

Through want of time, I dare not adventure upon
the amplification of this Use. Therefore I crave leave
for your helpe and heartening against the feare of Op-
pressors, to improve onely one Scripture, which I
conceive very pertinent and profitable. I, even I am
be that comforteth you, who art thou that thou shouldest
be afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the son of man
which shall be made as grasse, and forgettest the Lord
thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and
laid the foundations of the Earth, and haft feared conti-
nually every day because of the fury of the Oppressour,
as if he were ready to destroy, and where is the fury of the
Oppressour, &c.

In these words, the Lord by his Prophet checking
and chiding his timorous people, doth counsell them
to feke the conquest of their dismaying feares, by
comparing himselfe their God, with their furious op-
pressours.
1. Though they be our oppressours, yet his Majesty is our comforter. And is not the God of all consolation more able to cheer us, then all men are to dishearten us?

2. They in their best strength are but dying men and withering grass; but he is the Almighty, the all-making God, whose omnipotency and independency is sufficiently discovered by stretching forth the Heavens, and by laying firm the foundations of the Earth. And our necessities cannot possibly put him upon a more difficult service for our Deliverance.

3. Although they seeme ready to destroy, as an Army at hand to devour: yet remember that your Saviour is the Lord of Hosts, who commands and orders all Martiall forces in the world, who can found a retreat and call them off by one word in a moment. When we speake of Armies on Land, and strength on the Seas prepared against us; What though Papists, Atheists and Divels were in combination to destroy us, yet the Generalissimo, who manageth all forces and maketh all motions, is the Lord of Hosts our maker, our comforter.

4. If our trembling, misgiving hearts shall object the ruins wrought in Ireland, as occasions to increase dejecting fears: we should repell them, by reminding experiences of Gods former famous acts for his servants safety, when in much deeper danger, I am the Lord thy God who divided the Sea, whose waves roared. That was Israels experience which is on record in holy Writ for our encouragement. We may add from Gods dispensations in this Kingdome. Who in the yeare Eighty-Eight sunke and scattered the Spanish Navy called invincible? Who brokethe necke of the Popish
Popish poudr-plot, and brought to light those under ground workings of the traiterous, blody Papists: And who lately composed the dangerous differences betwixt England and Scotland, which threatened the desolation of both Kingdomes? Remember this God is your Refuge, and therefore be of good courage and feare not the fury of the oppressours, though in appearance ready to destroy.

Exhortation 5. To move us all to make use of our interest in God, in the behalfe of our oppressed Brethren. You know that we are bound to love our Neighbours as our selves, and to pray for them as for our selves: therefore my Inference is not forced, but naturall.

I shall be very short (as straights of time command) in this Exhortation, wherein I have bleeding, oppressed Ireland principally in my thoughts, and the rather because the sad troubles of our Country-men and Brethren there, is one chiefe occasion of our Congregating thus solemnely to seeke our God this Day.

Good Nebemiah may be propounded as an excellent patterne both to quicken and to direct this duty. He having intelligence, that the Jewes were in great affliction and reproach, and that the wall of Jerusalem also was broken downe, and the gates thereof burnt with fire. It came to passe (sith he) when I heard these words, that I sat downe and wept and mourned certain Dayes, and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven. This holy man was warme in worldly respects, being well placed and respected in the Court of a great King, he was in the Palace of a Prince in prosperity, at a great distance from danger, though Jerusalem was distressed, yet you see his strong affect ons, you reade his
his religious practice, in both which we are bound to make imitation. Remember them that are in bonds (faith the Apostle) as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being your selves also in the body. In which words our duty is both strongly urged and well guided. You must remember them, as being your selves in the body (q. d.) because you are fellow-members with them in the same mysticall body (as some interpret) or (as others judge) seeing your selves are yet in the body, natures frame not being yet dissolved, you your selves are exposed to the like sufferings, and therefore should Christianly remember them. But will a fleighty, wordy minding of them be sufficient? No, (faith our Apostle) you must feelingly minde them, as though your selves personally shared in their sufferings, or as your selves would desire to be remembred if in their sad condition.

This employment is excellently petswaded by king David in the 122. Psalm. 1. Because hereby we shall at once, both evidence our spiritual love and interest our selves in Gods Promise to undertake our personal welfare. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. 2. By his owne practice. For this was his request in reference to Jerusalem. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy Palaces. 3. Because of our neare relation unto them, whose condition calleth for our prayers. For my Brethren and companions sakes, I will now say peace be within thee. 4. Seeing the Religion and worship of God is there professed and practiced. Because of the house of the Lord my God I will seek thy good. How fully all these Arguments reach us in reference unto differenced
A Sermon preached at the late Fast

...distressed Ireland, I humbly referre it to your considerations.

But you will say unto me, wherefore doe you thus perswade us? Doe you not see we are here with you to pray for Ireland. And is there not a monthly Fast appointed, that prayers may be continued? All this I thankfully acknowledge, both blessing God for this mercy, and honouring the Kings Majesty, with the Honourable Court of Parliament, for their religious care herein: Yet it is my duty to lay the weight of Scripture authority upon your consciences, that you may conscientiously and affectionately bestow your selves in secret daily, as in publick weekly, monthly in prayers for your oppressed Brethren.

But is this all that you have to say? I answer, No. There are two duties to be added unto our prayers, without the addition whereof, our prayers for Ireland, will be lesse successfull for it, and lesse comfortable to our selves. 1. We must repentingly returne unto the Lord from the evill of our wayes. Both Nehe-miah and Daniel took this course, when they fought the Lord for Israel. The Lord directed Job's friends, to crave his prayers, promising to accept him in their behalfe. And the Prophet Joel calls for heart humiliation and conversion, before he directs this supplication. Spare thy people o Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the Heathen should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God. The Reason whereby Hezekiah moves his people to repent is remarkeable. For if ye turne againe unto the Lord, your brethren shall find compassion.

2. We must contribute our best assistance in all kinds, according as God gives power and opportunity, for their
their reliefe and deliverance. Thus did Nehemiah in trading every Talent with which divine providence had trusted him, for Jerusalem's welfare: He improves his favour with the King, and employs authority received by commission from him for the common good; he worketh, watcheth, warreth, commandeth, encourageth, threatneth, punisheth, &c. that he might be serviceable. In like manner should we for Ireland, consult, command, contribute, underwrite, encourage others or adventure our selves, according to our severall stations and abilities, as the Lord shall be pleased to goe before us by his leading providence. And truely, there is no more sincerity of heart in our suits, then there are suitable endeavours in our lives, to effect and accomplish what we pray for.

From these generall exhortations which concern all, I now proceed unto that, which more peculiarly appertaineth unto you Right Honorable, whose servant I am, in my present employment. Give your servant leave I pray you, to persuade, to petition your imitation of God, in becomming a Refuge to his oppressed people in the times of trouble. The Lord is a Refuge both offensive and defensive, offensive unto the oppressors, defensive unto the oppressed. And it will be your honour, in both to be imitators of him.

From God our Tower and Fortresse, our Castle of defence, there are battering Canons discharged, thunder and lightning scattered, terrible judgements (I mean) denounced against oppressors. The Lord undertaking the prosperity and establishment of his people, addeth, And I will punish all that.
that oppress them. And of Christ this was prophetically foretold. He shall break in pieces the oppressors. Right Honourable, I presse not rigor, but righteousness. Neither doe I take upon my selfe, the boldness in personsall cases to counsel you. God hath made you wise, and my prayer is, that your zeal and courage may be answerable. But my zeal for Gods glory and your honour, makes me bold to tell you, that there are many, who reproachfully say, You shew your teeth, but you do not bite. For my part, I shall only read to you, two quotations out of sacred Scripture, the one suggests the comfort of doing judgement, the other intimates the danger of neglecting it. I have done justice and judgement, leave me not to mine oppressors. Be surety for thy servant for good, let not the proud oppress me. Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let goe out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to utter destruction: therefore thy life shall goe for his life.

But my principall arrand is to request you, to labour to be like your God, in becoming a covert unto us from the face of the spoilers. From my Text I presse Gods owne practice. The Lord executeth righteousnesse and judgement for all that are oppressed. He strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong. And this was prophesied concerning Christ:ts care of his people. No oppressor shall passe through them any more. Yea this is reported in the commendation of the Lord Jesus, that while as man he abode on Earth, He went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed.

These 4. Considerations following may serve further and more forceably to set on my present suite.

1. The
1. The fruits of oppression upon particular persons oppressed are very grievous. Surely (saith Salomon) Eccl. 7:7, oppression maketh a wise man mad. Into what extremities and confusions are many at this day apt to runne out, because bitten, or rather torne with the teeth of Prelaticall oppressours. And I am confident that the likeliest way to heale our breaches, and to compose our differences, is the removal of our oppressions. And Salomon thus againe expresseth himselfe. I considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sunne, and behold the teares of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter, and on the side of their oppressours there was power, but there was no Comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive. Many in this Kingdom have dyed many deaths under the yron hands of heavy oppressours, and truely many thousands of us shall dye many thousand times more, except you relieue us.

2. The danger of the Kingdom is no lesse then desolation, except you our State Phyfitions apply timely plaisters to heale our breaches, by easinge us of our oppressions. For thus bath the Lord of Hosts said, Hew yede downe Trees, and cast a Mount against Jerusalem, this is the City to be visited, she is wholly oppression in the midst of her. The people of the Land have used oppression, have exercised robbery, and have vexed the poore and needy, yea they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, &c. but I found none. Therefore have I pored out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath.

3. Those draw downe the wrath of God upon their own
owne heads, who having power in their hands, continue careless in endeavouring the reliefe of the oppressed. O house of David, thus saith the Lord. Deliver him that is spoyled out of the hand of the oppressour, lest my fury goe out like fire, and burne that none can quench it.

4. By labours of this kinde, you shall promote the honour and prosperity both of our King and this King-dome. Deliver the spoyled out of the hand of the oppressour, &c. For if ye doe this thing, indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house, Kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in Chariots and on horses, he and his Servants.

The equity of this Exhortation I am confident will be confessed: but enquiry may be made, What I meane by the oppressions, from which the Parliament should deliver us.

I answer, we groane and lye grovelling under many oppressing Grievances, both in the Church and Common-wealth, yet considering my calling, it will not so well become me, to particularize our civill pres-sures, neither need I bestow any words that way, seeing your selves have given us abundant cause to acknowledge that you have taken exact notice of them. But seeing loads which are laid upon mens consciences are most proper for me to complain of, suffer me, I pray you, feelingly and faithfully to spread some of them before you.

1. Subscription urged upon all Graduates in both Universities, and upon all men entering into the Ministry is an heavy oppression. (Mistake me not, for I meane not Subscription according to the Statute of the 13. of Queene Elizabeth, which is to those Ar-
articles which only concern the Confession of the true Faith, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments; but I intend the Subscription commonly called and knowne by the name of the Bishops Subscription.) By reason hereof, many young men of promising parts and well ripened hopes, are driven from the study of Divinity, from the worke of the Ministery, because not able to get over this block. And most in the Universities, at least those who take the degree of Batchelours of Arts, are necessitated to subscribe, themselves know not to what, and so through ignorance miserably enshre their owne consciences, as many sad experiences witnesse.

2. The pressing of the old Ceremonies in divine Administrations upon pain of Suspension, Silencing, Deprivation and Excommunication. How many deare unto God are hereby deprived of some sacred Ordinances? How many able Ministers of the Gospel have hereupon lost both liberty and livings, and their Families exposed to woefull penury? How many Congregations have beene deprived of their painfull Pastours? How many of our deare Country-men both Preachers and others, have within few yeares last past, been compelled to leave this Kingdome the place of their nativity. And certainly the continuing of this Grievance is the more inexcusable, because the most moderate men who plead for these Ceremonies, hold them things indifferent, and say they are, tolerabiles ineptiae.

3. Conniving at an ignorant, idle, erroneous, scandalous Ministery. Under this head I complaine of foure sorts of Clergy-men (commonly so called) being heavy burthens to the Church of Christ.

I 2

1. Blind
1. Blind Seers, who know not Heaven-way, dumb dogs which cannot bark.
2. Idle drones, who either preach not at all, or very seldom, or fruitlessly without care and study.
3. Mis-guiding Guides. Men Schismaticall and Heretickall, who let poison instead of wholesome food before their people.
4. Men scandalous, who plucke downe more with their soule hands, then they build up with their faire tongues. Under this head I may place Non-residency, which breeds and feeds a Ministry, ignorant, idle, erroneous and licentious.
4. The fearefull abuse of that high Ordinance of God, a Sacred oath, amongst all rankes and conditions of people in the Kingdome. In the Universities, the Oath of Matriculation to observe the Statutes of the University, which not one of many hundreds ever know. The Oathes of several Officers both in Church and Common-wealth, which although I cannot specify, yet it is my hearty request that they may be pursued, to prevent the profanation of Gods name, and the ensnaring of many thousand soules.
5. In regard of Church-censures. The dreadfull sentence of Excommunication is often passed and executed upon persons for small offences, yea for acts not evill, and (which is most horrible) for doing that which both God and the necessities of their own souls require. It is a burden intolerable, that men should be cast out of the Congregation of Gods people, banished from his publick worship, and delivered up to Satan for non-appearance at the Cathedrall Court, or buying, selling, or working on an idle holy-day, yea for
for going out of their own Parishes to heare a Sermon or repeating Sermons and praying with some Neighbours in their own Families.

And on the other hand, it is no small Grievance, both to godly Ministers and their people, that those who are the true Officers of Christ in his Church, have not authority to keepe them who are palpably ignorant and notoriously, scandalously profane, from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

6. The opposition made against the power of Religion, is a grievous oppression. When such who are forwarder in holy courses then others, are derided and discouraged by reproachfull names, yea molested and persecuted for frequenting the Ordinances of grace, whither publike or private, for the building up of their soules in Christ.

And I humbly commend this to your consideration, whither the Prelaticall Government hath not bin the root of all, or (at least) of almost all these oppressions. For my part, I profeffe that I cannot expect a compleat deliverance from these, and other like oppressions, but by the extirpation of that frame.

Right Honourable, you have done much, yea very much for our ease already, we are sensible that many heavy burthens are taken off our backs, which crushed us grievously heretofore: and for that reliefe which we have receiv'd we bleffe God, we honour our King and you. And I now heartily intreat and encourage the perfecting of that which you have so worthily begun. When Syon is set up in beauty, adorned and strengthened with her watch-Towers and Officers, then God will be knowne in her Palaces for a Refuge. 

Great joyes have bin raised in our hearts by under-
Standing from you, your intentions to call an Assembly of Divines, to consult with God concerning Church occasions, and we will daily pray for the directing and perfecting thereof, unto God's honour and this Kingdom's welfare through Jesus Christ. But I beseech you give me leave in the name of many to request your great care in the choice of men most meet for that great work. And for this end, I humbly commend 3 qualifications to be minded in the men to be elected. Let them be,

1. Men of approved piety, whose hearts are awed with God's fear, and unmoveably bent to advance his glory.

2. Scripture men, Men well acquainted with the records of Heaven, by the authority whereof, all doubts and differences should be determined.

3. Men not biased with selfish partiality. Such who may come to the Consultation as white paper, capable of those impressions, which the evidence and power of truth shall imprint.

Sound Doctrine maintained, pure Worship exercised, right Discipline erected and established will conduct greatly to England's peace and prosperity. When the Lord shall have washed away the filthiness of the daughters of Syon, &c. The Lord shall create upon every dwelling place of Mount Syon, and upon her Assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a Defiance.

FINIS.

It is this day Ordered by the Commons now assembled in Parliament, That M. Ash and M. Hampden shall returne thankes to M. Ash for the good paines he took in the Sermon he preach'd the last Fast day but two at the intreaty of the said Commons, and that he be desired to print his Sermon, And that no man presume to print it, but such as hee shall appoint, till the House shall take further Order.


I appoint Edward Brewster and John Burroughs to print my Sermon. Simeon Ash.
Self-Surrender unto God,
Opened and applyed,
IN
A SERMON
Preached before
The Honourable House of
COMMONS,
At Margarets, Westminster, at their late solemn
Fast, February 23, 1647.
BY
SIMEON ASHE, Preacher of Gods Word
at Michael Bassingshaw, London.

1 Cor. 6.19. Yee are not your owne.
Rom. 12. 1. 2. I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that yee present your selves a living Sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove, what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.
Luke 15. 17, 18, 19. And when he came to himselfe, he said, I will arise and goe to my father, and will say unto him, Father, make me as one of thy hired servants.

LONDON.
Printed for E. Brewster, and are to be sold at her shop on Ludgate-hill at the signe of the Bible neare Fleet-bridge.
ASRMON

The following is a page from a historical text, but the content is not clearly visible due to the condition of the image. It appears to be an old manuscript with significant wear and tear. Without clearer visibility, it is challenging to extract meaningful text. The page seems to contain a title or heading, possibly related to a religious or philosophical theme, given the historical context of the document.
TO

The Honourable House of Commons Assembled in Parliament.

When your Order commanded me to preach before you, on the day of your solemn Humiliation, Feb. 23, I conceived no subject more necessary, or more seasonable, for my Sermon, than this doctrine of self-surrender unto God; for as the Lord deserves much more than your All; so the success of all your services lies in his blessing; and the comfort of all your labours, ariseth from your sincere respects unto his Majesty through Christ. All is lost to your own souls, (though others receive benefit by you) if you doe not really intend God in your adventures and undertakings. By setting up the most High in your hearts and thoughts, dulnesse, delays, cowardlinesse, unfaithfulness, despondency, and weariness in his work will be prevented: By keeping the Lord in your eyes and aimes, love would bee enlarged, zeale enflamed, diligence doubled, uprightness maintained, courage increased, and refreshings multiplied. And neglect of this duty cannot proceed from want of arguments to move it, for every holy ordinance which you use, and every ordinary providence, which reacheth you, doth speak strong reasons to persuade the giving of your
The Epistle Dedicatory.

Your selves unto the Lord. Every Fast you keep, every Sermon you heare, and every prayer you make, should work you more fully towards God. Honor & dishonour, safety and dangers, success and disappointments in your Negotiations, should carry you to God. Your owne Orders, calling for Sermons, approving them, and appointing them to be printed, will rise up in judgement against you, if you doe not really devote your selves unto the Lord.

[O therefore let not Gods words and works, his frowns and smiles, be lost upon your soules; Winter and Summer Showers and Sun-shine, are not in vaine to the senseless plants and the dull earth, for they, upon the receit hereof, give forth their strength, to the use of man. And shall men, wise men, men under various, glorious administrations, refuse to make over themselves unto their God, in all they are, and have received from him? O God forbid.

Right Honourable, The imploying, the improving of every Mans All for the Lord God, is the duty which I preached to you, and now publish to the world, according to your command, under your protection. That the comfort of this Practice may fill your owne hearts, and that the fruit hereof may spread to the glory of God through the thanksgivings of his people, shall be the prayer of

Your faithfull, though unworthy Servant

SIMEON ASHE
A SERMON
Preached before
The Honourable House of
COMMONS,
At their Monthly Fast, on Wednesday, the 23.
of February, 1647.

2 CHRON. 30.8.
Yield your selves unto the Lord.

His Text, as I have read it, is rather a para-
phrase, or an Interpretation, than the Trans-
lation of the Originall. The genuine con-
struction of the Hebrew phrase, is, Give ye
the hand unto Jehovah.

I finde a foure-fold gloss given upon the
Text in reference unto the Originall express-
ion. First, some conceive that it implies a professed depen-
dance upon the Almighty, and requires a prayerfull application

Date manum.

Prostrati Dei
opem et auxili-
um implorate ut
vos misericordia
suae erigat. Iun.
& Tremol.
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons, to his Majesty, for succours according to present necessities. Deodat hath this note upon the words. Call upon him for mercy: And there are parallel Scriptures to justify this sense, wherein the exercise of prayer is thus expressed, as Job. 11:13. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him. And 1Sa. 1:15. When you spread forth your hands, when you make many prayers. This interpretation therefore would be safe, and the observation thence would be reasonable (viz.) That in stormy, troublesome times, people should betake themselves unto God by prayer.

Secondly, others judge, that the phrase bespeakes obedian
tial subject to God's commands and government; and they allledge that place of Scripture, to make out this interpretation, where the obedience of Solomon's subjects unto him, as their King and Soveraigne, is declared, by the selfe-same words, 1 Chron. 29. 24. All the Princes and the mighty men, and all the sions likewise of King David, submitted themselves (or gave the hand) unto Salomon the King.

Thirdly, some imagine, that a federal obligation, added unto an obedian
tial resolution, is here intended: Their reason is, be
cause giving the hand is frequently spoken of in the Old Testa
tment, as a signe of Covenant making: As the Lord upbraiding and threatning Pharoah for his falshood, notwithstanding se
erall engagements, spake this in this manner; Seeing bee despi
ded the Oath, in breaking the Covenant (when loe bee had given the hand) and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. And Salomon in the Book of Proverbs thus spakeath of obligation by Suretiship, Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties. From this notion I might take occasion to discourse of self-engaging unto God, both in respect of itsprofitableness, and our call to it, as also the right managing thereof, to our owne advantage.

4. There is yet another truth hinted to us by this expression, Give the hand to the Lord. The 70. render it thus, Give glory to the Lord, directing the people to determine all duties, all obedian
tial endeavours in God, making his honour the highest and last end of all their services whatsoever. And doubtlesse, such are the motions of every sanctified soule, because they arise from
at the monthly Fast, Febr. 23. 1647.

from God's grace, therefore they are referred to his glory: For as the Naturallists speak concerning water, that it may be raised to a Cisterne so high as the Fountaine was from whence it fell: In like manner, men under the powerfull principle of saving grace, are carried on in their course, till they center in God. The Apostle Paul told the Philippians, that his earnest heart-workings were, that the Lord might be magnified by him, whether by life or death. And doubtelese these are the breathings of every gracious soule, because we are commanded to doe all to the glory of God.

But passing over thus briefly the severall apprehensions of learned Expofitors, let us take the words as we finde them in our Translation, Yeeld your selves unto the Lord. This Text calls for a sacred surrender of our selves to God.

Wherein we may consider:

1. The gift, Your selves.
2. The givers, Ye your selves.
3. The receiver, Jehovah the Lord.

There is need of warinesse, lest according to this division of the Text, the sentence thereof should be misapprehended and misapplied; therefore let these Cautions be premised, before I pitch upon the Doctrine hence to be handled.

First, this Text doth not presuppose that we are our owne to dispose of, as our selves please; for the Psalmist assures us, that the whole world is the Lords, and all that dwell therein, therefore this gift is not in the givers possession to doe with it as hee lists.

Secondly, neither is it intimated in these words, that we have ability in our selves, to make a surrender of our selves unto God: For the Receiver (God Almighty) enables his servants to make tender of that which he deserveth and accepts.

The Holy Ghost reporting the success of this advice given in the Text, tells us, In Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to doe the commandement.

Thirdly, nor is it implied in this phrase of speech, that men may by any forcible resistance gaine-say and disappoint God in his eternall purpose, to make improvement of them for himselfe; for the giver hath not thus the gift in his own power.
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,

True it is, that the commands and tenders of God are disobeyed and slighted by Mans stubbornnesse: In which sense the Lord complaines, *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me.* Yea, I confesse also, that many motions of Gods Spirit are resisted by heart-perversenesse; In which respect, the Martyr Stephen speakes in this manner to the Jewes, *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye doe always resist the Holy Ghost; as your Fathers did, so do ye ye. But the Almighty by the all-conquering power of his grace, subdues all them unto his government, whom he intended from eternity, to bring unto himselfe. *All whom the Father giveth me (faith Christ) shall come to me.* And though the elect through the wickednesse and waywardnesse of their hearts, should say, *Wee will be like others, serving wood and stone;* the Lord will answer, *That which commeth into your minds, it shall not be.*

Fourthly, neither may we hence inferre, That when we doe through the assistance of divine grace, give up our selves to the Lord, this may properly be called a gift.

For 1. *We give to God, that which is his owne. Ye are not your owne (faith the Apostle) your bodies and soules are Gods.*

2. And when the Lord enjoyeth us in the fullest imployments and improvements, this question may be propounded, *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him, or what receiveth he of thine hand?* The Psalmits confession answers the question, *O my soule, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, my goodnesse extendesth not to thee: Neither our selves, nor our services can possibly reach God, with the leaft advantage; for unto perfection there can be no addition at all. My Text holds forth,

First, *What is Gods due, Your selves.*

Secondly, *What is mans duty, Yeeld your selves unto the Lord.*

The Doctrine is open and evident, it lyes faire and full in the face of the Text,

*That people of all sorts, should yeeld themselves unto the Lord.*

This is the counsell, the command of the Text; and it is considerable, that herein no more was required of inferiours, then was
was endeavoured by Superiours of all forts, towards the pro-
moting of this service.

It is in mine heart (faith King Hezekiah) to make a Covenant
with the Lord God of Israel. He gathered the Rulers of
the City, and went up to the house of the Lord. And the Princes
also, went throughout all Israel and Judah, according to the Com-
mandement of the King, saying, The children of Israel, turne again
unto the Lord.

Neither can any justly except against this Doctrine; as though
it held forth to Christians an Old Testament exercise. For Gos-
pel mercies are mentioned by the Apostle Paul (that Gospel-
Preacher) to perswade it, *I beseech you (faith he) by the mercies
of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and
acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

And it is recorded to the great commendation of the Mac-
donians, That they gave their own selves to the Lord.

The words which surround my Text, discover the severall
arguments, whereby this practice was pressed upon this people,
which I will briefly point at, and leave it to your consciences to
consider, whether they concern not us, even our selves this
day.

First, From this glorious Title of God, Jehovah, which hints
unto us both his Independency and Fidelity. 1. His Independen-
cy. The Lord revealed himself to Moses by this Name, *I am that
I am;' What I am, I am, of and from my selfe, neither nee-
ding creatures, nor receiving advantage from creatures. Wee
have in our times notorious experiences of many men, yeeld-
ing themselves as servants to men, because of their dependance
upon them, though their supporters are also supported by another
power. How much rather should we give up our selves to an
Independant God.

2. His Fidelity. *I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac,
and unto Jacob (said the Lord unto Moses) by the Name of
God Almighty, but by the Name Jehovah was I not known unto
them.* The meaning of which words is manifest, that although
manifold providences had abundantly proved his great power,
yet in the faithfull performance of his promises, he had not been
so clearly discovered, as now he intended to disover himself.

Exod.3.14.
Exod.6.3.
Alas, many amongst us enslave themselves to false-hearted men, who are neither faithfull to God, nor to their friends: much rather should we make resignation of our selves unto Jehovah, whose wayes are mercy and truth, whose promises are yea and amen in Jesus Christ, unto all those who humbly wait upon him.

Secondly, from their relation to his Majesty: The render the word Jehovah, by these words, The Lord God of Israel. And it followes immediately after the Text, Serve the Lord your God. In the 6. verse, the exhortation is thus expressed, Ye children of Israel, turne againe unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. Here I remember the counself of Solomon, Thine owne friend, and thy fathers friend, forsake thou not. I appeale to your conscience, whether I may not with more strength of reafon, give this advice; To your owne God, and your fore-fathers God, dedicate your selves religionly. Is not Jehovah the only true God? our God by publique profession, and by manifold severall engagements; our appearing before his Majesty in the duties of this day, is a reall acknowledgement of him, as our God: And which of us knows, how many times, upon Sacrament dayes, Fasting dayes, and upon various occasions, we have by solemne Covenant taken the most High to be our God? Therefore yeeld up your selves unto his Highnesse, as to your God.

Thirdly, From his providences, both towards others, and themselves.

1. Towards others, Gods providences had been destructive. Your brethren trespassed against the Lord God of their Fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as you see, v.7. Many of us have seen the black foot-steps of bloody warre. How many thousands have lost their lives by the mercileffe Sword? And what wofull spoyles have been made by the prevailing enemies? Many sadly complaine of the breaches made in their nearest relations, and lay with sighs, that their houses have been demoli shed, and themselves in their outward estates are utterly impoverisht. In this respect, God expecteth our submission unto him. Towers are desolate ( saith the Lord ) I have made streets
at the monthly Fast, Feb. 23. 1647.

Streets waste, their Cities are destroyed. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction.

2. Towards themselves, the providences of the Lord had been defensive. You are escaped out of the hand of the King of Assyria, ver. 6. How various and glorious God's administrati-ons have been for your preservation, in your persons, possessions, relative comforts, and your faire opportunities of publick service, I leave it to your selves to consider. But when you have surveyed them, I beseech you let this be the result, the improvement. We will therefore yeeld our selves unto the Lord.

Fourthly, From his precious promises. Both to themselves, and unto their brethren.

First, that God might subdue them unto himselfe, hee pro-miseth to them, 1. The ceasation of his anger. Serve the Lord, that the fierceness of his wrath may turne away from you, ver. 8. This argument was strong in Hezekiah his thoughts, quickning this engagement. Now it is in my heart, to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turne away from us. Let us, I pray you, apply this to ourselves.

Amongst what sort of people in this Kingdom are there not coales of divine displeasure kindled? our schisms, and sildings, our factions, and frations, (I know not how many) our divisions, both in regard of Church and Common-Wealth concerns, doe discover the flames of God's anger burning amongst us. Now what gracious heart desires not to tread out the sparks of divine vengeance? Are we not assembled this day, to powre out buckets upon these burning flames. Therefore let us yield our selves unto the Lord.

2. The continuation of his favour. Hee will not turne away his favour from you, if yee returne unto him, ver. 9. Oh how sweet is God's love, in it selfe, and in thefruits thereof, unto the soule which hath been scorch-ed with the expressions of his displeasure? Doubtlesse, in his favour is life; and his loving kindnese is better then life. In him we live, move, and have our being. If wee may have God's smiles, we shall not need to feare mens frownes. His good-will sweetens all our sorrowes, betters all our comforts, supports us under all our pressures, and adds very much to our advantage, in all concernsments and conditions of life, whatsoever; There-
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,

fore let this argument prevail with you, thus to resolve, we will yield ourselves unto the Lord.

Secondly, God's grace gives out promises, extending to their brethren as to themselves, upon this condition, of a right self-dedication unto his Majesty, both compassions and reparations.

1. Compassions. If you turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and children shall find compassion.

2. Reparations. They shall come again into this Land. ver. 9.

And that these promises may be credited, notwithstanding this people's unworthiness, the reason of all is rendered, verse 9. For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful. Now to bring these encouragements of God's grace home to our selves, by way of argument. This day we should have bowles full of bowels towards all our suffering brethren: poor Ireland especially may challenge a great share in this dayes prayers; Alas, alas, how inexcusably hath that wasted, and almost lost Kingdom been neglected! And I am persuaded that every good heart here, asks for bleeding Ireland, and gasps after the speedy repairing of the wofull breaches there. Therefore to the use of other meanes, for the effecting of your poore brethrens deliverance, add this, Yield your selves unto the Lord.

Thus from the interpretation of my Text, and the confirmation of the doctrine thence collected, I proceed to the application of all by way of use, and the uses which I shall insist upon are of two sorts, the one of Reprehension, and the other of Exhortation.

Reproof.

I begin with reproofe, wherein I premise two things by way of request. 1. That if any shall judge me sharp, it may be remembered, that I spake for God, and therefore may be bold, and must be faithful. 2. That every mans conscience may by selfe-reflexion make a particular application of that which I shall onely in generall propound unto consideration.

There are 4 sorts of people, whose courses are inconsistent with that selfe-surrender unto God which my Text calls for. First, those who yield themselves up unto Satan; so God and the Devill are Asubasta, they are at as great a distance as Heaven and
at the monthly Fast, Febr. 23. 1647.

and Hell, light and darknesse. What fellowship is there (faith the Apostle) betwixt Christ and Belial.

This charge I believe will be acknowledged just, but few or none will be willing to owne it, as reaching themselves. Every one will be apt to ward off this blow, to avoid this blame, as imagining that it belongeth not unto them; therefore let us enquire, the characters of those, who are in this kinde blame-worthy.

First, All Witches, Wizards, Conjurers, and such like creatures, who by compact fell themselves to Sathan, upon condition that he will be serviceable to them, in the accomplishment of their malicious, mischievous desires. But these I look upon as too fowle to be spoken of in this Assembly.

Secondly, those who abide wilfully ignorant, of the things of God, the matters of Religion. The Devils are called, The rulers of the darknesse of this world. Hereunto accords the speech of the Apostle Paul, reporting the end of his spirituall Commission to the Gentiles: It was (faith he) to open their eyes, to bring them from darknesse to light, and from the power of Satan to God. These words imply, not onely, that men under Sathan's power, are unsubdued to God; but also, that men in darknesse, men willingly buried in ignorance, are in the Devils dominion. I wish that all those who contemne the knowledge of God in his worship, and the government of his Church, &c, would seriously consider of this matter. There is a generation who say to God, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. If they may understand how to buy and sell, to save and gain, to converse with men, for their owne credit and advantage, they lift not to learne how to diserne betwixt truths and errors, things that differ in matters of Religion; doubtlesse these yeeld not themselves unto the Lord, but rather contentedly continue in servitude to the Prince of darknesse.

Thirdly, such who notwithstanding the light of knowledge which they have attained, and whereof they boast, doe yet stubbornly persist in courses of known disobedience to God. The Apostle thus characterizeth them in whom the Prince of the power in the ayre exerciseth his authority. Children of
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,
disobedience, children of no persuasion, as the Originall imports,
who will not be prevailed with, by any persuasive arguments to
order their conversations according to holy Scripture, but they
walk according to the manners of the multitude, and the ima-
ginations of their owne hearts. Our Saviour himselfe speaks
home to the confciences of these men. 

Ioh, 8. 44.
Non persuades, 
etiam perfun-
siris.

Ioh. 8. 44.
Secondly, those who are the slaves of the world. This I
intend not against them, who are in bondage to the men of the
world, (so I shall deal with them under the next head of re-
proofe) but this I direct unto the drudges of the world, who
make it their maine businesse, to scrape and heape together the
poore, low, under-moone contentments of this transitory
world. For our Saviour faith, Ye cannot serve God and Ma-
mom. And the Apostle James renders the reason of the inco-
sistency hereof; Ye Adulterers and Adulteresses, know ye not,
that the amity of the world is enmity to God? whosoever there-
fore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. Inordinate
affection to the worlds vanities, can no more consist with lo-
ving subjection unto God, then whoredome, with chaste con-
jugall communion. This assertion will not be denied, because
it is so open and evident in the language of the Holy Ghott.

But the question will be, How may persons herein blam-
worthy, be discovered?

I answer. They are such, who make the world their end,
in the profession and practice of Religion. They assemble them-
selves (as the Prophet complains) for corn and wine. They
set up Family duties, frequent Sermons, keep Fasts, &c. to
feather their owne nests, to make themselves and others rich
and great in the world. Woto you Hypocrites (laid our Saviour)
you devour Widdowes houses, and for presence make long prayers,
therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

2. The
at the monthly Fas, Feb. 23. 1647

2. The strength, the frame of their heads, hearts, interests, and all abilities run out much more world-ward, then after God, in advancing him, and enjoying communion with him. They mind earthly things. This is their unum necessarium, their business, as though they were brought into the world (as Factors are sent into forraigne Countries) for no other end then to get wealth.

This is notably set forth by the practice of that earth-worm spoken of in the Parable. He thought within himselfe, saying, what shall I do? and he said, this will I doe. Dialogue-wile he debated the business with himselfe. Himselfe asked the question, and himselfe returned answer. He layd forth his abilities to gather or store up the fruits of the earth; but we read of no forecasting, no projecting, to grow rich in grace, or to make Gods Name glorious in the world: He did the work of men about earthly concernments, but labours not at all for Gods honour, or his own eternall happiness.

3. They sit down satisfied in the enjoyment of sublunary accommodations; having stored their houses, filled their purses, provided large portions for their posterity, they settle, as the stone in the center. Here they live, and solace themselves as the Fish in the water: Like that Worldling of whom I spake before, when his barnes being enlarged, were filled, he faith to his soule, Now take thy rest, for thou hast goods layed up for many yeares. Now he sings a Requiem to himselfe; now his dayes work was done, he thinks he may goe unto bed and rest. And there is one circumstance more considerable (viz.) that he calls the fruits of the earth, his goods, looking upon them with highest respects: I call upon your conßences, to make application of this particular, when the securing of outward estates, and the settling of civill liberties, is satisfactory, though matters of Religion continue unreformed, and the government of Jesus Christ in his Churches is neither perfected, nor established. This frame of heart argues that men rather yeeld themselves to the world, then unto the Lord.

4. Their conßences can contentedly dispence with things displeasing to God, and dishonourable to him, that they may serve their owne turn, in compassing worldly accommodations.
Demas hath forsaken me (faith Saint Paul) having loved this present world, and is departed. What cared he for the truths credit, or the Apostles comfort, if he might gain the world? And of like sort were those spoken of in the parable, who slighted God’s invitation to ordinances of Communion, in comparison of a Farm purchased, Oxen bought, and a Wife newly married. Orphah in hope of marriage-preferment in her own Country, will leave her mother in law Naomi, her Religion and her god also. So the rich young man in the Gospel will goe crosse to Christ’s counsell, hazzard eternall life, and forfake Christ himselfe, rather then sell his faire estate. Directly thus it is with many amongst our selves; what care they what becomes of the Covenant, conscience, Christ in his government, or the work of Reformation in the Kingdom, if themselves may be enriched, raised to places of preferment, and bee made great in the world? There is no question to be made of it, but these persons yield themselves to the world, and not unto God.

Thirdly, those who are in willing servitude to men. The Apostle Paul saith, yee are bought with a price, bee yee not the servants of men; And the Evangelist gives the reason, for one is your master, which is Christ. The Levellers of these times may be apt to inferre from these expressions, that all subordinations in civil societies should cease amongst men, that there should not now bee any more King and Subjects, Master and Servants, but parity and equality amongst all. I may not digresse to speak against this wild phancy, the birth of mans intolerable pride; But the Apostle himselfe in his words foregoing, doth sufficiently discover his dislike of this conceit. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Are thou called being a servant, care not for it; (q d. perplex not thy heart, with the thought of this thy condition) for he that is called being a servant, is the Lords freeman. And it follows, Brethren, let every man, wherein bee is called, therein abide with God.

The meaning of the Apostle is, That in matters of Religion and Conscience, no man professing a servant-like relation to Christ, should pinne his opinion upon another mans sleeve, and enslave his judgement or practice unto another mans will and
and way. But as the Lord hath distributed to every man, as the verse.
Lord hath called every one, so let him walk.

Now here it will be demanded, who are these servants of men, whom you reproue, who doe not yield themselves unto the Lord? I answer, 1. Such, who in the things of God make mens opinions, precepts, practices, their rules and standards, whose feare (whose way of worshipping) is taught by the precept of men, as the Prophet Efaiah speaks. And who willingly walk after the Commandment, as another Prophet expresseth it. You may know them by their language, by their queries in matters of controversy, what is the judgement of such a person in this particular, what way walketh such a prevailing party in, in regard of this difference amongst brethren; like unto the enquiries of old, Doe any of the Scribes and Pharisees believe on him? Ioh. 7. 48. Doe the Grandees, the masters of these times, practice, or approve such a course? These servants of men will frame according to their masters compasse; set their watches according to his diall; dance after his pipe. As Luther before Christ converted him, yielded himselfe to the Popes pleasure; so many to prevailing and overpowering great ones amongst men. 2. Who aime at mans applause as their mark, in their appearing for Religion, either by word or action. All their works they doe, (faith our Saviour) to bee seen of men. And as the foolish Hen cackles when shee hath laid an egge; so these men desire that Trumpets may be blowne, to sound our, farre and neare, their brave exploits. Come with mee (faith Jefu) and see my zeale for the Lord. These men-pleasing men, still to let their wills, that the wind of mans applause may fill their sayles. And therefore to honour them, whom they Idolize in this kinde, they will adventure both credit and conscience too. As Herod stretched out his hand, to vext certaine of the Church, and bee killed James, the Brother of Iohn, with the sword; And because bee saw it pleased the Iewes, bee proceeded further to take Peter alfo. The practice of Pilat proved him to be a man of the same make, who notwithstanding caveats given by his Wife, and checks received from his owne conscience; yet to gratifie the tumultuous, mutinous multitude, passed the sentence of condemnation upon Iesus Christ. And I heartily wish, 
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,

wish, that there were none in this age, who accuse, revile, persecute, and prejudice their brethren, even against their owne professions, and the verdict of their owne consciences, being carried on headlong with an impetuous desire to bee approved and applauded by some men. Oh that this sort of people, men of this generation, would seriously and sadly consider the words of the Apostle Paul, Do I now persuade men, or God; or do I seek to please men; for if I yet pleased men, I should not bee the servant of Christ.

Fourthly, Those who make themselves their own Masters, whereas if selfe bee not denied, Christ cannot be followed, as appears by his owne words. If any man will come after me, let him deny himselfe, and take up his crosse and follow mee. Take this truth with caution; for doubtleffe the Lord allowes men to seek their owne credit, liberty, and other outward comforts; yet selfe in these things must not be supreme, but should be sought in subordination to farre higher ends. There is also a spirituall selfe-seeking, in studying peace with God, growth in grace, communion with Christ, and more full conformity to his government; and this cannot bee separated from a sacred selfe surrender unto the Lord. But the selfe-seeking which I reprove, as inconsistent with giving up selfe unto God, is that selfe-Ido{lizing which is common amongst men, whereby they set up themselves as their own last ends, either onely, or principally, minding selfe ease, selfe-advancement, selfe-advantage in all their negotiations, whether civill or sacred, personal, or more publique.

Here it will be enquired how selfishness in this sense may be detected.

First, By consulting with carnall reason alone, in holy undertakings; Like that people, who being disswaded from burning incense to the Queen of Heaven, they review their former plenty enjoyed, in that superstititious course, and therefore sleight the Prophets counsell; Wee will certainly doe whatsoever thing goeth forth of our own mouth, for then had wee plenty of Visionall, and were well, and saw no evill; but since wee left off, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword. This (I am afraid) is the reasoning of many in this Kingdome,
in reference to the work of Reformation begun amongst us. When we had our old way of Divine-Service, and when all were admitted to the Sacrament without any examination, how well was it then with our forefathers and with ourselves? Thus people argue the case, from hence, not having recourse to God's word, for satisfaction. In like manner, many reason against the Presbyteriall Government, the exercising of it, is likely to be an hinderance to us, in our callings, our credit, our commands, and gainfull courses, and therefore we will not assent unto it. As the King of Navarre told Beza, that hee would not adventure on Sea, for Religion, any farther then he might see a safe passage to shore againe, I leave the application of this, in respect to your concernsments, unto your own spirits. Sure I am, when God's grace had wrought Paul unto Christ, he faith (and his practice proved the truth of it) I consulted not with Gal.1.16.

flesh and blood.

Secondly, By making carnall-selfe, in the enjoyment of sublunary contents, the last and chiefest end, in Religious services. The Lord by the Prophet Zacharye, blames old Israel for this fault. Yee fasted to your selves, and not to me; And did you not eat and drink to your selves? How low and unworthy were the spirits of Hamor and Sechem, in moving their Citizens to accept of Circumcision (which was an holy ordinance of God, and a seale of his covenant with his people) because by this means they might enrich themselves. If every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised, shall not their cattell, and their substance, and every beast of theirs be ours? Such a bent of heart upon persons in these times of more full and glorious light, is more abominable, and much more inexcusable. Should men now make their pretences to Religion meerly stirrups whereby to raise themselves, that they may sit in the saddle of greatness and rule, they would fasten upon themselves a blot not to be wiped off. I have heard it reported, that some great ones have said, that the onely end of our Solemne-National-League and Covenant, was to bring in the Scots, for our assistance in the time of our need. Oh tell it not in Gath, and publish it not in Askelon; Alas, alas, that ever such words should be spoken in England, as though our use of an ordinance so high
high and holy, our obliging ourselves to reform our selves and families, and our engaging our selves to reform the Church according to God's word, was meerly to serve our owne turne, in the day of our distressed Question: these men thus minded, gave themselves up to themselves, and not unto God, in their coveting:

Thirdly, By hiering more, upon wrongs and affronts offered to selfe, then for dishonours done to the great God. How many are Gallio like, not caring at all what disgrace is cast upon the government of Christ, and his Embassadors, and yet will be all on a flame if their own credit be touched, their free-holds shaken, and carnall hopes disappointed, as it was with them who made silver shrives for Diana, when Paul by his preaching did undermine that vanity.

Thus have I in generalls suggested the courses which are inconsistent, with a right selfe-surrender unto God. Do not, I pray you, in the application, put them off unto others (as children, when looking-glassses give the representation of their owne faces, say, they see Babies) but let every one labour by self-reflection to discover their owne defects, and upon humiliation resolve upon future amendment. And thus from reproofe I proceed to Exhortation.

My exhortation is, come and let us joyne our selves to the Lord. Oh that all our hearts might joyntly resolve,

Wee will yield ourselves unto the Lord.

In the enlarging of this use, I will 1. Lay open this duty, because it is large and comprehensive. 2. Perswade the practice thereof, because it is necessary, and yet there is a wofull waywardnesse in our Natures to submit unto it.

I begin with the unfolding of this service, of self-surrender unto God, which (as I conceive) comprizeth these particulars.

First, A minding of our own selves, both first and most in references unto God; Whereas the Hypocrites say, but do not; They bind heavy burthens upon others, but themselves will not move them, with one of their fingers. It's an easier thing to command others, than to obey our selves. But in our language to others, we should learn alwayes, to take in our selves. Come, let
let us go to the house of the Lord. He will teach us of his ways; and we will walk in his paths.

Secondly, Consulting with God in all our religious concerns. I am thine (faith David) and I have sought thy precepts; I am thy servant, give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Wee must yield our understandings to be informed, and our judgements to be rectified by the Lord, not daring to entertain any opinions, or to adventure upon courses, in matters of Religion, but such as God approves.

Thirdly, Real resolutions of obedience. His servants you are, (faith the Apostle) to whom you yield your selves as servants to obey. Knowledge aggravates disobedience; And it's a sure note of an Hypocrite; to propound questions without purposes to submit unto truths discovered. The Prophet Jeremia had to doe with such people: Ye dissembled in your hearts (faith he) when ye sent me to the Lord your God, saying, pray for us unto the Lord our God; and according to all that the Lord our God shall say, declare unto us, and we will do it: And now I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of Lord your God in any thing, for which he hath sent me unto you. It is a most sad thing and an argument of Non-dedication to God, when Gods Messengers are called to attend a people from Fast to Fast, with the messages of the most High God, and yet that people refuse to yield obedience.

Fourthly, Integrity in regard of person. Glorifie God both in your bodies and in your spirits; And yield your selves, faith my Text. God will not take up with halves; Hee will not accept any partner, he cannot endure any competitor; Hee will either have all, or none at all. The counsell of Samuel was, If you return to the Lord with all your heart, serve him only. If you bring your bodies, without your hearts, hee will not accept your present, it's a vain oblation; And if your soules come in, your bodies will not, cannot, be kept back.

Fifthly, Universality, in respect of duty. I remember the answer of the governour of Ahab's children, sent to Jehu his challenge; We are thy servants, and we will do whatsoever thou commandest. Sure I am, it is more reasonable to resolve this, in regard of God. And this is most certaine, that they do no-
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,

thing for God conscientiously, who obey not universally: but the words of the Prophet Jeremiah may be applied to them. They have done nothing, of all that which the Lord commanded them.

Sixthly, Spontaneity. Thy people are a willing people, faith God to Christ. This offering up of our selves unto God, must in the sense aforesaid, be a free-will offering. You your selves, yield your selves, is the counsell of my Text.

Bee not hailld per-force to God in holy performances, but come freely: It added much to their commendation, who offered themselves willingly to God in his service. Let this encourage us to doe the like.

Seventhly, Sincerity. Respecting both Gods call and glory in this self-surrender. Whether we live (as the Apostle) we live to the Lord, or whether we die, we die to the Lord; therefore whether we live, or die, we are the Lords. If God be not intended as our ultimate end in this work, we lie open to that reproche which was charged upon the people in the Reigne of Josiah, of whom God thus complains; Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly; because the command of the King, and respect to company, did more cooperate, then respect to God, in that their conversion.

Eighthly, Willingnesse, not only to doe duty, but also to induce hardship for God. Hee that followes Christ, must as well take up his cross, as betake himselfe unto his work. The hand must be ready for action, and the back for burthens, for blowes.

Herein Saint Paul gave us good Example. I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the Name of the Lord Jesus.

Ninthly, Zeale. Gods peculiar people should be zealous of good works. And is there any concernment in the world, which should so much fire our hearts, as the things of God? Micah gathered a company, and made after them, with an out-cry, who had taken away his Idols, and his language express'd much passionatenesse; You have taken away my gods, and what have I more, and what is this that you say to me, what aylest thou? Oh blush for shame, you luke-warm men, who under presence of moderation, can contentedly suffer God, the onely true
true God, in his ordinances, in his truths, in the government of his Sonne, to be dishonourd in your Families, and in the Kingdom also, both by opinions and practices which are intolerable.

Tenthly, Constancie. The Lord taketh no Apprentizes for term of yeares, but wee must serve him all the days of our life. And I pray you consider, whether those reasons which may perswade a servant-like subjection unto God, once, will not be found as strong, to prevale with you, to yield your selves to him for ever. Doubtlesse that man loved his Wife but little, who wished her like an Almanack, that he might have another the next yeare; and he that desires to be set free from his engagements to God, loves him not at all. The servant that loved his Master, would not go out free, but was content to be bored through the eare, that he might serve him for ever.

Eleventhly, Concord and hearty affections towards all them, who will associate with us for God. When James, Cephas and John (faith the Apostle Paul) saw the grace that was given to me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. Our Solemn League and Covenant calls for our Harmonious holding together, that we may, by united endeavours, perfect the work of publique Reformation. The combination of our common adversaries, requires our conjunction for Gods glory, and our owne comfort. And it is a very lamentable thing, that when Religion lies at stake (as it were) men should drive private personall designes, and make parties to serve their owne turne, though to the increase of our divisions, and to the dishonour of God.

Twelfthly, A calm and contented committing of our selves, with our All, to the disposal of God, as may seem good in his sight. The practice of David may be our pattern in this particular: When his credit, his Crowne, and his life, were endangerd by the rebellion of Absolon, these were his words; If the Lordsay, I have no delight in thee, here am I, let him doe to mee as seemeth good unto him. And upon the practice of this selfe-surrender, in the forementioned particulars, wee may with much confidence and comfort, put our selves with our concernsments, upon the stream of Gods providence, to becc
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,
carried to shore, sooner, or later, with more, or with leffe, as
may stand with his good pleasure.

Thus having laid forth the duty of the Text, in the com-
prehensions of it, I now proceed to perswade the practice
of it, by Scripture arguments; and I shall give in the argu-
mentative enforcement of this selfe-yielding unto God, under
four heads of motives.

The first is taken from the equity thereof. The Apostle faith,
It's your reasonable service. This will appeare by three Consi-
derations.

First, Because the Lord hath a more full right to us, then
either ourselves, or any other can claim All soules are mine,
faith the Lord.

1. And the Psalmist gives one reason: For hee hath
made us, and not we ourselves, we are his people, who organi-
zed our bodies, who created our immortal soules: dare any
other challenge right to us in these regards?

2. Another reason is rendered in Nehimiah 5. Thou art
Lord of all, for Thou preservest them; in him wee live, wee
move, and have nor being. The whole frame of nature would
fall into pieces, if Gods hand did not hold all together.

3. Hereto might be added, other works of God more pe-
culiar, viz. our redemption. You are not your owne, you are
bought with a price; therefore glorifie God, both in your bodies
and in your spirits, for they are God's. Here the consideration
of the slavery from which Christ bought us, and the price paid
for our ransom, would add much strength to the argument.
Another work of God engaging us to his Majesty, is our ju-
ification. The Prophet Ezekiel, thus expresseth it, I covered
thy nakednesse, and thou becamest mine. But these things I only
name, without enlargement.

4. Besides these administrations of God us-ward, whereby
we are obliged to become his, by our owne acts we have
many times made over our selves unto him. Here, our federa-
tions sacramentall, our promises, protestations, vows personall,
and our Solemne Nationall League and Covenant might bee
remembered. In respect unto all, we have cause to say, as Ieph-
shak when he had vowed, I have opened my mouth unto the
Lord
at the monthly Fast, Feb 23. 1647.

Lord, and I cannot go back. Do not all these particulars prove God's propriety in us? The Apostle perswades, Render to all their dues; And our Saviour counselleth, Give unto God the things which are God's: Therefore, Yield your selves unto the Lord.

Secondly, Because God's right hath long been detained from him. How much of our first strength and best time, hath been lavished cut in the pursuit of vanities, and in the service of foolish, hellish lusts? Is it not therefore most equal, that what remains should be resigned up to God? This is the argument of the Apostle Paul: I speak after the manner of men. As you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness.

Thirdly, Because God Al-sufficient tenders himselfe in the operations of all three persons in the God head, to be enjoyed by us; and it is through our faultinesse, that we do not possesse and improve him. 

Hear O my people, I am the Lord thy God, open thy mouth wide and I will fill it; But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me.

I leave the enlargement hereof to your owne meditations. How infinitely is the Almighty better then the best of Creatures? In how many thousand regards doe we need him? How happy may we bee, in receiving him, and in living upon him? whereas his Highnesse, neither needeth us, nor can receive the least advantage from us. Therefore seeing hee offers himselfe unto us, it is most equal, that wee should returne our selves unto him.

The Second argument may be gathered, from the necessity of this selfe-dedication to the Lord; These may be made manifest, by taking notice of these three particulars.

First, That necessary Supplies cannot else-where bee had: Ps. 73. 25, 26. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? (faith the Psalmist) God is 18, the Strength of my heart, and my portion for ever; therefore it is good for me to draw neer unto God. Remember how this necessity brought the poor Prodigall, with a servant-like subjecti-on unto his father. Hee said, how many hired servants of my Luk. 15, 17, 18, fathers have breadenough, and I perish for hunger? I will rise and goe to my father.

This
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,

This we read, as one complaint in Jeremiyh his Lamentations: We have given the hand to the Egyptians, and to the Assyrians to be satisfied with bread. If we want wrought their submission to Heathens, how much more should our need work us to willinglyse, to give the hand unto the most High? for alas, where else can we hope to have bread? can solid, satisfying supplies, be received from any other hand?

Secondly, That safety cannot be had from any other. From this ground, repenting Israel resolves upon a returne to God. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God; Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, or from the multitude of mountains: Truly in the Lord our God is the Salvation of Israel. Noah his Dove came back again to the Ark, and yielded his selfe into his hand, when shee could not elf where find rest: Hills, and houses, and high trees were all covered over with waters; therefore without danger of drowning shee could fail nowhere, but upon the Ark. I need not make application of this story, because every one with ease apprehends it. Where, on this side God, can we possibly be secured from dangers, which threaten Church and State, our persons, our liberties, and our begun Reformation? A Parliament, and an Army, will appear to be weak, insufficient, unsafe refuges; therefore let us yield our selves unto the Lord.

Thirdly, That ruine from Gods hand of judgement, cannot in any other course be escaped. Loe, all they that are farre from the shall perish; Therefore said the Psalmist, It is good for mee to draw neer unto God. In this case (beloved) wee must either yield up our selves to God, or be destroyed. I pray you consider it; either yield, or die.

The third argument is fetched from abundant benefit to be received by devoting our selves unto the Lord. Under this head, I shall only briefly hint three things.

First, Hereupon we shall be in a fit posture, to attend upon God, in the use of his Holy Ordinances. The words immediately following the Text, speak this, Yield your selves unto the Lord, and enter into his Sanctuary. I may not here shew how much preparednessse for any good employment, is comprized in this one practice (viz.) A regular selfe-resignation to the Lord. Secondly,
Secondly, This being done, we may confidently lay claim unto God, as our God. Then hast confirmed to thy self, thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee for ever; and thou Lord, art become their God. For, as the reason of our love to God, is because he loved us first; So his giving himself unto us, causeth us to give ourselves unto him. Therefore in this holy claim, we may reason from the effect to the cause, with much assurance; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God. If God will acknowledge us, to be his, we may challenge him to be ours. I am my beloveds, (faith the Spouse) and my beloved is mine. And oh, how great is the sweetness which from hence flowes into the Soule.

Thirdly, Those who have made over themselves unto God, may boldly plead their cause before him by holy prayers, upon all occasions. I am thine, (faith David) save me. And the people of God, having made many suits of great concernment, conclude all with this argument, we are thine: For thus the Lord is moved from self-love, to see unto the welfare of them, who acknowledge themselves more his then their owne. In this manner (having yielded ourselves to the Lord) we may humbly expostulate with his Majesty. Lord, although we know no worth in our selves, we finde no reason wherefore thou shouldst consider us for our own sakes: yet it's most reasonable, that thou shouldst see to thine own possession; therefore for thine own sake appeare for thy people, according to their necessities, for we are thine.

The last argument relates to the sad consequences, of refusing to yield our selves unto the Lord. This stubbornness will expose us to a threefold danger.

First, To be cast under the Tyranny of cruel men. When Shishak King of Egypt had taken the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem, Shemaiah the Prophet came to Rehoboam, and the Princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jerusalem, and he said,

5 I wis faith the Lord; Ye have forsaken me, therefore also have I left you in the hand of Shishak. And though they humbled themselves, and acknowledged Gods righteousness, whereupon he resolved upon some mitigation of the judgement,
yet this is threatened, they shall be his servants, that they may know my service, and the service of the Countries. We have already in this Kingdom beene enslaved to men (and what yokes are for the present upon our necks, I forbear to mention, though multitudes feel them;) Oh that we might at length learn to be so wise, that our perverse withstanding the government of Christ, may not yet further sink us under that tyranny and those oppressions whereof we have just cause to be afraid.

Secondly, To bee lift unto the servitude of accursed corruptions. This judgement is ten thousand times worse, then to bee enslaved unto the worst of men. A soule mastered with hellish lusts, is in a more sad condition, then a body possessed with a Legion of Devils. Now this judgement of judgements all you lie open unto, who gain-say the government of God. My people (faith the Lord) would not hearken unto my voice, and Israel would none of mee; so I gave them up to their owne hearts lusts, and they walked in their owne courses. And the Lord looking upon poor Israel under this bondage, laments their misery, as knowing it to bee extraordinarily, O that my people had hearkened unto mee; Tremble therefore, and refuse not to stoop unto God.

Thirdly, To be slaughtered by God's revenging hand; And how can better be expected, as the consequence of the forementioned curse? As for those mine enemies (faith Christ) who would not that I should rule over them, bring them hither, and slay them before mee. What hope of safety, when the judge himselfe proceeds against the Malefactor, as his enemy? And how great is that severity, when the judge himselfe will see execution done upon the offender before his face? Now consider this, you that forget God, lest he teare you in pieces, and there bee none to deliver.

These arguments have, I hope, affected your hearts; therefore put not God off with a deniall, or with delay; say not only, we will think of this motion hereafter. For if this bee not done, you are undone. Now therefore be not stiffnecked, but yield your selves unto the Lord, according to the counsell of my Text. The Psalmisc thus expelleth the comming in of the Gentiles.
at the monthly Fast, Febr. 23. 1647.

tiles in Gospel times. *Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hands unto God, or thus, shall make her hands to run unto God.* Oh with what speed will a converted heart, under the command of grace post unto God. Zacheus made haste and came, upon Christ's call: The Lord wing your spirits, that to day, while it is called to day, you may give your selves unto the Lord. And if God shall conquer your hearts to come in unto him, you may not, you will not, you cannot be content to come in alone, but you will seriously seek to bring in others also, by counsell, by command, and by example also: *As Hezekiah in this History, layeth forth his power, and his interests, that his subjects with himselfe, might yield themselves unto the Lord.* Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus, and Philip brings Nathaniel along with him.

This I might persuade, 1. From holy selfe-love, that our selves may have the comfort of this good endeavouer. 2. From good will to others, that they also, with our selves, may be advantaged by their attendances upon God. 3. From respects to God, that his Name may be advanced, in the comming in of more servants unto his government. But I may not enlarge these things any further.

And now Right Honourable, seeing your command called me hither, to attend upon your selves in the present service, I humbly crave leave to make a fair and faithfull application of this Text unto your consciences, in few words.

First, Remember your sinfull man-pleasing, and selfe-seeking, with your former defects in this self-surrender to God; Be humbled, repent and pray, that what hath been faulty may be fully forgiven, through God's rich grace in Christ.

Secondly, Resolve for hereafter to Yield your selves unto the Lord: For, as publike persons, as Parliament men, as gifted men, as trusted men, as men of parts, and as men of power; you owe more to God then to any other, then to all others whatsoever.

Did not God call you hither? Hath not he continued you here, in life and safety hitherto? therefore in all your authority, abilities, interests, and opportunities, Yield your selves unto the Lord. You shall express your reallity herein, by employing your power to rectifie the Universities, to propagate the Gospel.
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons,

Gospel throughout the Kingdome, and to perfect the work of Church-Refomation, which you have begun. I heare, that according to your own order, an ordinance is in readyinesse for report, for the suppressing of swearing, cursing, the profanation of the Sabbath day, and Fasting dayes; call for it I beseech you, that further dishonour to God in these kindes, may by your care be prevented. Disregard not their comforts, disappoint not their hopes, who have served God, and you, with their prayers, purses, persons, and with all that is neare and deare unto them in this world. And take I pray you, these two hints along with you, in all your Negotiations. 1. Make Gods word your Rule. 2. Make Gods honour your End.

When you think of wayes of Accommodation, resolve to yield so farre, and no further, then Gods word doth allow, and will stand with his Honour; Enquire whether yielding to connive at Herefie and Blasphemy, and to give a boundlesse toleration in matters of Religion, can possibly confit with right selfe-yielding unto the Lord. And as in Gods presence ask your hearts this question (to which you must answer at the day of judgement) Whether witting, willing, deliberate Covenant breaking can stand with a sincere selfe-surrender unto God.

When you say amongst your selves, we must not suffer our honour to be blemished, or the Authority of Parliament to be trodden under foot by Malignant Pamphleteers; I intreat you add this interrogation, May we permit the Scriptures of truth, the word of God to be traduced and blasphemed? May we suffer the Son of God, the Spirit of God, to be undified by mens tongues and pens, without manifesting dislike, without making opposition? Can we in these and such like cases be silent, and yet say truly, we yield our selves to the Lord?

I beseech you for the Kingdoms sake, for the Churches sake, for the Lords sake, to yield your selves unto his Majesty, vigorously, effectually, and for ever. Meditate, Speak, Act for the Lord. Consult, Confer, Vote, Adventure, live and die for the Lord. This is indeed right yielding of your selves unto the Lord.

FINIS.
Orderd by the Commons assembled in Parliament, that Mr. Rose doe from this House give Thanks unto Mr. Ashe, for the paines he took in his Sermon preached on this day at Margarets Westminster, before the House of Commons; and that he be desired to Print his Sermon: Wherein he is to have the like priviledge in printing of it, as others in the like kind usually have had.


I appoint E. Brewster to print this Sermon.

Simeon Ashe.
GODS INCOMPARABLE

Goodness unto

ISRAEL.

Unfolded and applied:

In a Sermon preached at Margarets Westminster before the Honourable House of Commons Assembled in Parliament, at the last Solemn Fast,

April 28. 1647.

By Simeon Ash, Preacher at Basingsham, London, and one of the Assembly.

Published by Order of the House of Commons.

Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee! O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy Excellency, Deut 33:29.

For what Nation is there who hath God so near unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all things that we call upon him for, Deut. 4:7.

I the Lord do keep it, I will water it; every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day, Eze 27:3.

LONDON,

Printed by W. Wilson for Edward Brewster, and are to be sold at his Shop on Ludgate-hill, at the Signe of the Bible neare Fleet-bridge, 1647.
To the Honourable House of Commons Assembled in Parliament.

Right Honourable,

His Sermon was preached, and is now printed, in humble obedience to your Commands. In both these services, I have (according to my weakness) sincerely endeavoured to approve my selfe faithfull to God, and to your consciences. The subject I judged seasonable, for all the duties of the day, not knowing any argument so kindly breaking the heart for sinne, or more forcibly persuading prayer to God, obedience to his Word, and serious Covenant-renewing with his Majesty, then his abundant goodness. And my thoughts could not fasten upon any discourse, more probable to quicken the fruitfull improvement of your present Authority and trust, then by propounding God himselfe, in his goodness towards his Israel, as your pattern for guidance and encouragement. This Sermon is plaine, as best suiting with my Spirit, and in that regard best agreeing with the day of Humiliation, wherein God would have those Robes laid aside, which at other times may be
be better born with. The food is savory, though not curiously Cooked. Truth, not words doe feed the soule: and I much rather desire in my Ministry to profit, then to please my Auditory. Consider I pray you, that all the Fast Sermons which you heare (besides many others) the most whereof are made publique, will be upon Record against you, if you doe not conscientiously act, according to the counsell given in them, in the Name and authority of the great God. The Lord give you continually to remember that his holy eyes are alwayes open upon your hearts and ways: and that you must be judged according to his Word, at the last day. Such thoughts will double industry, move selfe-denyal, make single-hearted in your ends and aimes, increase your zeale, and add much to your courage for Jesus Christ. And that you may proceed with this glorious frame of heart, to do worthily for this our Israel, in imitation of our God, is and shall be the prayer of

Your faithful, though unworthy Servant, SIM: A S H.
SERMON
Preached before the Honourable House of Commons at their monethly Fast, April 28, 1647.

Psalm 73. 1. Truly God is good to Israel, even to such who are of a cleane heart.

The title of this Psalm, is A Psalm of (or for) Asaph. But whether Asaph was the Pen-man, or whether David penned it, and committed it unto Asaph for publique use, Interpreters do not accord.

And where the holy Ghost is silent, we should not, we need not be curiously inquisitive.

This is most apparent in many passages of the Psalm, that...
A Sermon preached before the House of Commons

the Psalmist's smarting sufferings occasioned this good Psalm.

God's rods were frequently upon his backe, hereupon Satan (who watches for opportunities to doe mischief) makes sore assaults upon his soul, and many unfull diistempers break forth from his Spirit. This sharp conflict made way for this Scripture, which hath been for many ages, and still is on record for the Churches use. Hence wee may note, That the sufferings of God's servants, tend to the Churches advantage.

The Apostle Paul reports the experience hereof, Phil. 1. 12. I would ye should understand brethren, that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out to the furtherance of the Gospel, &c.

How many parts of Holy writ have wee for our edification, which were the happy consequences of the afflictions and faults of God's people.

This meditation is marvellously comfortable in these times of so great distractions and uncertainties: for doubtless these storms this winter weather will produce an happy harvest, either for this age, or for succeeding generations. And I may boldly speake it in the words of the Psalmist, Psal. 102. 18. The people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord.

More particularly, its enquirable, from whence the good mans inward trouble and temptation arose? He saw the wicked fit safe and warm, sheltered from dangers, and filled with contents, whilst himselfe was wet & weather-beaten, with an inundation of Crosses. This perplexed the holy mans Spirit. Hence we learn, The prosperity of the wicked is sometimes a matter of offence unto suffering Saints.

The reason hereof, the Psalmist himself renders, vers. 22. So foolish was I and ignorant.

Through darkness they misse their way, and are in dangers to be mislead. Some Interpreters conjecture, that David was thus offended in his younger days, before hee was well acquainted with God's various administrations in the world, towards his foes and towards his friends.

This may be an item to us to take heed of this rock.

Beware of misprision of Providences.

And for your security, take this short direction. Interpret all God's workes out of his word; Make the holy Scriptures a

 Doctrine.

Phil. 1. 12.

Use.

Psal. 102. 18.

Doctrine.

Psal. 102. 18.

Use.

Psal. 102. 18.

Doctrine.

Psal. 102. 18.

Use.
at their monethly Fast, April 28. 1647.

confiruung booke, to the booke of Gods providences. Judge
neither better of prosperity, nor worse of adversity, then Gods
word warrants. This was the Psalmists cure, his experience
did put a probatum est unto this prescription, vers.16.17. When
I thought to know this, it was too painfull for me, untill I went to the
Sanctuary of God, then understood I their end.

I proceede. In the body of the Psalm, we hear the Psalmist
groaning under his daily burthens, see him violently affaunted by Sathan, and find him wounded by sundry sinfull di-tempers, (vid.) Envy, Infidelity, Discontent, &c.

But in the Text and else-where towards the conclusion, wee meet with him as a Conquerour, in the pursuite of his enemies, and we heare him singing the triumph. Truly God is good.

Hence observe. That notwithstanding the sorest assaults of Sa-Doctrines, than, the world, and corruption, the servants of the most High shall get the victory.

The Apostle John gives us the true reason hereof, which holds in reference to all oppositions, though he makes a particular application, 1 John 4. 4. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you, then hee that is in the world. Although children, yea little children in regard of their own weaknese, yet conquerours through the strength of the Almighty.

This may wonderfully encourage Gods people to hold out the confict, to keep the field, though the strength of the bat-tell come upon them. Although worsted, disordered, routed for the present, yet rally, gather up broken strength, face about, and give a fresh charge, for the day shall undoubtedly be yours. Say to the insulting adversaries, as Mic. 7. 8. Rejoice not against me o my enemie, when I fall, I shall rise, when I sit in darknesse, the Lord will be a light unto me. Yea this is comforta-bly applyable, in reference unto Christian-Soul conflicts, when the understanding is darkened, thoughts distracted, affections disempered, conscience wounded, the Devil gratified, and God provoked; yet be not discouraged, but cheer up with the words of David, Psalm 42.5.11. Why art thou cast down o my soule, and why art thou disquieted within me; still hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.

B 2 Further
Further observe, that the Psalmist gives God the glory of this victory, God is good.

The more deliverances, and the better successes, a gracious heart receives, the more it admireth and advancest God.

And indeed, God's manner is, many times to make the battle the more hot, and the success in appearance more doubtful, that the conquest in conclusion, might be the more to his praise.

Use.

Hereby, leare to judge aright of the temper of your owne Spirits. How doe your hearts behave themselves God-ward, upon the perusal of the great things which hee hath done for you? Is God the higher in your estimation and affections? Do you the more magnifie him in your conversations, because hee hath prospered your Counsels, and Armies for your honour, and the Kingdomes welfare? I propound the question to your consciences, let your foules return right answers to the Lord.

And once more mark (as another generall) That a personal experience is improved to an universal advantage.

One Asaph, or one David, is rescued from the power of Satan and Sin: but the inference made, is for the comfort of the whole Church. Truly God is good to Israel.

This is very remarkable, together with the ground of it, in the practice of the Apostle Paul, bringing that unto common use, which was spoken to Jeshuah many ages before, Heb. 13. 5, 6. He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee: So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper. For God in his Covenant and affections towards his people, is Jehovah who changeth not, throughout all generations.

Use.

1 Be instructed to trade the providences of God for the good of others, unto your owne particular profit.

David in an estate of desfaction, hath recourse unto Gods gracious dealings with his fore-fathers, Psal. 22. 5, 6. Our Fathers trusted in thee, they trusted and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee & were delivered, they trusted in thee & were not confounded.

2 Be perswaded to impart your owne experiences for more common use. Conceale not within your bosome, those things the communicating whereof may be for publique profit. And in this regard it is very desirable, that God's many marvellous administrations.
administrations in this Kingdom, in this age, may be handled to posterity. Oh that they might be recorded, and reported to the encouragement of succeeding generations. As this my Text is here registred for our use and edification this day. Truly God is good to Israel.

Having thus briefly pointed at these few observations in my way to the Text, I now come more close to the consideration of the words: Truly God is good to Israel.

In which words we have, 1. A precious priviledge propounded. Truly God is good. 2. The sharers in it described. By a Title, Israel. 2. By a qualification. Pure, or true of heart.

I will take the words, as our translation renders them, and shall undertake (through God’s grace) the handling of this proposition. Truly God is good to Israel. In the handling whereof I shall endeavour, 1. The explication of the words here used; 2. The confirmation of that truth, in the latitude of it, which is hence tendered. 3. The application of the point, that it may be fruitfully improved.

I begin with the first. And in the proposition, I consider, 1. The subject. Israel.

2. The predicate. Truly God is good. Wherein note 1: the assertion. God is good. 2. The asseveration. Truly. The word Israel signifies a prevailer (or) one strong with God. And primarily it was a name of honour put upon Jacob by God himselfe upon his prevailing prayer made: in the time of deepe distresse, Gen. 32: 28. Thy name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel, for as a Prince hast thou power with God.

Afterwards this title was commonly given unto his natural Posterity, sometimes more largely, and sometimes more strictly: which now in Scriptural discoveries, I may not looke after. But here neither All, nor only Jacob’s children according to the flesh are meant. Nor all the outward visible members of the Church Christian, as the last words of the Text (which are Exegeticall) doe declare. Such who are cleane of heart.

It is here observably, with what cautiousnesse the holy Ghost serves out Gospel Cordialls. He neither doth carelessly lavish them out unto all, without exception: nor unto all professors of Religion, without a speciall limitation: Even those who are
cleanse of heart: Our Lord and Master in the days of his flesh said, "It is not meet to give the children's meat to dogs." The Lord makes Ministers & people wise in applying Gospel prerogatives.

Next; the several words in the predicate come to be opened. God. The original is Elohim, a glorious title of the great God, the only true God, which word signifies unto us 1. Both the Omnipotency. 2. And the subsistence of the God-head. Elohim signifies strength, ability. And Elohim (in the plural number.) holds forth the Trinity of the persons in the Deity. As Gen. 1.1. Elohim created. The work of creation belonging to Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost.

Gen. 1.1.

Bonum utile, honestum, ju-cundum.

Math. 19.17.

Ps. 119.68.

Ps. 145.9.

Ps. 86.5.

There is but one word more to be interpreted, Truly its but a particle: But the smallest fileings of gold are gathered up. Little pearls are of great price. And this small particle is not of small use, being rightly applied and improved.

First, take it (as our late translators give it us) as a note of Assveration. Truly. Its a word of faith, opposite to the Psalmists sense, and Sathan's injections. Whatsoever sense sees or feele, whatsoever Sathan infinuates and lyes; yet precious faith, with confidence asserts: Truly, verily God is good. He is not only
only good in word, but in deed also. Not only seemingly, but certainly good.

Secondly consider it as an Adversative particle; Yet, so our old translation. Ainsworth renders it, yet surely: taking in the former & this together. And then the sentence runs thus: How ill forever things goe in the world, how ill forever it fares with Gods Church and people amongst men, Yet God is good to Israel.

Thirdly, some conceive, that the word carries admiration, oh how good is God to Israel. Where expressions and apprehensions fail, there the Psalmist takes up Gods providences with admiration, oh how wonderfully, how transcendently good is God to Israel.

All these things in the unfolding, in the construction of the words being premised: Now take the doctrine in its latitude and full fence. That the mighty God, Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, is really, constantly, singularly good in his administrations to his Church and people. Truly, yet, oh how good is God to Israel.

The second thing premised in my discourse, follows (vid) the confirmation of this point which I shall give you, in the three branches which are distinct in it.

First, God is truly, really, good to Israel, not only in appearance but in practice, not in words alone, but in his works also. And this is manifest under these two heads.

1. In that he confers all needed good upon them, Psal. 84. 11
No good thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly. Its most manifest in experience that many things are withheld and withdrawn also, from Gods faithful people, which they highly prize, and much desire: But nothing which God in his infinite wisdom foresees, might be for their true good, is either denied or removed.

2. In that he converts all events to good unto them. Thus faith the Lord Jer. 24. 5. God of Israel. Like those good figs so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of idolatry for their good. Though the antecedents and consequences of captivity were grievous, yet God intended and effected his peoples good. Blowes, blood-shed, banishment, loss of liberty, lively-hood, and the lives of many in near and deare relations, with the want of holy Ordinances, the comfort, the life of their lives.

The
The reproaches cast upon themselves, yea upon their God in his
government, saered administratiions, and present providences,
by his and their enemies, ( which things to gracious hearts
are more bitter then death ) were all for good.

Rom. 8. 28.

We know ( faith the Apostle, Rom. 8. 28. ) that all things shall
workke together for the good of them who love God. Do not sever pro-
vidences, which God would have considered together, and you
shall be able to make out this preetious truth.

Secondly, God is constantly good. Yet, God is good.

This yet ( as I conceive ) hath a three-fold reference into the
body of the Psalme. For as Interpreters observe, though these
words are set in the beginning, yet they suggest the conclusion
of the Psailmists conflict. And the Psalmit it seenus to begin some-
what abruptly: Yet God is good. But having filled his thoughts
with his former foiles and fears. And now seeing himselfe in a
safe condition both for the present and the future, he is full of
confidence and comfort: and that which was the strongest and
chiefeft in his heart, now breaks out first: Yet God is good.

Verse 14.

1. This yet relates unto his sufferings, vers. 14. All the day
long have I been plagued and chaffned every morning.

Notwithstanding the variety and frequency of the Saints
sufferings, yet God is good. Though sorrow salutes them every
morning, at their first awaking, and trouble attends them to
bed at night, yet God is good. Though temptations many and
terrible make batteries and breaches upon their spirits, yet God
is good to Israel.

Verse 21.

2. This yet reflects upon his sinnings, the frettings & wran-
glings of his disstempered heart, ver. 2. 3. My feet were almost gone,
my steps had well nigh slipst, for I was envious at the foolish when I saw
the prosperity of the wicked. And ver. 21. My heart was grieved, and
I was pricked in my reins.

Though sinfull motions doe mutinye in the soule against
Gods wise administratiions. Though there bee foolish proud
quarrelings with divine providences, and inexceuffible distrust
of his faithfull promises. Though fretfulness at others pros-
perity, and discontent at their owne adversity: yet God is good.

Israels disstempered came not the Almighty to change
the course of his accustomed goodnesse. While corruptions are kept
kept from breaking out into scandal, while the soul contends against them, and is humbled for them (as this Psalmist was) this conclusion must be maintained: yet God is good.

3. This yet looks back upon his misgivings. There had been distrustful despondency upon the good man's heart. For from both the premises (vid his sufferings and sinnings) hee had inferred this conclusion, ver. 13. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, & washed my hands in innocency. As if hee had said, I have kept Fasts, observed Sabbaths, heard Sermons, made prayers, received Almes, avoyded sins, resisted temptations, withstood lusts, appeared for Christ and his cause and servants in vain: yea to his heart had added an affirmation (verily) to this faithlesse opinion: but now he is of another mind. Yet God is good. The administrations of God are not according to the sad surmises of his peoples mis-giving hearts. For though they through diffidence are apt often to give up their holy labours, as loft, and all their conscientious care and carriage as utterly cast away; yet God is good to Israel.

Thirdly, God is superlatively good to Israel. This transcendency of divine indulgence towards Israel, I will discover in five particulars.

1. Hee gives himselfe to be possessed and improved as their God, Luke 1. 68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.

He is not ashamed to be called their God, Hab. 11. 16. He is (take in, this thought humbly, and admire rich grace in it thankfully) as truly theirs, as his owne. All Gods attributes and excellencies are Israels through rich grace, to bee employed as really for their advantage, as for his owne advancement.

And is not this superlativen goodnesse? As much as God is better then all created comforts, so much is his goodnesse to Israel greater than to other men. Though Esau hath the fat of the earth, yet Jacob (in this sense) hath the dew of Heaven. The wicked are Lords of worldly accommodations, they have in outward regards many times (as this Psalmist expresseth it, ver. 17.) more then heart could wish, yet God the portion of Jacob is not like them (as the Prophet speakes, Jer. 10. 16.) For bee is Jer. 10. 16. the former of all these things. Marke that clause. Besides all his owne All-sufficiencies, and all existent comforts in heaven and earth,
earth to be communicated to them for good, he can with ease create new refreshings, and doubtless will, rather then they shall lacke any thing which might doe them good.

2. He is their hope, *Jer. 14.8.*  *O thou the hope of Israel. God is Israel's hope.*

Not only 1. *Objectively,* as *Psalme 39.* *Lord what waitest I for, my hope is in thee.*

The soule through its high, incomparable estimations of God, being with loves and longings in expectation of nothing so much as of God, to bee more and more enjoyed and improved.

2. But also (and that principally) effectually.

*Take it thus.* True hope is the vigorous daughter of precious Faith. And hope lookes out for the performance of that promise, which faith believes as true. Faith assents to the truth of the promise, Hope expects the good promised. As is cleare in *Abrahams practife,* *Rom.* 4. 18. *VVho against hope beleived in hope.* And the reason is added, *verse 20, 21.* *Hee was strong in faith,* and fully persuaded, that what he had promised hee was able to performe; When neither fence, nor reason, nor experience, can make out the probability or possibility of receiving the good, held forth in the promise, then God holds up *Israel's* hope and heart both together. And certainly when the Hypocrites hope shall be as *a Spiders Webb,* *Job 8. 14.* And as the giving up of the ghost, *Job 11. 20.* then this will be found a very choife, sweete priviledge, which is peculiar to *Israel.* That their God, the God of all grace, is the upholder of their hopes.

3. He is the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble (as it followes in the same Scripture before quoted) *Jer.* 14. 8.

There is more in the original, then our translation expresseth; *In tempore angustiae,* In the season of distress.

*Two things seeme to be intimated.* 1. That God is a mighty Saviour to *Israel.* He saves from distress, when plunged over head and eares into perplexity, when walled up (as it were) with surrounding dangers, when there appears no promising means of deliverance, when men and means faile then hee can save. *He that quicketh the dead* (as the Apostle speaks) *2 Cor.* 1.

2. *Cor.* 1. 9. *Psal.* 44. 4. *He can by his word command deliverances for Jacob,* *Ps.* 44. 4. *His*
His word workes what he wills, both with ease and speed.

2. That God is a wise Saviour. The wise man (faith Solomon) observes both time and season. Now God saves seasonably. He takes the first, the fittest opportunity for Israel’s rescue.

The Lord waites that he may be gracious, Esa. 30. 18. As the Scripture reports of Joseph, Psalme 105. 18, 19. Whose feet they hurt Psalme 105. 18, with fetters, he was laid in irons until the time that his word came. 19.

The reasonable time. Its the same word in the original. And as Job speaks of himselfe, Job 23. 10. When he hath tried me, I Job 23. 10. shall come forth like gold. Men who melt such precious metals, will use care and skill that they may lose no opportunity of advantage to themselves.

4. Jesus Christ, who is the Spring head, the fountain of all Christians supplies and refreshings, belongs to them.

He is called The consolation of Israel, Luke 2. 25. & ver. 32. Luke 2. 25.

The glory of Israel.

Remember that in the opening of the words, you heard, that Elohim, all the three Persons in the blessed God-head, are singularly good to Israel: In the fore-going particulars you were, acquainted with God the Fathers goodness to Israel: Now this imparts goodness communicated from the Son, and this is indeed the ground both of what went before, and follows after in Israel’s privileges.

But you may aske what prerogatives issue from Jesus Christ to Israel. I answer, 1. both grace, 2. and the comforts of grace. You shall find both together in Acts 5. 31. Him hath God exalted Acts 5. 31. with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel andforgiveness of sins.

1. Repentance. Many graces are comprehended in this one, (vid) conviction, humiliation, conversion. Sight of sin, sorrow for sin, and amendment. The penitent reflects upon sin with shame, sorrow, hatred, feare, resolution to forsake it. He looks towards God with love, longings, estimation, and an obedientiall disposition. Now these and all other graces Gods Israel receives from Christ.

2. Forgiveness of sins. Well may I call this the comfort of grace, for the Psalmist, Psalme 32. 1. Speakes of the Blessednesse of them whose iniquity is pardoned, and whose sin is covered.

Hence
Hence issues tranquility and joy of heart, bold addresses to God upon all occasions, and fiduciiall expectation to have all gospell promises seasonably accomplished, both for sanctification and salvation. Now these and such like Cordials flow from Christ, into the soules of the Ifrael of God.

Gal. 6. 16. Peace, Gal. 6. 16. shall be upon the Ifrael of God. Look upon this as the good work of the Spirit, the third Person in Trinitie, Gal. 5. 22. Rom. 15. 13. Here I will not expatiate to speake of peace in generall, or the divers kinds of peace, but shall only wish you to take notice of the worth of this peace, from the expressions of the same Apostle, Phil. 4. 7. The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keepe your Minds and hearts through Christ Jesus.

From whence you may observe, 1. The excellency of it; It passeth all understanding. I pray consider the phrase. It is not. It is as great as words can set forth. Nor thus: It passeth the reach of mans language. Nor thus; It is as excellent as mans reason can comprehend. Nor yet thus; It exceedeth the comprehension of ordinary understandings. But it passeth all ( even all ) understanding. No mind can fathom it.

2. The efficiency of it, Shall keepe as with the guard of a Garrison. The whole soule is secured, both in the actings of the understanding, and motions of the affections, which might divide the heart from God. This peace preserves against the batteries both of earth and hel. That Christian best knows how to prize this peace, who can tell experimentally what it is to be besieged by Spirituall adversaries.

Hence the inference of our Saviour from this Legacy bequeathed, is very notable, John 14. 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, let not your heart be troubled, nor be afraid.

6. God makes over his marvellous mercy unto Ifrael. This follows in the same place, produced to prove the former peculiar prerogative appertaining to Ifrael, Gal. 6. 16. And mercy shall bee upon the Ifrael of God.

Psalme 145. 9. It is most true (as I hinted before in Psalme 145. 9. ) that the mercies of God are over all his works. These common compassions which shelter, succour, and support in a sort the wicked, are not to be slighted. But speciall mercies, Covenant mercies be-
long alone unto Israel. Hence that passage, 1 Pet. 2. 10. is con-
derable, differencing Gods peculiar people from others; You
(faith he) had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

And how admirable is this priviledge, for oh, how sweet is
this mercy. It is sin pardoning mercy, Mica 7. 18. It is corrupt-
on killing mercy, verf. 19. It is foule sanctifying mercy. This
mercy seafons all comforts, sweetens all sorrowes, easeth under
all burthens, vanquisheth all temptations, upholdeth under all
discouragements, and procureth the acceptance of all services,
Dan. 9. 18. And that I may at once, give all, in one word. This
mercy effateth, interesteth us in all the precious promises of
the Covenant of the richest grace. For the Covenant is gound-
ed upon mercy, Luke 1. 54,55. He hath holpen his servant Israel
in remembrance of his mercy. As he spake to our Fathers, &c.

And in this last handfull, you have more tendered then your
hearts or heads can hold. O take into your consideration I
pray you. all these rich dispensations of Gods goodnesse unto
his Israel, that you may give full and firme assent unto the do-
ctrine under hand; That God is really, constantly and transcendently
good to Israel.

Thus having cleared the words of the Text, and having also
confirmed the Doctrine offered from them, in the third place
according to promise, I proceed to the application, which I shall
give in without much amplification in heaven uses.

1. Conflutation. This truth (which stands firm upon Scrip-
ture bottoms) gives check to the irreligious, Atheiftical concei-
ts of all them who imagine the ways of holy addresses to
God, to bee altogether unprofitable. The Pen-man of this
Psalme, in time of temptation, had a touch, a taint of this er-
rour, verf. 13. as you heard before. Verily (said he in his heart)
I have cleansed my heart in vaine.

But he tooke shame to himfelfe for this mistake, verf. 22.
upon better consideration. So foolish was I and ignorant, and as a
beast before thee.

And the Text befaeps him a man (upon coole considerati-
on) of a founder judgement. Truly God is good, yet God is good,
Whatsoever Sathan hath suggetted, and I have imagined, yet if
I should speake thus (I have cleansed my heart in vaine) I should
offend
offend against the generation of thy Children, verse 15.

The Lord takes himselfe to bee unworthily dealt with by men of this mind, Mal. 3. 13. Your words have been flout against me ( faith the Lord of Hosts ) you have said it is in vaine to serve God. And well he may make this interpretation of such words, as spoken against himselfe. For he hath openly and often asserted both by word and worke the truth of the Doctrine under hand, Esa 55. 19. I have not said to the seede of Jacob seeke ye me in vaine? Therefore how can it be leffe then blaspheyme thus im- pudently to give God the lye to his faces.

But I may spare this Langnage here, seeing your comming together this day, in this extraordinary manner to seeke God, doth prove that you be of a better mind. And I beseech you to behave your selves in the use of Gods Ordinances, both Ser- mons and prayers, that it may appeare you account them not vaine unprofitable dispensations.

For humiliation, which is more reasonable and suitable to the service of the day. Is God thus admirably, and abundantly good to Israel? And hath this our Israel, have wee his Israel, had experimentall proofe hereof to our great comfort? Oh how then should our ill requitals of Gods goodness break our hearts. Have not we returned to our God evill for good, and even hatred for his good will? What else meane, the lowing of the Oxen, and the bleating of the Sheep which I hear?

Do not errours broached, and blaspheymes belched out ag- ainst God in this Kingdome proclame it? Do not cruel oppre- sions, wherof many of your Committees stand guilty, pub- lish it in all the corners of the Land? Doth not the contempt of Christs government, Ordinances, Officers, witnesse it, farre and neare? What else speakes our crying downe the Solemne Nationall League and Covenant, which makes the ears of our Brethren in Forreign parts to tingle? What else is discovered, by a bold pleading for tolleration of all Sects, under pretence of indulgence to tender consciences. Alas, alas! Might not Gods Messengers speake to us, as Moses did to Israel of olde, Deut. 32. 6. Doe ye thus reward the Lord, ye foolish people and un- wise, &c.

I might here shew you that the abuse of Gods goodness doth much
much aggravate sin, and greatly endanger the sinner, Jer. 2. 19, Jer. 2. 19, 20. It is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that there is not in thee the fear of my Name. For of old time I have broken thy yoke and burnt thy bonds.

But I know, that there is nothing which more deeply wounds an ingenious, a gracious heart upon the remembrance of sin, then injury offered to a good God. Against thee, the only have I sinned, was David's mournfull complaint, Psal. 51. 4. It runnes not thus in his lamentation. Against my house, my Kingdome, my selfe have I sinned, though there was truth in all that, as the History declares. And now I believe he had in his thoughts Gods goodnesse, whereof Nathan before had remembred him, 2 Sam. 12.

And no marvel that this consideration doth paine a pious penitent heart, for this unworthinesse, this worst kind of unthankfulness, doth put God himselfe upon complaint and lamentation.

The Prophet Isaiah brings in God upon such like returns for his goodnesse, bemoaning himselfe (as it were) before the senselesse creatures, Isa. 1. 23. Hear the heavens, and give ear to earth, for the Lord hath spoken it. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebeld against me. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib. But Israel doth not know, &c. Ab sinfull Nation

God is burthened with such basenesse, and therefore sighing-ly sayes, Ah, I will ease me, vers. 24. The Lord command your consciences to bring this home for your humiliation, both in reference to miscarriages publique and personall. For how much or how little better you be for all your deliverances, God and your consciences best know. And though our selves be not scandalously guilty, yet the sins of others in our Israel should in this regard afflict our hearts, Gen. 34. Its said of Jacobs Sons, The men were grieved (in reference to Sechems sin) because hee had wrought folly in Israel.

3. For Information. How unlike unto God are all those who thinke ill, with ill, speake ill, plot ill, and practise ill, against the Israel of God.

In all the fore-mentioned particulers, expressed in the Do-
Sermon preached before the House of Commons

Psalme 137:

And Moab-like, who said to Balaam, Num. 22. 6. Come curse this people. Sending to hell for helpe, to lay waste the Church of Christ.

Yea Devil-like, who like a roaring Lyon seekes whom hee may devour, 1 Pet. 5.8. And might he have his will, he would not suffer a true Israelite to live.

I know that Israels enemies are of severall kinds, some appear in wayes of open hostility, others oppose more covertly and subtilly. But the Manner and meanes of their way-laying Gods people in their comforts and hopes, are all knowne to God, who accounts them his adversaries, and will deal with them accordingly.

Gods Church being assured of this truth, doe under this notion turn the edge of their prayers against them, Psal. 83.1.59. Keep not thou silence o God, &c. For loe thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head. They have taken crafty counsell against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, come, let us cut them off from being a Nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance, &c. persecute them with thy tempest, &c.

Use.

4. For examination. It nearlie concerns us all, to prove whether we be true Israelites.

1. Who desires not to know his right to this prerogative now laid open, which is so prectious, and so comprehenlive, as you have heard. Men of the world imagine that they can never make sure enough their title to earthly accommodations. O that we were so wise for our soules.

2. All
2. All are not Israel, who are of Israel faith the Apostle, Rom. Rom 9. 6.

9. 6. Neither every natural Israelite, who issued out of Jacob's loyns, nor every visible member of the Christian Church, must now bee admitted into the fellowship of that Israel which my Text speaks of.

3. And we who by natural descent are Gentiles, may yet by a spirituall Interest, be sharers in the privileges of the Israelites of olde. Ephes. 2. 19. Yee (faith the Apostle to the Ephesians) are no more strangers, nor forreiners, but fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the housebold of God, &c.

4. The knowledge of our propriety in the immunities, liberties of this Israel's Charter, will wonderfully conduce to our spirituall advantage, both in point of service and comfort. The Apostle speaks much to this purpose, in his Epistle unto the Ephesians, that they might admire God's rich grace in Christ, and make a fruitfull improvement thereof in their conversation. Now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken downe the middle wall of partition betwixt us, &c. And we have accessse by one Spirit to the Father, &c.

Now the discovery of a right borne Israelite in the fence of the Gospel, may be made by these four notes following.

First, A conforming of our course according to Canonical Scripture. This note liyes faire, Gal. 6. 16. So many as walk according to this rule, the Israel of God.

There are two things notable in this Character, 1. The true Israelite in all doubts and ambiguities hath reference to the holy Scriptures, for direction and satisfaction.

It is not the judgement of such and such men, which alone carries him, nor the phantasies of our owne brains, which are by many called Revelations, and new lights. Some for Independency; Others for Presbytery. A third for Episcopacy. A fourth for Neutrality, waiting only in policy to see which way may be most advantagious in accomplishing their own inferior ends. No, no, but the true Israelite desires to know the minde of the holy Ghost in Scripture, whether it agree or disagree with his own designs, engagements, associates.

2. The true Israelite walkes according to his Scripture light
As Luke 1. 6. It is said of Zachary and Elizabeth. They walked in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God.

Not as many, who only profess, and pray according to Scripture rule the original word walk ranflated, signifies (as Beza well observes) both exactness and constancy, in steering our course according to Canonicall Scripture. Whereas the Hypocrites say and do not, Matth. 23. 3.

Secondly, A minding of the inward man, in the course of obedience. This my Text tells us, Gods Israel is cleane or pure of heart. And St. Peter affirms, Acts 15. 9. That God puts no difference between us Gentiles, and the best of Jewes, having purified our hearts by faith.

The Apostle Paul speaks out clearly and fully to this character, Rom. 2. 28, 29. He is not a Jew, (in sense its the same, which he is not an Israelite) which is one outwardly, But he is a Jew, with is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit.

The true Israelite lookes inward, works inward, both in avoiding sin, and doing service.

Therefore the gawdy outside Pharisees, must not goe for right Israelites, who are like gilded Sepulchers, who honour God with lips, but their hearts are far from him.

Thirdly, A true Israelite is Nathaniel-like, a man in whom there is no guile, John 1. 48.

He desires not to cozen the world with faire flourishes. Hee had much rather be good, then appeare good. Not shewes but substance is in his heart and endeavour.

This cuts the combs, and crusheth the hopes of those people who only desire to be scene of men. As Matth. 23. 5. our Saviour describes the Hypocrites. A plaudite from men, is much more contenting to them, then an Euge bone serve, et fidelis. Well done good and faithfull servant from God, Matth. 25. 23.

4. A genuine Israelite may bee knowne by his trading with God in prayer. For hence it was, that Jacob originally received this Name, Gen. 32. 28. as I hinted before.

I know that the Rabbins vainly fancy, that the Angell with whom Jacob wrestled, was Esau his Angell, who now way-laid Jacob, and hindered him in his course: but the history itselfe in many passages sufficiently confutes this conceit, and therefore
at their monthly Fays, April 28, 1647.

D 2

Not rightly named Jacob, for he hath exaggerated me these two times. The

norightly named Jacob, for he hath exaggerated me these two times. The
The true Israelite desires to wet the ground where he wrestles with tears, that if he be foiled, his fall may be the more easie. He reviews with sorrow his sins against God, when he presents his prayers before him.

Men of flinty remorseless spirits, may in this respect question their spiritual estate, who commonly stand up under the remembrance of sin, with dry eyes, and senseless hearts.

4th. It was humble. Jacobs humility appeared divers ways.

1. In his reviewing his former bare & low condition, Gen. 32. 10. With my staffe I passed over this Iordan, bringing nothing else. The Chaldee expounds it, my selfe alone. Doe you frequently, conscientiously reflect upon your personall, domesticall, politcall lownesse, that your hearts may not swell before God.

2. Acknowledging God the Author of all his encrease, of his happy change, Gen. 32. 10. The mercies which thou hast shewed to thy servant. Not idolizing selfe-industry, vigilance, policy, (though much hereof was in him, as the History relates) but he lookes as farre as Gods hand and blessing. Doe you cast your eyes beyond your owne Counsels, and your Armies courage in your successes. I mention not more secret concerns.

3. Confessing himself, lesse then the least of all these favours, with which the Lord had now filled him, Gen. 32. 10. The proud Hypocrite lookes through selfe-conceite upon his All as too little: but the true Israelite freely acknowledgeth himself lesse then the least of the blessings which God bestoweth, and thus much he here freely expresseth before God in prayer.

5th. It was fervent. This is implied, in that his praying is called wrestling, Gen. 32. 24. Wherein there is both intention of mind, and extention of bodily strength. Both dexterity and ability are exercised in wrestling.

So in right prayer, all the faculties of the soule, (vid) the understanding, memory, will, affections, and all the graces in the heart are seriously set on work.

The Apostle James gives a full description of it, James 5. 16. The effectuall fervent prayer.

It is a working prayer. Lip-laboured prayers, well-worded supplications, are no good arguments to prove a true Israelite. Much lesse will yawning, sluggish, bed-ridden devotions evidence a mans interest in this prerogative.
6th. It was fiducial. This appears 1. By his pleading God's promise, Gen. 32. 9. 12. Thou saidst returne unto thy Country and to thy Kindred, and I will do thee good, &c. Faith in right prayer takes hold on the engagements of God grace, when it cannot fasten elsewhere.

2. By his closing with the Angel, who was Christ. Holy faith, though humbly, yet adventurously strikes in with Jesus Christ, being in regard of his humanity our neere Kinsman, and our Mediator, according to the appointment of the Father. And the obedientialnesse of his heart to God's command, was a manifest signe, that his faith was right, vers. 9. Thou saidst returne. As though he had spoken in more words, thus. Lord I am come hither in obedience to thy call and command, therefore doe not disappoint the hopes of thy servant. True faith which embraceth the promise, doth submit to the command of God also.

7th. It was for a Blessing, Gen. 32. 26. I will not let thee goe, Gen. 32. 26. except thou bleffe me.

This I conceive was not only for deliverance from the approaching imminent danger, but for some manifestations of his love; that in some kind, according to his promise he would doe him good, vers. 9.

The Psalmist gives in this as an infallible mark of the true Israelite, Psalm 24. 6. This is the generation of them who seeke thee, who seeke thy face. As David expresseth himselfe, Psalm 4. 6. Many say, who will shew us any good, but Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.

The smiles of God's face are rather begged then the gifts of his hand. Loves rather liberality in outward contentments, are looked for, and longed after by the gracious heart.

8th. It was constant & persevering, Gen. 32. 24, 25, 26. There wrestled with him a man till the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacobs thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. And he said let me goe, for the day brake. And bee said I will not let thee goe except thou bleffe me. From these words note, that he continued praying, 1. Notwithstanding God's delays. Although God give no answer, yet the true Israelite will not give
off prayer. He must and will continue this work, though he receive not wages.

2. Notwithstanding God's denials. Faith interprets denials, in this case, as tryals, which rather quicken than dishearten. And the gracious heart keeps God's command in the eye; and therefore will do duty, though comfort be denied.

3. Notwithstanding God's opposing pinching providences. Though Jacob suffer in continuing his contest, yet he will rather suffer than sin. The loss of the use of a limb, will not cause him to come off from his God. Bring all this home to your hearts I pray you. Good Christians, can experimentally subscribe to such sad dispensations from God to whom they no answer. 2. They read down-right denials in some of God's pray. 1. They have providences. 3. Yea, their condition seems to grow worse and worse. Losses are increased, Crosses renewed, temptations multiplied, yet they continue praying.

USE.

Deut. 33. 29.

5th. For consolation. Consider, Deut 33. 29. Happy art thou, o Israel, who is like to thee, o people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy helpe, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found lyers unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

How sweetely fruitfull is this Scripture for the comfort of God's people. But I must leave the enlargement, & the improvement hereof to your own meditations.

I might here remember you of all the Cordials given out to God's Israel in the proofe of the Doctrine.

But I shal onely briefly point at the amplification of this use under two general heads, vid. 1. The removing of discouragements. 2. The propounding of encouragements to every true Israelite.

1. This truth improved, will take off our greatest discouragements, which most ordinarily arise from these grounds.

First, Our owne weakness. Either to discharge service, or to resist assaults, to bear afflictions, or to fill relations. For God is the strength of Israel, 1 Sam. 15. 25. And is not this a Cordial to the soule that is ready to faint under its owne feeblenesse, to understand, that it hath interest in the abilities of the Almighty.

2. Our owne unworthinesse. The soule which surveyeth its own
be no good, from the hand of God, no guidance, no assistance, no supply, no comfort: yet in this case, God's mercy may cheare, when merit cannot be pleaded. Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, Psal. 130. 7.

3. Our manifold future necessities, considered with our unanswerableness to former favours. These are the common complaints of gracious hearts. My receipts from God have beene many and great already, but I have not improved them, I have abused them rather: why therefore should I look for any further knowledge. But yet should Israel hope. For with the Lord there is plentiful redemption, Psal. 130. 7. Former failings bewailed, shall not interrupt the course of future kindness. Although old debts be not payed, yet God will give his Israel leave to goe upon a new score.

4. Our various and heinous provocations. If yet the poor soule say, I am not only weake and unworthy in my self, or only unthankfull for, and unsuitable to former mercies in my conversation: but alas, how many evills arise in my heart against his government, and break forth in my life unto his dishonour: yet is there comfort. For God will redeeme Israel from all his iniquities, Psal. 130. 8. I only point at these things, not having leisure to enlarge them.

2. This Doctrine applied by faith will administer marvellous encouragement in every change and condition of life whatsoever unto Gods Israel.

For 1. Though amongst men they are despised as the off-souling of all things. Yet Israel is Gods peculiar Treasure, Psal. 135. 4. The difference which God puts betwixt an Israelite and a Canaanite, is greater then men make betwixt their Jewels and dirt in the street.

2. Though friends forget their labours and adventures of love (as many in these times of so great changes have too much cause to complain) yet thus faith the Lord, Esa 44. 21. Thou art my servant o Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. God keeps a Catalogue of their Names, their services, their sufferings, and of every thing which may render them acceptable to himselfe.

3. Though men leave us to shift for ourselves, taking no care,
care for our safety. As some of your servants (pardon my boldness) whom you formerly sheltered, are now neglected both in their credit and comforts. Yet God, who keepeth Israel, doth never slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord himselfe upon thy right hand. The Lord shall preserve thee from all eill, &c. Psal. 121, 4, 5, 7. And he who hath Gods guard, may without danger want mans protection.

4. Though there be nothing in us to deserve Gods favour-able dispensations for our welfare, Yet his honour is engaged to accomplishe it, as the Lord himselfe by the Evangelicall Prophet expresseth it, Esa 46. 13. I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory. And doubtlesse his Majefty will maintaine his own glory, how low, how little wee we be in our own eyes, or the account of others.

5th. For admonition, which is two-fold. First, to Gods Is-\r\n\r\r\r\r\rrael. Let them be hence warned, to take heed of a double rocke. 1. Of envy, whereof they are in danger when the wicked prosper. 2. Of discontent, to which they are disposed when themselves suffer.

6th. For admonition, which is two-fold. First, to Gods Is-\r\n\r\r\r\r\rrael. Let them be hence warned, to take heed of a double rocke. 1. Of envy, whereof they are in danger when the wicked prosper. 2. Of discontent, to which they are disposed when themselves suffer.

I shall not need to travail out of this 73. Psalm, for the en-\r\n\r\r\r\r\rlarging of this Use: For this very Psalmist acquaints us expe-\r\n\r\r\r\r\rrimently. 1. Both with this double disease with which he was distempered. 2. And with the medicines, the means whereby he was well cured.

I laid open these maladies before, in the particular proofe of the Doctrine: therefore now I shall only name the several ingredients in the medicine, or antidote, which may be for our preservation or recovery.

First, To prevent or remove envionflies arising in the heart, because bad men fare so well in the world. Consider with your selves, that all their enjoyments are 1. Empty deceiving appearances, gay nothings, ver. 20. As a dreame when one awakes, so o Lord when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

They are as men in a dream who judg the worlds vanities, to be better then unsatisfying shadows unto a wel awaked soul.

2. Unreforming. These men are wicked though they prosper, ver. 3, 12. Their large possessions have no such influence either into their hearts or lives, as to make them better.
Corrupting, v. 7,8,9. Their eyes stand out with fatness. They are corrupt, and speake wickedly concerning oppression; they speake loftily. They set their mouth against heaven. They say how doth God see.

As wines and cordials to a man in a fever, enflame the blood and increase the disease. So are these men worser for their honour and worldly abundance. They are the more sinful because God is so bountifull.

They cannot possibly preserve their owners from perishing, vers. 18, 19. Thou castedst them downe into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment. Envy not that gallantry which can neither keep off a storm nor the scorching Sun.

Secondly, to staunch murmuring, and supresse discontent in respect of our owne wants and afflictions.

Consider that you are upright, have rather reason to raise up your hearts in the admiration of Gods incomparable goodnes, in the words of the Text. Oh how good is God. Mind I pray you for this end tour remarkable passages in this Pfalme, which I must only name, without illustration or enlargement.

1. We have soule-satisfaction in God, vers. 25. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. All the necessities of the heart are answered, and all the capacities of the soul are filled, out of the Al-sufficiency of God; and therefore there is no Gen. 33.11. repining. I have all faith Jacob, Gen. 33.11. The originall so expresseth it.

2. They have sure preservation from him, vers. 23. I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand. When dangers draw nigh, God is more high, to secure from all threatening mischiefs; both temporall and spiritual. Now at this time the Pfalmist was ready to be carried headlong upon rockes, but the hand of Omnipotency secured him.

3. We have his speciall direction, vers. 24. Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel. In wayes of darknesse and danger a good guide is comfortable. What our present times be in regard of pernicious errours, &c. I need not say; therefore the season adds to the sweetnesse of this engagement of Gods grace for the guidance of his word and Spirit.

4. God undertakes, with the communication of all needfull comforts here, our full glorification hereafter, vers. 24. And afterwards thou shalt receive me to glory. The promise is very comprehensive.
prehensive, containing the communication of all needfull contentment upon earth, & the inheriting of happiness in heaven. From all these considerations, I may conclude my counsel with the words of the Apostle, Heb. 13.5. Be content with such things as ye have. For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. The original is very Emphaticall, for there are 5. Negatives.

Secondly, the admonition to all others follows. Seeing God is so good to Israel, take heed of doing them any hurt, Jer. 33.9. The Lord said to Jeremiah the Prophet, all the Nations of the earth shall hear of all the good that I doe to Israel, and they shall feare and tremble for all the goodnesse, and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it. Yea, I remember the Speech of the man who told Joab, the reason wherefore he killed not Absalom the Traitor, when he found him hanging by his head upon an Oake. Though I should receive a thousand sheeckles of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the Kings Son, for in my hearing, the King charged, Beware that none touch Absalom. Here take notice of Gods inhibition and former readinesse to vindicate their wrongs, Ps. 105.12.15,16. When they were few, yea very few, he suffered no man to doe them wrong, but he reproved even Kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine Anointed, nor do my Prophets no harme. And I appeal to yourconsciences, whether Gods charge concerning his people, should not more prevail then Davids in respect of Absalom.

2. How apprehensive he is of their miseries, accounting them as reaching himselfe, Zach. 2.8,9. He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of mine eye. Together with the danger incurred, though done ignorantly. As appears in the case of Saul, why persecutes thou me faith Christ, Act. 9.4. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. Beware of a design or vote against Gods Ministers and servants.

7th. Exhortation. 1. To draw nigh to God, Ps. 73.28. This was the inference of the Psalmist. Both prudence and self-love may put us upon this improvement, from the hearsay of Gods goodnesse: and the rather should this persuasion prevail with you who have had in variety of experience, proofe of Gods goodnesse unto this our Israel. Now this is to be done two ways 1. By selfe-resignation. 2. By supplication.

First
First, By self-reignation to God. This improvement of my doctrine was long since foretold to be made in Gospel times, Zach. Zach 8. 21, 22, 8. 21, 22, 23. The Inhabitants of one City shall goe to another, saying, 23. come, let us goe speedily to seeke the Lord. Ten many people and strong Nations shall come to the Lord, &c. Saying, wee will goe with you, for wee have heard that the Lord is with you.

It is reported, Heft 8. 17. That upon the famous deliverance Heft 8. 17, which God wrought for the Jewes from Hamans conspiracy. The Jewes had joy and gladnesse, and many of the people of the Land became Jewes. Oh that the thoughts of Gods goodnesse to Israel might work upon many hearts.

This might be strengthened, by considering that Israels receipts from God are,

1. For quantity, the greatest. 2. For variety, the choyseft. 3. For quality, the sweetest. 4. For security, the surest. 5. For duration, the la stingest. Whereas the contents of them, who keep at a distance from God, are 1. Scanty, short, and not satisfying, 2. Few, and not extending to our several necessities. 3. Un savory and vexing. 4. False and fading. Now this selfe-surrender to God, in Covenant renewing, should be

1. Rational, from the apprehension of our engagements to him, and satisfactions to be received from him.

2. Total. For the whole man is due unto him, and our All is too little for him. Therefore yeeld your selves unto the Lord, 2 Chron. 30. 8.

3. Voluntary. Gods people are a people of willingnesse, Psalme 110. 2. Where can the will find so compleat, so pure, so suitable an object to choose as God is.

4. Sincere. Intending Gods honour as truly as our owne gaine, in this selfe dedication. Glorifie God both in your bodies and spirits, for they are Gods, 1 Cor. 6. 20.

5. Constant. To serve him in holinesse and righteousness before him all the days of our life, Luke 1. 74, 75. If you can finde a ny point of time, wherein God deserves not your service, or wherein you need not his grace, then with-draw your selves from him.

Secondly, By supplication, Jer. 14. 8, 9. O thou the hope of Is- Jerem. 14. 8, 9. rael, &c. Wherefore shouldest thou be a stranger. We are called by thy Name,
Name, leave us not. Have not wee reason to make the same use of this Doctrine?

That place in Hosea 12. 4. is very remarkable, where the Prophet relating to Jacob's succifeful prayer, speaks thus. He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. Rivet hath this note upon the place.

It was a Proverb amongst the Hebrews. Que patribus accidere putat filius. The Fathers concernsments were the childrens documents. They applied their Fore-fathers experience unto their owne proper encouragements. And this doth reasonably concerne us in regard of our opposites. For Israel's God can subdue the rebellious, calme the mutinous, and rectifie the erroneous; in a word. He can behead us in regard of all other concerns whatsoever. Therefore bee more frequent in prayer. And I befeech you be more reverent in your approaches to the Almighty by holy prayer.

Secondly. To imitate God in his goodneffe to Israel. Here remember 2 Sam. 9. 1. 7. The ingenuity, the gratitude of David towards Jonathan in his respects towards his Allies. Is there any to whom I may show kindnesse for Jonathans sake, &c. Surely we should be kinde to the godly, for Gods sake much more.

1. Be really kind. Doe not feed them only with fair words, 

1 John 3. 17, 18. My little children (said the beloved Disciple) let us not love in tongue, but in deed and in truth. When they petition you according to their severall necessitie, and grievances, doe not thinke it enough to tell them, that you will in due time take their case into consideration.

Right Honourable and Beloved, our God is not only verbally good unto his Israel; it is not his manner to put off Petitioners with good words. 2. Be singularly favourable to such, Gal. 6. 9. Do good especially to the Household of Faith. Let the world know that you will put a difference betwixt a Saint and a Malignant, and that your actions distinguish betwixt them who have beene faithfull to God and you, and such who have beene falso both to you and God. Let piety rather then private interest, and self-seeking draw forth your favour. Mind this I befeech you both in your acts of charity, and in conferring offices, places of honour, advantage and trust. Let mee be your
your remembrancer in particular, in behalf of the wounded soldiers who have lost their limbs for you: and in the behalf of poor widowes, whose husbands have lost their lives in your service. Doubtlesse both religion and reason doth call for that, for which I humbly move. 3. Be constantly friendly to them, Gal. 6. 9, 10. Be not weary of well-doing. This was commended in the Hebrews, Heb. 6. 10. You have Minifled to the necessitie of the Saints, & doe yet minifie. Oh never let it be truly said that Englands Parliament growes cold-hearted towards old true-hearted friends. I might here mind you of that change which appears in you, both towards Gods faithfull Ministers and others, who have been your fait and faithfull friends in the times of your greatest neede. Our Saviour gives you three admirable encouragements, Mat. 25, to practive this duty in imitation of your heavenly Father. These offices of love shall finde with Jesus Christ. 1. Kind acceptance, ver. 40. In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me. 2. Firm remembrance, ver. 34, 35, &c. Then shall the King say I was an hungred, and ye gave me meate, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drinke, &c. At the day of judgement all particular expressions of love shall be recorded. 3. Large recom pense, ver. 34. Come ye blessed, inherit the Kingdome prepared for you. The activity of faith will add efficacy to these short hints.

Thirdly, to requite Israels God I remember 2 King. 4.13. the speech of the Prophet to the woman who had bene kind to him. Thou hast had all this care for us, what shall wee doe for thee. Yea the Heathens yield to the law of retaliation in reference to men, Mat. 46.47. and therefore Christs faith. This is no singular thing. And shall we be worse in relation to God? O God forbid. But you will aske me the question in Job 22.2. Can a man be profitable to God, as hee that is wise is profitable to himselfe? And I must answer, that the question implies a strong negation. For Psal. 16.2. Our well-doing doth not extend to God by way of advantage. And our Saviour hath taught us to say. When we have done all, Luke 17.10. that we are unprofitable servants. Yet a gracious heart will be enquiring, Ps. 116.12. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me. Knowing that God may be glorified by man, in a way of manifestation, though not by addition of any thing to him, who is both perfect and infinite. And this may be done by your Covenant keeping.
keeping, Ps. 116.12.14. This was one part of the Psalmist's answer unto the fore-mentioned demand. *I will pay my vows.* Wherein should be endeavoured, 1. The conforming of your owne lives to God's commands, according to the advice of *Joshua* to others, & his resolution in regard of himself, whereof we read at large in the 24th chapter of his Book. 2. The reforming of your Families. The practice of *Jacob* should be your pattern, who said, Gen 35.2. *To his house*bold and all that were with him, put away the strange Gods that are among you, and make you cleane. 3. And the promoting of God's publike worship, Exod. 15.2. *The Lord is my strength & song* (faith Moses & Israel) and he is become my salvation, he is my God, and I will prepare for him an habitation. The things which I only name, are of mighty concernment, and they more concern you then your Fore-fathers, as in many other regards, & in respect of your *Solemn League* and *Covenant* which should never be forgotten.

Here I humbly crave leave to entreat you (Noble Senators) for God's sake to be good unto his *Israel*. I now speak of *Israel* as a politique body. The Apostle calls the Church the *Commonwealth* of *Israel*, Ephes. 2.12. And seeing God hath called me this day to speak in his name to you, as to speak in Christ's name for you, I will be faithfull. I told you before, that *Israel* is Gods peculiar treasure. And should, not, *crown* jewels be cared for?

Now mee thinkes I heare you whisper, what would the man have? Do you ask, What would the man have? The Minister of Chrif, and your servant (Right Honourable) would have the *Israel* of God minded, the wel-fare of the Church more endeavoured. We have liberty to speak to God for *Israel*, and therefore may be bold to speake for *Israel* to the chieft of men. I beseech you be good to the Church abroad, and to the Church at home. As for the Church abroad, I shall now looke no further then into Scotland and Ireland.

For Scotland I request, 1. A thankfull remembrance of their brotherly love and alittance in the time of our great need.

2. Sympathizing bowels towards them in regard of the fires which yet burn there, together with constant prayers.

3. Care to continue firm the brotherly League of Love, and zealous withstanding all overtures to the contrary.

4. And readiness to perform all good offices for that Church
and Nation, as occasion may bee offered in way of reall re-
quitall.
For bleeding Ireland, As I earnestly petition from you and all Christian praying hearts, teares and prayers, in wayes ordi-
nary and extraordinary, till the Lord be pleased to subdue the Rebels there, and to settle peace with truth amongst them. So I beseech your care;

1. That such Forces may be speeded thither, as in probability may (through Gods blessing) dispatch the work there. Alas, alas, why are our motions so slow for our brethrens relief and deliverance. Their estates, liberties, blood, lives, cry to you for reliefe. Take heed lest through your negligent, their blood cry to God for vengeance.

2. That the Army there, and to be sent thither, may be com-
fortably and constantly supplied for their encouragement. For you know by experience, what it is to promote the succesfull service of Souldiers by filling them with accommodations, and what it is to break them, by with-holding means of subsistence and comfort.

Now for the Church at home, what shall I say for distracted, divided England. You know our diseases, our disorders, our breaches, our dangers, and God hath given you power and opportunities to doe us much good. You have heads and hands, the good Lord give you hearts also more and more to be faithfull serviceable to himselfe and unto Israel.

And here for Zion's sake I must not be silent, but shall make bold to Petition fixe things, by the granting whereof I am confident, you shall honour God, and well provide for Israel's wel-fare.

1. The Speedy setting of Church-governement through the Kingdome. And herein I intreat you be God-like for our Israel. 1. In Reality, 2. In Constancy. 3. and Singularity of endeavours.

I acknowledge with thankfulness your good beginnings, and I desire that Nehemiab-like you may not cease till the work be finished.

Our God when he hath begun a good worke in us, hee will perfect it. And in the parable he is counted an unwise builder, who begins and makes not an end, Luke 14.
An half-faced government will make us a scorn to our enemies at home, and a wonder to our friends abroad. I beseech you let Gods house bee built and governed according to his own pattern. Remember Moses exactness, in acting to rule, Heb. 5. And the commendation which the holy Ghost gives of his faithfulneffe. I intreat you to proceed from good motions to good actions, and in good actions to perfections. And let your hearts speak as Psal. 137. 5, 6. If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I doe not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roofe of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefe joy, or the head of my joy. You should rather be content to be cut short of all comforts, to be disabled for any employment, then grow disregardlesse of Gods Church. The flourishing estate of the Church should be more in your hearts and aimes, then your own houses or the Common-wealth.

2. The setting up of good Magifirates in every Countrey, who may be at hand to countenance the exercise of Ecclesiasticall government. Therefore let not Parentage, parts, and patrimony be looked upon as the only, or the chiefest requisites in a Justice of Peace, or such others who are to be invested with authority from you to manage the affairs of State. But set up men according to Jesbro his direction, Exod. 17. 22. Men of courage, fearing God, hating covetousneffe, dealing truly. You should know them well whom you intend to trust with the civill Sword, for the consequence of such a trust is marvellous great.

3. The enlivening of old laws, and the making of new ones, for the punishing of old sins, and the suppressing of new disorders. It is worthy your time and study to find out the best medicines to cure our growing diseases.

You have made good overtures to see unto the better observation of the Sabbath day, and Fastinge dayes, I beseech you practically prosecute those and such like motions. You know that execution is the life of the Law.

Lately you appointed a Solemn generall Fast that we might be humbled before God, and pray, in regard of the inundation of Errors and Heresies. Give mee leave to ask you whether you only intended to speake to God, and to act nothing. If you doe not act according to your Orders and Prayers, God will
will judge you as hypocritically abusers of his Name and Ordinance. Doubtless proportionable to your sincerity in appointing that Fast, will be your zeal to suppress that, for which you professed humiliation before God.

4. The regulating of the Army. That the Souldiers may neither, 1. Oppress the estates. 2. Nor infect the souls of poor people.

Its reported that your best friends are worst dealt with. Faithfull Ministers and others, who have done and suffered most for your sake, are most pinched by quartering, and that many known Cavalliers are entertained and maintained in our Army. Its too notorious that all sorts of Errors abound and are abetted there. Either these reports which common fame carries abroad, are true or false.

If false, then upon examination let the Army be cleared by some Act of yours. But if true, then I humbly Petition, that for the credite of the Army, the peace of the Kingdome, the well-fare of the Church, that for Israel's sake you would speedily bethinke your selves how your army may be throughly purged.

5. The reforming of the Universities. I hope you desire both a Learned Magistracy and Ministry, therefore the Universities should in no case be neglected.

1. Incourage the good work begun at Cambridge, by providing honourable maintenance for the Masters of Colledges, that they may be able to live there, in that sort as may become their places. If this bee not done, they must either relinquish their charge there, which would be destructive to the worke of Reformation, or else be non-residents, which will be scandalous.

2. Speed the desired, much needed, long looked for, counsel for the purging of polluted Oxford. You cannot be ignorant how much matters are out of order there, both in reference to errors, yea heresies impudently broached, and also in respect of professed Malignants continued. I am credibly informed, that some Parents remove their children from thence, because the University is so corrupt, and their hopes of a Reformation are tired out through disappointments.

Give
Give me leave humbly to petition your serious, your zealous care, that piety may be cherished, learning encouraged, errors suppressed, profaneness punished, and notorious incorrigible Malignants checked in both Universities.

6. The encouraging of pious painfull Ministers. Had you no regard of them, as Christ's Embassadours, and such who under him are to bee Saviours to your soules: yet I pray you remember how your work hath been carried on by their hands. Therefore I humbly move: that neither their Callings may be condemned and reproached as Antichristian by them who are factious and impetuous.

2. Nor their administrations interrupted by such who are Malignants profane or seditious.

3. Nor their due maintenance fraudulently or violently with-hold upon any pretence whatsoever. In this particular I profess that I speak for my Brethren the more boldly, because my selfe through Gods goodness have no reason through want to speak for my selfe. Right Honourable, I beseech you slight not my faithfull advice from God and for God. Remember you are Gods Stewards, and must bee accountable to him how you spend your time, improve your parts, trade your Interests, use your authority. The work is worthy, and such as may well become the greatest among men, for it is Gods own work to care for the good of Israel. And it will bee your honour among men to be repairers of our breaches, yea it will be your comfort before God here and hereafter, when you call to mind the faithfull service which you have done for his servants, his house and Name.

I conclude all with this request (which was the first in mine eye in the choise of my Text) that you would in imitation of our God, be really, constantly, and abundantly good unto his Israel.

FINIS.
Die Mercurij 28° Aprilis, 1647.

Ordered that Mr. Alderman Atkin doe from this House give thankes unto Mr. Ashe for the great paines he tooke in the Sermon he preached this day at Margarets Westminister before the House of Commons , (it being a day of publique Humiliation ) And that hee doe desire him to print his Sermon, wherein hee is to have the like priviledge in printing thereof, as others in the like kind mutually have had.


I appoint Edward Brewster to Print this Sermon.

Reall Thankfulness:  
OR,  
A SERMON PREACHED  
In PAULS Church LONDON,  
Upon the second day of November, 1645.  

At a PUBLICK Thanksgiving for the taking in of the  
Towns and Castles of Caermarthen and Monmouth  
in Wales, it being the first LORD's-day after the inauguration of the Right Honourable Thomas Adams now  
Lord Major of that famous City.  

By SIMEON ASH Preacher at Basingshaw, London, and one  
of the Assembly of Divines.  

Psal. 50. 14.  
Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high.  

Psal. 50. 23.  
Who so offereth praise, glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his  
conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God.  

LONDON,  
Printed by G. Miller for Edward Brewster at the Sign of the Bible  
on Ludgate-hill near Fleet-bridge, M. D. C. X L V.
TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE
THOMAS ADAMS
Lord Major of the famous City of
LONDON, together with the right worshipfull the Aldermen and Sheriffs thereof.

Right Honourable,

When I prepared this Sermon to attend your commands, it was very farre from my purpose or thoughts, to make it more publike then in the Pulpit. And although I finde in my self an utter aversesse (in many regards) to appear in print, yet your Lordships earnest desire (which I account a command) set on by the solicitations of some others, hath conquered my unwillingnes, to transcribe this Sermon for the Preffe.

I presume upon this Dedication, not only because the Sermon was preached, and is printed at your command, but also that I might hereby make an open, grateful acknowledgment of your love divers maies expressed towards me.

My Sermon is for substance the self same, which you heard, know not any one particular head, which I have either added or diminished, only some phrases are changed (for my memory could not reach the same expressions) and the words of Scripture quotations are given in more largely, then when I reached. My subject is seasonable for these times, wherein the Lord hath been pleased to give us in this City occasion to celebrate many daies of Thanksgiving. The practice of our prai-

Vnto how many in our Assemblies (when we meet to sing aises) may our God say, Quid verba audio, cum facta vis? This people draweth nigh to me with their mouth,
and honoureh me with their lips, but their heart is fare from me. Loqurert ut e videant. Let your lives answer your language. When shall your works witness your thankfulnesse?

My Lord, I have often heard you use these words, Quid retributionem Domino? Give me leave to be your Lordships remembrancer; your obligations to the Lord are now much increased, and with them God hath added opportunities of more publike service to himself. Divine providence hath set you in a place of Honour, Authority and Trust, wherein much is expected from you: Magistratus virum indicat. A man is that in truth, which he is when tried. The world will judge of you for the future according to this years service. You be likely to meet with many temptations, to draw you aside both to the right hand and to the left: but I beseech you remember, whose you are, and unto whom you must give a strict account of all your waies. Advance God in your hearts, design the welfare of Sion, consult most with them, who counsel from God and to God according to his Word, and I beseech you all, often, and seriously minde your selves, and remember others of the solemn National Covenant, that the Almighty may not be furthe provoked by the neglect and violation of it. For the Sword under which we smart and bleed, doth avenge the quarrell of God's Covenant, Lev. 26.25. Therefore let every one thus speak up to the Lord, Praise waiteth for thee of God in Sion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed, Psal. 65.1. I will sing praise unto thy Name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows, Ps. 61.8. Right honourable and right worshipfull, the Lord hath conjoined you as brethren, in the great work of the Government of this renowned City, I pray God you may of one minde, soul and way, for the true welfare thereof, and the encouragement of all such in it, who sincerely seek to set up a holy government of Jesus Christ, in whom I am

Your humble Servant,

Simbon Ash.
Thanksgiving realiz'd.

Psalm 105.45.

That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws.

His Psalm is Eucharisticall, and this day is a day of Thanksgiving, therefore the subject of the Psalm, and the service of the day, doe well sute. In the Psalm the high exercise of praising God is, First, commanded and partly directed, in the four first verses, O give thank unto the Lord, &c.

Secondly, Perswaded, in the remaining part of the Psalm.

The arguments used to presse Gods people unto this Angelicall employment, are considerable under two heads.

1. The quality and variety of divine administrations for their comfort, Remember his marvellous works, that he hath done, his wonders, v.5 &c. And that this might be the more prevailing upon their hearts, a large Catalogue of kindeneses conferred, is given in, wherein we have an enumeration of glorious, remarkable providences, in almost fourty verses together.

2. The end which the Lord propounded and aimed at, in all these many and memorable dispensations. And this is held forth in my Text, That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Whereas the life of thanksgiving, lies in thanksgiving, in a well-ordered obedience to the God of our Salvations, the God of our mercies. This is the subject matter of my Text. Wherein are considerable.

1. The titles, whereby the rule of mans obedience is expressed, Statutes, Laws.

B

2. The
2. The termes whereby the regularity of deserved obedience, is suggested, Observe, Keep.

3. The way or means whereby this regular obedience, is promoted, viz. All the wonderfull works of the most High, for his servants, and against their enemies. For the Psalmist having particularized a great number of them, he concludes in the Text. That, or (as the old Translation renders it) to the intent, they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. If any should enquire (upon the perusal of these famous providences) the reason, wherefore the Lord wrought wonders so many, so great for Israel: the Text gives an account, That they might observe his statutes and keep his laws.

From the division of my Text, I proceed to the explication of the severall words used in it: wherein I will be but brief, though something must necessarily be spoken, to make the fairer way, unto that which afterwards must from thence be observed and improved.

You heard before of the two titles given in this Text unto the rule of mans obedience. The first is, Statutes. I finde the original word translated, 1. A decree, Psal 148.6. He hath made a decree which shall not passe. As all the motions of creatures inferior to man are bounded by the decrees of Gods dominion (which are often called the ordinances of Heaven) So all mans operations should be ordered and limited by his Commandments.

2. A Portion, Prov. 31. 15. She giveth a portion to her Maidens. And truly Gods commands are a good portion to his people, I have esteemed the words of his mouth (saith Job) more then my necessary food, Job 23.12. And, Thy testimonie. (saith David) are my heritage for ever, Psal. 119.111. Unto a gracious heart, Gods work is wages, and employment is preferment.

The second word, is, Laws. The original word is most ordinarily used to signifie the morall law, the Decalogue, that constant standard, or standing law, by which all Nations, in all ages of the world, have been, and shall be bound to order their conversations before God.
Thus much of the words used, to express God's revealed will, to guide man's course: It follows, that I explain those words, which suggest man's regular respect thereunto.

The first is, Observe, which imports, i.e. either to mind or reserve in memory. As old Jacob is laid to observe the sayings (the dreams) of Joseph, Gen. 37.11.

2. Or to preserve in safety. In this sense, the same Jacob used the word, in his prayer or vow, Gen. 28.20. If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, &c.

And this sense answers the true meaning of the next word, Keep, which properly signifies to keep with care and vigilance, as ammunition is preserved from fire, and false hands, when an enemy is expected, Nahum 2.1. He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face, keep the munition, watch the way.

Now these notions from the original, are not vain, they are both profitable, and such as answer the more open language of the holy Ghost elsewhere. The laws of the Lord should be treasured up in the cabinet of man's heart and memory, Prov. 3.1. My son, forget not my Law, but let thine heart keep my Commandments.

And all the precepts of God, should be secured from violence, that no breach be made upon them, Keep my Commandments and live, and my Law, as the apple of thine eye, Prov. 7.2.

These things I only touch, as I passe forward to that point, on which I purpose to pitch, both because it is the main intended in the Text, and also being most seasonable for the service of the day.

That man's regular observation of all God's Commandments, is the end of all his glorious administrations for man's comfort.

More short. The end of God's bounty, is man's duty.

Or thus, in reference to the instances of the Psalm, and the experiences of our times. Therefore the Lord taketh vengeance upon his adversaries, and therefore the Lord worketh the deliverance of his servants, that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws.

My beloved! Who can number up in order, the great things, which our God hath done for us, now of late, as heretofore?
Thanksgiving realized.

Our friends have been relieved, our foes have been routed, our prayers have been heard, our hopes revived, our forces prospered, our enemies discomfited. I pray you, fill your thoughts with the particulars, which this day have been mentioned, and upon other occasions specified: And then add unto the remembrance of all, this Doctrine which now I am to deal in. That God's end and aim in all, is this, That we might observe his statutes, and keep his Laws.

In the handling of this weighty point, well worth our serious considerations, I shall according to my accustomed plainness endeavour two things.

1. The explanation of the truth, that it may be rightly understood.

2. The application of it, that it may be fruitfully improved.

I begin with the former, wherein I will be but short, lest I should want time to speak unto the latter, which I chiefly intend, it being of greatest and most seasonable concernment.

And here by way of caution, to prevent mistake in this matter underhand, I wish that these four things may be observed.

1. Man's obedience is the end of God's gracious providences in regard of his precept, though not always in regard of his secret, eternal purpose. I well remember the words of the Psalmist, Psal. 92.7. When the wicked do spring as the grass, and the workers of iniquity do prosper, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever. But here I speak not of God's end in regard of his everlasting, righteous decree, which he is pleased to keep close within his own bosom.

As for the end of his command, revealing his pleasure to the children of men: the words of Moses that man of God are plain and pregnant to our purpose, Deut. 10.12, 13. where after an enumeration of various, marvellous favours vouchsafed unto Israel, he speaks thus, And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes.

2. It is the end of God, in (the fore-mentioned) intention, though.
though too too seldom in execution, God having engaged man
to obedience by his bounties, he expecteth an obedientiall im-
provement, though his Majesties expectations are commonly
disappointed. The Lords sad complaint of his vineyard, Isa. 5.
expresseth this fully, What could have been done more to my
vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked
that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?
ver.4. He looked for judgement, but, behold oppression, for righ-
teousnesse, but behold a cry, ver.7. And our God hath very much
occasion of the like lamentation, in this Land, yea in this City at
this day, notwithstanding the admirable deliverances, and vic-
tories wrought for us. Alas, alas, how few, how very few do
any where answer the expectations of his highnesse, in reformat-
tion of their waies, and in obedience unto his holy Laws.

3. Although mans observation of Gods statutes, be one end,
yet is it not the only end of his manifold favours. For amongst
many other aims, which are alwaies in his majesties eye, such is
his fatherly indulgence unto his people, that he doth give out cor-
dials on purpose to cheer their drooping spirits, and to facilitate-
their passage throuh the wilderneffe of this world, Let the Lord
be magnified, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants,
Psal.35.27. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so
the Lord is round about his people: for the rod of the wicked shall
not rest upon the lot of the righteous, left the righteous put forth
their hands unto iniquity, Psal.125.2,3.

4. Mans serviceable subjection unto divine injunctions, is not
Gods last and chiefest end, in all his glorious dispensations. The
ultimate, the supreme end of all Gods purposes and providences,
is his own honour, He doth all things for himself, Prov. 16 4.
In them who are not obedientially conquered by his kindeneses,
he will be glorified. Proud, hard-hearted Pharaoh stubbornly
withstood all the assaults of God, made upon himself and his peo-
ple, both by plagues and deliverances, yet God faith, Exod.14.
4. I will be honoured upon Pharaoh and upon his host. And thole
who are made obedientially fruitful, by the showres and Sun-
shine of divine indulgence: they being filled with the fruits of
righteousnesse, are by Jesu Christ to the glory and praise of

B 3. God.
God, Phil. i. 11. So that all administrations doe at last determine and center in the honour of the most high God, who is the author and orderer of them.

Yea beyond the duties of obedience, the welfare and happiness of them who are sincerely obedient, both here and hereafter is ordained and intended by God himself, as an end subordinate unto his own eternal praise, Oh that there was such an heart in them ( faith the Lord ) that they would keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, Deut. 5. 29. And the Apostle, having provoked the believing Romans unto the work of sanctification, addeth these words, To have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6. 22.

Having premised these cautions, these propositions to prevent misapprehensions, and that the meaning of my Text and Doctrine might be truly understood, I proceed unto the Application thereof, which is the second thing promised in the prosecution of the point.

The improvement of this seasonable instruction ( thus far unfolded ) is that which I had principally in mine eye, in the choice of this Text, and I pray God, to assist me in this last, and the greatest part of my Sermon, that I may reach your hearts, unto your edification and spiritual advantage. All that I shall say by way of Use, I will give in, under these three heads.

1. Information.
2. Reprehension.
3. Exhortation.

The two former sorts of Uses I shall dispatch quickly, but I shall crave leave to enlarge the last, because most profitable, and most pertinent unto this Congregation, and most conducing to promote the realizing of those praises, which this day we present unto our God.

Hence it naturally and necessarily follows, That the disobedience of those persons is most abominable and inexcusable, who have been under the most, and best administrations of the Almighty.

Such offenders do not only violate the Laws of Sovereignty, but of Amity. Their neglects, their miscarriages, are not only undutifulness,
dutifullenes, but unthankfulnesses and unkindnesses.

It is here considerable how the holy Ghost doth ordinarily caft this circumstance, as a loading aggravation upon the sins both of Nations and persons, to break their hearts in the deepest humiliation, and to justify God in his sharpest corrections. Thus Samuel sets upon unsubdued Israel, 1 Sam. 12. 6. And Samuel said unto the people, It is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers. When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place, &c. And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies, on every side, and ye dwelled safe. Here is the commemoration of mercies. Now follows the sin therby aggravated. And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay, but a king shall reign over us, when the Lord your God was your king. Beloved, I may not spend time in paralleling these passages, with God's providences towards this poor Kingdom, and this Kingdoms miscarriages towards the Lord. Do it your selves, I pray you; and I doubt not, but the serious doing of it, will be advantageous both in the advancing of our God, and in the abasing of our selves before him. England's deliverances and mercies. London's deliverances and mercies have been more and greater then of other Kingdoms and Cities; therefore England's sins, and London's sins are more hainous, horrid, high provocations of the most high God.

And as the evils of a people are thus aggravated by the Lord; so are the offences of particular persons also. In this manner Samuel greatens the dilobedience of King Saul, 1 Sam. 15. 16; Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee, what the Lord said unto me this night. When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast not thou made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee King over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the
the Amalekites, and fight against them, till they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst flee upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord? I will not gloss upon this Scripture, which might truly be applied unto many of the richest and chiefest rank in this City: but I humbly beseech you to remember from what low and little beginnings, the Lord hath advanced many of you; and then reflecting upon your lives; consider what account you can give unto his Majesty, for your obedience (or for your disobedience rather) to his holy Commandments. Yea, this course God hath been wont to take with his own dearest servants, to work them unto true repentance. Davids scandalous fals are well known (I might lay they are ill known by too many, who thence take encouragement to offend,) and I believe you are not ignorant of that course, which his God took by Nathans ministry, to present his sins as very sinfulfull in his own sight, 2 Sam. 12.7,8. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the band of Saul, And I gave thee thy Masters house, and I gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee, such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? &c. Herein, herein, lies the aggravation. Wherefore hast thou? Thou so preferred, thou so preferred. How canst thou answer this?

Give me leave to touch one instance more, which I doe the rather add, because it concerneth men of mine own cloth and calling, that you may be convinced: We Ministers desire to aggravate our own faults, by the self-same circumstances, whereby we greaten yours. Eli his sinfulfull indulgence to his wicked sons is notorious; now mark how a Messenger from the Lord painteth out this his provocacion, in black colours, 1 Sam. 2,27. Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaohs house? And did I choose him out of all the Tribes of Israel to be my Priest, to offer upon mine Altar, to burn incense before me? And did I give unto the house of thy father, all the offerings made by fire of the children
wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice, &c. And honourst thy sons above me? We, who are the Ministers of the Lord should look upon our aberrations, as the more loathsome, because God hath honoured us with an high and holy employment in special attendance upon himself.

I might much enlarge this meditation, by acquainting you, that guilt under this notion, is most grievous unto a truly gracious repenting heart. It was this that cut good David to the quick, when he cried out, Against thee, thee only have I sinned, Ps. 51.4.

But I must leave this Use, because not so fully iutable unto the peculiar service of this day.

The next Use follows, which is for the just reproof of two sorts of persons, whose practices do point blank oppose this purpose of God, in conferring favours, which my Text makes report of.

First, who in handling this doctrine, can hold his hand off them, who are the leffer obedient and the more dissolute in their lives, because of Gods long-sufferance and loving kindnesse. This sticks, as a black brand upon King Reboboam, 2 Chro. 12.1. It came to passe that when Reboboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the Law of the Lord.

It may be truly said of many, that they had not been so bad and base in their lives, if God had not bin so bountifull to them in his bestowings. Herein men discover their egregious folly, which can no way be excused, Do ye thus requite the Lord, ye foolish people? is not thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, & established thee? Remember the days of old, &c. De. 32. 6, 7.

Yea, herein appears the vile malignity of our natures, the inbred poynous disposition of our unhallowed hearts, which Spider-like suck venom out of those sweet flowers, from whence the little laborious Bee draweth wax and honey.

I have three things to say unto such persons, which I heartily wish may tend unto their humiliation and amendment.

1. That this hainous abuse of Gods bounties, is a sad sign of an unregenerate estate. Let favour be showed to the wick'd, yet will he not learn righteousness, in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, Isa. 26. 10. I have heard the Hypocrite sometimes compared to a Top, which goes no longer then it is lashed. The exprehions
prayers of the Psalmist concerning such unsound hearts, are here notable, Psal.73.34. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and they enquired early after God, &c. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.

2. That in this particular, idolaters express more respects unto their vain, dull, idle Idols, then these people do unto the only, true, living, world-governing God, God blessed for ever. For observe how the Prophet Hosea, bringeth in the idolatrous, reasoning for their Idol-worship, Hosea.2.5. I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool, and my flax, mine oyl, and my drink. In which respect, we may take up against these malefactours, the patheticall complaint of the Lord, Jer.2.9, I will yet plead with you (faith the Lord.) For passe over the Isles of Chittim and see, send unto Kedar and consider diligently, and see if there be any such thing. Hath a Nation changed their gods which are yet no gods? but my people hath changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, faith the Lord &c.

3. That this carriage is no better then brutish, Je surun (faith Moses) waxed fat and kicked, thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatnesse. Then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation, Deut.32.15. The Metaphor is taken from the foolish Ass, which being kept low, will come to the Master's hand, but being put into a full pasture, waxeth wanton, and either runs away from his feeder, or else turns heels, and strikes him.

And the zealous Prophet Jeremiah doth with much sharpnesse speak in like manner unto these beastly kinde of men, When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the Harlots houses. They were, as foie horses in the morning, every one neighing after his neighbour's wife. Shall I not visit for these things (faith the Lord) and shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation, as this?

The Lord awakens the sleeping consciences of such, whom thi
quick reproof doth reach, that they may be the better for it through his rich grace in Jesus Christ.

The second sort to be blamed I shall touch with a more gentle hand (viz.) all those whose ends and aims, in seeking, and in bestowing favours, are directly contrary unto the command and practice of our blessed God. I here point at offenders, in the same kinde, under a double head.

1. Such who in the pursuit of outward advantages and accommodations for themselves, do only intend the gratifying of the flesh, the satysfying of their own hellish lusts. The Apostle James checketh these men, Jam. 4. 3. Ye ask amiss, that ye may consume upon your lusts. And there is a smart rebuke of Baruch, wrapped up in that Question, which the Prophet Jeremiah propoundeth to him, Jer. 45. 5. Seekest thou great things for thyself? Those must take this home to themselves, who minde nothing so much, as sloth, sensuality, pride, luxury, revenge, and the like, in coveting and hunting after vast estates, places of honour and command in the world.

2. Those who in conferring places of profit, authority, employment and trust upon others, doe principally (if not only) aim at the making of a party, the strengthening of a faction, against the government and waies of Jesus Christ. I will make no instances, but leave it to your wisdom and consciences to make application and improvement of this general Item.

If there be any, whose purses, power, votes, vigour, are to fill offices with men, whose minds, hearts, hands are against the power of godlinefsse, the purity of Gospel-ordinances, the progress of our Church-Reformation, I wish they would consider, that they are not herein acted by the Spirit of God. I will not make any application of Balsacks promise to promote Balaam, if he would endeavour to discomfit Israel, lest I should seem over tart. Neither would I be thus interpreted in that I have spoken, as though I purposed to strike secretly, any who labour in the sincerite and simplicitie of their spirits, to make Jesus Christ glorious in the world. Let my tongue rather cleave to the rooff of my mouth for ever, then that I dare to utter one word wittingly and wilfully against the honour of our Lord Christ Jesus.

Now
Now I come to the last Use, which is to persuade us all
unto a double duty, and accordingly is to be divided into two
branches:

First, We are hence to be moved to praise God for this his
indulging providence, in that he is pleased by means of kindnesses
to seek the winning and working of our hearts unto his holy
obedience.

This inference is made to my hand, in the words immediately
following the Text, Praise ye the Lord. Now to quicken our
hearts unto the admiration and adoration of God, in this re-
gard, let these following short meditations, be seriously con-
idered:

1. That man's obedience makes no whit at all unto God's ad-
vantage, Can a man be profitable to God? Is it any gain to him,
that thou makest thy ways perfect? Job 22. 2, 3. If thou be
righteous, what giv'st thou him, or what receiv'st he at thine
hand? Job 35. 7. These interrogations carry along with them
vehement negations. That it is not possible to profit God in the
least measure, by our best obedientiall endeavours.

Men hire servants, because their work tends to enrich them.
But in references to the Almighty, All-sufficient God, all must
lay, When we have done all those things, that are commanded,
we are unprofitable servants, Luk. 17. 10. My well-doing (faith
David, though a man according to Gods own heart) doth not
extend unto thee, Psal 16. 2. For unto that, which is infinite and
perfect, no possible addition can be made.

2. That man's disobedience doth not in any degree prejudice
God, If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy tran-
sgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? Job 35. 6. The
Sun is not obscured by man's refusing to behold it, or to commend
the light of it.

The self-same beauties, perfections, happiness, which the
Lord enjoyed in himself from eternity, he shall possess for
ever, though no creature should serviceably attend upon
him.

Amongst men it is otherwise, for a flock cannot be traded, a
farm cannot be managed, many necessary works would be un-
done,
done, if we had not the assistance of servants. The Crown needs the Plow, the chiefest could not subsist, but by the support of the meanest. The feet uphold the head, and the whole body.

3. That God's rich, meek mercy did move him, to make manifest his minde unto man, that man might understand what carriage would content his blessed Majestie, and in this regard (if God had not added any further motive to obedience) we are obliged to honour his highness, *He sheweth his Word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgements unto Israel.* *He hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his judgements they have not known them.* Praise ye the Lord, Psal. 147.19, 20.

What if the Lord had left us all in our natural darkness, as Heathens unacquainted with his Commandments, yet should we not have had any occasion to except against his Majestie.

But how great is our engagement to our God, who having given some light of knowledge, doth liberally give in favours, to move the obedientiall improvement thereof?

4. Suppose that the Lord suspending all ways of love and liberality towards us, should only by threats and blows, have endeavoured our obedience, yet in that respect there would have been cause of thankfulness, for it is much better to be beaten to God's work, than to neglect it. *David was of this minde, Psalm 119. 67, 68. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy Word. Thou art good, and doest good.* And ver. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.*

Therefore the ways of fairnessse, and fatherly indulgence, whereby God seeks to conform our hearts and lives unto his Commandments, should endear him to our hearts, and draw forth our souls in thanksgiving.

5. The worke and worship of the Almighty, which we take in hand, is always more or lees defiled; God's excellencies are much obscured, his name sundry ways dishonoured, by our imperfections, which ev. r. attend our best performances. *There is iniquity in our holy offerings, All our righteousnesses are like unsightly rags.* Isa. 46. C 3

When
when good Nehemiah reviewed his famous services for God and
his house, upon the discovery of his sinfulnesse, he cries out, Neh.
13.22. Lord, pardon me according to thy great mercies.
Now all this God knows, yea he fore-knew all our future ab-
errations, when he showered down favours, to move our obe-
dience, Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins
in the light of thy countenance, Pffal. 90.8. And David testifi-
eth, Pffal.139.2. That God knows his thoughts afarre off. Is it
not therefore to be very much admired, that the Lord should by
renewed and multiplied favours labour to prevail with our hearts,
To observe his statutes, and to keep his laws?
6. Lastly, (as though all that I have spoken were too little )
the Lord hath herein further manifested and magnified his un-
searchable grace, that he hath undertaken abundantly to recom-
pence all our obedience, In keeping of his Commandments there
is great reward, Pffal.19.11.
Every self-knowing Christian, who is wont with any seriou-
nesse, to compare his returns to God, with his receits from God,
will freely acknowledge that he is alwaies infinitely behinde hand
with his Majesty: therefore considering his former favourable
providences, to perlwade obedience, together with future preci-
ous promises, to crown obedience, we have all reason to call upon
our selves, Praise we the Lord: and to say unto one another, Praise
ye the Lord.
The second branch of my Exhortation follows, which I have
had principally in my minde and aim, all this while.
To perlwade your conscientious care to improve all Gods fa-
vourable providences unto the promoting and bettering of obe-
dience, according to his purpose and appointment, I beseech you
therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your
bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your
reasonable service.
If my Exhortation upon this ground be not reasonable, lay it
aside, I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say. Beloved,
I am very serious in this my meflage, being not only seafonable,
but of exceeding great concernment, and I shall be very unwilling
to goe off with a deniall unto this my reasonable request, which
which I make in the Name of God for your good.

Manifold examples might be produced to press this Exhortation. That double, that treble resolution of Israel, raised from this consideration, is notable, God forbid, that we should forsake the Lord, for the Lord our God is that brought us up, and our Fathers out of Egypt, from the land of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, &c. Therefore we will also serve the Lord.

And again, when Joshua seemed by his words to suspect their sincerity, The people said unto Joshua. Nay, but we will serve the Lord.

And yet once more, Joshua putting them to it unto purpose, The people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

But I will come lower, then Israel professing dependance upon God. The very Heathens, wicked ones, moved only by morall principles, will requite kindnesse in respect to the law of retaliation, If you do good to them, which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do the same. And yet in reference unto God, I now request no more. Doe but Christianly endeavour to answer Gods kindnesse with an obediential carriage, and I call for no more.

I remember, when cruel Saul, plotting and practising Davids death, was yet by Davids forbearance to slay him (having power and opportunity) to overcome, that he brake forth into these words, My son David, I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day, 1 Sam.26.21. Gods long-sufferance and loving kindnesse to us-ward, doth wonderfully exceed all that David either did or could express towards Saul: He hath not only with-drawn his own revenging hand, though we have infinite times provoked him to his face, but he hath also held the bloody hands of cruel men, who have desired our death: yea, we doe not only enjoy safety, but rich supplies of comforts from our God. How much rather therefore should we resolve no more to dishonour God by our disobedience, but to observe his statutes, and to keep his laws.

2. This grateful obedience, the Lord will graciously accept,
as a full contenting recompence for all his bounties. When Mo-

ses had numbred up multitudes of blessings bestowed upon Israel, 

he adds, Deut.10.12, 13. And now, o Israel, what doth the 

Lord thy God require of thee, but to walk in all his waies, to 

keep his Commandments? As if he had said, this is all, he will 

be satisfied with this, he looks for no more. O beloved, how 

deeplv are we indebted unto the most high God, and yet such is 

his indulgence, that upon sincere observation of his laws (which 

by vertue of our being reasonable creatures, we are bound to 

yeld) he will cast a quietus est, a full acquittance into our 

bosomes. 

But if this consideration cannot prevail with you, yet I pray 
you consider on the other hand, how unkindely the Lord taketh 
their disobedience, towards whom he abounds in benefits. How 
pathetick is that complaint of God himself against his Israel, 
breathed forth by the Evangelicall Prophet, Hear 0 heavens, and 
give ear 0 earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished 
and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me. The 
Ox knows his owner, and the Ass his masters crib, but Israel 
doeth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation, 
In reference unto this lamentation, which the Lord maketh over 
stubborn, unthankfull ones, I will only say thus much; Have you 
not yet offended your God enough, but will you proceed to grieve 
him still. 

3. This praifing of Gods praises will be many waies beneficial 
to our selves.

1. It will render us wise, in the account of all such, who with 
any seriousneffe consider our great obligations unto God. Keep 
therefore and do them, for this is your wisdome and understanding, 
in the sight of the Nations which shall hear of these statutes, 
and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding, 
people. For what Nation is so great, who hath God so nigh unto 
them, as the Lord our God is in all things, that we call upon him 
for? Deut.4.6,7. Is it not wisdome to obserue him, who secures 
our persons and comforts, whose ever-waking and all working 
providence is for our good in every kinde? And how can man 
more manifest his wisdome, then by making Gods ends, his ayne in
in every thing? Now Gods end in the administrations of his love is, that we may observe his statutes, and keep his laws.

2. This obedientiailly improvement of Gods goodness, will evidence the uprightness of our hearts. Mark Davids argument which he pleads before the all-knowing God, Psal.26. O Lord, I have walked in mine integrity, ver.1. For thy loving kindnesse is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth, ver.3. Threats and blows drive hypocrites to duty, but cords of love draw the gracious heart unto exact walking with his God.

3. When former favours produce better obedience, then may we boldly expect the multiplication of future mercies. Moses having, Deut. 29. specified some of Israels rich receits from Gods good hand, from ver. 2. to the 9th, he thus concludes, Keep therefore the words of this Commandment, and doe them, that ye may prosper in all that ye doe. The self-seeking husbandman will cast precious feed with a liberall hand into a fruitful soyl, which is wont to return an answerable crop. God hath the end of his bounties, in our obedience. And his promises to follow and to fill them who are obedient, with blessings of all sorts, are manifold in the holy Scriptures.

4. Many and heavy are the judgements threatned against them who continue stubbornly disobedient, notwithstanding the sweet assaults made upon them, by Gods gracious administrations. That commination in Deut. 28. 47,48. hath often affected and shrifted my heart, in reference to this trembling Kingdome, Because thou servedstst not the Lord thy God with joyfullnesse, and with gladnesse of heart, for the abundance of all things (mark that, for the abundance of all things) therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send upon thee, in hunger and in thirst, and in nakednesse, and in the want of all things, and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, untill he hath destroyed thee. When Samuel had pressed the bettering of obedience, by Gods remarkable works, (which is the very exhortation, which I have now under hand) he lets it on by the self-same argument, 1 Sam.12.24,25. Fear the Lord, and serve him in truth.
Thanksgiving realized.

and with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still doe wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King. Beloved, we know to our sorrow, that both our King and his Kingdoms are in a wasting condition. God forbid, O God forbid, that our continued disobedience should work our utter consumption and desolation.

This which I have said is sad, and I have made mine own heart say by saying it; yet that is much more lamentable, which the Apostle Paul reports concerning God's judgement upon poor, purblind Heathens, for their ingratitude, in not living up to their light, to their receipts, Rom. 1: 21. Because when they knew God (it is meant of knowledge attained by God's works) they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, &c. Wherefore God gave them up unto uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves ver. 24. The penalty inflicted upon the immortal soul is the more heavy, because of the soul's excellency. And meer torment upon the well-awakened soul is not comparably so grievous as it's servitude to sinfull lusts. Now this, this judgement of judgements is incurred, by not answering obedientially our receipts from God. And let none thinke to put this off, by saying, This concerned Heathens, but we are Christians: for consider, I beseech you, whether the danger be not hereby increased? Is our light greater? Have God's works amongst us held forth more grace and glory? Then question me if our disobedience will expose us to as great, or greater judgements.

I have done with the Arguments prepared to enforce my Exhortation: and I hope they have so farre prevailed with you, (as least with some of you) as to move resolutions, to make an obedientiall improvement of your experiences. I now proceed to acquaint you with some few rules to direct this your obedience, your reall thankfulness unto God, with which I shall conclude. And for brevity sake, I will only mention such, as issue naturally and necessarily from my Text and Doctrine.

1. Therefore God should rather be obeyed, then any man what soever. I am farre from disdaining dutifull obserdance unto lawfull Superiors of any quality or degree: but I propound th...
Let him, who doth most and greatest favours for us, receive the largest and frequented respects from us. Give the chiefest attendance unto the best benefactor. Now who, or what is he, that shall dare to stand in competition with God? No doubt but Joseph, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, had so much ingenuity, as to acknowledge with gratitude their obligations unto their Superiors, yet being acted by their stronger, higher engagements unto God, they refused to gratifie them in things displeasing unto his Majesty. And I shall not need to tell you how farre the bestowings of God in quantity, quality and variety, doe transcend all that kindeness, which either hath been received, or can be expected from any humane hand.

2. Therefore we should obey God with our All. Both riches and honours come of thee, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. All things come of thee, 1 Chro. 29:13, 14. Is it not reasonable that all which is received from the Lord, should be imploied for the Lord? You Merchants, expect thus much in justice and equity from your factors beyond seas, that whatsoever commodities you convey unto them, should be disposed of to your advantage. Now I pray you turn the Tables, and deal you with God, as you require men should deal with you. Who doth not acknowledge strength in the Apostles argument? 1 Cor. 6:20. Glorifie God both in your body and in your spirit, which are Gods. Therefore if we grant the premisses, it will be our weaknes to deny the Conclusion.

Consider what I say. If any of you enjoy any wisdom, strength, authority, estates, parts, interests, opportunities, which you received not from the Lord, then refuse to lay them forth for the Lord. But let me appeal unto every individual soul here present, in the Apostles words, What hast thou which thou didst not receive? 1 Cor. 4:7. The inference therefore comes with force upon you, Thou shalt love (and consequently thou shalt obey) the Lord thy God, with all thy soul, with all thy thoughts, with all thy might. Cum omni valde tuo. O it is an unequall and unreasonable thing, to make any deeds of reservation in our dealings.
with our God, the God of all grace and of all consolations whatsoever.

3. Therefore our obedience unto God, should be tendered speedily. For is not the Lord so farre beforehand with us in his favours, that ἡσυχαμεν, at this very instant, we are engaged obsequiously to submit unto his government? ἡσυχαμεν having particularized to Israel ancient providences, whereby God had expressed his care and kindenesse towards them and their fore-fathers, he calls for service without delay, Josh. 24. 14. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him. Doe not any of you dare to put off God one day longer with procrastinations. A father said, that ερας, ερας, was corvina vox. Delays will breed guilt, and bring danger. Let us call to minde how much we were in Gods debt, how farre in arrears, before we began to pay one peny (as it were) in any humble, holy, hearty performance. Therefore let us now, now obedientially remember our Createour, our Protectour, our Benefactour, our God blessed for ever, To day, while it is called to day, do not harden your hearts.

4. Therefore in all waies of holy obedience, we should walk humbly with our God. Well may this alone abase our hearts, that the excellencies of the Lord, and the worth of his service, should not be sufficient to work us unto dutifulnesse, without a daily addition of fresh favours from his Majesty. But when we compare our unanswerablenesse to Gods purposes, expectations, deservings, it is strange that there should be the least conceitednesse in us, in regard of any work at any time discharged. If ever man had occasion to glory in his labours, and adventures for Christ, the Apostle Paul (I thinke) might be the man. But he protesteth, Acts. 20. 19. That he served the Lord in all humility of minde. Now it is most apparent, that besides other means whereby he attained and maintained this sweet, humble frame of spirit, this was one, viz. That he had much in his eye, his rich receits from Christ, which he was no way able to requite. And I am confident, that by a serious, wise paralleling that which God doth for us, with that which we doe for him, in regard of quantity, quality, variety and constancy, the swelling of our hearts will be much abated.

5. There-
5. Therefore all our services for God should be the warm breathings of flaming love. All the undertakings of St. Paul for Christ, seemed to be sparks arising out of this fire. He speaking of labours, losses, hazards, gives in this as the reason of all, 2 Cor. 5.14. For the love of Christ constraineth. And when David had endeared his God to his heart, by meditating upon his mercies, Psal. 116.1. I love the Lord, because he hath heard my suppliant, &c. From thence did issue obediential resolutions, I will call upon the Lord. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. Although God alloweth the use of other arguments to quicken obedience, yet this of love should have the preeminence.

6. Therefore we should serve the Lord in truth, because he hath done great things for us, 1 Sa. 13.24. This truth is opposed to seemings and falsehood. God doth not feed us with fair words. We do not only hear of his bounties, but we see, touch, taste, enjoy the comforts of his good providences. Let us answer our God with realities. If any man only seem to be religious, his religion is vain, Jam. 1. As for those who content themselves with shews of godliness, denying the power thereof, they are abhorred by the Lord. Be not deceived, for God will not be mocked. According as every man sown, so shall he reap. If you sow the wind, you shall reap the east-winde. Be you well assured, that Court complements, frothy flatteries, empty shews will not take with God. Those who pay in good coyn, will not be repaid with that which is counterfeit. Let us not therefore dream of requiting Gods real favours with meer formalities, Let us not only love in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth.

7. Therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity. This sincerity is opposed unto selfishnesse. Whereas the hypocrite centers proudly in himself, makes himself his last end, his God. Did ye not eat for your selves? Did ye not drink for your selves? Did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me? As with the Lord. The practice of God, intending and effecting our good, as truly, as his own glory, may well prevail with us, to minde his praise in that which we undertake. His gracious providences are for our comfort, his holy Commandments are for our good, therefore let not us sit down satisfied in serving our own turn by our services, but let us move forward.
ward, not resting till we come to this center, God's honour. Whate-
soever we do, whether in our general or particular callings, in
commanding, obeying, in private or publike, Let all be done unto
the glory of God, I Cor. 10. 31.

8. Therefore we should observe God's statutes, and keep his
laws continually. This the Lord desires, Deut. 5. 29. That there
were such an heart in them, that they would keep my command-
ments alwayes. And this his Majesty well deserves, For he daily
loadeth us with his benefits, Psal. 68. 19. His unweariedness in
following us with favours, should move us to follow him un-
weariedly in the ways of well doing. If in the whole course of
your lives, you can finde one day, or one hour, wherein God doth
not, in one kinde or other, doe you good, then on that day, in that
hour suspend the serving of his highness. We (such is the sin-
fulness of our sinning hearts) doe every moment of our lives,
give the most high God most just occasion to resolve to favour
us no more: but the Lord (so admirable is his goodnesse) doth
every minute of time, afresh engage us unto his obedience.
Therefore be not weary of well-doing, but rather, be alwaies
abounding in the work of the Lord. God forbid, that it should
be truly said of any of us, That we began in the Spirit, and did
end in the flesh.

All these eight rules, necessary truths, and naturally deduced
from my doctrine, do concern every one in this great Congrega-
tion without any exception. I cannot imagine, from what seem-
ing pretence any should dare to plead exemption from these direc-
tions; and I pray God, that no one of you may depart this As-
sembly, without some obedientiall bents and resolutions upon
your spirits. But all my Sermon, all my counsell doth most con-
cern them, for whom the Lord hath done most, in waies most re-
markable and glorious. No City in the world hath been more
magnified by divine providences, then this wherein we are. No
people on earth hath been more enriched with temporall and spi-
rituall provisions together, then our selves. Our God grant that
our improvements obedientiall, may prove in some good measure
answerable.

Notwithstanding, by vertue of the equity of my doctrine, the Lord
Lord expecteth to be best served, to be most advanced, by them whom he hath most enriched, whom he hath most advanced. And therefore give me leave to tell you, Right Honourable, the Lord Major, and Right worshipfull, the Aldermen of this famous City, that God deserveth and expecteth more from you, than from your brethren. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more, Luk. 12.48. As you are bound to be exemplary in exact endeavours, to observe God's statutes, and to keep his laws: So is it your duty (in a speciall manner) to take care that all others under your command be conformed to the Commandments of your God, Magistratus est custos utrisque tabula.

Right Honourable, your Lordship hath for divers years been acquainted with my plain Ministry, and I cannot say that I have lost any place in your affections by my plainness, therefore I will take the boldness to direct my self in faithfulnesse unto you.

Do not you dare through indulgence to spare the punishing of them, who doe dare to cast Gods Commandments behind their backs. Could you hold your hands, and connive at such, who should go about to sleight the works, which are raised and maintained for the safety of this City? You heard in the opening of my Text, That God would have his laws preferred from violence, as the means of our preservation. I once heard a plain dealing Preacher, compare a remisse Magistrate unto the sign George on Horse-back, who standeth all the year with his hand on the Sword, but never strikes. My Lord, You have not received the Sword in vain, Rom. 13.4. Although I would not sharpen the edge of authority unto undue severity; yet would I whet mine own knife to lance and let out the impostumated matter in my friends flesh. I grant your Lordship must be cautious, as courageous, and therefore you have good reason to make Solomon's prayer, 1 King. 3. 9. Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad. But I beseech you remember withall, That foolish pity spoils the City. Let not common drunkards, profane curlers and swearers, brutish wantons, and such like wicked ones, escape that penalty.
penalty, which the Law hath appointed for them. Phineas executed judgment, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Psal. 106.30,31.

2. I call for your zeal against Popery, that abomination, which brings defolation. Let your zeal move often inquisitions, whether in some corners of this City, there be not Idolatry in the use of the MaLe, left through neglect of search, that abomination be suffered. But I move that in a speciall manner, search may be made after Jesuites, those unsufferable incendiaries, who blow the coal of contention amongst brethren, who have caused, and doe continue the unhappy breach betwixt our King and Parliament, our Sovereign and his Subjects. I have heard a Story of a man, who passing by a tree, which Nature was cleaving, did thrust in his hand to increase the breach; whereupon providence suddenly closing the breach, did there hold the man by the hand, as an act of revenge. Though I dare not assert the truth of this Story, yet I make this morall. Doubtlesse there are Jesuitical spirits, who haunt these coasts, who walk in this City, and it is suspected by many, that they have a speciall hand in some of the pamphlets published, to increase the flames of unbrotherly divisions: I heartily wish that they might be apprehended by some good hand to be made exemplary. It's reported that the Pythagoreans did set a note of infamy upon the number of two, because it was the fift, which dared to depart from Unity. Solomon faith, He that soweth discord among brethren, is an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 6.16.19. And this reacheth more then Jesuites in this Kingdome, yea in this City: For how many make it their business to make breaches, not only among private brethren, but also between the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland, notwithstanding the solemn brotherly Covenant. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ. Ro. 16.17,18. I humbly move cautionness in regard of Malignants, that those mischief-workers, who now (as report speaks) are moving homeward, may not inconsiderately, upon too easie tearms be entertained and trusted. It is my daily prayer, that God would convert and
and pardon those who express the most malignity against the work of Reformation so happily begun amongst us: and my soul, God forbid, that any who are sincerely changed, should by our sorrow, be sent back again into our enemies quarters. Notwithstanding I must tell you, *Abundant cautela non nocet.*

When Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the Disciples, but they were all afraid of him, *Act. 9. 26.* Faint-hearted ones amongst ourselves, may do us much more wrong, than known adversaries at a distance. And is it not a just ground of complaint made by our friends, when foes who have forsaken City and Parliament, shall make their peace at such easy rates, that they suffer less in their outward estates upon their return, then approved friends have done, if their Afferlements and voluntary contributions be considered? I undertake not to direct in this case, but I intreat God, to make the Parliament and City-wise and circumspect in this particular.

4. I most earnestly importune your care, for the better and stricter observation of the Sabbath, and I heartily commend worthy Nehemiah, as your pattern of imitation in this practice. The waies and courses whereby he witnessed his holy zeal in this kinde, lie open in the History, I shall not need to specify them. I beseech your Lordship to see to the supprezzion of buying, selling and sporting upon the Lords day. I have often thought upon a speech of that famous servant of Christ, and Minister in this City, learned, humble, holy, publike hearted Dr. Stoughton, which I had from him in private conference in those times, when the Sabbath, and the observation thereof, was decried by the Prelates and professtors of men. His speech was this, *Should any man give up a Castle of such concernment to this Kingdom, as the fourth Commandment is to the safety of Christian Religion, he would deserve to die many deaths.* As you love the Lord, and the life of Religion, regard the Sabbath, and let your heart and hand be against those doctrines and practices, which tend to the profanation of it.

5. I entirely Petition your utmost towards the compounding of our miserable divisions about Church affairs. There are not only Congregations of Anabaptists, Antinomians and Brownists.
Thanksgiving realized.

ists in this City connived at; but (as it is commonly and credibly reported) also companies of men, who deny the Deity of Christ, and divine authority of the Scriptures. I remember that when Gallio was Deputy of Achaia, there was insurrection made in Corinth against Paul, and there were wofull confusions in the City; but it is added, Act.18.17. And Gallio cared for none of those things. God forbid, that either your Lordship, or any other Magistrate in this City should be thus regardleffe of our present distractions. When there was a great breach made in the ground by an earth-quake at Rome, and notice was given, that the gods would not be pacified, except something of speciall worth was cast into the breach, Marcus Curtius did cast himself in, in love to his Countrey. And I believe that there are very many amongst our selves in this City, both Ministers and others, who could be content to sacrifice their lives in this service, to reconcile dissenting brethren. For alas, alas, Doe not divisions threaten dissolution? A Kingdom divided cannot stand. My foul defires that London may, in waies of truth and holinesse, be like Jerusalem, A City compact together; or (as others render the phrase) A City that is joyned to itself together; Psal.122.3.

For the effecting whereof, I make it my last request, that with all your might (as God may be pleased to give opportunity) you would promote the speedy setling and exercize of Church-government. Were the Church blessed with the use of that Discipline, which is according to the minde of Christ, in this posture, it would be terrible as an Army with banners, Cant.6.10. By this means profanenesse would be crushed, superstition suppressed, errours checked, Malignancy discountenanced, the Sabbath better oberved, holy Ordinances more purely administred, and our breaches well healed. Here are motives enough to move every right bred son of Sion, to set head, heart and hand unto this work. Conscientious, zealous care in this kinde, will contribute very much to your honour here, and your comfort hereafter. Good Nehe- miab thus pleads for himself before the Lord, having been industrious in this service, Remember me, my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds (my kindnesses) that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof, Nehem.13.14. Now
Now in this case, the counsel of God's faithfull Ministers, is to be considered. The words of Artaxerxes are notable, Ezr. 7. 21. Whatever Ezra the Priest, the Scribe of the Law of the God of heaven shall require of you, let it be done speedily. Some (it may be) will catch at this sentence, and say, This discovers the drift of Presbyterian spirits; you desire to exercise dominion over your brethren's consciences, and therefore would have all things managed according to your minde? But I must take the boldness to answer, That this is a notorious slander. For we petition nothing, but that which in our consciences is according to the minde of Jesus Christ, and profess ourselves willing with the least and lowest of Saints, to submit unto the Scepter of our Lord and Saviour, not requesting favour in any thing, repugnant unto the holy Scripture.

This is that advice, which in faithfulness, and with humility I present unto your Lordships consideration; and I doe it with the more confidence, because in all particulars it speaks the language of our solemn Nationall League and Covenant, which should never be forgotten. And now to conclude all. I beseech you all (both right Worshipful Aldermen, and right worthy Citizens) to consider seriously how far my counsel directed to the Lord Major concerneth you every one. O that God would give you all with one heart to say unto his Lordship (as it was once spoken to Ezra, to quicken a work of Reformation) Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee, we also will be with thee. Be of good courage, and doe it, Ezr.10.4. For my part, I shall use no more words, but those of David to Solomon (relating to Temple-work) 1 Chron.22.16. Arise therefore and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.

FINIS.
THE CHURCH SINKING, Saved by Christ.

Set out in
A SERMON PREACHED Before the Right Honourable the House of Lords, in the Abby-Church at Westminster, on Wednesday, Febr. 26. 1644. being the day of the Monthly publike Fast.

By Simeon Ash Minister in London, and a Member of the Assembly of DIVINES.

Deut. 32:36. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himselfe for his ser.
vants, when he seeth that their power is gone; and there is none shut up, or left.
Deut. 23:10. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people! saved by the Lord. the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellencie: and thine enemies shall be found iars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

LONDON,
Printed by G. M. for Edward Brewster, and are to be sold at his Shop at the Signe of the Bible on Ludgate hill neer Fleet-bridge. 1645.
Die Javis, 27. Febr. 1644.

It is this day ordered by the Lords in Parliament assembled, That this House doth give thankes to M' Ash for his great pains taken in the Sermon he preached yesterday in the Abby Church Westminster before the Peeres of this Realme, it being the day of the publike Fast. And that he is hereby desired to print and publish the same; which shall not be printed or reprinted by any, but such as shall be authorized thereunto under his hand.


I doe appoint Edward Brewster to print this Sermon, and no man else,

Simeon Ash.
TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

The House of PEERES

Assembled in Parliament.

Right Honourable,

Obedience to your Lordships Or
der, I humbly present unto publike
Service, my Sermon, which attended
your commands the last publike
Fast. Herein your Lordships have
Jesus Christ propounded, as a per-
fect patterne to perswade, incourage and direct your
continued endeavours to save and uphold his opprested
Church. This work is not too low for those who are
most High amongst men, seeing our Lord, who is the
choicest of ten thousands, the only Potentate,
God blessed for ever hath undertaken it. The sad di-
visions and distractions of three Kingdomes doe daily,
hourly, petition your Lordships for help and healing:
Your Honours are strongly obliged by Gods Commands

A 2
and Providences, by your owne solemnne Covenants and interests, to lay forth yourselves faithfully and unweariedly, for the honour of Christ, and the good of his Church. In this Service (most Noble Senatours) you have the hearts and prayers of Heavens Favourites for your comfort, and the attendance of the holy Angels for your defence. And in the sincere prosecution of this designe, God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are engaged for your assistance and good success. Therefore, I know nothing that should (nay) that can dishearten them in this glorious achievement, who keepe their mindes and hearts upon the Almighty, and the obligations of his rich grace, through Iesus Christ, which that your Lordships may doe, and in so doing, proceed and prosper, shall be the constant, servant prayer of

Your Honours humble,

faithfull Servant

Simeon Ash.
A SERMON PREACHED
to the Lords at their Monethly
Fast, Febr. 27. 1644.

ISA. 63. 5.
Therefore mine owne arme brought Salvation unto me, and my fury is upheld me.

Jesus Christ's care of his neglected, distressed Church, is the subject matter of this Text, wherein these two particulars are considerable. First, the reasons wherefore he engageth himself to save Sion. Secondly, the means, whereby he worketh her safety.

First, the causes of this undertaking, suggested in these words, are two:

1. Because others are careless of the Church in danger, therefore the Lord Jesus will appeare her Saviour. The first word in my Text (Therefore) calles us backe unto the former part of the verse, from whence this argument is open and apparent. I looked and there was none to help, therefore mine owne arme brought Salvation. Amongst men, company doth encourage difficult undertakings. But with God, it's otherwise; His Majestie had rather act alone, that no creature might share with him in glory.

2. Because Jesus Christ in regard of his fellowship with his Church,
A Sermon to the right honorable House of Lords

Church, doth account himself a sufferer in her sufferings. This is twice expressed in the word (Me, me) This is the language of our Lord. Sions deliverance is salvation to me. The support of a sinking Church, is the upholding of me. Should the Church suffer shipwreck in the stormy Seas of this troublesome world, Jesus Christ, the owner, the Master thereof, would judge himself a great looser, therefore for his own sake, he will secure and save her. All the designs of God arise from himself, and they are referred to himself: He transfats all with himself and for himself: As he is the first efficient, so is he also the last end of all his administrations.

Secondly, the means, by which Christ doth accomplish his Churches preservation are double, as my Text doth discover.

1. Mine own Arme. Mans Arme is that part of his body, whereby (in warlike achievements, as other-ways) his strength is exercised. And here it is metaphorically ascribed to Christ as God, to signify that strength and abilitie, by which he effecteth the deliverance of his endangered people. He hath showed strength with his Arme (faith the blessed Virgin,) he hath scattered the proud.

And when God manifests his omnipotencie in the rescuing of his oppressed ones, its thus expressed. The Lord hath made bare his holy Arme in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The mighty power of Christ procures the preservation of his Church and people. His right hand and his holy Arme hath gotten him the victory. Neither did their own arme save them, but thy right hand, and thine arme.

2. My fury; it upheld me.

Some translate it, My heat, and they interpret it concerning the fire of love which burns in the bosome of Christ towards his endeared Spouse:

I finde the originall word rendred (Bowels.) Thus the Lord speaketh with his favourable references, towards his repenting Ephraim. My bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, faith the Lord.

Others render the word, indigation, anger, or fury (as we find it here in our translation) understanding it of the flaming displeasure of Christ, against the adversaries of his Church: And this...
It upheld me. The originall word, according to its various use in holy Scripture, is very considerable, and useful in its application to our present purpose. It signifies, 1. To uphold, as an infirme aged man is stayed, by leaning upon his staffe, Isai. 36. 6. 2. To support, as a great, weighty building is upheld by pillars, Judg. 16. 29. 3. To sustain, as man's strength, and life are maintained by provisions, Gen. 27. 37. Psal. 71. 6. 4. To stay up, from fainting, by administering cordials, Cant. 2. 5.

Now, here I may not take occasion to enlarge my self according unto these things, which I only hint, in the expostion of my Text. Though hence it is notable, That sufficiencies for Sion's support are in Jesus Christ, according to her various necessities.

Thus have you (right Honourable and beloved) the division and the interpretation of my Text, both together. And by this time, I believe you can easily guess at the various precious truths which might from hence be naturally collected. But because I must wrap up all in one Sermon, therefore I shall only resolve upon the handling of the generall Doctrine of the Text, in the prosecution whereof, I shall have occasion to touch upon the several which are considerable in the words. Our Proposition or point of Doctrine is this,
That the safety of the militant Church lies upon the hand of Christ.

If the Church be in danger, his Arme savaes; and if ready to sink through oppressions from men, or faintness in herself, he supports. All Interpreters with one consent agree, that the words of my Text are the words of the Lord Christ, and therefore it would be vain work to labour any further to clear the foundation upon which my Doctrine is built. Neither shall I need to travel farre to fetch in witnesses, to attest this truth. In this Prophecie, Chap.59.16. we have a passage which almost runnes paralell with my Text, (the person only being changed) His Arme brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness sustaine-d him. And if we cast our eyes, a little further into this Chapter, we shall see our Prophet once and againe asserting the same thing, ver.8. He was their Saviour, and ver.9. The Angel of his presence saved them.

If the reason of this Christs undertaking be enquired after, I must preface my answer with the words of the Lord, upon the like occasion, Ezek.36.22. Say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine own holy Names sake. Beloved our proud hearts (which on such dayes as this should be kept humble, in a speciall manner) are apt to swell and to grow conceited, while we are hearing of the meanes which God provideth to prevent their dejectedness: therefore let it not be judged unnecessary, if I tell you and tell you againe, That the cause of Sions safety lyes in God, and not in the bolesmes, or abilities of the fairest member of the Church on earth. Alas, alas, we have no colour of cause to rejoice in our selves, when we are told, that Jesus Christ engageth himself to be our Saviour. For the welfare of the Church ariseth causally, neither from any meritorious qualification inherent in our persons, nor from any deserving worthinesse adhering to our performances. It is pertinent for this purpose to observe, that when the Church had by faith pitched upon this conclusion, Isai.64. in the end of the fifth verse, We shall be saved, it followes immediately in the next verse, But we are all as an uncleane thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. The universality of the words is very considerable, both in reference to the Agents, We all, and
the Action, All our righteousnesses. The best of Gods people through the remainders of corruption, and the fairest excellencies, though abstracted from their duties, are not in any capacity to deserve any kindnese or care from God: And it is of good use for us to mind our selves of this, when we have occasion to meditate upon the ever-waking, and ever-working providence of God for our good.

As our selves must be abased, so our Saviour must be exalted in our thoughts and hearts, when we make enquirie after the reasons, wherefore he undertakes to secure his Israel: For though he find nothing in us, nothing in any of his servants, which can meritoriously commend them to his tuition, yet in himselfe, within himselfe, there is cause sufficient for this glorious engagement. Thus much our Text holds forth, as I have already hinted, and shall hereafter more fully manifest. The true ground of all the care which Christ takes, that his Church may not utterly sink under her oppressions, is his faithfulnesse to fill, to fulfill all those neare, endearing relations, wherein he standeth in reference unto her. These relations, (which the holy Scripture renders as the reason of the point under hand) I shall suggest under a three-fold Notion. They are 1. Naturall. 2. Domesticall. 3. Politicall.

First, Christ is the head of his Church, and therefore (faith the Apostle) the Saviour of that body, Ephes. 5. 23.

Nature hath placed Understanding, with Sight, Hearing, and other Senses, in the head, as Sentinels in a Watch-Tower, for the securing of it self, and the whole body. And the Apostle tells us, Eph.5.29. that, No man bateth his own flesh, but nouriseth and cherishteth it, even as the Lord the Church.

The Lord Jesus in references oiconomicall, hath various relations to his people, and every one of them yeilds us some rational account, wherefore he thus regardeth them.

1. They are his household, and he their Master, Eph.2.19. Although he is the great Land-lord of the world, and all the earth, with all the inhabitants thereof are his possession, Psal.24.1. yet he accounts the Church only, as his family, Eph.3.15.

Noah according to divine Commission prepared an Ark, that therein his household with himselfe might be shipp'd and secured from...
from the world-drowning deluge. Lot likewise was called up
by the Lord, to save his Family from the devouring flames
which consumed Sodome. And the Holy Ghost commandeth
all sorts of people, to be peculiarly kind unto the household of faith,
Gal. 6. 9. yea, this is left on record in holy Writ, that, he who
provideth not for his own house is worse then an infidell 1 Tim. 5. 8.
We therefore may be confident, that our Lord and Master Iesu
Christ doth in this regard see unto his Churches safety.

2. The Church is espoused unto Christ, as her husband, 2 Cor.
11. 4. and she is called the Lambs wife. Rev. 19. 7. and 21. 9.
And our Gospell Prophet gives in this as the reason of her pro-
speritie,even in this world. Isai. 54. 5. For thy Maker is thine
Husband. I remember what holy History doth report concern-
ing Davids brave adventures, to deliver his wives taken cap-
tives by the Amalekites, and this he did, being incouraged by
counsell divine.

Now never did man more expresse love to his Spoufe, then
Christ Iesu hath towards them who are spiritually troth-
plighted to him. And this the Lord renders as a reason of his
readinesse to doe good to ill-deserving Israel. Jer. 3. 14. For I
am married to you, faith the Lord.

3. Christ in reference to the the Regenerate (who are borne
againe by his Spirit, John 1. 12, 13.) is called, The everlasting fa-
thor, Isai. 9. 6. And thus he is brought in by our Prophet,
speaking of his peculiar people. Isai. 8. 18. Behold, I, and the chil-
dren whom thou hast given me.

Now in this relation there is a commanding power, to cause
the care of Safety. How doth father Jacob bestirre himselfe in wayes
both prudentiall and pious, to preserve his poore children, from
the death-threatning rage of his bloudie brother Esau, as the 32.
of Genesis doth fully evidence! Yea doe not Creatures of all
kinds, though voyd of reafon, yet by strong instincts, both act
and adventure to secure their young, from harms and dangers?

And threfore, we may well add this paternall relation of
Christ to his people, as another reason, of his regard of them in
troublesome times. This argument also, is grounded upon the
holy Scriptures,for from hence, the most High God, lets his So-
veraignty on worke, to redeeme his Israel from Captivity. Isai.
43. 6.
43.6. I will say to the North, give up, and to the South, keep not back, bring my Sons from farre, and my daughters from the end of the earth. All creatures, all coasts and corners of the World, must according to divine appointment, cooperate for the comfort of God's Children. And hence it is, that the Church suing out to the Lord for deliverance, pleadeth this relation unto his Majestie. Isa. 63.16. Doubtlesse thou art our Father, thou & Lord, art our Father. The doubling of this argument, argues, that strong confidence and hope, is rayed from this fatherly relation, in the hearts of them, to beg and expect Salvation from him.

4. The Lord Jesus stands in a brotherly relation to his people, for they have all one Father, John 20.17. Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I goe unto my Father and your Father. And, A garden enclosed (faith he) is My Sister. Cant. 4.12. He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. 2.11.

Now those who are but very little versed in the sacred Story do understand what an effectuall influence this relation had upon Joseph, to prevale with him to provide for his brethrens well-doing in Egypt, notwithstanding all their unworthy carriage him-ward formerly. And it is here notable, how the Servants of Benhadad improved this title Brother, for their Masters advantage, 1 Kings 20.32, 33. They did hastily catch it, And they said, Thy brother Benhadad.

But to bring this home unto our present purpose, our blessed Saviour, though he had been forsaken by his Disciples, and denied by Peter, yet knowing that they were full of sorrow upon his death, and very apprehensive of approaching perill upon his departure from them, it is worth the observing how carefull he was to give them notice of his Resurrection, and to promise them a meeting, for their comfort and confirmation, because he still owned them as his brethren. Matthew 28.10. Go tell my brethren (faith Christ) that they goe into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

The third sort of relation betwixt Christ and his Church follows (viz.) Politicall; from whence as from the former, his studie for her safety is inferred. This we have faire and full from the Prophet Isaiah, The Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, he will save us, Isaiah 33.22. It was a speech wel-becoming a King,
King, *Salus populi suprema lex esto*, making the subjects safe the end of his authority. Thus I am sure it ever was, and ever will be with our Lord and King, Jesus Christ, in all Ordinances and Administrations whatsoever, he intends as truly his peoples welfare as his own honour.

Here I might tell you, that Christ's Regal power is in Scripture expressed by comparing him to a Shepherd, and calling the Church his flock, and that from thence, his care thereof is concluded, Ezek. 34. *I will deliver my flocke*, ver. 10. and again, *I will save my flocke*, ver. 22.

But I will enlarge myself no further in the reasons of my Doctrine, for I suppose that sufficient which hath been spoken, to ratify the truth of it by the several relations, wherein our Lord and Saviour is endeared and engaged unto his Church and people, through the riches of his free, superlative grace. Therefore from the proofe of the point, I proceed to the improvement thereof, by way of use: And I finde the Doctrine in hand three ways especially useful, according to the inferences and applications of holy Scripture, whereby I desire to be guided in my ministerial service.

**The Use.**

First, for the Information of our Judgements. Secondly, for the Consolation of our hearts. Thirdly, for the Direction of our course.

The inference by way of Information is double: first, Therefore all those are very unlike unto Jesus Christ, who have no regard at all of the welfare of his Church. Men of Gallio his temper, of whom it is said, that though the place where he was Governour, was filled with confusions, and though Sothennes (a good man, and one deare to Paul, 1 Cor. i. 1.) was beaten and abused openly, yet Gallio cared for none of these things. Many such Gallio's we have amongst our Gallants, yea, and amongst people of inferior conditions also, who regard not at all what becomes of the work of Church-Reformation begun amongst us, whether God's Ordinances be purged, or pulled; his Embassadors incouraged or abused, his Gospell propagated or interrupted; all is one to them: if they may save their own skins, secure their own personal contentments, and fit warme in their own Nefts, whether Sion sink or swim, they are at a point, they care for none of these matters.

And
And give me leave (Right Honourable) to tell you how the Holy Ghost hath marked with a black coale, the Nobles of Tekoa, who when Ierusalem's breaches cryed aloud to them for Reparation, yet it's said, Nebem.3.5. Their Nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord. There seems to be some difficulty in the place. I will not press too strictly the phrase of putting the Neck to work; it signifies voluntary subjection to service. As Matth.11.29. Take my yoke upon you. And doubtlesse Nobles, men of chiefest ranke and quality, should deny themselves so farre as to put heads, hands, shoulders, sides, and necks also unto the service of the Church. But that which is most obscure, lies in the word translated (Lord.) Some understand it of Nehemiah, who was chiefe Commander in the present service. Now though he was in regard of his former employment, a meane person in comparison of those Nobles (for he was the Kings Cup-bearer at the palace of Shushan,Neb.1.11.) yet these Nobles are checked, I might say, blotted with a note of reproach for not submitting to him in the service of Ierusalem. Yea, the word in the Original being in the plurall Number, signifying Lords, some Expositors conceive that thereby are meant the subordi- nate Commanders, assigned by Nehemiah (who commanded in chiefes) to oversee the work, and from thence they inferre more then was noted before. For they thence observe, that these Nobles are rebuked and reproached for not submitting to the directions of meninferior to Nehemiah in the service of the publike. But I rather judge that the word though in the plurall Number, (Adoni) doth only relate unto God, whom these Nobles should have stooped unto, as to their Lord. And if the Scripture be applied in this sense, (which to me is the fairest, because I find the word thus limited, Mal.1.6.) yet hence it may be noted, that the most High God doth stigmatize Nobles with a brand of infamie, for refusing to appeare, and to act personally, laboriously in Church Reformation. How great is the dissimilitude in affection to the Church betwixt Iesus Christ, and this sort of men? For suppose he (who was brought up in the bosome of his Father, and there enjoyed full, and perfect delights, before the foundations of the world were laid) had resolved not to displace, dis-cause himselfe for mans restauration, we with all mankind should have continued
continued under ruines and desolations unto all Eternitie.

I have three things to deliver unto these persons, who are poss'd with a Spirit of indifference, in reference unto Sion, resolving to sit still, and to see the game played on both sides, not caring much who win, or who loose; who prosper, and who suffer; whose hopes are accomplished, and whose disappointed in respect of Church concerns.

1. Without all question these Neuters are not incorporated spiritually into Jesus Christ. For if any man abideth in him, he ought himselfe also so to walke, even as he walked. And I appeale to mens Consciences from that which hath been delivered, whether in any age of the Church, the Lord Christ ever stood by, as a Neuter, when the concerns thereof were in disputation and agitation amongst men.

So soon as Paul was savagely subdued by the Spirit of Christ, his change in this particular was manifest: He that persecuted us in times past (say the Saints) now preacheth the faith which he once destroyed. Gal. 1.22,23. And when the Lord had efficaciously touched, and taken hold on, the Prophet Isaiah, (though formerly backward to engage for God) no sooner can a question be asked, Who shall go for us? but he presently offers himselfe, Here am I, send me. For certainly in this case, (as in others wherein Christ is concerned) the love of Christ constraineth Christians to appear and adventure for him. And Christ's people are a willing people (Volunteers, a people of willingness) in the day of his power. Die exercitium, in the day of his Armies, when he mustereth up his forces to secure Jerusalem.

Therefore all such who are not in these kindes animated and acted by the Spirit of Christ, they are none of his.

2. This Neutralitie is by our Lord himselfe interpreted as downe-right contrariety. His words are plaine, he that runneth may read the meaning of them. He that is not with me, is against me. I shall not gloss upon this Scripture, nor give in any other application then the Note which the Rhemists have left us. They that are indifferents to all Religions, commonly and falsely called Neuters, joining themselves to neither part, let them mark these words well, and they shall see that Christ accounted all them to be against him and his Church that are not plainly and flatly with him.
3. The misery of these men is exceeding grievous, which I know not how more fully (with brevity) to express, then by applying and opening the curse against Meroz, for the like neglect. Curse ye Meroz (said the Angel of the Lord) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Hence these particulars are seasonably enquirable: 1. What is threatened, A curse, a bitter curse, the curse of men warranted by the Lord, and to be executed by the Lord. Though the curse cause thee shall not come; yet when God and Christ, Angels and men curse, how unhappy shall be the condition of such accursed creatures? The barren fig-tree withers upon Christ's curse; Mens persons, comforts, hopes, all being blasted by divine malediction. 2. For what cause this Anathema, this heavy curse is gone out from the Lord? The words tell you once and again, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord. It is not said, they took up Armes, and joyed in combination against the Lord, in the Liberties and comforts of his Israel, but because they would not come in, and joyne themselves with the people of the Lord, nor shew themselves on God's side, therefore this heavy curse is denounced against them. Base omissions of good, when God gives abilitie and opportunitie doe expose unto the Axe of divine displeasure. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit, is hewn downe and cast into the fire. Matth.3.10. And at the day of judgement our Saviour will passe this black sentence upon them who have neglected offices of love to himself in his afflicted members. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devill and his Angels. And these shall goe into everlasting punishment.

3. What was the case and condition of Israel when Meroz refused to associate for their assistance? Truly at this time many mighty enemies had got the upper-hand and greatly oppreseed Israel. If you will look back unto Judges.4.3. You shall see, that Jabin King of Canaan, had 900, chariots of iron, and he mightily oppressed Israel for twenty years. Now although the inhabitants of Meroz might, in the opinion of morall cautious men, seeme in this regard to have sufficient reason to refuse siding with Israel, yet you hear, how heavy a curse is threatened against them for this their Neutralitie. Fig leaves will neither cover guilt, nor defend

Judges.5.28.
Maledicite me.
Exod.19.10.
Quicunque Spiritus Dei afflatus est, me cum semper pronunciabitur male dicitor, &c. June.
Proverbs.16.2.

Matthew.18.4.1.
46.

Dwelling near the place of barrell (and belike fearing the success) they came not out, &c. Sir Walter Raleighe.
defend from God's wrath. Many allegations, which take with worldly wise men, will be of no account with God. I might here take occasion also, to tell these Lukewarm persons, moderate men, (as they would be accounted) men of a tepid temper, neither hot nor cold, who are neither zealous for Christ, nor yet furious against him. That our Lord threatens to spew them out of his mouth. But I will not proceed to discover their sad condition who are ejected with abomination as the vomit of the Lord our Saviour.

The second inference by way of information followes. Hence may be manifested both the malignancy and misery of all those, who professedly engage themselves against the peace and preservation of the Church of Christ. I believe (beloved) that you look upon those to whom I spake in the former use, as in a doleful condition, if you minded and credited what I delivered from the Lord: But this sort of men, who now come under consideration, are in a farre worse plight. For the former doe only hang betwixt Heaven and hell, betwixt God and Belial, Christ and Antichrist, in a way of indifference, but these people doe place themselves in a posture of contrarietie against the Lord Jesus, for they drive a designe diametrically, directly opposite unto the offices, relations, engagements and undertakings of his Highness. The head, the heart, and the hand of Christ are all at work, to support and save his oppressed, sinking Church. But these men (I had almost called them miscreants) gather, conjoyne, and exercise all their strengths to lay Christ's Vineyard waste, to subvert not only the comforts and hopes of his subjects, but also the fundamental laws and government of his Kingdom. In the entrance upon this use, I spake of the malignancie of these persons, and truly I have reason to call them Malignants, if the devils powerfull working in the hearts and lives of men, may warrant that Denomination. The Devill is named Abaddon, and Apollyon, because a destroyer. And it is the devils endeavour, to devour the instruments, the means, of Church Reformation. The Dragon stood before the Woman, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child, as soon as it was born.

This malignent spirit moved Judas to betray Christ. And the Holy Ghost faith, that the Devill (by inspiring and over-powring persecutors)
persecutors) cast the Christians, in the primitive times, into prison. And from this very ground, the Apostle John faith, that Cain was a Malignant. Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. This hatred of good men for goodness ariseth from hellish malignitie against God himselfe. Like as the Libard, or Panther, which in regard its dislike of man will rend and teare his image.

I shall not need to say more to evidence their Malignitie, but I will proceed to discover their misery. For which purpose, I pray you, consider the speech of Christ to Saul, being in a way of opposition against his Church. Act.9:4,5. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, it is hard for thee to kick against the prick.

In these words, we may note for our present purpose these particulars: 1. That Christ accounts himself persecuted in the persecution of his members. Thou persecutest me, when the foot on earth is troden on, the head in Heaven complaines, Why do you hurt me? This sin therefore of opposition against the godly is of a more hainous nature than men imagine.

2. That the Lord takes exact notice of every individual person who hath an hand in the wrongs offered to his people. The Messenger, the Pursivant, who now was on his journey with letters missive from the High Priests, to bring Christians bound to Jerusalem, he is here called unto by name, Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute? Although the Eagle soare high, and seeme farre from her Neft, yet her piercing eye soon espies, if any approach be made to prejudice her young.

3. That this opposition is very perillous. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. The speech is Metaphorickall, taken from the brutish Creatures, which being pricked, doe by kicking, strike that which prickeath them deeper into their owne flesh. That passage of our Saviour, Matt.21:44. is somewhat answerable, Whoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken. By falling upon Christ, whether by opposition against his Government, or members, men breake themselves, as the proud waves breake upon the hard rock.

4. That although men through ignorance know not, or through incogitancy, consider not, their courses of contrariety against the Church.
Church of Christ, yet is their sin thus high, and their danger thus heavy, as you have heard. Saul here imagines not, that any wrong was offered to any one in heaven, and therefore thinking it strange when he hears of complaint from thence, he asks, Who art thou Lord? yea, elsewhere he professeth, that he did it ignorantly, and that through zeal he persecuted the Church; yea, that he verily believed, himself bound to do somewhat against the Name of Jesus Christ.

I heartily wish, that this may be well considered, because many who bitterly make opposition against the Church of Christ, at this day in this Kingdom, doe verily hope, that because they set according to their Consciences, therefore they are in no danger. It is true, Paul himself saith, I was received to mercy, for I did it ignorantly in unbelief; yet for all this, he kick’d against the pricks, and had undoubtedly perished everlastingly in this way of persecution, if God’s glorious Grace had not converted him. Alas, alas, then what will become of all them, who wittingly and wilfully, maliciously and desperately engage themselves against the cause and Church of Christ? Truly, I tremble, when I seriously ponder that imprecation of the Psalmist against such persecutors? Lord, be not mercifull to any wicked transgressours.

Although this might seem sufficient to startle and awaken these Malignants, who make it their business to break in pieces the people of the most High: yet I will make bold to discover their doleful condition further, from my Text and some neighboring passages, which border upon it.

There are two things considerable concerning their misery.
1. It is inevitable. 2. It is irreparable: God’s arm cannot be resisted. And the breaches made by his indignation cannot be repaired. First, their destruction cannot be avoided. Either by multitudes associated for their security. ver. 6. I will tread down the peoples (for so it is in the original) noting the pluralitie, the Numbers of Antichristian opposites. And for this end, Zech. 12.3. is very remarkable. I will make Jerusalem a burthen some stone for all people, all that burthen themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. The Captaine of our Salvation will rout the greatest armies that
that can possibly be raised against his Jerusalem. 2. Or by places fortified for their safety, ver. 1. The Lord in taking vengeance had dyed his garments in Bozra. This Bozra was the Metropolis, the mother City of Idumea, Isai. 34. 5. And such places usually are most strengthened by forts and fortifications. But the breath of God's displeasure will blow down and demolish all such means of defence, how promising forever they appear.

3. Or by accumulated estates, accommodations, honours and authority. Thus much is Metaphorically, yea, Allegorically expressed in the Scripture last cited, Isai. 34. 6, 7, 8. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of Lambs and Goats, with the fat of the Kidneys of Rams, for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea, and the Unicornses shall come down with them, and the Bullocks with the buls, and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness, for it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. By Goats, Rams, Unicornses, Bullocks and Buls are understood men of highest place and power in the world. And when our Lord taketh vengeance upon the adversaries of Zion, he will make it to appeare, that he is no respecter of mens persons. He will strike through Kings in the day of his wrath: He shall wound the heads over many (or great) countries. There is no respect of persons with God. Neither Crown nor Scepter can secure them, against whom the Almighty is incensed.

Secondly, their ruine cannot be repaired. Thus much is suggested, ver. 3. I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. The Metaphor is taken from treading the wine-press, where the grapes, were full, and faire before pressing, but when the myrture is squeezed out, it cannot be restored, nor the beauty of the grapes repaired. Thus Christ will in vengeance breake (as it were) the veynes and bones of his enemies, and squeeze out blood and marrow. And if timely repentance prevent not this vengeance, they shall be remedilessly ruinated, never to be healed, never to be restored.
More I will not say (neither need I) to set forth the wickedness and wretchedness of these mischief-plotters, and mischief-workers against the Church of Jesus Christ, which he undertakes to save. And I should think, that enough hath been said to convince, if not to convert these men, had not the Scripture told me, that Persecutors are unreasonable men, and if Paul had not confessed of himself, that in this way he was exceedingly mad. 

Ach. 26. 11. Pride, passion, and malice doe more then infatuate 

I must leave these distempered (if not distracted) men, but while I am leaving them, truly my bowels are troubled for them, therefore before I leave them, I will breathe forth Christ's prayer for them. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they doe.

The second use followeth. Our Doctrine administers much matter of singular Consolation unto the servants of Jesus Christ. And let it not I pray you, be offensive, as a service unreasonable, that I serve in cordials on our fasting, heart-humbling day, where-in we should feed upon slower herbs. For as my Text doth naturally, according to the purpose of the Holy Ghost, offer comfort, so the present sad condition of this Kingdom doth call for it, and the drooping spirits of many godly ones amongst us need it. Moreover, the minding of Christ's care and kindness towards his sinking Church and bleeding servants, may much promote the duties of the day, because thereby the heart is most kindly broken, for our several unkindnesses and dis-regards of so kind and careful a Saviour. By means hereof also, we shall be quickned, with more fervency and confidence to supplicate his Majesty, for that salvation, which he hath promised, and which we expect.

But to passe from this digression, let us a little minde the strong consolation here intended. From this Doctrine of Zions salvation undertaken by Christ, his Church is called upon to rejoice, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, Shout, O daughter Jerusalem, behold, thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and having salvation.

And upon this consideration, the godly have been wont to triumph and to glory. Psal. 68. 19, 20. Blessed be God, even the God of our salvation, Selah. He that is our God, is the God of Salvation. yea, this joy doth in a peculiar manner appertaine unto Gospel times. In that day, it shall be said, Lo, this is our God,
We have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, and we will rejoice in his Salvation. This honey (you see) drops out of the Comb, without pressing, this Consolation flows from the Doctrine, without the least forcing.

Now this Fountaine of comfort sendeth forth its streams:
1. To the Church in generall. 2. To the several living members thereof in particular.

As for the Church universall, Mount Zion standeth fast, and can never be removed. And the Church being built upon this rock (Christ) the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The greatest strength of Cities, especially when besieged and endangered, is placed at the gates. And the gates were wont to be the places where the wise Elders and Judges met for civill Judicature. Now our Saviour, by the gates of hell understandeth, all the ability and subtilty of Satan, and he assures his Church, that neither power, nor policy, shall prevail against it, seeing the foundation of its safety lies in him. And I shall not need to step out of my Text, to bring in pillars, to support our confidence, that our hopes may be unshaken in this regard. For this purpose, I shall now make use of the four observations from the words of the Text, which were briefly pointed at in the division and interpretation of it. Here we have the whole Armour of God, weapons both defensive and offensive, that the Church may be preferred and her enemies destroyed.

1. That the less ease assistance comes to Zion from men, the more ready will our Lord be to engage himself for her deliverance. Mark well, I beseech you, my Text, with the words preceding. There was no help, there was none to uphold, therefore: He saith not, though there was no help, yet I saved. Neither doth he speake thus, There was little help, and there were few to uphold. But the words run thus, There was no help, and there was none to uphold, therefore, I brought salvation. Therefore when multitudes stand aloofe off, as idle Spectators not daring, or not willing to side with Zion in the day of her trouble, then, even then, may we hopefully look for help from Heaven, I will restore health to thee, and I will heal thee of thy Wounds, saith the Lord, because they called thee an out-cast, saying, This is Zion, Whom no man seeketh after. Yea, when many either through faintness, or falsness, fall off (though these are fad

**Ps. 125.1.**

**Mt. 16.18.**

**Panopliae Dei descript.**

**Brachium & indignatio Dei,**

**bac sunt duo armis Dei, quibus omnia vincit.** Cornelius a lapide.

**Jer. 30.17.**
sad prognosticks of our danger to sense and reason) yet even from
hence will well-guided faith fetch and plead-arguments to cher-
ish hope in holy prayer. Be not farre from me (faith David to
God) for trouble is neere, and there is none to helpe. Many Bulls
have compassed me, strong bulls of Basan have beset me round. Here
you see, that strong resistance, and no assistance from man is the
argumentation of holy faith before the Lord.

2. That the Churches welfare depends upon the Almighty
power of Christ. Mine arme (faith he) brought salvation. This
is comfortable to Gods people, when endangered, by an over-
powering enemie, as it appears in the experience of King Asa,
seeing it is nothing with him to help, whether with many, or with
them who have no power. Here concerning the Lords Arme, I
might note these three things. 1. That its irresistibly strong. The
Psalmist faith to God, Psal.8:3. The heavens are the work of the
fingers. Now if Creation-work, be but finger-work with the
Almighty, imagine (if you can) what power is in his Arme.
He that could bring beauty out of deformity, the goodly structure
of the Heavens out of confusion, out of nothing, by the motions
(as it were) of his fingers, can perfect Church Preservation and
Reformation by his strong Arme. 2. That it is incomparably
long. By the breadth of his hand, you may guess at the length
of his Arme. Isai.40.12. He meted out Heaven with his span. His
Arme then is long enough, to reach from one end of the earth,
unto another. He brought Israel out of Egypt with a strong hand,
and an out-stretched arme. And the Psalmist speaks in this man-
ner to the Lord, Thy hand shall find out all these enemies, thy
right hand shall find out all that hate thee. His Majestie can easi-
ly, quickly reach his servants with deliverance, and his foes with
vengeance, when they are at the greatest distance. 3. That it
is everlastingly unchangeable, it cannot be weakened, or wearied,
much less be broken or corrupted. And this is mentioned by Mo-
ses the man of God, for Isaels constant encouragement. The
everall God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting armes.
Therefore the fears and hopes of Gods people should not ebb
and flow, abate and augment, according to the increase, and de-
crease of their own, or their adversaries strength. For the Arme
of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

3. That:
3. That self-love sets out our Lord on work, to secure and save his endangered, neglected, deserted, sinking Church. This reason from himself Christ twice preseth in this short Text, Me, me. And indeed, if the matter be well considered, we shall finde that Jesus Christ hath reason, in self-respects to look unto his Church; for the riches of Christ are in the Church, the members thereof are his jewels, his peculiar treasure. Yea, the Church is part of himself, his body. He should be an head without a body, if he did not maintain the being of his Church. The Church is the fulness of him (meaning Christ) who filleth all in All (faith the Apostle.) And St. Paul is not afraid, to call the Church, Christ, 1 Cor. 12.12. where having compared that Mystical body of his with the body natural, he thus concludes, So is Christ.

I might enlarge this ground of comfort further, by shewing how much Christ is concerned in his offices exercised, and in his Ordinances administered in the Church. If the Church of Christ should miscarry, then the greatest designes of the Godhead would be disappointed, and then the glorious Promises of the Gospel would be nullified, &c.

Therefore, though we can plead nothing from our selves, to move Christ's care of his opposed, oppressed Church, yet he can and will produce arguments from himself, to prevail with himself, and with his Father also, to preserve his Church: yea, although we who are passengers and adventurers in this ship, doe by our finnes make leaks to let in dangers to sink all, yet will Christ, (who is the Pilot, Master, and Owner also of all the goods therein) for his own sake, belewe of himself, and preserve all. It is here observable, that when Daniel on his fasting day had acknowledged, and aggravated sin, confessing that confusion of right did belong unto that people of God, yet in the conclusion of the prayer, his faith pleads strongly with God, for his own sake, and his Christ's sake. Now therefore, o our God, heare the prayer of thy servant and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy Sanctuary, that is desolate, for the Lords sake. O Lord, heare, hearken, and doe: deferre not for thine own sake, o my God.

4. That Christ's indignation against his peoples opposers and persecutors shall work on, the Churches safety. My fury, it up-
held me. Mark the verse fore-going the Text. *The day of my vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed ones is come.* When Christ taketh vengeance on his daring, provoking enemies, then he effecteth the deliverance of his endangered, persecuted people. Therefore by how much the more outrageously profane, the adversaries of the Church are, and the higher their wickednesses, and the more frequent their dishonours done to the Lord: by so much the more hope have we of deliverance. And in this regard, though we have indeed occasion of sorrow, to see and hear God's Lawes violated, his Government despised, and men's immortal souls everlastingly endangered: yet we may spread the inhumane cruelties, filthinesses, outrages, with the strange blasphemies of Zions enemies, before the Lord, as arguments to preface their downfall and our deliverance. As *Psal. 74.*

O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemies blaspheme thy Name for ever? Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy Name. Arise, O God, plead thine own cause. Remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily. Forget not the voice of thine enemies, the tumult of those that rise up against thee, increaseth continually.

Thus farre the comfort hath been carried on, in reference to the Church in general, I now proceed to the Application of it unto the members thereof in particular. And here I might take occasion to discourse concerning the comforts from hence to be administered unto Nationall Churches, the members of the holy Catholike Church, and unto the Church in this our Kingdome particularly. But as time will not suffer me thus to expatiate, so because I find not sure footing in Scripture, to ground such discourses upon, therefore I had rather be silent, then too adventurous. That threatening of our Lord against the Church of Ephesians, I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of its place, except thou repent. That threatening (I say) doth not only prove, that the Church, state of a place, a Kingdome may be removed, but it doth also intimate our danger. What the Lord intends in this kind England-ward, himself only, certainly understands. But thus much I may say with confidence, that so farre as we endeavour to set up, and to keep up, the Government of
Jesus Christ in the Church amongst our selves, so much hope we may exercise in the expectation of a Church state to be here continued by Jesus Christ. If Ephesus repent and reforme, the Candlestick shall not be removed.

But leaving these things to your consideration and care (which I shall again quicken anon) let us a little enquire after the comorts, which from this Doctrine, appertain unto the individual, living members of the Church, the mysticall body of Jesus Christ. For our Lord doth care for the whole, that he is not, (indeed) he cannot be unmindfull of the lowest, the meanest part thereof, at any time. Now left the childrens bread should be given to dogs, left the cordials which belong to the members of Christ, should be lavished out amongst the limbs of Satan, I will very briefly by some pregnant Scriptures, signifie to you some qualifications of the persons who may, with divine warrant, challenge a share in the comforts, afterwards to be propounded.

First, Surely they are my people, children that will not lye: so he was their Saviour. Two things are here notable. First, They are my people. A people self-reigning, and self-devoting to God, who account not themselves their own, to live unto themselves, but yeeld up their All to God, these may expect the Salvations of God. Secondly, They are children that will not lye. I could wish that all Lyars would seriously consider of this, whether that practise of theirs may not give them cause to question their federal reference to God. This I speake the rather, because this foule sin of lying (I report it with griefe of heart) is woefully common amongst many Professours. But I rather conceive that by Children that will not lye, here are understood such, who neither answer their own profession, nor Gods expectation in their conversation. They profess one thing, but practise another. Their lives prove the faldhood of their fair Profession.

Secondly, God will save the humble person. Such who swell not with their parts, who acknowledge themselves leffe then the least of Gods mercies, who lye low in their dutys, and kisse the rod, when layed in the dust, these are they whom the Lord will save.

Thirdly, He will beautifie the meek with Salvation. Meeknesse, (in strictnesse) is that grace which moderates anger, and prevents...
the desire of revenge. Those therefore, who are of calme, well-
appeased Spirits, not passionately furious, when crossed, provoked, wronged, but having an eye upon God, in all affronts and injuries offered, doe referre their own righting, and the vindicative re-
compence unto his Majestie, such (I say) may look for mercifull, glorious deliverances from the Lord.

Fourthly, The living God is the Saviour of all men, especially of them who believe. Such, who feeling all creature props (thinks) under them; yet finding strength and steadiness in the Almighty, doe, from the encouragement of his Promise, rely upon him, in the days of danger, they doe engage his Majestie to be their Saviour.

Fifthly, Surely his Salvation is nigh unto them who fear him. Men whose hearts are awed with divine Majestie, and who, through estimation of his love and glory, draw back from sinne, because it tends to his displeasure and dishonour, these may expect Gods Salvation.

Thus from the Characters of the persons, to whom this comfort in peculiar appertains, I proceed to particularize the comforts hence deducible, and you may take them from these foure heads.

1. I will save you (faith he) from all your uncleannesses. And again, He shall save his people from their finnes. This is a great salvation, and a sure salvation. There is no doubt to be made of it, but Jesus Christ will save the souls of all his redeemed ones from all their sins, from the affrighting guilt of them in Justification, and the commanding power of them in Sanctification.

2. They shall be secured from all externall grievances and annoyances, so farre, as freedome therefrom may be for their best advantage. For he will be a Sun, and a Shield, and no good thing will be withhold from them who walk uprightly. As the careful Phisitian would not (were it in his power) suffer his Patient to loose more blood then might tend to health.

3. They shall undoubtedly be delivered from the poison, the prejudice of every affliction which befals them. He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven, no evil shall touch thee. This is not to strange as true, that though the godly be over the head and eares in the floods of various calamities, yet no evil doth once touch them.
them. It is with all outward troubles which take hold on God's people, as it was with the Viper which fastened on Paul's hand; though the Barbarians seeing the venomous beast hang on his hand, said, surely Vengeance will not suffer this man to live: yet its affirmed, He slooke off the beast into the fire, and felt no harms. It is most certain, that though men (or rather) beasts of prey, may plunder, impoverish, wound, and imprison the Saints of the most High God, yet they neither doe, nor shall receive Spiritual detriment thereby; yea, though they may be killed, yet they cannot be hurt.

4. Christ is the Author of eternall Salvation unto all them that obey him; whereas death, naturall death, is the utmost and the last danger, with which our blood-thirsting enemies can reach us: this is our comfort (and how great this our comfort is, I know not) that then, and by meanses thereof, our perfect, our everlasting deliverance is received. So soon as we shall passe out of the gasping hands of death, our soules shall be eternally saved from all sin, and sorrow whatsoever, not only in the power and prejudice thereof, but in regard of the presence, and appearance of it also.

The last sort of Uses follow, (viz.) Exhortation, which divideth itself into three branches, wherein I will study brevity.

First, let us hence be perswaded to joyne our selves unto the Church of Christ, because there the surest salvation is to be enjoyed. The Lord foretells this improvement of this Doctrine in the days of grace. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, It shall come to passe that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the Nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a few, saying, We will goe with you, for we have heard that God is with you. Nature seeks its own safety, and humane prudence in meer morall men, will project for their own preservation. Hence it was that upon the glorious providence of the Lord, for the deliverance of his people from Hamans hellish conspiracie, it is said, Many, of the people of the Land became fewes. Oh that there might be some such fruit of this my poor Sermon, that some might be brought in, to joyne themselves unto Zion, upon the report of the peculiar salvation of God, there to be expected.

Right Honourable and beloved, I speake not (the Lord knowes), without sorrow of heart, of siding with this, or that party.
party, against the other, here in bleeding England: my soule rather makes its unceasing suites to the God of peace, to give us a speedy good peace, that our dread Soveraigne, and his divided subjects, in all the three Kingdomes, may be of one heart and way for Christ, and that we may side as one man against Antichrist: But if our teares and prayers cannot reconcile our unhappy differences, give me leave to advise you, to be on Gods side. Now the Psalmist tells us, that God and Israel make one side. If it had not been the Lord, that was on our side, may Israel say. But you will answer me, what is this to us? I reply, This is very much to us, for we may be Gods Israel by speciall Covenant and grace, although not by naturall descent and propagation. Observe you therefor, the words of the Apostle, As many, as walke according to this rule, the whole Israel of God. All such persons, who are carefull, to steere their course according to Sacred Canon, they are true Israelites in Gods estimation.

Wherefore I pray you, consider without partiality, which party in the Kingdome, studies Church-Reformation, and State-Reformation according to the Scriptures, and be you confident, that God is, and will be on that side, making bare his Arme for the salvation thereof, according to his promise. And if God be on our side, who can be against us. My beloved when the Lord shall convince your hearts of his truth, discovering to you the way of his government and worship. Take heede, o take heede how you with-draw your selves therefrom, under any pretence whatsoever.

And if hope of Salvation, will not hold you, yet let the feare of destruction, chayne you to Christ, who hath thus spoken. Those mine enemies, who would not have me to rule over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.

Secondly, let us be incouraged, to set upon Christ by our supplications to save Zion, to uphold his shattered, sinking Church amongst our selves. The resolution and practise of Gods people, grounded upon this truth; should be both our incouragement and patterne. O thou the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the day of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a man astonyed, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou o Lord art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy Name, leave us not.
I beseech you, make conscience of this duty. I will not goe out of this Chapter for arguments to presse this practise.

1. The Lord is able, with safety to save us, though our distractions are many, and our dangers great. I (faith he) speake in righteousnesse, mighty to save. ver. 1. We know that when the Seas were rough, and the Ship (wherein Christ was with his Disciples) was covered with waves, upon his word all was still, he rebuked the winds and waves, and they obeyed him. And questionless he can, by his command suddenly quiet and calm, the proud waves in our troubled waters. Threfore we should pray. Thou art our King & God, Command deliverances for Jacob.

2. He is willing to admit of a parley, a treaty with us. Thus much may be gathered from the three firft verses of the Chapter, which contain a Dialogue, an interchangeable discourse betwixt Christ and his Church, wherein we shall find his Highnesse ready to returne answer after answer unto her demands.

For this purpose, that passage in this prophecy, is very considerable. Come let us reason together. Adeste quae, & disputemus. The originall word, I find translated (Dispute) Job 23. 7. and Reprove, Gen. 2. 1. 25. So great is the condefecntion of Gods love to his people, that he doth not only allow them, but he invites them, to reason out their case with him, to urge their strongest arguments for audience, yea to tell him plainly, wherein they conceive themselves neglected, or too severely dealt with by him.

Some doe thus gloss upon the phrase. Come sue me at the law, produce my bonds obligatory, plead my promises, shew all the evidences you can, to engage me. Truly (beloved) this liberty of speech, which the Lord allows to poore penitents, when they approach his presence by prayer, should wonderfully encourage our hearts, in speaking for Sion. In this regard, let us give the Lord no rest, for we have manifold, open promises, to pleade in the behalfe of his people.

3. He is full of love, and tendernessse. The Church in the eighth verse faith, I will mention the loving kindnesse of the Lord, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them, according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesse. Mercy is the gate of prayer, and
and kindness in great ones, increaseth the number of their petitioners. I here remember the words of Benhadad's servants, We have heard, that the Kings of Israel are mercifull Kings, let us go out to the King of Israel, peradventure he will save thy life. The heart-saying of mercy in a man, moved them to petition, though they had no more then peradventure to prevail. And shall not the sure, approved, abundant mercies of God, encourage us much rather to speake for our King and his three Kingdomes, for the preservation both of Church and Common-wealth.

4. He doth Sympathize with his suffering servants. Mark the nineteenth verse, In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them. Christ's bosome was full of bowels, while he was upon earth: And though now he hath laid aside his natural infirmities, yet assuredly, he hath not put of his sympathizing compassions. Therefore I will conclude this argument, with the words of the Apostle. We have not an high Priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

If hereupon, you be resolved, to ply the throne of grace for Zions safety, I intreat you, to take with you these short directions.

1. Plead the Churches relation to Christ, when you have almost nothing else to urge. As verse sixteen, Doubtless thou art our Father, thou art our Father. And o Lord thou art our God, let not man prevail. And Jer. 14. 9. We are called by thy name, leave us not. For the incouragement of our hearts and hopes herein, that Scripture is famous. Concerning my Sons, command ye me, Isa. 45. 11. Let us with wondering and thanksgiving lay hold on this glorious engagement, and in the improvement hereof, let us thus reason in our requests before him. o Lord if thou be willing to be commanded in the behalf of thy children, why then, dost not teares and prayers, sighes and supplications prevail with thee for them, who cry Abba Father.

2. Reforme your hearts and wayes. Israel wearied, wafted with oppressions, cryed to God, and received a sad answer. I will deliver you no more, yet when they put away their strange gods, the Sonne of the Lord was troubled for the miseries of Israel.
I will apply to you (Beloved) and to my self also, the encouragement given 2 Chron. 30. 8. If you turne again unto the Lord, your brethren and children shall find compassion. If Jonah be cast over board, the seas will be quiet. And shall we rather hazard the losse of Church and State, of our selves and ours, with our dearest comforts, then part with our sins? O God forbid, God forbid: for how should we be ever able to answer such an horrible thing either to God, or man?  

3. Lastly, persevere in prayer: You that are the Lords Remembrancers give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. It is recorded in the Parable, that the unjust steward was prevailed with, by constant importunity. And observe the improvement hereof to our purpose. And shall not God avenge his Elest which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them. I tell you, that he will avenge them speedily. Wherefore let us every one resolve, as Isai. 62. 1. For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof, as a lamp that burneth.  

Thirdly and lastly, let us all be prevailed with, in imitation of Jesus Christ, to endeavour with our utmost, with our All, to save and upheld his Church. Methinks I heare Christ speaking to us, as once Gideon did to the men under his command, Look on me, and doe likewise. My Beloved, Can we write after a fairer Copie? Can we find another pattern so perfect to guide our practice? Will it not be our glory, our crown, to be coadjutors, coworkers with Jesus Christ. For what will we engage, if not for the Church? wherein are all our precious and pleasant things, the meanes of our sweetest, most solacing Communion, with our dearest Lord? For whom will we adventure any thing, everything, if not for Jesus Christ? who is so worthy? who deserves, or can deserve, either by doing, or suffering, so well at our hands? What should be deare unto our hearts in comparison of the honour of our Lord and Saviour? Therefore let us joyne our hand to his Arme, let us adde our Spark to his flame, in seeking to secure and save Zion.  

But if this my expostulation prevale not upon your hearts, I pray you weigh wisely the words immediately before the Text.
I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Hence two strong arguments may be urged, to enforce us (as it were) to engage for the Church of Christ. 1. The Lord takes an exact account, who come in, and who keep off, from Zions succour. He observes the Names, and the Number of them who are employed in his Church-work; He takes notice of the Nature of our work, the place, where it lies, and manner how we behave our selves at it. All this, and more then this might be manifested from the third Chapter of Nehemiah, if I had leisure to look into it: yea, he considers who are absent, and wherfore they absent themselves, when the Church of God needs their help; as it might be evidenced from Judg. 5. 16, 17. For the divisions of Reuben, there were great thoughts of heart. Why abodest thou among the sheeplolds, to heare the blessings of the flocks? Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and Why did Dan remaine in ships? After continued on the sea shore.

2. Christ Jesus is as a man amazed, when he beholds multitudes making head against his Church, and yet few, or none, come in for her reliefe. I wondered (faith he) that there were none to uphold. And no marvell, that our Lord wonders, seeing neither his own authority, glory, deservings, nor the Churches beauties, excellencies, necessities, dangers, together with mens owne concernsments involved in her welfare, can prevail with them, to appeare for her deliverance. Idolaters will hazard liberty, livelyhood, limbs, and life it selfe, for their idols. Morall men, Heathens, acted by late Principles, and heated with love to their Countrey, have made bold, and brave adventures for the honour and safety of the Common-wealth. It is reported of Marcus Curtius, (that Noble Romane) that when by a terrible earth-quakee there was a great breach made in the ground tending to publike danger, he cast himself into it, hearing that something of speciall worth must be thrown in to pacifie their provoked gods. Its no wonder then, to heare that Christ is astonish'd at Christians backwardnesse to contribute their assistance to prevent the ruine of a trembling, tottering Church. In this respect therefore, I pray you, lend Zion an helping hand, that you, you also, may not be objects of astonishment to Jesus Christ.

If now, (my beloved) you be resolv'd to serve the necessities of
of a bleeding Church, I shall briefly from my Text, cast in some rules for your direction. 1. Lay forth your chiefest strength in this glorious service. Christ stretcheth forth his Arme, therefore do not you thinke it enough to touch the work now and then, with one of your fingers. We should love the Lord with all our might. Every one therefore should enquire where his strength lies, whether in parts, power, purse, interests, and employ that for the Church of Christ.

2. Draw not back, though the state of the Church should be more desperate. When the frame is falling, Christ upholds. And let us resolve also, to help at a dead lift.

3. Be not discouraged, nor wrought off, by paucity of helpers. For Christ doth engage alone. Observe ver. 3. I have troden the wine-presse alone, and of the people, there was none with me. Therefore let us make up the number, though there be but few besides ourselves.

4. Be zealous and vigorous in your endeavours this way. My heat, my fury (faith Christ) is upheld. So should we, be fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.

5. Have pure and sincere references to the honour of Jesus Christ in all your adventures and endeavours. As he minded himself (My arme saved me, and upheld me,) so should we also. Think often with your selves, that you heare the Lord speaking thus to you. Did you at such a time consult for me, or engage for me? Doe you give for me, or lend for me? Doe you pray, and fast for me?

6. Give not over the work, come not off the ground, till the Churches deliverance be compleated. As Christ brought Salvation, he did not only begin, but did perfect, what he undertook. He went not to rest, till all was finished. Therefore let us not be weary of well-doing.

And now, Right Honourable, I humbly crave leave in the conclusion of my Sermon, to appropriate my Exhortation to you, seeing according to your Commands, I attend your souls peculiarly in this dayes service. 1. God hath honored you with his own Titles, He hath said, you are Gods; he hath called you Saviours, therefore fill your places, answer your titles, labour as Christs Vice-gerents on earth, to save and uphold his Church. 2. God hath trusted
trusted you with more Talents then other men, and all should be traded unto your Masters advantage: Your authoritie, abilities, wisdome, interests, opportunities, doe engage you the more to God: Your selves are not your own, you should glorifie God with your All. Those to whom the Lord hath given much, of them the more will be required. Be you well assured that Jesus Christ will call you to an exact account, how you have husbanded, that which he hath lent you. Remember the sentence of the slothfull, unprofitable servant, and be warned thereby: Call to minde the recompence promised to them who are faithfully laborious, and be encouraged to imitation. 3. That speech of Mordecai to Esther was smart and quick. If thou hold thy peace at this time, there shall be enlargement and deliverance to the Jewses from some other place, but thou and thy fathers house shall be destroyed. I commend the application and improvement thereof to your wisdome, wishing heartily, that your purpose, and practice may paralell hers. 4. This work will yeeld both comfort and honour. Worthy Nehemiah pleaded his care in this kind, before the Lord with confident expectation of recompence. Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds, that I have done for the house of my God, and for the Officers thereof. And God hath said to them, who instrumentally serve the publike, Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. I will conclude my Motives with the words of the Psalmist, Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. o that every one of your hearts might breathe out his resolution, Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good. But it may be, your Lordships will anwer, What mean you thus to move us! Have we not done much, tending to Church Preservation and Reformation? Are we not still doing what we can, to compleat the work begun? Right Honourable, All this is acknowledged with humble thankfulness. Qui monet us facias, quod jam facias, ille monendo laudat. We honour your Lordships, and we honour God in you, and for you, upon the remembrance of what you have done, and are still endeavouring: yet give me leave, I humbly pray you, to adde a few directions, to guide your further care, to save and uphold the Church of Christ amongst our selves.

I. Proceed
1. Proceed more and more to reforme your selves, that
the Lord may delight more and more to use you as instru-
ments of his Churches welfare. If thou doe so and so (spea-
kling of self-reformation) then shalt thou raise up the foundations of
many generations. And this honour (faith the Psalmist) have all his
Saints. Psal. 149.9. The Lord loves not to work with rustie toolcs,
by unreformed men, he rather useth those who are chosen, holy, and
faithfull. Pride, prodigalitie, idlenesse, Epicurisme, sensuality,
oppressions, leightness in Gods Worship, and much profanenesse
are too commonly found amongst Nobles: What your faults are
I know not, but I beseech you betwixt the all-knowing God
and your own Consciences, consider your wayes, and amend
whatsoever you find amisse, as you desire to prosper in the weight-
ty, glorious services, which you have under hand.

2. Execute judgement throughly, between a man and his neigh-
bour. Right Honourable, you have divers petitions presented to
you, which lay open the injustice and injuriousnesse, whereby
many have been, and are oppressed. Now it is your duty, to clear
the innocent, to relieve the oppressed, to punish the delinquent,
and by so doing, you shall prevent our dangers, and hasten our de-

derance. Phineas arose and executed judgement, and the plague was

shayed. And the Promise of God to this practife lies open. Jer. 5.1.
Run through the streets of Jerusalem: if you can finde a man, if there
be any that executeth judgement, and seeketh the truth, and I will

share it.

3. Doe what you can to countenance and advance the power
of Godliness throughout the Kingdome, and for that end in a
speciall manner consider, by what means the more conscienti-
ous, careful keeping of the solemn Nationall Vow and Cove-

nant may be promoted. May not I take the boldnesse to apply
unto you (Right Honourable) the words, in the like case spoken
to Ezra (and I am confident that there are thousands who herein

affent with me) Arise, for this matter belongs to you, we also will
be with you: Be of good courage, and doe it. And my soule desires,
that the counsell given and the course taken in the prosecution of
that businesse, (which is recorded in the 14, 15, 16. verses of that
Chapter) might be duly considered, and in some answerable kind
imitated. Although I dare not undertake to advise your Honours

for
A Sermon to the right honorable House of Lords

(for I am conscious to mine own weakness) yet I humbly move, whether it might not be worth the while, to call upon the Reverend Assembly, to consult of a course, to further Covenant keeping in the Kingdom. Blame me not, for being zealous in this particular, because the Lord himself saith, Lev. 26, 25. I will bring a sword upon you, which shall avenge the quarrell of my Covenant. I seriously profess, that there is no one sin which more shakes my heart and hopes in reference to bleeding England, then falsifying our Covenant with God.

4. Endeavour vigorously to compound our differences in Ecclesiasticall Concernments. Alas, alas, my heart akes, because of our breaches. Let mine eyes run downe with tears night and day, and let them not cease, for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow. Jer. 14, 17. What Factions and Fractions, what Schisms and Separations, what rents and divisions are in this poore, distracted, distressed Church: of England! How should either Kingdome or Church divided stand? God forbid, but tender respect should be had to tender Consciences. But (Right Honourable) I beseech you take heed, lest under that pretext, you think of tolerating all Religions amongst us. Such like liberty (I am afraid) would usher in Libertinisme, and hasten our desolation.

5. And lastly (as one means of the former) Expedite what you may, the establishment and exercise of that Church-Government, which is found most consonant to the Word of God. Discipline is as the hedge or wall about the Vineyard of the Church, to keep out destructive dangers. The Church reformed in matters of Doctrine, and holy Worship, and furnished with power to exercise censures, according to the Scriptures, is like an Army with Banners, both to terrifie the common adversaries, and to secure itself. The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Sion, and upon her Assemblies, a cloud and smoake by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for, above all the glory shall be a covering, or (as our Translation renders it) upon all the glory shall be a defence.

Consider, I beseech you, what I have spoken from God, for his Church, and the Lord give you the fruitfull improvement of my counsell, through the riches of his Grace, in Jesus Christ. Amen.

FINIS.
RELIGIOUS
COVENANTING
DIRECTED,
AND
Covenant-keeping persuaded:

PRESENTED,
In a Sermon preached before the
Right Honourable Thomas Adams Lord Major,
and the Right Worshipfull the Sheriffs, and Aldermen his brethren, and the rest of the Com
mon-Councel of the famous City of
LONDON, January 14. 1645.
Upon which day the solemne League and Covenant was renewed
by them and their Officers, with Prayer and Fasting,
at Michael Basing-staw, London.

By Simeon Ash Minister of the Gospel:

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not
slack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will require it of thee, and it
would be sin in thee. Deut.23.21.
I will bring the sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrell of
my Covenant. Lev.26.25.

LONDON,
Printed by G.M. for Tho. Underhill at the signe of the Bible
in Wood-street. M.DC.XLVI.
TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THOMAS ADAMS Lord Major,
AND THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL
The Sheriffs and Aldermen his Brethren, and to
the rest of the Honourable Court of Common-
Council of the City of LONDON.

His plain Sermon which attended your service
of Covenant-renewing from the Pulpit,
comes now from the Press, in obedience to
your command, to do you and the publick
some further service. If upon the perusal of
that which you heard preached, it may please
the Lord to quicken your zeal in Covenant-
keeping, I shall have occasion to blest his Name
With a joyfull heart.

The zeal of the Common Council of London, in renewing their
solemn League and Covenant, rings thorow the several Counties
of the Kingdom of England: and I am confident, that the sound
thereof hath been heard in many other Kingdoms: And doubtlesse
there are often enquiries, and earnest expectations to hear what Lon-
don now doth in the pursuance of their Covenant heretofore taken,
and now again solemnly renewed With holy fasting and prayer. A City
set upon an hill cannot be hid; your practices have had, and will
have strong influences into the several parts of this Land, and into
other Nations: You have formerly and lately done well and Worthy
in respect to your Covenant: I pray God, that your continued
holy zeal may affect and fire many in other Countries in faithful Co-
The Epistle Dedicatory.

venant-keeping. God forbid, that you should ever deserve thus to be stigmatized, either by God or men; Their heart was not right with God, neither were they steadfast in their Covenant, Psal. 78.37.

I shall not need to tell you, that our solemn League and Covenant is despised, derided, aspersed and opposed by too many: for that which you may read in Pamphlets, and hear from some Pulpits and other places, both make you both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of this evil, which should be greatly bewailed. This contradiction, this opposition should increase your gracious heat for your God. Fire gives out the most scorching heat in the coldest weather. It is time for thee, Lord, to worke (faith David) for they have made void thy Law. Therefore I love thy Commandements above gold, yea above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way, Psal. 119.126, 127,128.

My soul desires, that according to the guidance of that wisdom which is from above, you all may make the like gracious improvement of the checks and affronts which you meet with, in your Covenant-keeping. By how much the more, any others do plot and prattise to hinder the glorious Works of Church-reformation, by so much the more do you consult and act, to expedite and perfect it. By how much the more any others strive and study to maintain Popery, Prelacie, Schisme, Heresie; by so much the more, do you set your selves against such matters, as being destructive to the welfare both of Church and State. By how much the more others designe and endeavour to break the brotherly union between England and Scotland, by so much the more do you lay forth your selves to maintain it. And that your zeal in these kindes may appear to your selves and others to be pure and sincere, let it be your chief and constant care, to reforme your selves and all yours, in every thing, according to the will of God: That you all may in these particulars and in all things else, approve your selves faithfull both to God and man, in holy Covenant-keeping, shall be the prayer of him Who is

Your servant, in, and

Feb.34th

for Jesus Christ,

Sim: Ash.
RELIGIOUS COVENANTING DIRECTED.

Psal. 76. 11.
Vow and pay unto the Lord your God.

His Text persuades a double duty. 1. To make vows. 2. To pay vows unto the Lord our God. From whence two truths, reasonable for the service of the day, fall naturally, and easily; without forcing, into our consideration.

That God's people must make religious vows; as his hand of providence doth lead them forth thereunto. Doct. 1.

That such vows being made, must be paid unto the Lord our God. Doct. 2.

In the handling of the former of these propositions, I shall briefly give you, 1. The explication; 2. The application thereof.

The explication of the point I shall dispatch under these three heads. 1. The Act required, vow. 2. The Agents, or persons upon whom this duty is pressed; This the following words express, All those that be round about him. 3. The providences, whereby God calleth forth to this practice of making vows.

First, Holy vows are the solemn engagements of the soul unto the Lord, according to his will: If a man vow a vow unto the Lord,
Lord, or swear an oath, to bind his soul with a bond, Numb. 30.2. To vow, to swear, and to covenant, are in Scripture phrase equivalent, importing the same thing, Jonathan made a Covenant with David, and Jonathan caused David to swear again, 1 Sam. 20.16, 17. Here I may not spend time, in discoursing concerning the several sorts of vows, which might be spoken to, under these, or such like heads. 1. They are either made to God, or man. 2. Of things necessary, or arbitrary. 3. Explicite, or implicite, mentall, or vocal. 4. Assistant, or promissory. But let it be sufficient, that I now suggest thus much: That the Text is to be understood of such vows, as are promissory obligations unto the Lord. And from hence I shall persuade and direct the managing of such vows unto God, as are necessary and openly unfolded to every ordinary understanding, in the solemn League and Covenant this day to be renewed.

Secondly, the Actors in this duty are described to be such, as are round about the Lord. The Psalmist hath reference to Numb. 2. 2. where Israel was commanded to pitch their Tents round about the Tabernacle, which was a sign of God's special presence. And this phrase (as I conceive) describeth God's people by a double character. 1. Their special attendance upon God, their readiness to receive and obey his commands: As the four and twenty Elders, are said, Rev. 4. 4. to be round about the Throne, as pres'd to praise the Lord. 2. God's special presence in the midst of them, to hear prayers, and to perform promises, for their preservation and welfare in every kinde; who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God, in all things, that we call upon him for? Deu. 4. 7.

Thirdly, the call unto this employment I shall note under a five fold providence from the Lord.

1. Sinful defections from God, that by means of religious vow-\ing, his backsliding people might be recovered: Our fathers have trespassed and done that which is evil in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their face from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs. Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burnt incense, nor offered burnt offerings, in the holy place unto the God of Israel. Now it is in my heart (faith Hezekiah
zekiah) to make a Covenant with the Lord God of Israel, 2 Chron. 29.6,7,10. Thus likewise the people of God resolved in the days of Ezra: We have trespassed against our God, &c. Now therefore, let us make a Covenant with our God, Ezra 10. 2,3.

2. Sad discoveries of divine displeasure, that by holy covenanting present judgements might be removed, and future evils prevented: The wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem; and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. For lo our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, and our daughters, and our wives are in captivity for this. Now it is in mine heart (faith Hezekiah) to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us, 2 Chron. 29.8,9,10.

3. Famous experiences of God's goodness, that by the right use of religious vows his Majesty may be praised, and his providences improved. The exhortation in the Text was grounded upon some such occasion, as many verses in the Psalm declare: The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands, ver. 5. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead-sleep, ver. 6. When God arose in judgement to save all the meek of the earth, ver. 8. Hence follows, vow and pay, &c. Interpreters judge, that this Psalm was penned, upon Absures overthrow, whereupon many brought gifts unto the Lord unto Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 32.23. according to the advice given in the words immediately following the Text, Bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

4. Defective improvements (if any improvements at all) of God's favourable administrations, that by feéedall engagements his people might be bettered: These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses, &c. Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes, even in the land of Egypt, &c. The great temptations, and those great miracles: yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day, Deut. 29.1,2,3,4. This is propounded as one ground of the Covenant renewed, whereof we read in the following verses.
5. Apparent danger of seduction and departure from God. In this regard God's servants have afresh obliged themselves to His Majesty, for their own establishment and preservation: Ye stand this day before the Lord, to enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, lest there should be amongst you any, whose heart turneth away from the Lord, Deut. 29. 10, 12, 18.

The application of this point followeth; which serves in the first place to informe you of your call to covenant-renewing, the intended service of this day. For give me leave to appeal unto your conscience, Right Honourable, right Worshipfull, and much respected Citizens, whether all the five fore-mentioned particulars, do not fully reach you and take hold upon you, both in respect of God's dealings with you, and your miscarriages towards him, since you at first took the solemn League and Covenant. And here I shall make bold to propound unto you some short interrogatories, under the five fore-mentioned heads, to which I wish your hearts may returne answers, as in the presence of the All-knowing God.

First, Are you not guilty of sinfull declinings in a great degree from your former engagements unto the Lord? Have you not lost your first love? Have not the matters of God's house been much sleighted and neglected? Hath not your care to preserve the truth of Religion from corruption been much abated? Have you not connived at the spreading of pernicious errours in this City? Hath not your zeal against schisme and sinfull separations from our Church Assemblies been very much cooled? Is not your love towards our Brethren of Scotland in a great measure lessened? Have not your vigorous endeavours to promote the setting of Christ's government in our Congregations been wofully diminished? And have you not been lamentably wanting in labouring the thorough reformation of your selves and families? Which of you, hath striven to exceed, to excell others, in advancing the power of godliness in your conversation? Doubtlesse these and such like backslidings from former engagements, may well warrant your Covenant-renewing with your God.

Secondly, None of you can be ignorant of the manifold, manifest discoveries of God's heavy displeasure against this poor trembling Kingdom. Hath not the Lord delivered us up unto trouble and
Religious Covenanting directed.

and astonishment, by his severe administrations? How many thousands have fallen by the sword of cruel war? What wofull desolations are made in many Towns, yea Counties in this Kingdom, by the prevailing pitileffe enemies? And should not we read Gods wrath against our selves, in the abundance of blood which hath been shed, and the unhappy spoils which have been made in Scotland and Ireland? Besides all this, I pray you consider whether these things do not proclaim and speak aloud Gods anger? Our long looked for reformation in matters of Religion, is still deferred: our hopes of the much-needed and much-desired Discipline of Jesus Christ, are still disappointed: the miserable rents and divisions in families, Congregations, Cities and Counties, by reason of different, yea contrary opinions and practices, in ways of Religion, are wonderfully increased. And have we not in these regards reason to renew our Covenant, that the wrath of the Lord may be turned from us?

Thirdly, God hath often remembered us in our lowest estate, because his mercy endureth for ever. Who can recount Gods many marvellous works for our safety and comfort? Have not our deliverances been wonderful, and many of our victories little less then miraculous? How often hath the subtill enemy been infatuated, the strong enemy weakened, and great Armies broken by a little strength? I shall not need here to minde you of the many wonders which Gods Almighty hand hath wrought for us, both in the Northernne and Westernne parts. And as for this City, how admirably and unexpectedly hath it been preserved and provided for, in every kinde by the Lord? How many oppressions are we freed from, by Parliamentary authority, through the goodness of our God? Therefore besides other presents of praisewhich God deserveth at our hands, we have just occasion to present our selves unto his Higness by Covenant-renewing.

Fourthly, Notwithstanding our various and glorious experiences of Gods patience and goodness; Have we not too much cause thus to complain, that to this day we want hearts to husband Gods remarkable providences, to his honour, and our own advantage? Who loves God more, or who serves him better, because of the great things he hath done for us? Is our faith in Gods promises stronger? Is our fear of Gods displeasure greater? Are we more
more zealous for the Lord of Hosts, or more courageous for his truth, against error? Dare we say that we do our utmost for the speedy of Church-reformation, that we may not be over-run and undone by Sects, Schisms, and confusions? Therefore certainly, we have a call to renew our Covenant, to quicken our improvement of God's gracious providences, both to his praise, others profit, and our own further comfort in Christ.

Fiftly and lastly, That we may not fall from our steadfastness, we have need to bind our selves yet further unto our God by solemn Covenant. Men are wont (as I have heard) to hoop their vessels with iron bonds, in which they carry their stronger liquors beyond seas, that by the tossings in the ship and the liquors working, the vessels may not be broken into pieces, and the liquor lost. And have not we more need to add the bond of a solemn Covenant to the bond of God's sacred commands, that we may not be broken from one another, nor divided from God in his truths and holy worship, in these broken, erroneous, stormy, tempestuous times?

For 1: Emulation, variance, strife, seditions, heresies, are reckoned up, by the Apostle, amongst the works of the flesh, unto which our corrupt natures do strongly dispose us.

2. There are more than a good many of subtle, busy factours in this City, to promote errors, schisms, and factions of several sorts, to draw disciples after them, and to spread their infection amongst people of all rankes and qualities.

3. It is apparent, by too many instances, that divers persons both wise and godly, have been deceived and drawn aside from the ways of truth, into the by-paths of error and schisme, and into practices of bitterness (I will not lay of how many kindes) against their brethren. Therefore in this respect, as in those before mentioned, you have just cause to lay one to another; Come, let us join our selves unto the Lord in a Covenant, never to be forgotten.

Having thus far endeavoured to clear up your call unto Covenant-renewing, I now proceed by way of exhortation, to persuade your regular and reverential cautiousness in this weighty business. Consider the glorious Majesty of God, unto whom vows are to be made; He ought to be feared, as our translation renders
renders the words following the Text: or, He is fear as the Original hath it. In which phrase we have Nomen affectus, pro objecto. God is a dreadfull and terrible Majesty. And this doubtlesse is added, to awe mens hearts, in the undertaking of such like services. The advice of Solomon upon this ground is more open, Eccles. 5.2. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth. In which counsell, the wise man hath special reference unto vowing, as the following words declare.

Now for your guidance in this great service, I will give you briefly some plain and necessary rules.

1. You must Covenant knowingly. It is thus openly expressed, of them who covenanted in the days of Nehemiah, Every one having knowledge, and having understanding, they clave to their brethren, they entred into an oath to walke in Gods Law, Neh.10.29. Ignorance doth nothing well: the light of knowledge must guide our whole course. And in this businesse of a sacred vow, it is necessary that men know, both the nature of the duty, and the matter of the federall engagement. No man should be moved by an implicit faith, but every one should be fully perswaded in his own minde. For as in other cases, so in this, whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.

2. Repentance for former offences must precede, and prepare for Covenant-renewing. Thus it was with those, who sealed and subscribed the solemnne Covenant in the time of Nehemiah, for they assembled themselves to keep a religious Fast (as we do this day) before they entered into the Covenant, Neh.9.1. In which exercise deep sorrow for sin was expressed, their particular evils were aggravated and largely confessed, themselves were judged, and God was justified in his severe administrations: All these expressions of repentance, are manifest in that 9th Chapter of Nehemiah, which then was the introduction to the Covenant. And doubtlesse if we do not penitently bewail our former violations of Gods commands and our own vows, we cannot with acceptation to God, or with comfort in our own hearts renew our Covenant with him this day.

3. Your hearts must go along with your vows. It is said, 2 Chron.15.15. That all Judah did swear with all their hearts: And
And God will not take up with flesh at our hands this day. It is no better than hypocrisy, to lift up hands before God, when the heart is far from him. We must in our judgements approve and resolve upon the payment of our vows, and all our affections, both concupiscible and irascible, must be upon the wing, according to the various particularities expressed in the Covenant. The soul should with love, joy and longings, worke towards the speedy setting of Church-governement according to the word of God, and towards the maintaining of brotherly union between the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland, together with the more full reformation of our selves and families. And O how should your souls now rise, in holy dislike, in the hatred of, and in indignation against Popery, and all profaneness, against Heresies, Schisme, detestable Neutrality, and whatsoever else it is, which is against God and the wellfare of these Kingdoms!

4. Our Covenanting must be accompanied with humility.

1. From the sense of our own weaknesses to keep touch with God, in comming up fully to the Covenant; we should lean to his promise, and take hold on his strength: Say, as the Church, Through God we shall do valiantly, Psalm 60.11. And as the blessed Apostle did: Phil. 4.13. I can do all things through Jesus Christ strengthening me.

2. And being apprehensive of our own unworthinesse, to receive any ability from the Lord, seeing by our sins, we have enfeebled our own spirits, therefore we should humbly petition for divine assistance. Herein imitate David, who having thus in resolution and promise expressed himself before God, I will keep thy statutes, he immediatly adds, O for sake me not utterly, Psalm 119.8. The more of the spirit of self-denial and prayer is in your hearts, when you take the Covenant, the more hope there will be of your keeping it afterwards.

5. Come to the Covenant conscientiously. Be not acted only by the appointments, expectations or practices of men in this particular: Let not this be the alone motive upon your spirits; Covenant-renewing is ordered by the Court of Common-Council: But rather reason thus; The manifold providences of God before specified, do call unto this service, and therefore we will undertake it. If you respect not God in the worke, you shall lose both acceptance and recompence.
6. Covenant fiduciably: If your spirits act sincerely, according to the fore-named directions, then be you confident that the consequence of this dayes service will be comfortable. Although your weaknesses are many and great, yet if your hearts be herein found upright with God, you may hopefully persuade your selves that the Lord will so far regard his own ordinance, and have respect unto the mediation of Christ (the Messenger, the Mediator of the new-Covenant) that your worke shall be crowned with good success. You heard before, that Enemy-conquering providences made way unto the exhortation in the Text, Vow and pay unto the Lord your God. And I conceive that the verse following is considerable, being the language of faith; He shall cut off the spirit of Princes, he is terrible to the Kings of the earth: The most potent adversaries of the Church shall be brought down, by holy Covenant-making and Covenant-keeping with God.

Now this lets me into the consideration of my next Doctrine;

That vows made, must be paid unto the Lord our God.

Although a vow must not be made a bond of iniquity, and therefore unlawfull vows rather call for repentance than performance, (as Davids rash revengefull resolution against churlish Nabal.)

Yet such Covenants as we make according to Gods will, we must make good, in conscience to his commandment: Pay that which thou hast vowed (faith Solomon,) Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not pay it. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, Ecclef. 5. 4, 5. The Scribes and Pharisees were but slighty superficial Exploitours of Gods Law, yet they were wont thus to publish Gods command: Thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt performe unto the Lord thine oaths, Mat. 5. 33.

In the prosecution of this plain, profitable, reasonable and necessary point, I shall faithfully endeavour three things. 1. To persuade this duty by arguments. 2. To guide this practice by rules. 3. To promote your obedience herein, by some short directions.

The motives whereby we may be induced to make good our honest and holy vows, shall be cast under several heads, that my progresse in them, may be the more easie and edifying.

1. From the nature of a vow in generall, and from sundry circumstances
circumstances considerable in our Covenant particularly.

In general: 1. All vows are sacred obligations upon our consciences: If any (faith Moses) vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath, to bind his soul with a bond, Numb. 30.2, &c. In this respect the holy Psalmist resolved upon this duty, Psal. 56.12. Thy vows are upon me, O Lord, I will render praises: And doubtlesse every gracious heart will be sensible of this great spiritual engagement. 2. By means of vows we become Gods debtors: Hence it is, that the Text calls for payment, Vow and pay. I here remember the speech of the Prophet unto the poor widow, 2 King. 4.7. Go sell thine oyl, and pay the debt. And the Holy Ghost gives in this, as a note of a wicked man, Psal. 37.21. He borroweth and payeth not again. You Merchants, who have great dealings in the world, would you not be ashamed to appear upon the Exchange, if you were not careful to pay your debts unto men? Therefore, vow and pay unto the Lord your God.

More particularly, there are sundry weighty circumstances considerable, in regard of our solemn League and Covenant, which may work our hearts unto serious resolutions to keep it.

1. The materials of our Covenant are lawfull and justifiable; we vow to endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, Superstition, Heresie, schisme, profanenesse, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness. And have we not good reason thus to do? For have not these things much endangered the welfare both of this Church and Commonwealth already? and will not the indulging of such matters, prove destructive both to our publike hopes and comforts? We vow sincerely, really, constantly, through the grace of God, to endeavour the reformation of Religion, in Doctrine, worship, Discipline and Governement, according to the word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches. I shall not need to specify our engagements, to defend the Kings person and authority in the preservation of the true Religion, to preserve the privileges of Parliament, as also to continue a firme peace and union between the Kingdoms of England and Scotland. These and other things expressed in the Covenant, are by you Covenanters accounted just and equall. I remember Davids resolution, Psal. 119.106, I have sworn and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements.
judgements. And if we judge the materials of our Covenant righteous, we should in that regard lay the greater charge upon our consciences to keep it.

2. Our vows are deliberate. The nature of this ordinance hath been unfolded, the severall Articles in the Covenant have been considered of, and therefore the rather to be observed. Rash vows binde conscience, if the keeping of them prove only in inexpediences prejudicial to ourselves, and contradict not any of Gods ever-binding laws. Therefore Solomon calling for the payment of vows, tells people, that they must not thinke to put off that obligation, by saying, it was an errour, Eccl. 5. an inconsiderate oversight. And we all know, that when Israel was bound to the Gibeonites by an oath, through a mistake, being over-reached by a cheat, All the Princes said to all the Congregation, We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel, now therefore we may not touch them, Josh. 9.19. How then shall we be excused, if our premeditated vows be not performed?

3. We have vowed before many witnesses. Men who stand much upon their credit and reputation in the world, will be taken with this argument. When King Herod was caught in a snare, by his heady vow, and being troubled, because the dancing Damsell demanded the head of John the Baptist, it is said, Nevertheless for the oath sake, and them which fate with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her, Mat. 14.9. Consider how many have seen you lift up your hands unto the most High possessor of Heaven and earth, in holy Covenanting: Remember how many thousands know that the vows of God are upon you, and be you hereby prevailed with to keep touch with him.

4. Hereto I might add the consideration, both of the multitude of all rankes, qualities, callings in this Kingdom, in Scotland, Parliament-men, Souldiers, Citizens, Divines, &c. who are here-in mutually engaged with us. I might also minde you of the often reiterations and renewings of your vows and Covenants: Doubtless these things will not be snighted by them who are ingenuous; but I may not insist upon them, having divers other heads of arguments to speak unto.

The second sort of arguments to perswade Covenant-keeping, shall be taken from our God, the only true and blessed God, unto whom
whom our vows oblige us. And under this head these particulars are considerable: 1. His Majesty takes exact notice of all such engagements, together with all the circumstances of time, place, companies, occasions, &c. which belong thereto: O God thou hast heard my vows, faith David, Psal 61.5.

2. His Highness well remembers these obligations: The Lord rounds Jacob in the ear with this Memento, I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointest the pillar, and where thou vowest a vow unto me, Gen. 31.13.

3. He calls for payment, he will not be taken off from demanding his debt in this kind: When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee, Deut. 23.21.

4. He is the most High possessor and commander of Heaven and earth. The Psalmist lays strength upon this consideration, Psal. 50.14. Pay thy vows unto the most High. And this thought was prevailing upon the hearts of Jephthah and his daughter, in a case very difficult in a course very crooked to the stream and strength of natural affection: you all know his vow, therefore I shall not need to name it, but marke I pray you the expressions, both of the father and of his childe, Judg. 11.35,36. I have opened my mouth (faith Jephthah) unto Jehovah, and I cannot go back. And she said to him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto Jehovah, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth.

5. He is a most faithfull Covenant-keeping God: He is God, the faithfull God, which keepeth Covenant and mercy, Deut. 7.9. Although meer mercy move his Majesty to make Covenant, yet will he make it good: How much more should we keep our holy Covenants, which both duty and necessity call us to renew.

6. Although our well-doing, doth not, cannot reach the Lord with advantage, yet his Highness will account himself honoured by our faithfullnesse in Covenant: Hence it is, that these two duties are conjoinied in the Scripture; Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High, Psal. 50.14. And Psal. 65.

1. Praise waiteth for thee O God in Sion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed. Consider I pray you, Do we not owe God praise? Do we not pray, Hallowed be thy Name? Will it not be our
Covenant-keeping persuaded.

our Honours to set the Crown on his head? Therefore let us all resolve to perform our vows unto the Lord our God.

The third head of arguments follows to be considered, and it is drawn from the various precious benefits to be received, by conscientious Covenant-keeping with the Lord our God. 1. Care in this kind will evidence our effectual conversion to God. The Prophet Isaiah foretelling the calling of the Gentiles, speaketh thus, The Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation, yea they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and performe it, Isa. 19. 21.

2. Good Covenant-keepers lye very near unto the Lords warme heart, he loves them dearly: If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, Exod. 19.5. Covenant-keepers are Gods jewels, and all other persons are accounted as the lumber of the world, in comparison of them. Men will adventure much to ingratiate themselves with great ones; and shall not we pay our vows, that we may enjoy the favour, the estimation of God, whose loving kindness is better then life?

3. Hence issueth hope to prevail with the Lord by our prayers: The Psalmist having said, Psal. 65.1. Unto thee O God shall the vow be performed; he adds immediately, O thou that hearest prayers. And so soon as this counsel was given, Psal. 50.14. Pay thy vows unto the most High, in the next verse, this follows by way of connexion. And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. As you desire the audience of your prayers, make you conscience to pay your vows.

4. The sanctification of all our concerns, is a rich privilege appertaining unto honest Covenant-keepers: All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto them who keep his Covenant, Psal. 25.10. God's sweet mercy, in the performance of his promises, runs through the veins of all his providences for the good of them, who in reference to Covenant, keep touch with him: And who knows fully the worth of this one prerogative; therefore as you desire a share herein, make conscience to pay your vows unto the Lord your God.

5. What need I descend unto any more particulars, seeing all the precious.
precious promises of the Covenant of Gospel-grace, are assured up-
on them, who are faithfull in Covenant with God. The Pfalmift
having moved this question, Psal.24.3. Who shall ascend into the
hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place? part of his
answer is this ; He that hath not sworn deceitfully, he shall re-
ceive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God
of his salvation: Therefore be prevailed with, through holy self-
love and desires of blessedness, to pay your vows unto the Lord
your God.
6. And yet once more give me leave to press this argument
about, upon the hearts of you who are affectionate parents: I
know your bowels earn towards your children, and you desire their
good, as your own comfort; now be you well assured, that you can
take no course, which will be more probable to entaile Gods ble-
ssing upon your posterity, then this of conscientious Covenant-
keeping with God. How admirable and desirable is that promise
in Psal.103.17,18. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to
everlasting, upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto
childrens children, to such as keep his covenant?
These benefits of Covenant-keeping I leave in your bosomes, de-
siring that through the blessing of God, they may do you good.

Motive 4.
I might here mention a further motive, to perswade the paiment
of vows, from the sad consequences of falsenesse and unfaithfull-
nesse in this kinde. 1. The Pfalmift gives in this as a character of
a wicked man, Psal.55.20. He hath broken (or profaned) his Co-
venant. 2. All the sins of men are greatly aggravated by this
circumstance, that they are not only transgressions of Gods Law,
but violations of their own vows. Thus Solomon brands the adul-
terous woman, Prov.2.17, She forgetteth the Covenant of her
God. 3 Breath of Covenant brings Gods burning displeasure up-
on people: This thought did awe Israel, in reference to their rash
League made with the Gibeonites, Josh.9.20. We will let them.
live, lest Wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware un-
to them.
4. Gods anger in this kinde kindled, may bring a consumption
upon our hopes and comforts. That Item which the Wise man
gives in this case should be seriously minded, Eccl 5.5,6. Better it is
that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not
pay;
pay; wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the
worke of thine hands? Never were greater works under hand for
Church and Common-wealth, in our dayes, or the dayes of our
fore-fathers, then are in agitation amongst us at this day; there-
fore let us take heed, lest our unfaithfullnesse in our Covenant pro-
voke the Lord to dash all our endeavours into pieces, with the dis-
appointment of all our golden hopes. Gods curse is annexed unto
his Covenant, to enforce the keeping of it. It is said, Neb.10.29.
They entered into a curse, and into an oath to walke in the Law of
God. And the sword of cruell war is drawn by the hand of Di-
vine justice, to avenge the quarrel of the Covenant, Lev.26.25.
This sword of Civil war is eating mans flesh, and drinking mans
blood in this Kingdom at this day; and how can we expect that
the Almighty should command it to returne into its scabbard, and
to be quiet, if we continue carelesse in keeping Covenant? I pro-
tefle (beloved) that I have often trembled to thinke upon that dis-
coveiry of Gods severity, in punishing Israel with three yeers fa-
mine in Davids time, because Saul had broken the rash vow,
which the Elders of Israel had made long before with the Gibeon-
ites. For thus I reason, If the violation of an unadvised oath with
subtil sinfull men, by the posterity of them who made it, did bring
a fore nationall judgement; what then may we expect from the
hand of God, for contradicting both by words and deeds, both by
opinions and practices, the solemn sacred League and Covenant
which our selves have upon deliberation, both made and renewed
with man and God? These are weighty considerations, and worthy
your often and serious thoughts, unto which many more might be
added; but I forbear the enlarging of this subject, because you have
to fully been acquainted with this matter, by my Reverend bro-
ther, who hath largely to satisfaction set forth the exceeding great
danger of truce-breaking, from 2 Tim.3.1. Covenant-breaking
makes the times perillous: unfaithfullnesse in Covenant is a Land-
destroying, a Kingdom-devouring sin.

Now (my beloved) to summe up all my arguments: If there be
in your hearts, 1. Either respect unto the sacred obligation of a fo-
lemn vow, 2. Or unto the most High possessor of Heaven and
earth. 3. If you either prize the promisses of his grace, and desire
to be partakers thereof through Christ; 4. Or dread the disco-
veries.
veries of the wrath of the Almighty, and would preserve your selves and your posterity, your selves and the Kingdom from breaking blows of vengeance, pay your vows unto the Lord your God.

These arguments I hope will not be slighted by you: God forbid, that matters of so great, so publike concernment, should be disregarded by them, who profess so much zeal and respect to God and to his cause, unto the prosperity of this famous City, and the wellfare both of Church and Common-wealth, as you worthy Citizens have done, and persevere to do: Therefore I proceed in this service, to set down some Scripture-rules to guide you in the faithfull payment of your vows unto the Lord your God.

Pay your good vows universally: Pay thy vows, saith the Psalmist, Psal. 50.14. All thy vows, none excepted; whatsoever you have vowed according to his word, you must make good according to his command: Thus much is open in the text, vow and pay unto the Lord your God. Take good King Josiah for a president for your paterne in this particular, of whom it is thus said, upon his covenanting with God, 2 Chron. 34.33. And Josiah took away all the abominations, out of all the countries which pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to swear, even to serve the Lord their God. You see that he spares nothing, no where within the reach of his authority, which might be displeasing unto his God, or destructive to his people. I pray you peruse the particulars to be oppofed by vertue of your Covenant, Popery, Prelacy, Profaneness, Schisme, Heresie; and do not dare to indulge any abomination, which you have vowed to oppose: Take heed that no sinfull biasse of near relations, or any self-advantages, take you off from your faithfullness in this kinde. The Holy Ghost makes this a character of an heir of Heaven, Psal. 15.4. He swears and keeps it, though to his own hinderance: Therefore let not fear of losing a customer, a friend, an office, a good bargain, or any other outward advantage, hinder you in keeping your Covenant. I will not further enlarge this head, which I leave to your thoughts, but will conclude the rule, with reading the practice of King Asa in the pursuance of his Covenant, 2 Chron. 15.16. And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the King, he removed her from being Queen, because she had made an Idol in a grove; And Asa cut down her Id. I, and stamped it, and burnt it in the brook.
brook Kidron. There are Idols of mens heads; and of mens hands, there are Idol-opinions and Idol-practices to be opposed by vertue of our Covenant, and you must beware left through respect of persons, you prove partiall and unfaithfull.

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it, Deut. 23.21. And, thou shalt not defer to pay it, Ecclef. 5.4. I might here speak much to persuade the speedy payment of our vows; hereby your comfort will be increased, and the publike worke of reformation quickned and expedited, your acts will be exemplary and of common influence both thorow the City and the whole Kingdom. How many thousands enquire, what is done in London against Popery, Profaneness, Schisme and Herefie, in the pursuance of their solemn League and Covenant? The seasonablenesse of an action betters it, doubles it: Bis dat qui citò dat: and I may truly say in the cafe under hand, Bis facit qui citò facit: ply the worke of reformation now it is upon the wheels, and you may do much worke in a little time: principium est di-midium roti us; gain-say growing evils, tread upon the Cockatrice in the shell, oppose those opinions and practices in the bud, in the birth, which if suffered to grow, to live longer, will threaten the peace both of Church and State; by delayes your own guilt will be multiplied and greatened, your hopes of reformation will be enfeebled, and the whole Kingdom endangered: Businesse of necessity call for quick dispatch? and is there any worke of greater concernment, then the worke of your God, in endeavouring your own reformation, and the reformation of his Church according to his word, which is the matter of your Covenant? I remember the words of Moses to Aaron, Go quickly to the Congregation, for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun, Num. 16.46. And it is said that Aaron did run. Blame me not, but bear with me, I beseech you, if I appear warme, in persuading your speed in acting according to your Covenant, for I speak for the safety of a sinking Kingdom. Are we not all on a flame? which way can you cast your eyes, but you shall see the sparkes of unbrotherly contentions, rising as out of a furnace? Alas, alas, we shall burne into ashes, and from confusions fall into a ruinous heape, if through Gods blessing upon Covenant-keeping-endeavours, our misery be not prevented.
Pay your vows boldly, with so much opennesse, that the wit-
nesse of your bonds may be witnesses likewise of your faithfull-
nesse in discharging them: The resolution of David is herein imi-
table, which he expresseth once and again in the fame Psalme, I
Will pay my vows unto the Lord in the presence of all his people, in
the presence of all his people, yea in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem,
Psal.116.14,18,19. Is it any shame for a man to be honest, and to
pay his debts? Wherefore then should men be loth to appear in
the pursuance of their Covenants? Act so publiquely, so courageous-
ly for a full reformation according to the word of God, and against
Malignancy, Sedition, Heresie, together with all other things de-
structive to the welfare of the three Kingdoms, that both City
and Countrey may understand your undaunted resolutions to keep
Covenant with your God. And if in this way of zeal and faith-
fullnesse, you should meet with checks and affronts, make ye that
answer unto your opposers, which brave-spirited David made unto
mocking Michal. If this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile,
2 Sam.6.

Keep Covenant with the Lord conscientiously: Have respect
unto God in paying as in making vows: My text holds forth this
openly, as many other parallel Scriptures, which I have formerly
made use of. Whatsoever we do, which is materially comprehended
in our Covenant, we should do it, because of the oath of God,
Eccles.8.2. Do not only intend man-pleasing, or selfe-seeking in
the pursuance of your Covenant; be not popular and vain-glorous,
but sincere and single-hearted in this service. As in other acts of
obedience, so in this of Covenant-keeping, have an eye unto your
heavenly father who seeth in secret, and he will reward you openly.
God forbid, God forbid that any one of you should act against your
brethren with an envious or malicious spirit, under pretence of
making good your Covenant. O take heed unto your selves, that
you disgrace not this holy ordinance, nor open the mouths of them,
who maligne our Covenant, and would upon such like observa-
tions, reproachfully asperse both you and it. I will conclude this
rule, with the caution given by worthy Nehemiah: Ought ye not
to walke in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of our ene-
 mies? Neh.5.9.

Be vigorous in the payment of your vows: The command of
God
God given unto Moses for the guiding of this business, is here very considerable, Lev. 22.21. Whosoever offereth a sacrifice to accomplish his vow, it shall be perfect to be accepted, there shall be no blemish in it. When you pay your debts to God, bring your best coyn; put not off your light gold to God; employ and improve your very best for your God; give him the flower of your wisdom, strength, authority and interests; sit down and consider where your chiefest ability lies, and resolve with that to pay your vows. Say thus unto your own souls seriously in secret, I will beat mine own brains by study, I will stir up my best friends by importunity, and I will industriously take all courses within the compass of my general and particular calling, that my selfe and my family, that this Church and Common-wealth may be reformed, and that unity betwixt England and Scotland, may be preserved according to the solemn League and Covenant. To quicken your care in this kind, remember those smart words, Mal. 1.14. Cursed be the deceiver, who hath a male in his flock, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my Name is dreadful among the heathen. Look to it therefore, I beseech you, think not to put God off, with supine, superficial luxuriance in Covenant-keeping: If you have male-consultations, male-affections, male-endeavours, male-adventures for other things, God will not accept your female, your cold, faint, feeble actings for him, in the payment of your vows: Therefore if you have any talent better then ordinary, trade that for your God, in the pursuance of your Covenant.

Keep Covenant with the Lord constantly: I will sing praises to thy Name for ever (saith David,) that I may daily performe my vows, Psal 61.8. you must not be like those Tenants, who bring in their rents readily, and miss not a day for the first year, but grow careless afterward, in making payment according to their compacts and agreements. The same heat which is in your hearts to day (this day of your Covenant-renewing,) for reformation according to Gods word, and against the hindrances and hinderers thereof, must be kept burning in your bosoms so long as you shall live. It is to be bewailed with tears of blood, that the tract of time takes off the fervency of mens spirits for God
in the worke of vowed-reformation. How have we lost our first love? How is our zeal for good, and against evil of late abated? The time was, when our Covenant was much in our thoughts, much in our mouthes, when we moved others, and provoked our selves to make conscience to keep it: but now (I am ashamed to speake it,) our Covenant is forgotten, our Covenant is laid aside; yea (O that I had not occasion to add) many repent their taking of the Covenant, and some are not afraid to plead against it: I heartily wish, that the true causes of this great change were well enquired after. My beloved, Is Church-reformation according to Scripture grown lesse desireable? Are pure ordinances lesse lovely in our eyes? Is there now lesse danger of our undoing by malignancy, popery, divisions and heresie, then heretofore? Remember, I pray you, from whence you are fallen, and do your first works, in reference to your Covenant, the obligation whereof continues upon your consciences. Our God keeps Covenant to a thousand generations, Deut. 7:9. Let his example in this particular perswade your constancy. Be not weary of well doing; be not discouragd by disappointments; be not beaten off by difficulties, delays, oppositions; but proceed according to your callings and conditions, to promote that blessed reformation which is under hand: In due time you shall reap, if you faint not; Finis coronat opus; Be you faithful in your Covenant unto death, and you shall receive the crown of life.

I have done with my Rules; now give me leave to give in some few helps that you may act accordingly, and I will conclude all.

That you may be able to keep touch with God in point of Covenant, take these very short directions.

Directions. 1. Work well into your hearts the knowledge of all the forementioned particulars produced to perswade Covenant-keeping:
A wise man (faith Solomon) is strong, yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength (or strengtheneth might,) Prov. 24:5. Scripture-truths clearly understood, convey according to Gods Ordinance, spirituall abilities into the souls of men to act accordingly; As the warme beams of the summer sun administer vivacity to the creatures, both vegetative and sensitive: Therefore I humbly advise you, to put your selves often under the power of those truths, which
which may convince you of the necessity and equity of paying your vows unto the Lord your God; and I doubt not, but by means of serious meditation, you shall finde more activity herein to do your duty: *While I was musing (faith David) the fire burned,* Psal. 39.3. The bellows of meditation will produce the flame of zeal, out of the small heat of holy desires to keep Covenant with God.

2. Act conscientiously, according to that measure of strength which you have received. We all know by experience, that exercise increaseth bodily strength, and questionleffe Christians finde the truth hereof in their souls. *Solomon assureth us,* Prov. 10.29. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright:* The further we walke on in the ways of faithfullnesse with God, and for God, the more able we shall be to make good our foederal engagements unto his Majesty. Do you not all remember that famous story of the well-minded widow, lamenting her inability to pay her debts, whose little stock of oyl was multiplied by pouring forth, 2 King.

4. I beseech you make a spiritual improvement of this experiment; give out those gifts, graces, which you have received in the payment of your vows, and be you confident of increase: *In this felse habenti dabitur;* trade your two talents, or your five for your Masters use, and they shall be doubled, arise and be doing, and the Lord will be with you. Many of you know to your comfort, that a small stock traded, is grown up to a great estate; I pray you make practicall application.

3. Minde your selves, and minde one another often of your solemn Covenant: This was Gods own direction in this case, 2 King. 17.39, *The Covenant which I have made with you, ye shall not forget.* Among men, many promises are not performed, because they are not remembred: And so it is likewise in many of our obligations unto God, forgetfullnesse is sometimes one cause of some unfaithfullnesse. The Psalmists connexion, Psal. 103.18. is considerable; *Those that keep his Covenant, and those who remember his Commandements to do them.* There is an Order of Parliament, requiring Ministers to reade the solemn League and Covenant in the Congregation, upon our Monethly Falt dayes; And I humbly move, that there may be an Order of the Common-Council of this famous City, that the Covenant which you this
Covenant-keeping persuaded.

day renew, may once at least in every quarter of the year be read amongst you; by means hereof, you would be quickned to appear both jointly and severally, in courses to promote both private and publike reformation according to your Covenant.

4. Seek strength from Heaven, by faith and prayer: The holy Apostle, holding up to Jesus Christ by humble confidence, could say, *I can do all through Christ strengthening me*, Phil 4.13. And the Psalmist makes this report of the success of his prayer; *In the day when I cried, thou answerest me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul*, Psal.138.3. Your selves best know, wherein Covenant-keeping sticks most with your selves, you are acquainted with your own remoraes, your own difficulties in this service. Consider that your helpe lies in the Lord your God, therefore fetch it thence by fervent believing prayers; plead the promises of Gods Covenant with you through Christ, that you through him may be able to deal faithfully, to do worthily; and be you confident that the Lord will never be wanting unto the soul which seeks him in truth, *He hath not said to the house of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.*

FINIS.