

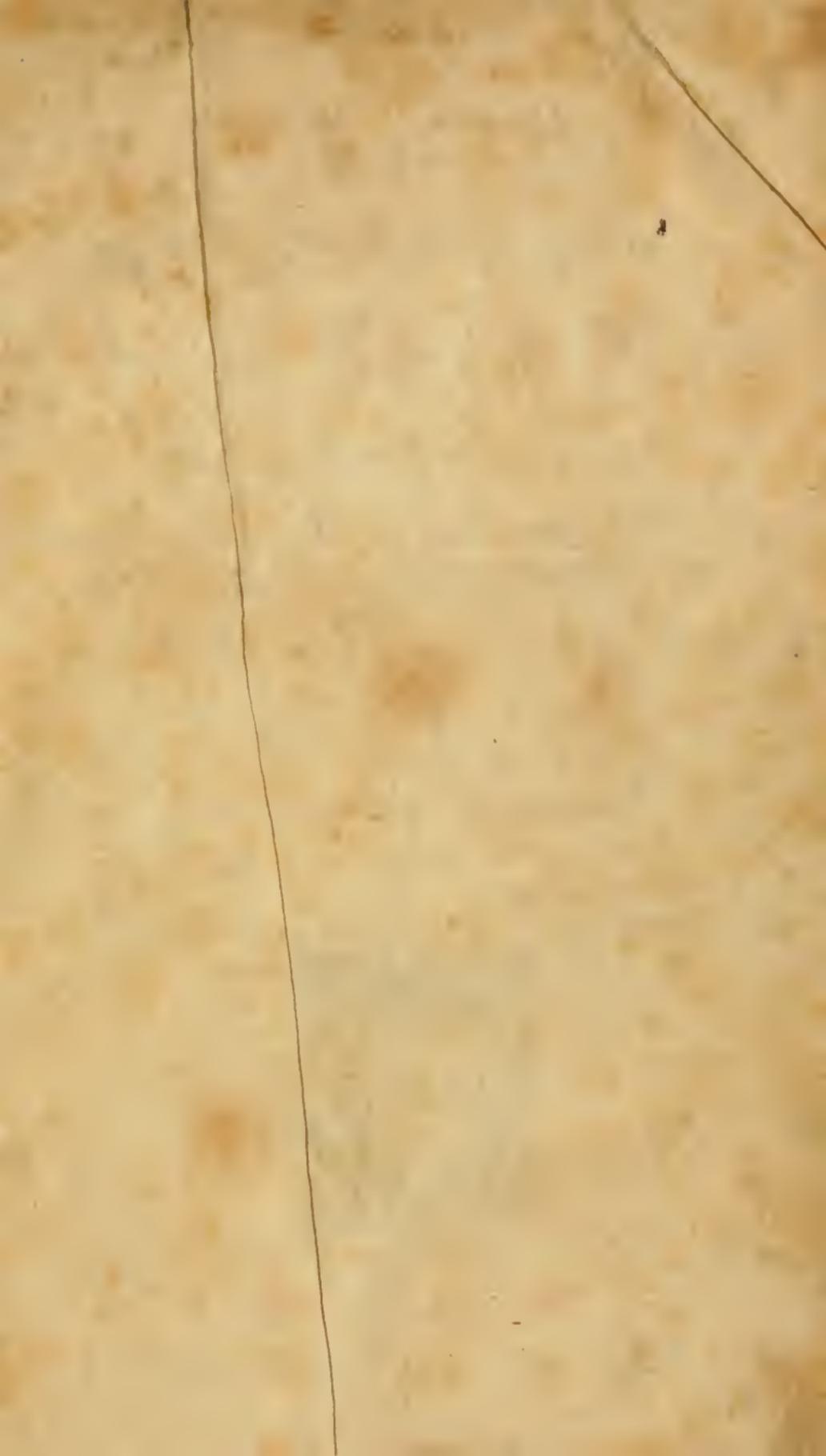


Division... *SCC*

Section... *3023*

No. *v. 1*







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COLLECTION
OF CATHOLICK
SERMONS,

Preach'd before their MAJESTIES

King *JAMES II.* *MARY* Queen-Confort,
CATHERINE Queen-Dowager, &c.

VOLUME the FIRST.

By the Reverend FATHERS

AYRAY,
BETHAM,
BIX,
CODRINGTON,
ELLIS,

GIFFARD,
GODDEN,
LEVISON,
SCARISBRIKE.



LONDON:

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

COLLECTION

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED

AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY'S

IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

BY

THE REV. FATHER

OF ST. MARY'S



1800

BOSTON



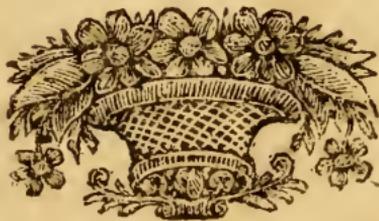
THE
PUBLISHER
TO THE
READER.



AS most of the following Discourses were deliver'd before a numerous Auditory, and Persons of the highest Distinction in the Nation, so they were favour'd with the universal Approbation of all pious and well-disposed People, upon account of the Pureness of their Morality, the Soundness of their Doctrine, and the moving Sentiments of Devotion, which they contain: And accordingly they have ever since been earnestly sought after, and carefully bought

The PUBLISHER *to the* READER.

up, by Catholicks in particular, though publish'd separately, and never in one Collection till now. Which Considerations, not to mention their being almost out of Print and in danger of being Lost, moved me to undertake this Edition, and to offer the present Collection to the Publick, not doubting but all well-disposed and disinterested Persons will be willing to encourage so useful a Work, and to contribute to the Preservation of these Pieces, so worthy, upon many Accounts, of being transmitted to Posterity.



C O N T



C O N T E N T S

To the FIRST VOLUME.

SERMON I. On ALL-SAINTS-DAY.

MATTH. v. 12.

Gaudete, & exultate, quia merces vestra copiosa est in cœlis.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Page 3

SERMON II. On the First Sunday of ADVENT.

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Et tunc videbunt Filium hominis venientem in nube cum potestate magnâ & majestâte.

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There

C O N T E N T S.

There hath stood one among you, whom you know not. Page 67

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Glory in the highest to God, and in earth, peace to men of good-will. 95

SERMON V. *Of the Nativity of our L O R D.*

L U K E ii. 15.

Pastores loquebantur ad invicem, transeamus usque ad Bethlehem, & videamus hoc verbum quod factum est, quod Dominus ostendit nobis.

The shepherds said one to another, let us now go even to Bethlehem, and see this word which is made (or this thing which is come to pass) which our Lord hath made known to us. 127

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Postquam consummati sunt dies octo, ut circumcideretur

C O N T E N T S.

cumcideretur puer, vocatum est nomen ejus
JESUS.

When eight days were accomplished, for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS. Page 163

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Ecce Magi ab oriente venerunt Jerosolymam, dicentes: Ubi est, qui natus est Rex Judæorum? vidimus enim stellam ejus in oriente, & venimus adorare eum.

Behold, there came wise-men from the east to Hierusalem, saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him. 189

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P R O V. viii. 15.

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Cæcus quidam sedebat secus viam mendicans;
-----Et clamavit, dicens; Jesu Fili David,
miserere mei!

*A certain blind man sat by the way side begging;
-----And he called out, saying; Jesus Son of David, have mercy on me!* 259

S E R-

C O N T E N T S.

S E R M O N X. *Upon the First Wednesday in L E N T.*

M A T T H. xii. 41.

Viri Ninivitæ surgent in iudicio cum generatione ista, & condemnabunt eam: quia poenitentiam egerunt in prædicatione Jonæ.

The Men of Ninive shall rise at the day of Judgment against this Generation, and condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas.

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Assumit Jesus Petrum & Jacobum & Joannem fratrem ejus, & ducit illos in montem excelsum seorsum; & transfiguratus est ante eos.

Jesus taking Peter, and James and John his brother, leadeth them into a high mountain apart; and was transfigured before them. 321

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Propter scelus populi mei percussus eum.

I have struck him for the sins of my people. 389

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

K I N G, Q U E E N,

A N D

Q U E E N D O W A G E R ;

In their MAJESTIES Chapel at St. *James's*,
upon ALL-SAINTS-DAY, *November 1, 1685.*

By the Reverend FATHER

Dom. PHIL. ELLIS, Monk of the Holy
Order of St. *BENEDICT*, and of the *English*
CONGREGATION.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY's Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.



S E R M O N I.

Preach'd before the

K I N G, Q U E E N,

A N D

Q U E E N D O W A G E R.

On ALL-SAINTS-DAY, *November 1.*

M A T T H. v. 12.

Gaudete, & exultate, quia merces vestra
copiosa est in cœlis.

*Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great
is your reward in heaven.*



IT is more than eight hundred
Years (most Sacred Majesty)
since the Church *Militant*,
the Parent as well as Sister of
the Church *Triumphant*, con-
descending to pious Instances of her Chil-

Psal. 150.

1.

Heb. 6.

10.

dren tending to Perfection, appointed this Solemnity for our Encouragement, and in Memory of *the Just made perfect*. And tho' a Feast of this Denomination be not so much recommended for its Antiquity, as for the *Piety*, which is always seasonable, and the *Fitness* of its Institution; yet it is no new thing to praise God in his Saints, as the Royal Prophet exhorts; nor to minister to them while living (as the Apostle advises) nor after their Departure to erect Altars to Almighty God under their Invocation, crown'd with Garlands, and echoing with Hymns of Joy, on the Anniversary Days of their Deposition, as was the Practice of the first Ages.

Ephes. 1.

17.

FOR since they possess what St. Paul wish'd the *Ephesians*; *The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, the eyes of their understanding being enlightned, to discern what is the hope, to which the Father of Glory calls them, and how great are the riches of the Glory of his inheritance in his Saints*: We who are Candidates of that Wisdom, who are cleansing and preparing our Eyes for that Revelation, can do no less than congratulate their Felicity, than celebrate their Victories, than attend their Triumphs.

Triumphs. And since we all fight under the same Standard, where they conquer'd, observe the same Order and Discipline, which render'd them victorious, join in the same Faith, (or at least in a Preparation of Mind to it) and in the same Practices of a holy Life, (or in a Tendency to them) which produced their *Reward* in Heaven; So is it fitting that once a Year we draw all our Devotions together, which were dispersed thro' the Revolution of their separate *Festivals*, and that the Church Militant join *in Body* with the Triumphant, to contemplate that Glory, which we hope one day will be our own, nay, which is already ours by Anticipation, because it is that of our Fellow-Members and Brethren.

FOR besides the blessed Hope that we shall arrive to the *Fellowship of the Saints*, a Hope that does not only intitle us to a Possession, but even *gives* while it *promises*, since they were in a mortal Condition whom he calls *not strangers and foreigners, but citizens of the Saints, and the household of God*: Besides this, I say, there is not any one in this most Honourable and Religious Assembly, that has not a *peculiar* Interest in the Honour of this Day: There is not any one of us that does not piously confide,
that

that he has a Parent or a Child, or a Relation, or a Friend, and what is an accumulative Joy to a Christian Heart, an *Enemy* and *Persecutor* enroll'd in this blessed Society. And how joyful a Reflection is it to your Sacred Majesties, that so many of your Royal Ancestors, and mighty Predecessors, ^{1 Peter 5.} *inherit a never fading crown of glory*, and ^{4.} possess a *Kingdom*, which they do not transmit, but willingly share with their Posterity, without lessening their Greatness! A *Kingdom*, where the Enjoyment is eternal, where Peace is essential, where the *Lion* and the *Lamb* lie down together, the *red* and *white* Roses are twisted in the same Garland, the *Edwards* and the *Henrys* embrace, and the fierce *Briton* rejoices that the Royal Blood of *Scotland* runs in *English* Veins. This blessed Expectation bore up their Spirits under the weight of Cares and Solitudes, which are inseparable from an earthly Crown; it kept a rein upon the Effervescence of Nature amidst the Temptations that hover about a Court; it made them postpone the Magnificence of their State, to the adorning their Souls; and while they desired what they did not see, made them contemn what they saw, and *Phil. 3. 8.* *count all as dross that they might gain Christ.*

Now

Now they see what they believed, they possess what they hoped, they obtain what they desired; and *thus shall the man be blessed that fears our Lord*; especially your Sacred Majesties, who inherit their Virtues no less than their Crowns, making it the principal Subject of your Joy, *That your reward will be great in heaven*. I beg also it may be the *Subject* of your Attention, after I have implored the Assistance of him that is the *Crown of all the Saints*, and which I hope to obtain by her Intercession who is so dignify'd a Member of that blessed Assembly, that if the other Saints are the Friends and Domesticks, she alone is the *Mother of God*, becoming so when the Angel saluted her, AVE MARIA.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

THERE never was a Question *started* so early in the World, nor so warmly *discuss'd*, and, what was most unhappy to Mankind, so late *resolved*, as that of the Rational Soul existing in another World, and of a well spent Life being attended with a Reward in Heaven. The sober and sound Men of every Age singled it out as
the

the chiefest Object of their profoundest Speculation, and the *Libertine* made it the Subject of his Mirth and Raillery; with this only Difference between other Times and these we live in, That the most Witty, and best Parted Men of the *Gentiles*, were the most serious Enquirers after this Verity, arrived to a *Glimpse* of it by the Light of Nature, and wrought out an imperfect *Idea* of it by the Force of Reason: But in our Days, in the *Noon* of Christianity, and the clearest Proposal of our *End*, it is become the Character of a *Wit*, either wholly to neglect this greatest Concern, or to study the *Resolution* meerly to revive the *Question*; and while the *Heathen* submits to the Doctrine of *Christ*, the *Christian* endeavours to subject it once more to Dispute; verifying the Paradox of the Philosopher, *That no one can be happy against his Will, nor would the ill Man be so by his Good-will.*

INDEED no Man can be so miserable as not to desire to be happy, and Self-love, which is the occasion of his Misery, is the Root of this Desire. But Men frame to themselves so *childish*, so *mean*, or so *sensual* a Beatitude, that themselves blush to own; but while they are not ashamed to pursue it, they lay an Obligation upon us,
who

who are the Dispensers of the Mysteries of God, to shew,

THAT there is no true Happiness to be found in the World (which is my First Point;) unless it be in a firm Belief, and serious Practice of *Christian Religion*, which is admirably comprised in the Gospel of the Day: This is my Second Point, and the only way that leads to a final Beatitude in Heaven (my last Consideration) where it is bestow'd as a *Reward* of our Faith and good Life, which shall make my Conclusion.

Division.

I.

II.

III.

I. THE Holy Ghost instructing King *Solomon* how to delineate the Folly of Man, and his Progress in it, who calculates his Happiness from worldly Enjoyments, reduces the Multitude of our Errors and Mistakes touching that Point, to *Three* principal Heads, as our Blessed Master and *Doctor of Justice*, seated on a Mountain (to express the Sublimeness of his Doctrine) comprehends all the Methods leading to a true Felicity, in *Eight Beatitudes*.

FOR every Man, that yields to the Bent of Nature, seeks his Enjoyment either,

I. IN corporal Pleasures, the Delights of the Senses;

B

II.

II. OR in Honour and Greatness, the Delights of the Passions;

III. OR in Wisdom and Knowledge, the Delights of the Mind.

A Gradation taken notice of by St. *John*,
 1 *Jehn* 2. tho' express'd in other terms, *Concupiscence*
 16. *of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life.*

FIRST. When a Man is arrived to the opening and Bloom of his Reason, that part of Life we call *Youth*, he becomes more heady than to be govern'd intirely by the Reason of another, yet remains more weak and unsteady than to be guided by his own: Wherefore *Sense* takes the Chair, the Heat of Blood and Corruption of Nature put in for his bosom Counsellors, and by their Advice he abandons himself to *Liber-tinism* and Disorder. His Language and Behaviour is admirably personated in the
 Sap. 2. 6. Book of *Wisdom*; *Let us go, says he, and*
 &c. *enjoy the things that are before us. Et utamur creatura tanquam in juventute celeriter: Let us live wpace, and use the creature before that and our youth pass away. Let us bathe our temples in rich wines, and shed sweet oyntments on our heads, let no flower*
 of

of the field escape our hand; we will crown our selves with roses before they wither; we will leave marks of our luxury and riot where-ever we go, Quoniam hæc est pars nostra, & hæc est fors, *This is our portion, and this is our end; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die.* 1 Cor. 15.
32.

BUT when by Access of Years that irregular Heat evaporates, and the Spirits grow more cool and temperate, he soon grows weary of such Pleasures as he finds by a woful Experience to ruin the Health and Constitution of his Body, and sadly to de-face the Beauty of his Soul. Then he upbraids his charming Deceivers, and expostulates with the Objects of his Folly; *Risum Eccl. 2. 2.*
reputavi errorem, & gaudio dixi, cur frustra deciperis? Laughter and merriment I thought a cheat, and I said to joy, Why hast thou vainly deceived me? For he plainly sees, that can never be the Happiness of a reasonable Creature, which is a Torment to the Reason, and a Remorse to the Conscience, where the Delight passes, and the Sting remains.

* SECONDLY, With such Reflections the *Prodigal* returning into himself, takes leave of his former Courses, and enters upon another more refined and elevated, changing

indeed his *Passion*, but not his *Slavery*. He quits the *concupiscence of the flesh* for *concupiscence of the eyes*, and *pride of life*; the *proud* and *curious* Person being only the *sensual* Man reform'd. He aspires to Honour and Preferment, courts Fame and Esteem, entertains the largest Retinue he can make, and worships the Populace, that they may return his Adoration with Interest; and, in a word, labours to hide and varnish over the Stains of a corrupt and *infamous Life*, with the *Formalites* and *Lustre* of Greatness. But no sooner is he well acquainted with his new Choice, than he discovers the *Vanity* and *Emptiness* of that too; the thing for which he is so valued by others, sits uneasy upon his Shoulders; Use and Custom take off the Sense of Pleasure, and his Happiness corrupts into *Affliction of Spirit*. He experiences that Honours too have their Weight, that Dignities are Burthens and Servitude under a finer Name; *Fulgidi compedes & clara miseria*, Golden Fetters and a dazzling Misery: Riches, but the Occasion of Disquiet; Pomp, the Object of Envy; Fame, but the Opinion of Men, and of no longer Duration than their other Fancies.

Psalms 75.
6.

Dormierunt somnum suum (says a Prince, as Great and Powerful, as he was Learned and

Holy)

Holy) & nihil invenerunt omnes viri divitiarum in manibus suis; Thus the Rich and the Great sleep out their golden dreams, and when they awake find nothing in their hands.

THIRDLY, But perhaps the Contemplation of *Wisdom* may afford a more solid Fruition. To distinguish *Verity* from *Vanity*, Truth from Falshood, seem to raise a Man above the Level of Mankind, distinguishes him from the unthinking Multitude, and cuts off many Branches of our Misery which spring from *Ignorance*, and want of Reflexion. But alas, the Crop doth not answer the Tillage: *Qui addit scientiam, addit & laborem; He that increases knowledge, adds to his labour*, but not to his Satisfaction. In many things our *Principles* are meerly supposed, our *Maxims* prove but *Opinions*; the *Causes* and *Natures* of the lowest and most obvious things are so far above our reach, and our Understanding so clouded and circumscribed within so narrow Limits, that again with the wisest of Men *he deserts all his Labour*, and discovers even this to be the *greatest Vanity of all*; while the Fruit he reaps from so much Pains, amounts only to a *puffing up of the mind* (as the Apostle 1 Cor. 8. 1. speaks) and as *St. Augustine* ingeniously comments from his own Experience, *Superbæ*

perba dejectioni & inquietæ lassitudini, to a haughty Dejection of Spirit, and restless Weariness of Heart.

THERE is no Man that gives way to the Inclinations of corrupt Nature, but has follow'd one or more of these Courses; and I appeal to his own Experience, if he has not fail'd of his Expectation: *if his eye has been satisfy'd with seeing, or his ear with hearing, or his heart with desiring*, I allow him to have found a Beatitude where no wise Man would have sought it. But while I see him like the *Dove* flying from the *Ark*, and not finding where he can *rest his foot*; while I contemplate every Sinner in the State of a weary and weather-beaten *Traveller*, that sits down on the barren Sands in an untraced Desert, uneasy in himself, and uncertain whether he be nearer his Journey's end than when he first set out; I am ready to pronounce with the Royal Prophet, *In circuitu impii ambulant; The wicked walk in a circle*: They make forward in vain, they only change their *Place* by shifting their *Pleasures*, but they approach not a Hairsbreadth nearer the Centre, *Beatitude*.

Psalms 11.
9.

You desire to be happy; so far you are in the right, 'tis what we were created to.

St. Aug. *Bonum quæris, sed non benè*; What you seek

is

is good, but it is not where you look after it ;
It is not found in the land of those that live Job 28.
deliciously, said holy Job. You search after^{13.}
Life in the Region of Death and in despite
of our Saviour's Admonition, you are still
looking for *Grapes upon Thorns*, and *Figs*
upon *Thistles* ; for *Joy in the Vale of Tears* :
non invenitur. You place your End among
things inferior to your selves ; you enquire
after *Happiness* among things without,
while the *Kingdom of God is within you*. Luke 17.

IT is my Second Point, That nothing^{27.}
but *Christian Religion*, and the Observance
of its *Doctrines* and *Precepts*, can make a
Man happy.

II. IT is the peculiar Advantage, the Ex-
cellence, and (as I may say) the *incommu-
nicable Attribute* of *Christ's Doctrine*, that
it discovers a Man to himself, that it opens,
and searches and heals those Wounds, which
all other Religions either *imperfectly* cure, as
the *Old Law* ; or labour to *conceal*, as the
Moral of Philosophy ; or *widen and inflame*,
as the *Pagan* and *Mahometan* Worship.
None but *Christianity* proposes an End
worthy an intellectual Being, and prescribes
Means to obtain it proportion'd to a reason-
able Agent.

FOR

I. FOR the *Jewish Law*, (as the Apostle says) indeed *was just and holy, yet brought nothing to perfection*; its *Promises* for the most part mean and carnal, a *Land flowing with milk and honey*, a *numerous issue*, and *length of life*: The *Means* servile and co-active, terrible in the *Promulgation*, amidst *Thunder and Lightning*; Severe in the *Exaction*, with *Menaces of Death*, repeated at every turn; And infine, difficult and heavy in the *Execution*, a *Yoke, which neither our Fathers, says St. Peter, nor we were able to bear.*

Rom. 7.
12.
Heb. 7.
19.

Acts 15.
10.

II. THE Religion of the *Pagans or Gentiles*, stands condemn'd for no less than gross and palpable *Contradictions* to the in-born Principles of *Reason*. For a fundamental Error in the *Object of Divine Worship*, by constituting a *Plurality of Gods*, by paying *Divine Honours to Creatures*. For the *manner* too of their *Worship*, human and ungrounded *Inventions*, and these, either unnaturally cruel, as the *sacrificing of Men*; or superstitiously foolish, as *adoring Idols*; or shamefully unclean, such as *Cato*, or any grave Person, would blush to assist at. For the *End*, either meerly *Negative*, by teaching the *Mortality and perishing of the Soul*; or by *assigning* it an idle and empty *Happiness*

ness in the *Elysian Walks*, which rises no higher than to a meer Privation of Pain.

EVERY one knows the *Doctrine* of *Mahomet* to be stuff'd with so many Absurdities, the *Means* of its Propagation so violent and bloody, and the *End* (a carnal Paradise) so beneath the Inclinations of an honest Mind, that one may wonder how it can be favour'd by any, except that barbarous People, whose Brutality it indulged, and with whose Arms it travell'd and conquer'd. Believe me, Christians, a just Punishment of God upon those Nations (a Punishment which I pray may never come home to our own Doors) for the Abuse and Contempt of a more holy Religion.

III.

AND these Religions consider'd in their fonder Parts, principally regard the exterior, and Ceremonies of Worship more than the Substance; they *draw not Man into himself*, and therefore merit not the Denomination they bear; they are levell'd to the gross Conceptions of the *Vulgar*, but are not Religions for Men of good *Sense* and *Learning*.

A Religion purely spiritual, would indeed be more adapted to the Understanding of sharp and learned Men, but what would become then of the far major Part of Mankind, that is led by *sensible to spiritual*

C

things?

things? Now only *Christian Religion* can pretend to this *double Perfection*, being a Debtor *both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise*, to the Unlearned as well as to the Learned; shewing in her *exterior* a grave Decency of Rites and Ceremonies; and offering to the *interior* a Doctrine so chaste, so pure, so perfect, that a gentle and docil Soul would be sorry it should not be true, and which a Man of Reason must acknowledge to be the *only true one*.

FOR that Religion can only be so, which proposes to Man the *Knowledge of himself*, as I before alledged; for without the Discovery of himself and of his Nature, he can never know what is his *End*, or what are the *Means* directing to it, and by evident Consequence, can have no true Idea either of *God* or *Virtue*.

Now to the Knowledge of his *own Nature*, 'tis requisite he discern the Dignity and Misery of it; the Perfection of which it is capable, and the Corruption in which it is immersed. *If we do not conceive our selves to be most excellent and noble Creatures, (says an eminent Writer) we are intolerably stupid; and if we do not perceive at the same time, that we are wretched, full of Pride, Passion,*
and

and Weakness, we are strangely blind. Yet not any Teacher besides Jesus Christ ever pretended to clear and lay open those two important Verities, That by the Excellency of our Nature we are capable of enjoying the sovereign Good, and of reigning with God in Heaven; but by the Corruption of our Nature we are unworthy of him. 'Tis absolutely and equally necessary in order to Man's Happiness, that he be convinced of these Truths; for it is equally dangerous to know our design'd End, without knowing our deserved Misery; and to know our Misery, without knowing the Means how to repair our Ruins, to retrieve our Innocence, to ward the Punishment, and to re-entitle us to the reward in heaven.

BUT this is above the Flight of Reason, without the Assistance of Revelation, that is, Religion. Philosophy leaves us quite in the dark, the Stoa and the Academy talk wildly upon the Point, and prescribe Methods that can never be reduced to Practice, and would not do the work if they could be: And tho' divine Plato discover'd the Happiness of the Creature to consist in becoming like the Creator; yet his Morals are as defective as those of his Neighbours, and he must yield up his mighty Title to Jesus Christ the Teacher

of Justice, who in the Gospel of this Day (which is the Beginning of that truly divine Sermon recorded by the *Evangelist* in this and the two following Chapters) establishes all the natural Principles of Truth and Goodness, fills up the Imperfections of the *Judai-cal*, dashes out the unlawful Permissions of the *Heathen Moral*, delivers a perfect Idea of *the Science of Saints, Scientiæ Sanctorum*; and in a word, draws an exact Map of all the Ways that lead to our eternal Beatitude. To shew this my last Point.

Sap. 10.
10.

III. GOD often tells us in his holy Word, that he has *set fire and water, good and evil before us*, that we may stretch out our Hand to which we please, giving us sufficient Strength to *pursue* the one, and to *avoid* the other: In the right Use of which Liberty, and Compliance with Divine Grace, consists *true wisdom*; for *to fear God*, which chiefly regards the avoiding of Evil, and *to keep his Commandments*, which regards the Election of Good, is *the whole Duty of Man, Deum time, &c.*

Eccles. 12.
13.

Now this *avoiding of Evil* is chiefly placed in restraining our Affections, and weaning them from the Love of temporal things; and because (as *St. Paul* observes) *those that will*

1 Tim. 6.
9.

will be rich, fall into temptation, and the snare of the devil; Therefore *Beati pauperes*, Blessed are the poor. Yet because a Man may turn his Poverty into a Subject of *Vanity*, and as *Plato* smartly reply'd to the *Cynique*, may trample upon Riches and Greatness with greater Pride than another retains them, Therefore, *Beati pauperes spiritu*; Blessed are the poor, not simply, but such as are poor in spirit. For when God has bestow'd upon you a plentiful Fortune, the Law of *Christ* does not oblige you to renounce that as Evil, which is the Gift of God, and a Blessing; but to limit your Desires, and to consider your self as his Steward, thro' whose Hands he conveys his Blessings unto your indigent Neighbour. This you must do, if you would avoid Evil. But the *Election of Good* stops not here; *Charitas Christi urget nos*, The love of *Christ* carries us on to be earnest and zealous for the Performance of every Duty; earnest in our own Practice, and zealous to encourage others in the Ways of Heaven; Therefore

I.

Beati qui esuriunt, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, and when they arrive to the Term of their Labours, they shall be satisfy'd. But the mean time they must not lose Courage, if they meet with any Opposition

II.

position in the way; for *he shall not be crown'd that does not fight lawfully.* The *Law of Arms* to the *Soldiers of Christ*, is chiefly *passive Valour*. Prayers and Tears are the only Weapons of a *Christian*, (says the *Fathers*) and those that otherwise resist (cries the *Apostle*) *shall receive to themselves damnation.* Therefore *Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur, Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake.* And that no one may think this a hard Lesson, the Encouragement is so bright, that any wise Man as well as *St. James*, would count it all joy to fall into divers temptations; for the reward is so great in heaven, that nothing less than the *Kingdom of Heaven* it self shall be the Reward: for theirs is the *Kingdom of Heaven.*

IV. SUCH is a *Christian* in the *Field*; but he is also the Member of *Civil Society*, and the best constituted Government in the *World*; which teaches him such Calmness in his Motion, such Modesty in his Behaviour, such Sincerity in his Dealings, such a Command of his Passions, as set a Beauty on our *Religion*, which never any other so much as pretended to, as Canonize *Civility*, and make *Good-breeding* a *Christian Virtue*, worthy a *Beatitude*, for *Blessed are the meek,*
deserving

deserving a reward, for they shall inherit the land, no question that which the Psalmist mentions, *the land of the living.*

Psal. 26.
13.

BUT if you sit down contented with your own Performances, you will fall short of the Reward; Because *Mandavit unicuique de proximo suo*; God has commanded every one to be concern'd for his Neighbour. And it is not sufficient to take notice of his corporal Wants, if you pass by his spiritual unregarded. Therefore, *Beati qui lugent*; Blessed are those that mourn, that lay to heart, and take home to themselves the Excesses and Corruptions of their fellow Members. For if the King and Prophet had reason to lay claim to a Share in the Merits of all good Men, *I am a partaker with all those that fear thee, and keep thy commandments*; have not we as much reason to apprehend we shall be accountable for all the Sins of Mankind that we can obviate, or for not bewailing them, if we cannot? And tho' the Effect correspond not to our Endeavours, yet *our reward shall be great in heaven*; *Ipsi consolabuntur*, Such shall be comforted.

Eccles. 17.
12.

V.

Psal. 118;
63.

BUT some Offences are directed against our selves, which we must be as ready to pardon, as to correct those which are committed against others; This being the heroic,

VI.

roick,

roick, and (as I may say) the specifick Virtue of a *Christian*, inspiring a Generosity not only to pass by an Injury, not only to scorn a Revenge, (a thing so sweet to Nature, and so honourable to *false Reputation*) but even to bear above the *Resentment*; and if I may apply the Apostle's Phrase, *To insert the olive-branch into the wild olive*, and graft Kindnesses upon the Stock of Injuries and Ingratitude: for *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*. And tho' the Word *οἱ ἐλεήμονες* properly signifies those that give *Alms*, St. *Augustine* teaches us *there is no Alms-deed like that of forgiving an Injury*.

VII. YET this Charity limited to our *private* Concerns, is not easily distinguish'd from *Self-love*; and *to forgive that we may be forgiven*, carries so much of Interest along with it, that a Man who is not tender and compassionate to his Brother, is at the same time barbarous and inhumane to himself. Love therefore, is of a more diffusive quality, and must extend to all those Feuds and Differences which are daily breaking out between such as have no other relation to our selves, than the common Bands of humane Society. And upon this account *Blessed are the Peace-makers, Beati pacifici*; a Benediction

diction that reaches from the *Cottager* to the
Monarch that sits upon the Throne, takes
 in all Mankind that lends a Hand towards
 establishing the *Empire of Peace*, but sheds
 it self more plentifully on the *Head*, that
 sacred Head, by whose most wise Conduct,
 and unwearied Industry, we rest this Day
 in the *Beauty of Peace*, while he sits above
 a living Representation of the only God
 we worship, *whose Place is made in Peace.* *Psalm 75.*
 And if such as contribute the most to the
 Welfare of Mankind, deserve a higher Re-
 ward, we that are in a lower Station, cannot
 envy them a more elevated Benediction;
Quoniam Filii Dei vocabuntur, They shall be
styled the Sons of God, because they carry on
 the great Work which the *Son of God* be-
 gan in the World, *reaching from end to end* *Sap. 8. 1.*
powerfully, and disposing of all things sweetly,
 as the Wise-man predicted; and by propa-
 gating a *Blessed Union* in this nether *Hie-*
rusalem, antedate the Joys of that *which is*
above, which is our Mother, and where all
 her Children *have but one Heart, and one*
Soul; neither divided by Interest, nor dis-
 quieted by Passion, nor stain'd by Imper-
 fection; but perfectly resembling that
 of their Blessed Master, described by the
 Apostle, *Holy, unblemished, innocent, made* *Heb. 7.*
D *higher* *26.*

higher than the Heavens, (which is only the Place of their Beatitude) the *Beatitude* VIII. it self consisting in this, *Blessed are the clean of heart, because they shall see God.* I reserved this to the last, it being the very Top of the *mystical Ladder*, where our Lord appears leaning; for upon such his Spirit rests, and by such Purity they rest eternally in him.

AND now before I was aware I have clear'd the last Point that I design'd to discourse to you, the *essential Glory* of the Saints. *Clear'd it*, did I say? 'Twas an improper word: Had I the Tongue of Men and Angels, I could never express what
 1 Cor. 2. *the Heart of Man cannot conceive*; and you
 9. know the Heart can conceive infinitely beyond what the Tongue can express. The great *Apostle* in his Rapture to the
 2 Cor. 12. *Third Heaven*, I am apt to think, among
 4. those *arcana verba*, those *unspeakable words* he heard, had some account of this blessed State; but he gives us no other Prospect
 1 Cor. 13. than thro' a *Glass*, and in a *Riddle*, that
 12. we know now only in part; the rest is wrapt up in the Obscurity of *Faith*, is left to the Expectations of *Hope*, and an Impossibility of Expression, *Non licet homini loqui.*

BUT

BUT while my Gospel acquaints you that you shall *see God*, what need you more to raise your Imaginations, to inflame your Hearts, to quicken and inspirit your Desires? Or if the Word *seeing* cannot put into you a lively Idea of that Glory, add to it the Explication in another Text, *This is eternal life, to KNOW thee, the true God, and whom thou has sent, Jesus Christ.* To have our Understandings fill'd with a clear Knowledge of the most perfect *Being*, of the sovereign *Truth*, of the original *Cause* of things, and in that of all other Causes, Effects, and Productions, as well natural as supernatural, makes the *Man of Reason*, the *Lover of Truth*, to fall out of himself, to strive to break his Chains, and languish *to be with Christ*, and wish with the Royal Prophet, that *He had the wings of a Dove, that he might fly, and be at rest*, in Contemplation of that self-evident Truth, supream Reason, *VERITY*, (as I say) the chief Attribute of God.

John 17.
3.

Psaln 55.
6.

BUT you are not to imagine that the Beatitude of the Saints is placed in a perpetual gazing upon the Divine Beauties, or in a sterile Speculation, of Truth; from

the Mind it flows into the Heart, from the the Understanding into the Will, penetrating all the interior of the Soul, *transforming her in a certain manner into God*, begetting Ecstasies without Emotion, Languishings without Defect, Enjoyments without Satiety, Love without Measure, and Fruition without End.

O you Joys of Heaven, how do you swallow up our Thoughts, and fill us at once with Pleasure and Amazement! And yet we must cry out as the Queen of *Sheba* did when she beheld a faint Representation of you in the Court of King *Solomon*, that *Half your Delights have not been told us*. Blessed are they that *stand in thy Courts, and minister to thy King* Day and Night; *Day without Night* I should have said, where every Moment is an Age, *Et mille anni tanquam dies*, and a thousand Years cannot fill up a Day: Love is the Measure of this Duration, and the Eternity of God the Measure of Love,

Psalms 89.
4.

BLESSED God! Thy Nature is *Goodness*, and therefore thy Work must be *Mercy*; that thou art so free of thy Creatures, I do not wonder; thou bestowest them on Man, thy better Creation; but why art thou so liberal

liberal of *thy Self*? Why hast thou prepared such a Happiness in Heaven for those that are seeking a Paradise upon Earth? That are contented to barter their *Eternal weight of Glory* for a gaudy Trifle, for a shining piece of Earth, for the gratifying a Lust, or an Ambition, for a *mean*, or a *sordid*, or at the best, but a *momentary Pleasure*? *Cur posuisti pretium in manu stulti*? Why hast thou laid such an inestimable Treasure in the Hands of ungrateful and insensible Men, that neither know the Value, nor value the Use.

No, Christians, we have no reason to expostulate with our God; for tho' by condescending to our Infirmary, he has under-set the Joys of his Kingdom, yet there are Conditions proposed, and without the Performance of which, there is no Heaven for us: *Qui vicerit possidebit hæc*; He that overcomes (says he) shall possess these things. *Apoc. 21. 7.* And do we fondly promise our selves the Triumph before the Victory, or a Victory before we have struck a Stroke? Indeed *Christ* bids us *be confident, for he has overcome the world*; but does not he give us warning, that whosoever observes not the same Discipline, *takes not up his Cross, and follows* *John 16. 33.* *Matt. 10. 38.*

lowers him, is not worthy of him? But is not
Jesus Christ the Author of eternal Salva-
tion? Yes (replies the Apostle) to them
that obey him. But does not the just man
live by Faith? Yes, if it work by Charity:
For he that trusts to the Strength of his
Faith, without the Support of a good Life,
is as blameable as the Apostles, when they
rejoiced at their Power of ejecting Devils.
Tho' our Faith be of such Prevalency as
to remove mountains, still by Good-works
we are to make our calling and election sure,
still we are to work out our salvation with
fear and trembling, and only rejoice that
our reward is great in heaven, a Reward
not bestow'd on those, who stand all
day idle in the market-place, but to those
that labour in the vineyard; a Reward that
shall be distributed in number, weight; and
measure in Proportion, and beyond all Pro-
portion to our smallest Performances, but
shall be more plentifully bestow'd on those,
who, like your Sacred Majesties, bear the
burthen of the heat, and of the day; which
we wish for the Good of your People, you
may long support, and hear, not till after
a long and prosperous Reign, that com-
fortable Invitation of your Original, Ye are
they,

they, which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the Tribes of your own Israel, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Luke. 22.
28.

F I N I S.



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before their

M A J E S T I E S,

I N

St. J A M E S's,

O N

A D V E N T - S U N D A Y,

N O V E M B E R 28, 1686.

By the Reverend FATHER

T H O M A S C O D R I N G T O N,
Preacher in Ordinary to His M A J E S T Y.

As Publish'd by their M A J E S T I E S Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.



S E R M O N II.

Preach'd before their

M A J E S T I E S

On the First SUNDAY of *ADVENT*,
Being *November 28, 1686.*

L U K E XXI. 27.

Et tunc videbunt Filium hominis venientem in nube cum potestate magnâ & majestate.

And then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power and majesty.



THE *Catholick Church* (Sacred Majesties) preparing Us for the *Anniversary Solemnity of the Human Birth of Christ*; acquaints Us, in this Morning's *Gospel*, with the Manner of his second Appearance

pearance to the World; which shall be in Judgment: That entering into our selves at the frightful Remembrance of that dreadful *Day*, we now may have recourse to our dearest Saviour in quality of our *Redeemer*, as Then we must appear before him in quality of our *Judge*. The Thoughts of that Appearance made such a deep Impression upon the great *St. Jerom's* Soul, that neither Day nor Night could work it out: And if we will believe himself, that tells us so; His Ears were hourly alarm'd with that terrible Summons of the final Trumpet, *Rise ye Dead, and come to Judgment!*

THE Terror of that dreadful *Day* proclaims it self sufficiently in the very Preparation for it, *Erunt signa in Sole & in Luna*, &c. Signs shall appear in the *Sun* and *Moon*; Earth-quakes on the Land; Innundations from the Sea; the Elements in a Conflict; the Powers, of Heaven, shaken and disturb'd: The Surface of the Earth in a general Conflagration; and poor Man trembling in the mean while, all that poor moment he hath yet to live, at the dreadful Consequences ready to befall him and the whole World; *Arescentibus hominibus præ timore quæ supervenient universo orbi.*

SUCH

SUCH frightful Preparations must certainly be attended with as frightful Proceedings; A Draught of which, I shall represent to your serious Thoughts: Forming in little, a Scheme of that great Court of Judicature, and the Transactions of that dreadful Day. This shall be the Subject of your present Entertainment; which, contrary to the accustom'd method of Partition, I intend to pursue in a continued Discourse; after we have implored the Divine Assistance by the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin. AVE MARIA, &c.

Et tunc videbunt Filium hominis venientem in nube cum potestate magnâ & majestate.

And then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power and majesty.

TO judge rightly of the Greatness and Majesty, wherein our Saviour will appear at his *second coming*; We must put in opposition to it the Lowliness and Humility, wherein he appear'd at his *first*. St. Paul describing the Manner of his *Incarnation*, expresses in these Words, To what a Depth of Abjection that God of Hosts abas'd himself: *Exinanivit semetipsum*, He (in a manner)

Phil. 2. 7.

ner) reduced himself to nothing. And he that rightly reflects upon his Life, and Death, will have just reason to give credit to the *Apostle's* Words. But Then he bore the person of an *Advocate*, Now he assumes the Person of a *Judge*; Then he put on the very Nature of the *Delinquent*, Now indeed he wears it to confound him; Then he came to preach and practise the humble Duties of a Christian Life, Now he comes to exact a rigorous Account of the Performance; Then he appear'd at a time, that (speaking in his own Expression) was not his, *Hæc est hora vestra*, said he to his Enemies, and in them to all Sinners, *This* (meaning the time of this present Life) *This is your hour, and the power of darkness*: But the Day of Judgment is his Hour and Day, and therefore properly call'd the Day of the Lord, *Dies Domini*. In fine, *He came then into the World, and they knew him not; he came amongst his friends, and they received him not*: Now therefore he comes with a design both to be known, and fear'd; and happy is he who now accompanies him! Happy is he, whom now he acknowledges for a Friend!

Luke 22.
53.

THUS then the King of Glory, *Jesus Christ*, environ'd with the whole Host of Heaven, acknowledged and adored by all
Creatures

Creatures for their Sovereign Lord, with Joy to his Friends and Terror to his Enemies, appears and seats himself in Majesty, to commence the General Judgment of the whole World. A Judgment as necessary to be perform'd, as Providence and Justice are Attributes necessarily belonging to the Nature of a God. For if we think him God, who is our Judge, and this same God the Governor of the World; we cannot surely imagine that he knows not, nor sees the Practices therein: And since his Providence hath an Eye upon Us here below; we cannot believe him either so ill intention'd, as to please himself with the Ills he sees; or again, so negligent, as not to punish them. Yet daily Experience acquaints us with the present State of this World; we see the Wicked often prosper, and flourish in it: The Just, on the contrary, afflicted, and kept under. At the sight of which the *Royal Prophet* at First was startled, until his Faith had led him to consider their last Ends *Donec intelligam in novissimis eorum*; O *Psalms 72.* then he rested satisfy'd with the Justice of *17, 19,* his Creator, being well assur'd that the *20.* temporal Happiness of such was but a Dream, *Velut somnium surgentium*; And that they perish'd eternally in the Life to come,

come, *Perierunt propter iniquitatem suam*: Thus appears the Necessity of a General Judgment to make known this Justice and Providence of God: And to let the World be a Spectator of the just Rewards of Men, as it was once a Witness of their Works.

BESIDES, when the Sinner is judged at the Moment of his Death, he is then judged in part only; the Soul indeed is sentenced, and after punish'd, whilst the Body sleeps securely in the Grave. That the Judgment therefore of the Almighty may be compleat and perfect, it is necessary that the Body be judged too: That, as with the Soul it had a share in Sin, so it may also have a share in Punishment, *Totus homo debet judicari, quia totus homo peccavit*, saith *Tertullian*; *The whole Man ought to be judged, because the whole Man hath sinned*.

THIS Judge then is seated, and the Books of Conscience open'd; *Judicium sedit, & libri aperti sunt*. Christians, Let Us fancy our selves now present in this great Court of Judicature, and all those Objects of Terror in prospect here before our Eyes. This Fancy only minds us of a Part, which we must every one of us perform hereafter as Parties concern'd at that Bar. Amongst the many Motives a poor Sinner hath to
dread

dread the Consequences of that terrible Day, Two particularly offer themselves to my Reflection; the Exactness of the Judgment, and the Exactness of the Justice. A Judgment in Delinquents Causes; is esteem'd without exception, most exact, when it proceedeth regularly on the Depositions of the Accusers and the Clearness of the Facts. Our Accusers at this Tribunal, are our own sinful Actions, speaking by the Mouths of our Conscience; and unfortunate indeed is that Prisoner, who takes for his Companions to the Bar, those very Witnesses that will appear against him. Such to every Man are his own Works, *Opera enim illorum sequuntur illos*; For their works do follow them; saith St. *John* in his Revelations. These our bosom Friends will stand up in Evidence against us, their Numbers increasing according to the Numbers of our Sins committed; Nor is this all, for the Devils also will help on vigorously to strengthen against us, and make the Indictment good. On his Right-hand, (saith St. *Anselm*, in the Scene he represents to us of the State of a poor Sinner before his Judge.) On his Right-hand will his Sins be placed that shall accuse him: On his Left-hand multitudes of Devils: Below him the horrid Chaos of Hell; Above him an

*Apoc. 14.
13.*

*De Mis.
Hem.*

angry and provoked Judge: Without him the World all on Fire; Within him a Conscience also all in Flames: Ah wretched Sinner! Thus press'd on every side, whither wilt thou fly? It is impossible to hide thy self, and intolerable to appear.

HAVING thus against us such strong Accusers, in vain we may hope to darken the Clearness of the Facts, or conceal our Faults from the Knowledge of our Judge. St. Paul assures us of the contrary in his second to the *Corinthians*, *Omnes nos* (saith he) *manifestari oportet ante tribunal Christi*. We all are to appear indeed; but that's not all: *We all are to be manifested before the tribunal of Christ*; That is, all expos'd and made known to the Eye of the whole World; our whole inward Man set out to view, even to the very secret Corners of our Hearts and Consciences: *Omnes nos manifestari oportet ante tribunal Christi!* Good God! What strange Discoveries will be made that Day of things now buried in Ignorance and Silence! How grossly then will some cold Christians find themselves mistaken, who so often in their Life-time did strive to lull their murmuring Consciences asleep, with, *Pax, Pax & Securitas, Peace, Peace and Security!* Imagining fondly their careless way

way of living, a sufficient Disposition to a happy Death; imagining a Life (because it is accompany'd with the Profession of a *Catholick*) yet passing away in a supine Forgetfulness of their Christian Duties, drowsy and sleepy to the Thoughts of Heaven, lost in a Fruitless wasting away of Time, drown'd in Vanities, bury'd in the unnecessary Cares of this World, with a cold, *Lord have mercy upon me, now and then* in the Confession-Seat: Imagining, I say, a Life thus led so secure a Preparation for another World, as if there were no more required for gaining Heaven! *Sed cum dixerint, Pax & Securitas*; But whilst they whisper to their crying Consciences (continues the *Apostle* in the same Chapter) whilst they whisper to their Consciences, *Peace and Security*, *Repentinus eis superveniet interitus, Unexpectedly they will see themselves eternally lost.* Then they shall rightly understand the Greatness of those Failings, which were the Occasion of their Perdition, and which nevertheless in their Life-time they set so little by: Whilst so many other wretched Souls lost also peradventure by their bad Example, will rise at the same time in Judgment against them, and will ask for their Salvation at their Hands.

Curfed Example! Thou alone, to how many haft thou been the Occafion of their eternal Ruin? *Ab alienis parce ſervo tuo!*
From other mens fins, ſpare good Lord, thy ſervant!

Pſalm 18.
 14.

1 Cor. 4.
 7.

BUT to acquaint our ſelves throughly with the Numbers of thoſe Failings, which ſhall then be manifeſted at the Tribunal of Chriſt: We may judge of the account we are to render, by the Number of the Favours we have received. Let us then run over in our Thoughts the Infinity of thoſe Bleſſings, with which our Souls are richly ſtored, and which Heaven from the moment of our Creation, doth daily ſhower upon us in this Life, both in the order of Nature and of Grace; *Quid habes, quod non accepisti?*
What haſt thou, O Man, which thou haſt not received? Firſt in the order of Nature, thy Being to diſtinguiſh thee from Nothing; thy Life, to diſtinguiſh thee from Stocks and Stones; thy Reaſon, to diſtinguiſh thee from brute Animals: A Body to lodge thy Soul in, well proportion'd, and organiz'd, even to the wonder of Nature it ſelf; this ſame Soul nobly attended with three Powers, conſtantly waiting on her Motions: An Underſtanding, to apprehend and conſider the Works of this great God of Nature: A Memory,

Memory, to remember and reflect upon them: A Will, to honour, love and thank him for them; all these the Effects of his Creation, that framed thee into Something out of Nothing, and every Moment conserves thee by his general Providence, lest from that Something thou return to Nothing. *Quid habes, quod non accepisti?*

THUS far the Goods of Nature; let us now ascend higher to those of Grace: *First*, Thy first State of Original Justice, which we all indeed forfeited in our first Parents Sin; then thy miraculous Restoration at the Price of the Death of thy Redeemer; the Honour done thy Nature in the Person of thy Saviour, to see it placed above the Angels; the Favour of being now a Member of his Church: The Light of Faith, to assist thee in the Knowledge and Love of him; the Help of sanctifying Grace, to give a value to thy Actions, and to render them worthy of eternal Glory. Oh Christian! What Advantages are these! Nay, there is not the least motion of exciting Grace, that ever reaches our Souls; The least good Thought, or Inspiration that carries us to Good, that we receive not from Christ as his Gift, and the Fruit of his bitter Passion and Death. Oh, *Quid habes, quod non accepisti?*

cepisti? What a Favour, think ye, is done to you, and you, as many as you are (whose Names are written in the Book of Life) to be redeem'd, when the Angels themselves were quite forsaken; to be baptiz'd, whilst the Infidel is forsaken; to continue firm and faithful to his Church, whilst the Mis-believer is forsaken; To return so often to Grace by *Penance*, whilst the Impenitent is forsaken: And finally, to persevere in this Grace to the End, when even an *Apostle* of Christ himself was at last forsaken. What Favours are these and extraordinary too! But observe a little for your Instruction the Words of the Great *St. Basil*, *Judicium gratiam sequitur; Grace is follow'd with judgment*: That is, to the Measure we have been favour'd, we shall accordingly be judged for it. This Truth is also strengthen'd by the Pen of an *Evangelist*, as deliver'd from the Mouth of Jesus Christ; *Cui multum datum est, multum quaeretur ab eo; On whom much hath been bestow'd, much will also be required at his hands.*

Luke 12.
48.

WE cannot in Justice, Christians, but acknowledge that much, and very much indeed hath been bestow'd upon us; are we all therefore ready upon the Summons to account

count

count for it? Have we been good Improvers and discreet Dispensers of these Goods of our gracious Master? Have we been just to God Almighty by a due and daily Acknowledgement of his Favours? Or rather (as our Consciences confess the Truth) how many Benefits hath he conferr'd upon us, which we have scarcely thought upon, or at least thought to have been such? And infinitely more perhaps he had bestow'd upon us, had we our selves not stood in our own Light, and put an Obstacle to the Course of them. Next, have we been just to our own selves by a right Use of the Benefits received at his Hands? On the contrary, how many Inspirations have we despis'd? How many good Motions have we render'd unprofitable! But above all, how many times have we frequented his *Holy Sacraments*, and where are the Fruits thereof? Oh *Catholicks*! So many *Confessions*, and so little Amendment! Where are the Fruits thereof? Lastly, have we been also just to our Neighbour, in employing the Gifts of God to his Spiritual Profit and Advantage? For believe me, Christians, we ought to be all Preachers and Instructors to one another; You as well of the one Sex, as We of the other; you of the *Sword*, as well as we of the *Gown*: All
Preachers,

Preachers, all Instructors to one another. But since peradventure this common Duty is not, by Persons of your Condition, so properly comply'd with in the Performance of their Tongues; it ought indispensably to be answer'd in the Example of their Lives. *Et plus docet vita quam Lingua; A good Life teaches better than an eloquent Tongue.*

CONSIDER then; dear Christians, how obligatory the State of every one in general; as Man and Christian, is, And chargeable enough upon every Conscience, were the total Account to finish here. But it is not so; there yet remains a private Scrowl of Debts, scarce thought upon; I fancy, by the greater part of the World, and yet to be clear'd between God and Us, before we can hope for a just Discharge.

I remember to have read a certain Story; related of the Emperor *Charles* the Fifth; who lodging casually in a certain Village, and hearing there how able a Man the Pastor of this Village was in Management of Consciences; was desirous to disburden his: So sending for this famed *Priest* the next Morning, he made his Confession to him; but in the accustom'd manner he formerly had used with others of the same
Coat,

Coat, his Spiritual Directors. The *Pastor* indeed answering fully the Character that had been given of him, understood extremely well how to perform his Part in this difficult Employment; so giving the Emperor a quiet hearing, till he pretended to have no more to say; then turning calmly upon him with a winning Grace, *And is this all* (said he) *O Emperor? Sure it cannot be; Dixisti peccata Caroli, dic nunc peccata Cæsaris: You have confess'd the Sins of Charles only, now confess the Sins of Cæsar!* Do you imagine, that you can govern the whole Empire, and that nothing will be laid to your Charge for it? Where is the Account of so much innocent Blood, that now perhaps does cry to Heaven for Vengeance? Where is the account of so many Injustices done by your Officers, and countenanced, or at least not look'd into by you? Where is the Account of the Disorders of your Court, promoted or encouraged by your Negligence, or Example? And can you think, these Crimes concern not you, O Emperor? *Dixisti peccata Caroli, dic nunc peccata Cæsaris!*

I suppose, pious Company, you easily reach at my Design in relating to you this Story. Every one of us here, as well as

every one else in the World, doth act upon this Stage of Life in the Presence of God Almighty a double Part, of a *Charles*, and of a *Cæsar*; and the Faults of the one are observed by the Eye above, and register'd equally with the other. By the Part we act of *Charles*, are understood the common Duties of every one, as Man and Christian: (those already I have treated of :) By that of *Cæsar*, are understood the particular Obligations of every State or Condition we are in; and for which we are as well to answer to God Almighty, as for the former.

THE *Church-man* is accountable to God for the Conduct of those Souls, that are committed to his Charge; and for the dispensing of those Spiritual Treasures, which are the Fruits of the Merits and Sufferings of *Christ*: The *Lay-man* is also accountable to God for his manner of receiving them, That he abuse not those sacred Benefits to his greater Judgment, which were left him by his Redeemer for his Salvation. The *Civil Magistrate* is accountable for the bearing of that *Sword*, which for Justice-sake was put into his Hands: The *Subject*, for his Behaviour to those in Authority; that he obey for *Conscience*, and not for *Fear* only; *Non solum propter iram, sed etiam propter conscientiam.*

Scientiam. Masters are accountable for the Discipline of their Families; that Scandals be not known, and not remedied: *Servants*, for their Compliance with that Trust and Confidence, which is necessarily reposed in them by their Masters. The *Marry'd* Person is accountable for the Duties that accompany a Conjugal State: The *Single* Person for the Blessing of a Life exempted from those *Tribulations*; which, according to the Apostle, are incident to the other State----

Tribulationem tamen carnis habebunt hujusmodi. Parents are accountable for the Education of their Children; that they be not encouraged in vicious Courses through their Neglect, or ill Example: *Children*, for their Carriage to their *Parents*; when they suffer not themselves obediently to be managed by their Counsels. The *Person in years* is accountable to God for the Helps he hath received to carry him through the Dangers of this Life: The *tender Youth*, for the Simplicity of that Part of our Age, which is ordinarily exempted from those occasions, by which Malice might pervert the Understanding, *Ne malitia mutaret intellectum.* The *Scholar* is accountable to God Almighty for his Knowledge, by which he is illuminated, to become perfect: The *Il-*

1 Cor. 7.
28.

Sap. 4. 11.

literate, for his Ignorance; by which he is humbled in the sight of Men, lest *Science* might unwarily puff him up with Pride;
 1 Cor. 8. *Scientia inflat*. The *Rich Man* is accountable for his Riches, and with them for so many fair Occasions of charitable Offices to save his Soul: The very *Beggar* also for his *Poverty*, by which he is free from those Cares that wait on Wealth, and from the Temptations to employ it ill. The *healthy Man*, for a perfect Use of his Limbs and Powers, to employ them in the constant Service of his Maker: The very *Sick* and *Diseas'd* too, for the Happiness of their *Purgatory* in this Life; did they bear the Hand of God with Patience, making a right Advantage of their Sufferings. To conclude, there is no State, no Calling, no Condition in this Life, that hath not the Charge of *Cæsar*, as well as of *Charles*, or is not accountable for the Miscarriages of both. *Dixisti peccata Caroli, dic nunc peccata Cæsaris!* You have confess'd the Sins of *Charles*, now confess the Sins of *Cæsar*.

THUS then, not to mention those crying Crimes of capital Sinners, of whom (without the signal Marks of an extraordinary Repentance indeed) we may almost dare to say, *Jam judicati sunt, They are already judged;*

judged: Not, I say, to mention the Horror of those loud Offences: Let us turn a little upon our selves, and consider the Obligations of our respective Calling or Condition: Our Failings in those very Duties only will discover to us matter enough for the Discussion of that great Day of Doom. But these, you'll answer me are light Faults only, scarcely deserving my Apprehensions of them. I cannot indeed term them Sins of the blackest Dye, yet such however, as the greatest Saints, and Persons the most illuminated, have thought upon with trembling: Being not able to understand how such considerable Failings in our *Christian Duty*, can escape the rigorous Judgment of that Court, where every idle Word only must be severely accounted for: *Omne verbum otiosum--reddent rationem de eo in die judicii.* Oh no! These Faults will then appear in their liveliest Colours; when the Lord shall search *Hierusalem* by the Light of Candles, *Scrutabor Hierusalem in lucernis.* Then we shall form a right Judgment of them; then we shall see, and sigh to see, how much we daily do to hazard our Salvation, and how little we have done to secure it.

BUT what, dear Sinners, what Reply can we think of making to such numerous and heavy

Mat. 12.
36.

Sophon 1.
82.

Job 31.
14.

heavy Charges against us? *Cum quæsierit, quid respondebimus ei? When he shall question us, what shall we answer him?* 'Twill be in vain to deny our Faults, they will shew themselves in Evidence against us: *Omnes nos manifestari oportet ante tribunal Christi.* What then remains, is to excuse them; but in what manner can we offer at so groundless a Plea as this? Our Excuses, with any appearance of Reason, must have regard to two Causes only: Either of *Ignorance*, or of *Frailty*. For *Ignorance*, alas, how weakly can we alledge it! We, who are born in the Heart of *Christianity*, nursed up and principled in the Maxims of it; We, who have the *Scriptures* for our Instruction, and the Lives of so many holy Men for our Example. Nay, we, who have daily repeated to us from the Pulpits, the Obligations of our Religion, the dreadful Consequences of Sin, and the necessary Concernment for the Salvation of our Souls. And after all these Helps for our Instruction, dare we still offer at *Ignorance* for a Plea? Let us then make our *Frailty* our Excuse, but with as little Hopes of bettering our Cause by it. We are *Frail*, 'tis true: But do we not desire to be so? We neglect to serve ourselves of those Remedies, which *Jesus Christ*
our

our great Physician hath prescribed us for the Cure of our Infirmities. We fly not by Prayer to his Protection in the time of Temptation; We frequent not his holy *Sacraments* as the Means to strengthen and fortify us in his Grace; We keep not our selves distant from the Occasion of Sin, and so out of the Reach of our ghostly Enemies. And if we yield, then are we excusable? If we fall, then are we to be pity'd? We, who call'd not for Help, whilst we were sinking; We, who neglected the Supports, which were to bear and keep us up; We, who danced unconcernedly upon the very Brink of the *Precipices* we sunk into? Oh no: Such Excuses will be shameful in the very Eyes of those that make them: *Omnis Iniquitas oppilabit os suum*, saith the *Psal-* *Psal.* 106.
42.
mist; All iniquity will stop its own mouth with confusion.

THUS, *Christians*, you have seen laid open to you the Exactness of the Judgment of this great Day; Proceeding equitably on the one Side upon the Strength of the Accusation, and on the other, upon the Weakness of the Defence. Now follows the Exactness of the Justice, in the Severity of the Sentence, and Punctuality of its Execution: The manner of it is deliver'd to us by *St. Matthew* in
his

his xiii. Chapter and 49. Verse, *The Angels,* (says he) *shall separate the just from the wicked.* Where 'tis observable, that he saith not, *The Great Ones shall be separated from the Less, or those of meaner Quality or Condition;* the sole Distinction then will be between the Good and Bad; *Separabunt malos de medio justorum.* The Just then being placed on the Right-hand of our Lord, the Wicked on the Left, as a Mark of their Misfortune; This great Judge will pronounce their final Sentence without Repeal. The Just shall be invited in these pleasing Terms, *Come ye blessed of my Father; possess ye the Kingdom of Heaven, prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* Possess ye the Kingdom of Heaven, and possess ye together with it the Plenitude of all that is, or can be good. Possess ye the Price of my dearest Blood. Possess ye the Accomplishment of Man's Desires, and (after I have said it) infinitely more. Possess ye what the Eye hath never seen, the Ear hath never heard, nor hath it ever enter'd into the Heart of Man; and this is the Reward my Father hath prepared for those that love him.

BUT against the Wicked a Sentence shall be thunder'd of another Nature. And me-
thinks

thinks I see this Judge in the very Posture he'll pronounce it in, With the bloody Standard of his *Cross* fix'd on his Right-hand (once the Instrument of their Redemption, now a Testimony against them to their Reprobation) and the great Book of all their Faults before him: Methinks I see him address himself to those poor Wretches one by one, reading to them the dismal Lectures of their sinful Lives, and with a Voice of Terror, I hear him thundering out to the Ears of their frightened Consciences the Words of the *Psalmist* spoken in his Person, *Hæc, Hæc fecisti, & tacui; These, and these things you have done, and I held my peace.* You (says he) and you (Ah Reprobate!) When you were yet but in your younger Years, you scarce began to know me, but you offended me. You learn'd indeed my Name, but it was only to blaspheme it, or to use it as a Seasoning to your vain Discourse. *This you did, and yet I held my peace: Hæc fecisti, & tacui.* Then growing up in Years, you grew up in Wickedness too; you soon list'd your self in the Roll of lewd Companions, who were your skilful Masters in *Libertinism* and *Lust*, and under whose hopeful *Tutelage* you gave your self over to

those irregular Passions, which are predominant in the Licentiousness of that Age; *And yet I held my peace; Et tacui.* Then entering into an Age, that enters also into the Concerns of this World, you embraced them so entirely, as if a Livelihood were your only Care. You raised your self a Fortune upon the Ruins of the afflicted Orphan or Widow; or gaining it justly by a Lawful Inheritance, you squander'd it away in dishonest Courses, whilst your Wife and Family were in want at Home. You neglected the honest Education of your Children; or advanced them by unjust and unwarrantable Ways. Your injur'd Creditors perish'd with Hunger, whilst your Daughters were cloath'd in Silks, and your Table plentifully furnish'd. When you were Great, you abus'd your Power to oppress the Innocent; When you were Low, your Envy lash'd at those who were above you: *All this you did, and yet I held my peace.* Finally, in your decrepid Age, when, even according to the course of Nature, it was then high time to think of another World, your Affections were still link'd faster to this: Your Restitutions for unlawful Gains were never thought upon; your Charity grew colder as your Nature did: And your Heart

was

was never more strongly fasten'd to the Earth, than when you were upon the point of leaving it. Thus you grew old in Sin and Iniquity, every Age bringing with it new Occasions of offending me, *Hæc fecisti, & tacui.*

BUT stay! Methinks our Judge doth seem to change his Note, and now to cry to the Damned, *Hæc, & hæc non fecisti, & tacui,* These and these things you have not done, and yet I held my Peace. These are the Omissions of charitable Offices, which the Gospel particularly insists upon, and which in appearance are proceeded against with the sharpest Severity of all. *You have not fed me,* (saith our Saviour) *when I was hungry,* in the Person of my little Ones; *You have not cloath'd me when I was naked;* *You have not visited me when I was distressed.* I wonder they had not answer'd, -- And what could be their Obligation so to do? The delicate Eater might have reply'd; 'tis true, the Poor complain'd of Thirst and Hunger, but he had never wrong'd them of their Bread; what he consumed upon his dainty Palate, was but his own to dispose of at his pleasure. The vain Gallant might have also reply'd; That the Poor indeed were naked and starved with Cold, but he was never the

Person that robb'd them of a Rag that kept them warm. And for the idle and lazy Liver; 'Tis true, he had not pain'd himself in comforting the distressed Sick, or Prisoner, but neither was he the Occasion of their being so. And what was then the Ill of such Omissions, that might deserve so rigorous a Sentence as the Loss of *Paradise*? The Ill was this: That those unfortunate Worldlings, whilst they mis-spent their Time and Means in Gaming, in Dressing, in Feasting, and Diverting themselves, unluckily omitted the Occasion of doing good (in the charitable Assistance of their necessitous Neighbour) and with it the fair Occasion of gaining Heaven. *Quam ergo spem habere possunt* (cries St. Austin) *qui malè faciunt, quando illi perituri sunt qui bona non faciunt?* What hopes then can those promise to themselves who have done ill, when such are like to perish who do no good? *Hæc & hæc non fecisti, & tacui--- Tacui, semper silui, Patiens fui; I held my peace, I was always silent, I was patient:* But now I will speak like the Woman in Labour, *ut parturiens loquar*; now you shall see that I am a Striking God, *Et scies quia ego Dominus percutiens.* Go ye then from me ye cursed, go from Thee? Good God!

And

*Serm. 38.
de Sanct.*

*Isa. 42.
14.*

*Ezech. 7.
9.*

And whither can they go, if they go from Thee? How shall the Weight go from its Center! Or how shall the Will go from its Good? Yes, *Go from me, ye cursed, into the fire of hell*: There scorch, and burn eternally!

THIS terrible Sentence is that double cutting Sword, which St. *John* in his *Revelations* saw come down from the Mouth of the *Son of Man*: *De ore ejus gladius utraq̄ue parte acutus exhibit*; *From his mouth came out a sword sharp and edged on both sides*. The double Sharpness of that Sword, expresses the Property of this Sentence, which wounds the Damned with both Edges of it: With the thoughts of Heaven for what they are fallen from; An Eternity of Happiness: And with the thoughts of Hell for what they are fallen in, An Eternity of Torments; *Discedite à me, in ignem æternum!* Oh, how that Thought will cut and tear their Souls, to be deprived eternally of the Joys of Heaven, and yet in an Impossibility of forgetting them! Then will they burst into Cries and Curses, that they had sold their *Paradisè* at so cheap a rate. But if it were permitted us (say they) to live again once more, Oh what Examples would we then

Apoc. 1.
16.

then be of a Penitential Life, and what extraordinary means would we then make use of to secure our Salvation! But *Hell*, we know, is full of After-resolutions.

THUS ends the Judgment of that Great Day, with Joy to the Just, Confusion to the Wicked: The Blessed accompany their Judge to receive the Reward; The Cursed are hurl'd down to *Hell* to receive their Punishment.

WHICH way, beloved Christians, do you intend to take, for the Choice is still in your Wills? But consider well, as you tender your future Happiness, since on this Sentence depends Eternity. And, Sinners, tell me, what think you of the State of a Damned Soul? Are the Pleasures of the World worth the Experience of that Misery? Ask first this Question of your selves, *Quis poterit habitare de vobis cum igne devorante?* Who of you all have Courage enough to take up his Habitation with devouring Flames? Since therefore this must be your dwelling for Eternity, come along with me, and let us go down to Hell together---- You are startled at my strange Proposal: Yet 'tis the very same a *great Saint* makes you, and offers himself to be a Companion with you.

Descendamus

Descendamus, saith he, *in infernum*, let us go down to Hell, but whilst we are yet alive, lest we be forced thither, when we are dead: *Descendamus in infernum viventes, ne descendamus morientes*. Let us then go down to Hell in our Thoughts, by a serious Consideration of the Nature of it, and inform our selves throughly of the State of things there; that by a right understanding of the sad Condition of those wretched Inhabitants, we may open our Eyes to view the Danger we are in, in following them. Such Thoughts as these, if well improved, will soon make us enter into our selves, and by a serious *Examen* of our Consciences, to prevent the dreadful Day of Wrath, and rigorous Discussion of our Judge: *Si nosmet ipsos dijudicemus, non utique judicemur*. And since we are not able to answer One for a thousand, let us strive with humble *Job* to appease him, rather than to justify our selves; *Meum judicem deprecabor*.

1 Cor. 11.
31.

Job 9. 15:

JUST Judge, yet Merciful Redeemer! Remember thou art yet our Advocate! Plead then for Us whilst there is time for Mercy. And as Thou comest now, as Prince of Peace in this approaching Solemnity of thy *Human Birth*; So let that

that Sweetness expressed at thy first Appearance, shelter us from the Fury that will accompany thy second. Remember, Dearest *JESU*, that the occasion of Thy Coming was to save me; Oh let me not be lost then, when Thou shalt come to judge me! *Recordare, Jesu pie, quod sum causa tuæ viæ: ne me perdas illa die!*
Amen.



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

KING and QUEEN,

U P O N

The Second SUNDAY in *A D V E N T*,
being the Fifth of D E C E M B E R, 1686.

By the Reverend FATHER

Dom. P H I L. E L L I S, Monk of the Holy
Order of St. *B E N E D I C T*, and of the *English*
C O N G R E G A T I O N, Chaplain in Ordinary, and
Preacher to their M A J E S T I E S.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY'S Command.

Printed in the YEAR M D C C L X I.

MEMOIRS

OF

KING and QUEEN

OF

ENGLAND

AND

FRANCE

BY

JOHN BURNET



S E R M O N II. *

Preach'd before the

KING and QUEEN,

Upon the Second SUNDAY in *ADVENT*,
being the Fifth of *December*, 1686.

M A T T H. xi. 2.

Joannes in vinculis.

John in Prison.



TRANGE surprizing News,
(Sacred Majesty) *John in
Prison.* *John* the Child of *Luke 1.13.*

Prayer, the Gift and Dar-
ling of Heaven, the mighty *Luke 11.*
Subject of an Angel's Em-

bassy, himself an Angel, and is he in Prison? *Matth. 11.*

John fill'd with the Holy Ghost in the very *10.*
Womb, filling his Mother with Prophecy, *Luke 1.15,*
and all People with Admiration, as soon as *41, 66.*

he appear'd in the World, and is he in

In vinculis. Vulgat. Matth. 11.

11.

Luke 1. 17.

2 Kings 1.

10.

Luke 1. 17.

Et Incredulos ad prudentiam justorum. Vulgat.

ἔσοβῆτο.

Metuebat.

Vulg. re-

verebatur

Rub. in

concord.

Mark. 6.

20.

συνέπει

αὐτόν.

conserva-

bat. Mon-

tan.

Chains? Is this the Character of the greatest Man who ever rose among the Sons of Women?

Is this the Herald, Precursor sent to prepare the Messiah's Way in the Spirit and Power of Elias? But he is tamely seiz'd, and com-

mitted to Goal, when Elias would have call'd fire from Heaven to consume the sacrilegious Hand. Is this the powerful

Man, who was to convert the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just? I should not

have wonder'd at his Father's Incredulity, had he foreseen the Passage of this Day; he would have been struck Dumb without a

Miracle, Horror and Amazement would have done the Work; unless I may call it a

greater Miracle, that John, IN PRISON, heard the Works of Christ, than all the mi-

raculous Works He heard. In short, is this the Man, whom Herod not only esteem'd,

but also knew for certainty to be just and holy? Sciens illum justum & sanctum; and

what could have endear'd him so much to a wise Prince? And St. Mark seems to imply

no less, custodiebat eum, he kept him, who would doubt but as a Counsellor and a

Friend? And so the Evangelist goes on, audito eo multa faciebat; he did many things

by his Advice, and heard him gladly. So far

it

it is very well; 'tis what we expected. But St. Luke says, *he added one thing over and above; adjecit & hoc super omnia; he shut him not in his Closet, but in Prison.* Strange Paradox of Providence! Strange turn of Fortune! Strange Emblem of human Mutability? A fresh Instance of that old Lesson, *put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Sons of Men, in whom is no Salvation,* for Luke 3. 20. Psalm 1. 46.

JOHN IS IN PRISON.

BUT what real or pretended Crime could be laid to the Charge of a Person so useful to his Prince, so serviceable to the Publick, so just, so holy and inoffensive in his private Capacity? The Gospel being but an Abridgement of Transactions, sets down only the immediate Cause, the immediate Provocation, because, says St. Luke, *Herod the Tetrach was reprov'd by him (cum corripetur ab eo) for Herodias his Brother's Wife, (because he had Married her, says St. Mark, his Brother being yet alive) and for all the evils which he had done.* Luke 3. 19. Mark 6. 17. Et de omnibus malis quæ fecit. Luke ibid

BUT *Josephus* (*Antiq.* l. 18. c. 10.) as a Statesman and Politician dives into the bottom of the Difference, and discovers the first Spring which moved *Herod* against the Baptist; because he excited People to the Practice of Virtue and Justice; *quia præcipiebat*

cupiebat Judæis virtuti dare operam, justitiam colere: Upon which Doctrine, as guilt is ever jealous, but commonly in the wrong place, corrupt Ministers, and a Government noted for many Injustices, pretended to ground their politick and irreligious Suspicion, that it would be of *dangerous consequence*; a general Reason for every thing one has a mind to obstruct, when no other Reason can be given: That it was not yet time to suffer such Doctrine to be preach'd, *nè novi aliquid fiat*, as the Historian continues, *lest it should cause some Disturbance in the State*: Wherefore, says he, *upon this sole Suspicion*, not for any real ground of it, but upon the Apprehension of Consequences meerly imaginary, *John* began to decline in the *Tetrach's* Favour; the *Tetrach* began to fear whom he ceased to Love; he first open'd his Ears to Accusations against him, and then his Hand to seize him, *tenuit eum*, and behold *Joannes in Vinculis*, *John* is in Prison.

AND here let us leave a while this Martyr of Justice, to consider a little the Weight and Importance of this Doctrine; How much JUSTICE conduces to the Happiness both of Prince and People, when its Dictates are follow'd, and what Reparation is required

required when they are neglected. The first comprehends the Nature, the Excellence, and the several Species of Justice, and shall be treated in my First Part: The second regards the Violation of it, as it is reparable; where I shall speak of RESTITUTION, and Conclude.

LET us beg a Portion of his Spirit, of his Firmness and Courage, that I may not sink the Reputation of that Cause, which he so gloriously maintain'd; but, as I cannot hope to bear it up to that Height, so it is my Comfort that I need not, since I speak to an Assembly already prepared to receive a Doctrine so agreeable to Reason, and essential to the Law of Christ, who came into the World, *to publish his word to Jacob, his justice and judgments to Israel*, when the Angel saluted the Blessed Virgin in the same Terms we make our usual Addresses to her, *Hail MARY full of Grace, &c.*

Psal. 147.
19.

IT is the first and greatest Commendation of Justice, that it comprehends all Virtues in it self, runs through every Branch of the Divine and Human Law, and verifies the bold Assertion of a learned Writer, that, as never any thing was well done which was not directed by Justice; so never

any

*Author.
oper. im-
per. apud
Cbrystost.
Hom. 34.*

any thing was done with a right Intention, if it was not for the sake of Justice. The ancient Author of the imperfect Work among those of St. *John Cbrystostom*, ingeniously proposes Justice as the *Vine*, all other Virtues as the *Branches*, which are vegetated and nourish'd with the Juice and Spirits, which are transmitted to them from this *Mother-Stock*. And what can be a greater Eviction of this Truth, than the *Holy Ghost's* generally using that Name for the Perfection of all, and promiscuously for every Virtue? For when he would deliver the *verbum brevium*, speak much of a Man in a little, a Panegyrick in a Word, he calls him *Just*; Thus, when he would raise in our Minds a high Esteem of *Noah*, he calls him a *just and perfect man*, *Noe vir justus atque perfectus*; when he would commend the extraordinary Piety and singular Prudence of St. *Joseph*, *Joseph cum esset justus*; when he would represent in one View all the Virtues of our *Baptist's* Parents, *erant ambo just*: And infine, when he had drawn the Portrait of our Redeemer, with his Government upon his Shoulder, to express his Sovereignty, he calls him *Wonderful*, for his Conduct; *Counsellor*, for his Knowledge; the *Mighty God*, for his Power; the *Everlasting Father*,
for

Gen. 6. 9.

Matth. 1.

Luke 1. 6.
19.

Ijaiab 9.
6.

for his Affection to his People; the *Prince of Peace*, for the Tranquility of his Reign; and this, says he, is his Name, his Stile, Character and Property, *vocabitur nomen ejus*; all which he sums up elsewhere in one Word, *Dominus justus noster*, our Lord, our King, the *Just*.

Hoc est nomen quod vocabant eum.
Jer. 23. 6.

FROM which, and many such Instances it appears, as St. *John Chrysostom* observes, That a just Man is a Denomination, which implies all Virtue; that Justice (as he speaks in *Psalms* xiv.) is a Compound of many Virtues, and one active Virtue does not make a Virtue, *Una virtus activa non facit virtutem*. How, great Doctor! Is not one Virtue a Virtue? No, replies he, no more than the Loss of one Plank makes a Wreck, or one Stone can build an House: A Ship cannot be built without Planks, nor a House without Materials; but Planks without Mortised, and Stones without Cement are of little or no Service: So are all other Virtues without Justice; They are loose and disjointed, they cannot denominate a Man Virtuous, because they cannot denominate him **J U S T**.

Hom. 23.

Iustitia constatur ex multis virtutibus, & una virtus activa non facit virtutem.

I know our Pulpits continually ring with the Praises of Charity, as the Mother and Mistress of all other Virtues, and little is

heard of Justice. But you are to observe, that the Pulpit, in preaching *Christianity*, supposes *Morality*; as one who labours to beautify and adorn a Fabrick, supposes the Foundation is well laid, otherwise it would be Madness to spend his Time, his Money and Industry upon a House, which may likely fall upon his Head, and bury him with his Art and Charges in the Rubbish.

Now Justice is the Ground of Moral Virtues, as Charity is of the Christian: And as it is a Folly to think to be *Pious* without first being *Honest*; so it is a fond Hope, and senseless Endeavour to superstruct *Charity* where *Justice* has not secured the Foundation.

To proceed therefore from the more general and larger Acceptations of the Word, to the common and more restrain'd Use of it, as it signifies a particular Virtue, it is defined by Divines and Moralists, after *Ulpian*, *Constantans & perpetua voluntas, jus suum cuique tribuendi*; *A constant and unchangeable Will, and Resolution of giving to every one what belongs to him*, whether in Buying and Selling, or any sort of Trade or Exchange, which we call *Commutative Justice*: Or by dealing out Rewards or Favours, with respect to the Merit, or Fidelity of Persons, which we call *Distributive Justice*: Or performing that

*Ulp. l. de
just: π de
jus v: &
jure.*

that Service; which every one in his respective Station is bound to exhibit to the Publick, which is term'd *Legal Justice*: Or restoring the Goods and Effects of another, which we have destroy'd, or unjustly detain'd, which is called *Restitution*. I purposely abstain from mentioning that sort of Justice, which inflicts Punishments, and is called *Vindictive*: I speak nothing of it, I say, partly because, 'tis a Branch of the Distributive: And partly because 'tis more the Business of the *Bar*, than of the *Pulpit*; and because I desire the Audience should not think I exceed my Commission; I speak of the Divine, not of the Human Justice, I summon you to the inward Tribunal; and if I threaten Punishment, I mean not that which is inflicted by the Temporal Power.

THIS premised, I affirm, any wilful and premeditated Offence against one or more of these Species of Justice, constitutes a Man formally unjust; and this not only by committing, or doing Wrong, but also by omitting, or neglecting to do what we ought; *Neque minus omissione reddi hominem injustum quam commissione*, say the Divines. And in such Cases, the Dictates of right Reason, as well as the Precepts of Religion, command us to make Reparation, if we desire to be

forgiven; of which more in my Second Part; at present, it will be sufficient to illustrate the Doctrine by an Example or two, in each of these Heads, as far as the Time will allow.

FIRST, If you have taken Advantage of the Necessities of your Neighbours, and upon that account sold things dearer than the true Value or common Price; you have sinn'd against *Commutative Justice*, and stand obliged to Restitution. If you have laid hold of the Inadvertency or Ignorance of the Seller, and surpris'd him into an inconsiderate Bargain; you have sinn'd against *Commutative Justice*; which sentences you to Restitution. What you call a good Bargain is a Deceit: You have not bought, but cheated.

SECONDLY, If you asperse the Reputation of your Neighbour, either take away his good Name, or notably prejudice it, by Detraction, Drollery, inventing or dispersing Satyr, imposing a false, or revealing a secret Crime, you have offended against *Distributive Justice*, which enacts *Honour to whom Honour* is due, and obliges you to Restitution, even with the Peril of your own Fame, under pain of being the Aversion of Mankind, *hominum abominatio*, says the

Rom. 13.
7.

Prov. 24.
9.

Wise-

Wise-man; of being excluded from the common Society of Men, *cum Detraētoribus nē comedas*: This Sin of Detraction, being one of those, for which God delivers Men over to a reprobate Sense, as he did the *Gentiles*; *Detraētores Deo odibiles, &c.* For if one, who has wrong'd another in his Goods, is bound to repair the Injury with the Expence even of his own (as all Men acknowledge) with more Reason shall he, who has committed a Crime of a more heinous Nature, and in a higher Subject, be adjudged to a severer Compensation. And if Calumny be a greater Crime than Theft or Rapine, because it issues from a deeper Malice, and leaves behind it a greater Prejudice; how came you to persuade your selves the Obligation of restoring should be less? If the Person injured be Sacred, it is not a simple Defamation, but a Sacrilege; It is an Invasion as well upon the Religion as Government; and to deface the Character of your Temporal or Spiritual Superiors, is so much worse than prophaning Churches and robbing Altars, as it is worse to mangle or destroy God's living Representation, than to demolish the Dead: *Diis non detrahes, & Principi populi tui non maledices: Thou shalt not revile the Gods, nor speak evil of the Ruler of thy People;*

Prov. 21.

Rom. 1.

28.

and 30.

People; Exodus xxii. 28. Speak not Evil one of another; James iv. 11. In cogitatione tuâ Regi nè detrabas; Debase not the King in thy very thoughts, Wherefore then were you not afraid to speak evil of my Servant? Num. xii. 8.

*Ecclef. 10.
20.*

THIRDLY, All Acceptation of Persons, whether in deciding Differences between Man and Man, or in conferring *real Honours*, Places of Trust, and Preferment in the Common-wealth, is a Violation of *Distributive Justice*, which obliges the Magistrate, if not to proportion the Reward to the Merit, at least to place the Reward with the Merit; nor to accept Persons, but upon account of a greater Desert, either of *Service*, or *Capacity*. In all other Cases, that Decision of St. *James* falls heavy upon Men in publick Employments; *Si personas accipitis, peccatum operamini; If you have respect to persons, you commit sin, being convicted by the Law, as Transgressors of it.* But what Law is there which binds a Man to the Choice of those, who are to serve under him, or in whom he pleases to repose a Confidence?

*James 2.
9.*

FIRST, The Law of Nature, which is nothing but the in-born Rudiments of Justice, prompting us to give every one, what in Right and Equity belongs to him; *Reddere unicuique quod suum est.* Merit and Retri-
bution

bution are Relatives; Merit therefore is a Right, which Equity is bound to acknowledge, and what Equity acknowledges, Justice is bound to pay. Publick Service, and suffering for the Publick are of equal Weight: They balance each other when Justice holds the Scale, they deserve an equal Reward; but he that suffers for Justice-sake, weighs down Both. *Innocence* is the Palm-tree which naturally grows under the Weight, and by Consequence ought to rise so much the higher, as it was more depress'd.

SECONDLY, The Law of God, as well declaring as acting; *Nulla erit distantia personarum*; *There shall be no distinction of persons*, say the Pandects of Heaven, neither at the Bar, nor at the Board, nor upon the account of Religion, much less of ungrounded Suspicion. *Nolite judicare secundum faciem*, says our Blessed Saviour, *Judge not according to the face*, which some Men set upon Things or Persons; No, nor according to the Opinion of the greater Number, who are sway'd by a contrary Interest, says the Eternal Justice; *In judicio non acquiesces plurimorum sententiæ, nec accipies cujusquam personam, ut à vero devies*: *In judgment, i. e. in assigning Rewards, as well as otherwise, do not acquiesce to the opinion even*
of

Deut. 1.
16.

John 7.
24.

Exod. 23.
2.

of the most, nor accept the person of any Body whatsoever; so far as to depart from what is right in thy own Judgment: As if he had said, If you do exclude Persons, whom you think deserving in your own Judgment, either upon appearances, or the erring Opinion even of the most, you will depart from Justice. Now, the New Law, raising every positive Commandment of the Old to a greater Perfection, more is required in this kind of the Christian Magistrate, than of the other, who acts meerly by the Law of Nature and Dictamen of Reason, or the brighter, yet imperfect and glimmering Light of the Mosaical. Wherefore St. James ii. 1. seriously admonishes us to have a care That we do not hold the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with respect of persons; In personarum acceptione nolite possidere fidem Domini nostri Jesu Christi; implying, that such a Proceeding is contrary to the Oeconomy and Justice, and by Consequence, is a Prevarication of the Faith we profess.

AND the Reason of this is evident, for every Person who confers Employments, or has Dependences, acts either *ex officio*, as the supreme Magistrate, a Man upon his own Estate, a Master in his Family; or else by *Commission*, as subordinate Officers,

IF he act *ex officio*, Justice and his Duty to the Publick Weal oblige him to delegate his Power to such as his own Judgment and Conscience represent to him as the most faithful and able Ministers: For as he is obliged to carry the Reputation of his Country and the Publick Good, not to any determinate Degree, but as high as his utmost Prudence and Endeavours can reach: So is he bound in Justice to make use of those Instruments, which are best proportion'd to that End; and where there is equal Capacity, or but little inferior, a more approved Honesty and Tenderness of Conscience ought to take place. If the Person act only by *Commission*, his Power is less, but his Duty is as great, in this Kind, as far as his Power extends; and he is bound in Justice to put the Places, which are in his Gift, not into such Hands as will give most for them, (which is Extortion upon the Publick) or are nearest related to him (which is another sort of Bribery, that of Affection) or will more espouse and advance his Interest, (which is but the Farming out an Office) but into such as will be most honest, and careful, and circumspect: For though the best Man is not always the best qualified for Employment, yet Virtue is the better

Title, where the Capacity is sufficient, because a vicious Man can hardly be *just*; for he wants the Divine Assistance, and bottoms his Honesty only upon moral Virtue, which does very seldom bear up its Name in Practice, and when it does, generally the Temptation of Dishonesty is overcome, meerly by a Sense of Honour: A doubtful Case, where a Man is to conquer one Passion by another. Wherefore the holy Fathers and Divines, I think, of all Religions within the Pale of *Christianity*, and I might take the *Jew* and the *Gentile*, the *Rabbi* and the *Philosopher*, into the Number: All Divines and Moralists, I say, unanimously agree, that such as employ Men who are corrupt in their Judgments, exacting upon the Poor, taking Bribes, or diverting the Publick Stock, &c. are obliged to Restitution, and to repair *their* Faults, if the Offenders do not do it themselves, which indeed is possible, but not reasonably to be expected.

FOURTHLY, But there is another sort of Justice, which we call *Legal*, and touches not only Men in Employments, but reaches all who are capable of serving the Publick, and from whose Service they are bound in Justice not to withdraw themselves; bound not only

to have *their Loins girt*, and be found in a readiness when they are called, but even in their several respective Stations to promote the Publick Good, and prefer it to the Private, whether Reputation or Interest. For as every one is a Part of the Civil Society, and enjoys the Blessings and Protection of it; so every one has a *Special Duty* incumbent on him to procure and promote the Good of that Society: For the Good of the *Part* is order'd to the *Whole*, and the Good of the *Whole* communicates itself to each Member. And therefore when a Man behaves himself meerly passive to the Community, much more when he vilifies the Government, and exasperates Peoples Mind against it; he is a *Monstrous Member* of the Common-wealth, and is obliged to Restitution, that is, to rectify, and atone for his former Coldness and Indifferency, with Diligence for the future, with more than common Instances of Loyalty, and Endeavours to set their Hearts right, which by his Example or Discourses have been alienated from the Government.

THUS have I given you a slight View of Justice in all its Branches, and crowded the Subject of whole Volumes, and indeed of ones whole Life, into few Words. And hav-

ing shewn the great Duty of Restitution to be far more obliging, and of far greater Extent than People generally imagine; it is time I proceed to treat of it in the common Sense and vulgar Usage of the Word, which imports only one Sort of *Restitution*, when another's Goods are unjustly taken or detain'd, whether by *Theft*, or *Robbery*, by *Rapine* or *Extortion*, and even by *Forms of Law*. Your Attention, and my *Second Part*.

S E C O N D P A R T.

SOME, who in other Matters accuse the Catholick Church of imposing too great Severities upon her Children, in this think her so impiously indulgent, as to connive at Injustices, to sell Pardons for Sins, and to allow of unjust Possessions, provided she goes Shares with the Possessor; and in short, that she dispenses with all sorts of Restitution, unless it be to her self. But in Truth, *this last sort is the only Restitution she can dispense with, and which she has actually, solemnly, and irrevocably done, as I lately proved in reference to Abbey-Lands*: She can renounce her own Title, but not anothers; For in all other Cases it is, and ever was her Doctrine and Practice, *Sicut non satisfit Deo de injuria sibi illata, nisi per pœnitentiam*:
ita

Sermon
before the
King upon
All-Saints
of the Or-
of St. Be-
nedict.
Nov. 13.

ita nec proximo de re spoliata, nisi per justam Restitutionem; as the great Master of our Schools expresses it; *As we cannot appease our God for an Injury done to him, but by a serious Repentance: So cannot we satisfy our Neighbour for usurping his Goods, but by a full Restitution.* He had learnt this Doctrine of St. Gregory, whose Judgment is become that of the whole Church, being inserted into the Body of our Canon Law: *Qui bona alterius, &c. Who unjustly detains the Goods of another, must at the same time acknowledge he cannot do that Penance, or make that Satisfaction, which will carry him to Heaven, tho' he may come off in this World, and in the Eyes of Men, unless he restore what he has unjustly seized.* St. Gregory had learnt this Doctrine of St. Augustin, who in his fifty fourth Epistle to Macedonius, a Man of great Authority in the Roman Empire, says, *Si res aliena, propter quam peccatum est, non redditur, non agitur pœnitentia, sed fingitur*; If the thing wherein you sinn'd by taking or detaining, be not Restored, you do not repent, but counterfeit Repentance. And the Reason of this is clear, for to obtain an *End*, we are obliged to use the *necessary Means*. Now there are two Sorts of Means, by which we are to work out our Salvation; both necessary, but not equally so: The first

*S. Thom.
Tom. 1.
Opusc. cap.
17.*

*Decret.
Par. 2. de
pœnit.
Dist. 5.
Cap. Fal-
sus.*

*Aug. Ep.
54.*

is *necessitas precepti*, necessary because commanded, as Fasting and Alms-deeds, &c. which are then binding, when we are in the Circumstance and Condition to perform them. The second, *necessitas medii*, necessary, because the End, without the Means, cannot be obtain'd, as Faith in Christ, in order to Eternal Life, the Love of God and our Neighbour, &c. Now God has affixt both these Necessities to Restitution. That of *Command* is frequently repeated and urged in both Testaments. In the Old, having provided for his own Love and Service in very few Commandments, he employs more than twice the Number in securing the Rights, and fencing in the Goods of our Neighbour; and to imprint in us a greater Horror of usurping them, he forbids even the Desire, *Levit. 19. Non concupisces*; and to imprint in us a greater Horror of detaining them, he will not permit his own People to keep the Wages of an hired Servant even till the next Morning. In the New Testament he does not repeat, but supposes the Moral Law as to *Honesty*; but proceeds to the Perfection of it, a consummated Virtue. This *Zachæus* understood, who without expecting any particular Order from *Jesus Christ*, promises; *Luke 19. Si quid aliquem defraudavi, if I have defrauded or wrong'd any one, I restore him four-fold.*

Levit. 19.

13.

Luke 19.

S.

2 Sam. 12.

6.

This

This the Moral Law obliged him to: The other Article, *Behold I give half my goods to the Poor*, was in compliance to the Evangelical, which enacts, *Quod superest date Eleemosynam; what you have over and above Necessity and Decency, give it in Alms.* Now he that obliges us to give what is our own, will he dispense with us from rendering what is not our own?

Luke 11.
41.

SECONDLY, This Duty of Restitution is necessary *necessitate medii*; 'tis *absolutely necessary*; neither divine, nor human Power can dispense with the Performance of it; and nothing but a *formal* and *absolute Incapacity* can excuse us; for No-body can be obliged to what is impossible. Yet this absolute Incapacity does not take away the Obligation, but only suspends it for the Time; for it still returns upon us when we are able in any Degree to comply with it: I said, *not the Divine Power*; I said it, and I prove it. For there are two Injuries involved in every unjust Action, or *quasi-action*, that is, Non-restitution; the one to God, who suffers by the Violation of his Commandments; the other to your Neighbour, who suffers by the Loss or Detention of his Goods or Inheritance: Whence arise two distinct Obligations; the one, of satisfying God, whose Honour and Sovereignty you have incroach'd upon

upon by Disobedience; the other, of satisfying your Neighbour, whose Tears, whose Wants, and even whose Desires cry to Heaven

Pfalm 10. for Vengeance against you; *For our Lord*
17. *bears the desire of the poor*, says the Royal Prophet. With this Load upon your Conscience, you place your self in your Oratory, or come to the Feet of your Confessor, you protest you are sorry for having offended

Pfalm 51. God, and come to beg Pardon of him, *who*
17. *will not despise an humble and a contrite heart*. Noquestion God would regard your Sorrow, and have Compassion upon your Tears, were the Injury directed only against himself: But your Neighbour is a Party offended too, you beg not Pardon of him, you still retain his Goods, you grasp his Inheritance; his Children serve you upon their own Estates,

Matth. 5. *vade prius reconciliari fratri tuo*; Go then,
24. says he, Go, and be first reconciled to your Brother, repair the Wrong, or compound it. 'Till one of these be done, all your Offerings are Prophane; *Bring me no more vain*

Isaiab 1. *oblations*; all your Observance of Religious
13. Duties, and even your appointed Feasts, *my*

Isaiab 1. *Soul hateth*: Even the *Sabbaths*, which I
14. commanded. *Iniqui sunt cætus vestri*; your solemn meetings are iniquity: They receive a Tincture of Injustice from that of the Mind you bring to them. All your Alms
 are

are fruitless; They are not your own; *Ex substantia tua fac Eleemosynas*; to merit that Name, they must be done out of your own Substance, not another's. Indeed Charity covers a multitude of sins, but why does not St. Peter say all sins, as holy Toby iv. 11. *ab omni peccato liberat*? The Apostle seems to allude to, and explain this Text: For some Crimes there are, which Charity itself cannot cover; she may varnish them over, but can never efface them; and these are Sins against Justice. To be short, your very Repentance is false and counterfeit, *Non agitur pœnitentia, sed fingitur*; your Hopes of Pardon are ungrounded and impudent; and when you spread forth your hands to receive it, *I will hide mine eyes from you*: Your very Prayers, the only Means left, become a fresh Provocation, and heighten your Guilt, *Cùm multiplicaveritis orationem, non exaudiam*; When you multiply them upon me, *I will not hear*.

BUT why hast thou set us up as a mark against thee? Why hast thou mark'd us out for slaughter, O thou preserver of Men! wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long a time? Because your hands are defil'd with Blood, and your fingers with iniquity. If he, who neglects to feed the Poor in Necessity, is properly said by St. Austin

to murder them (*si non pavisti, occidisti*) certainly he, who reduces them to Necessity, and continues them in it, is guilty of a double Murder : *Manus vestræ plenæ sunt sanguine, Both your hands are full of Blood* ; the one for *taking*, the other for *detaining*. As for other Offences, which strike only at himself, as all the Breaches of the first Table, he alone can, and is ever ready to forgive them ; but the Injuries aimed at him through your Neighbour, as Detraction, Oppression, Robbery, or Rapine, *non dimittitur peccatum, &c.* God cannot Pardon them I say, by the ordinary Course of his Grace, and without a Miracle, except the Offender's Ignorance be invincible, after he has used his best Endeavours to inform himself in his Fortune and Estate, according to the Example of holy *Tobias, Nè fortè furtivus sit*, lest any Part of what he possesses came to him by indirect Ways.

Tob. 2.
21.

BUT what a Phrenzy and Alienation of Mind is it in a *Christian* to desire those Riches which Providence has refused him? If you did lawfully possess those Goods you unlawfully enjoy, the *Baptist* would advise you to return them to the Donor in Relief of the Poor : But what would he say, did he see us coveting our Neighbours Possessions, or detaining them with an unjust Hand, tearing

tearing them from the Widow and the Orphan, and not regarding them, while their Cries, and Tears, and Prayers pierce the Heavens, and call down Judgment upon us, from a God, who vouchsafes to stile himself *the Refuge of the Oppressed*, Psalm ix. 9. to become their Advocate, and *plead their Cause*, Psalm xxxv. 1: And threatens *to break in Pieces the Oppressor*? Psalm lxxii. 4.

IF God had design'd to save you by Riches, he would have furnished you with lawful Means of acquiring them: But he has thrown up the Ditches, and thicken'd the Fences, that you should not break in upon them, foreseeing you would abuse them; they would seduce you. If God has bestow'd them upon you, he also has given you Grace to use them to his Honour; but if you add to the Heap what you receive not from his Hand, you force him to withdraw his Grace, and disable you to use the rest as you ought. But a little, you may say, cannot be of such dreadful Consequence: Yet it is not the Quantity but the Quality of the Poison which is mortal. This little which comes in by Driblets, must go out in great Sums, when you come to restore; and when will you be disposed to render the Arrears in *Quadruplum*, *Fourfold*, if you cannot now be persuaded to throw up the Tenure, or pay in the Principal? God Almighty is

Anselm. l.
cur Deus
Homo, c.
11.

Totam massam
corruptam
Vulgat.
ζυμοί,
fermentat.
1 Cor. 5.
6.
Matt. 6.
19, 20.

no Favourer of Interest upon other Accounts, but in Restitution he exacts it. *Non sufficit solum reddere, quod ablatum est, sed pro contumelia illata, plus debet reddere quam abstulit,* says our famous St. *Anselm*. If it be a little you unjustly Possess, you ought to be more ready to refund; if it be much, you ought to be more careful. But what is a little to you, perhaps is the whole Fortune and Subsistence, the daily Bread of the Sufferer. A little Injustice is like *the Leaven*, it corrupts the whole Mass; it is *the Moth*, which devours the Treasure; it is *the Thief*, which breaks in, and steals it away insensibly; the way, many Estates are consumed, when No-body could give an account by what Means. Unjust Possessions have this Quality of the *Manna*; they taste deliciously upon the carnal Palate, but putrify and become noisom, if they are kept even till Tomorrow; nay, they become mortal, as soon as the Person is satisfied they are unlawful.

Gabriel in
4. d. 15.
q. 2. a. 2.
Soto l. 4.
q. 7. c. 4.
Lessius de
jure l. 2.
c. 12. dub.
2.

GABRIEL, *Soto*, *Lessius*, and many others of the first Clafs, both ancient and modern Divines, teach as a certain Truth, that every unjust Possessor, when he knows himself to be so, *continud actu peccat*, sins continually, not only by an *habitual* Injustice mortally criminal, but also sins *actually*, till the Moment he restore. Be not surpris'd

at this Doctrine, it is grounded upon clear and undeniable Reason; for who does not restore when he can, wilfully detains another's Goods: But a wilful detaining them is a new Action, at least, *instar actionis*, equivalent to an Action: Therefore as long as his Will to detain them does continue, so long the Injustice continues, so long the Injury, and, by evident Consequence, so long the actual Sin.

Now, *Christian*, have you any thing to object against this, and not renounce that Name? Dare you reply in your Thoughts, that if you restore what you wrongfully possess, you will not be able to bear up in the World according to your Condition? If this Reason be as weighty, as it is popular, you may as well steal, you may rob the Altar to live according to your Condition. Why cannot you reduce your self, for the sake of Justice, to what other People do for Decency and Devotion? You will not be able perhaps to make so great a Figure in Court, nor glitter so much at a Ball, nor be so expensive in Plays; you will want Oil to feed your Excesses and Vanity: Now is not this an odd Kind of Objection, when one of the Reasons why God calls upon you to make Restitution, and to pay your Debts, is to remove you from the Occasions of offending?

offending? But it will draw an Infamy upon me: Sure you are a great Stranger to Honesty, who have so mean an Opinion of it. Justice is honour'd, and rever'd, and applauded even by the Wicked; and the Fame of a *Zacheus* shall live for ever; and so long the Memory of an *Abab* shall be in Execration.

1 Kings
21. 1.

Josephus
supra.

Psalms 85.
11.

BUT if this Doctrine were reduced to Practice, it would cause great Changes in a Nation. So thought the Statesmen of *Galilee*; so *Herod* fear'd, when a *Baptist* preach'd it, *Apprehendens nè novi aliquid fieret*. But what the Consequence would be, King *David* tells us, *Veritas de terra orta est, & justitia de cælo prospexit*; when Justice looks down from Heaven, Truth springs up from the Earth, as it were to meet it. *Justice and Peace shall kiss one another*, the Mother and the Daughter shall embrace; for Peace and Prosperity are the Fruit of Justice. O ye Sons of Men, be Just, and fear no other Consequences than these; for *the Justice of the clear-hearted man*, says the Wise One, *shall level and make strait his path, Justitia simplicis diriget viam; It shall conduct him safe to the end, liberabit eum*; it shall prolong his Days; and deliver him from the Death of Sin; *liberabit eum à morte*: It shall crown him with eternal Life, *in semitis ejus vita*:

Prov. 11.
5, 6.

Prov. 10.
2.

Prov. 12.
28.

It

It shall win the Affection of the Almighty, *Qui sequitur justitiam diligitur ab eo*; It exalteth a Nation, *elevat gentem*; and shall establish the Throne, *firmabitur justitiâ Thronus*. Thus might St. *John* speak, because thus speaks the Holy Ghost, who replenish'd him from the very Womb, and inspired him with that Courage, which the *Psalmist* glories in, that *he speaks of the Testimonies of God*, of Justice and Equity, *before Kings*, and was *not confounded*, though he was imprisoned: For nothing can confound a Precursor or Preacher of Christ, but betraying his Ministry. And now he has discharged his Office, I hope no one here will put him off, as *Felix* did St. *Paul*, when he had discoursed of the same Subject, *Tempore opportuno accersam te*, *I will hear thee at a more proper season*: I hope No-body will think his Doctrine unseasonable; or if any one do, you will not find him *a Reed shaken with the Wind*: You will find him firm to Himself, and to his Character, *preaching the Word in season, and out of season*. He will not change his Camel's Hair for soft Raiment, nor be taken off, nor mollified by the Amusements of a Court. He is the same Man in the King's *House*, as in the King's *Prison*: He will bid the Tradesman be just in his Dealing, the Rich to impart of their Superfluities

Prov. 15.
9.

Prov. 14.
34.
Prov. 25.
5.

Psal. 119.
46.

Acts 24.
26.
Disputante autem illo de justitia,
&c.

Luke 3.
11.

ties

ties to him that wants Necessaries; The
Luke 3. Publicans and Collectors, *to exact no more*
13. *than is appointed them,* and to give a faithful
 account of what they receive; The Soldier,
Luke 3. *to do violence to no Man, and to be con-*
14. *tented with his pay:* He has a *Non licet* for
 for every one, and a *Baptism of Repentance*
 in their own Tears, *for the Remission of Sin:*
 He has a Commission to threaten *every Tree*
which bringeth not forth good Fruit, that it
shall be cut down, and cast into the Fire; and
 he has an humble Petition to those, who
 Judge the World, that they will not think
 they perform their Duty to Justice, by observ-
 ing it Religiously in their own Particular,
 unless they cause it to be observed by all
 their Subjects, as far as their Knowledge and
 Power can reach; unless they redress the
 Wrongs of Innocents oppressed, and suffer
 No-body to be condemn'd, without first
 being heard; unless they repair the Breaches
 of the Publick Faith, and over-rule all Ordi-
 nances to the contrary; which can never tie
 up the Sovereign's Hands from reforming
 Abuses, though they oblige the Subject to a
 Passive Obedience, *to possess his Soul in pati-*
ence, and to forgive the Injury, while he
 sues to have it redress'd. *Which God, &c.*



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

KING and QUEEN,

I N

Their MAJESTIES Chapel at St. *JAMES'S*'s
on the Third SUNDAY in *ADVENT*,
December 13, 1685.

By the Reverend FATHER

Dom. PHIL. ELLIS, Monk of the Holy
Order of St. *BENEDICT*, and of the *English*
CONGREGATION, Chaplain in Ordinary to His
MAJESTY.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY'S Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

2 E R M O N

MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD



S E R M O N III.

Preach'd before their

M A J E S T I E S

On the Third SUNDAY in *ADVENT*.

J O H N i. 26.

Medius vestrum stetit quem vos nescitis.

There hath stood one among you, whom you know not.

Words spoke by *St. John Baptist*, and repeated by the Church in the Gospel of this Day; taken out of *St. John*, &c. and render'd into our *Vulgar English Translation*.

There standeth one in the midst of you, whom you know not.



HE last time *St. John Baptist* stood in the midst of us; that is, in the Gospel of last Sunday, Your Majesties beheld him sending Ambassadors to *Jesus*, to

inquire whether he were the *Messias*, to

convince those he sent of what he had preach'd from the *Wilderness* to the *Prison*, and to shew, that *if the Word of God cannot be bound*, so neither can the *Voice*. *John* was in Chains, but not the *Præcursor*. No Fetters can detain the Voice from communicating with the Words, *Ego Vox*. But the Gospel of this Day shifts the Scene, and discovers St. *John* receiving an Embassy upon the same account. A noble and learned Train of Priests and Levites; *Priests*, as Deputies of the Clergy; and *Levites*, their Attendants; selected Members of the *Sanbedrim*, and Representatives of the whole Body Ecclesiastick, with great Solemnity, and (as St. *Augustine* thinks) with no less Sincerity, address to him, with a *Tu quis es? Who are you?* In what Quality do you appear among us? By what Authority do you *preach Penance?* And by what new Light do you foresee that *the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand?* We are the ordinary Dispensers of the Word; *Who are you?* Your *Mission* is as extraordinary as your Life; But you must verify your Patent by greater Wonders than a hard Fare and coarse Habit; *Quis es?* Indeed the Sanctity of your Conversation, the Vehemency of your Spirit, the Force

Force and Excellence of your Doctrine, and your exact timing it with our Expectation of the *Messias*, the Scepter being now wrested from the Royal Tribe of *Juda*, by the Hands of a Stranger, and the seventy Weeks of Years, the Term assign'd by *Daniel* for the *Messias's* Coming, being now expired, we begin to doubt, and come to ask, *Are you he that is to come, or do we expect another? What do you say of your self? If you are Christ, tell us so plainly.*

THIS (according to the Fathers and Interpreters) was the Sense of their First Question, which our Baptist, as sparing in his *Words* as in his *Diet*, abruptly Answers, *Non sum, I am not he.* Which short Reply served for their following Interrogatories, *I am not Elias, I am not a Prophet.* Not *Elias* but only in Spirit and Power, to prepare the First *Advent* of *Christ*, as he in Person shall do the Second; Not a *Prophet*, because Prophecy consists in discerning things absent, and predicting the future; but I am only an Index to point out to you what is already before your Eyes, to awaken your Attention, that *There standeth one among you, whom you know not*; and therefore to put an end to your Enquiry, *Ego Vox, I am only*

John 1.
30.

only a *Voice*, a meer Organ, and Forerunner of the *Word*: for *He is coming after me, who is made before me.* For tho' the *Voice* be first by Priority of Place, yet the *Word* is first by Priority of Nature, the *Verbum mentis*, or Conception, being antecedent to the *Verbum oris*, or Expression. And as when good News is brought you (Right Honorable and Religious Auditors) you amuse not your selves with the *Voice* that delivers it, but attend to the thing deliver'd, so the *Jew*, so the *Christian* is commanded, so common Sense teacheth you, not to stop at the *Voice*, (a meer Shadow) but to carry your Attention to the *Substance*. So *St. John*, and so every one that after him announces *JESUS CHRIST*, exhorts you not to be offended with the plain and unartful Delivery of the Preacher, nor to expect that Harmony of Words, those moving Gestures, those sweet Cadences in the Pulpit, which draw you to the Theatre, which are the *Business*, and make all the Beauty of the Stage. They were certainly other Motives that brought you hither: for unless you mistake Curiosity for Devotion, you come not to be charm'd with soft Numbers and a musical Air, but to be instructed in solid and severe Truths, such as a Baptist publishes

publishes in my Text, in Words as unstudy'd as his Gesture, as rough as his Clothing, and containing a Doctrine as mortifying and rigid as his Life : And such you are to expect within these Walls, from one that pretends not to mollify, but to enforce his Doctrine, and, as his *Voice* and Interpreter, to carry home to you the bitter Reproach, that *There standeth one in the midst of you whom you know not*, that *There is a God who is a consuming fire, who is a searcher of hearts, a God jealous of his honour, and an Avenger of a Contempt to the Third and Fourth Generation* ; that this God is in the midst of you ;

I. BY the Immensity of his Nature and Being ; Division.

II. BY the Extent of his Power and Operation ; And

III. BY the Infinity of his Wisdom and Knowledge ;

(Which shall make the three Parts of this Exhortation) and yet you know him not, and yet you cannot but know him ; your Ignorance is not real, but affected and wilful ;

ful; your Knowledge serves only to make your neglect of him more criminal; and oh! I tremble to say it, without more than an ordinary Repentance, unpardonable. But we need a Baptist to evince these Truths, or at least a double Portion of his Spirit to rest upon, and to animate my Tongue. Let us apply our selves to him, that *chooses the weak things of this world, to confound the strong*; and as an instance, when he came to destroy the Kingdom of Sin, *he did not abhor a Virgin's womb*, the Angel Gabriel being the *Præcursor*, and especially in this holy Time of *Advent*, warranting our Repetition of his Message, AVE MARIA.

ἘΣΤΙΝ ΕΝ ΜΕΣΟΙΣ. *There hath stood, or standeth, one in the midst of you, whom you know not.*

- I. THE great *Præcursor*, of our Lord knew very well, that one of the most efficacious Means to keep us within the bounds of our Duty, or when we have stept aside, to cast a rub in our way, and make us fall back by a timely Repentance, (the Subject of his Preaching) was to put us in mind, that God, whom we so supinely neglect, and so carelessly offend, is *in the midst of us*;

FIRST,

FIRST, By the Immensity of his Nature and Being. For the Omnipresence of God, or his being in all Places, is so necessarily included in the Notion, which all Men have of the Deity, that a Doubt of it would sap the very Foundations of Religion, and shock the first Principles of Reason: For, *That is nothing where God is not*, says the most ancient of the Heathen Philosophers. And in effect, take away the Presence of the Divinity to all Things, and in all Places, his *Infinity* and *Immutability*, the unquestionable Attributes, and (as I may say) the constitutive Perfections of the God-head, are no more, and *the Fool may truly say in his heart, There is no God.*

FOR, *first*, That which is *Infinite* can suffer no Limitation; and yet if he were not Immense, the being in one Place would exclude him from being in another. And, *secondly*, that which is *Immutable* can never change, or shift its Place; yet if God were not immense, that is, if he were confined to one determinate Space, he could not be in another, without ceasing to be where he was before; whence it is evidently concluded; that he is every where, and reaches all Places, and all Times; by his *Eternity* all Times, by his *Immensity* all Places,

BUT withal we must acknowledge, that he is in a peculiar, more excellent manner, present to the Rational Creature; which bears his Image, and for whose sake he made all other things contain'd in that we call *Place*. For his Presence to other parts of the Creation, is only necessary in order to preserve them in *Being*; but his Presence to Man is necessary in order to his *Well-being*. Other Creatures operate by the Necessity of their Natures; Man by the Election and Liberty of his Will. Other Creatures cannot swerve from the Position, which was assign'd them, nor stop the Motion, which was impress'd on them, when they first began to exist; the Sun cannot start from his Sphere, nor the Earth burst from its Center: But you are not only eccentric to the State, in which you were created, you have not only stifled and suppress'd the Impulse of Original Innocence, and deaden'd the Action of justifying Grace within you; but you also stand in need of a strong Rein, to keep you from rushing into an endless Series of Irregularities and Transgressions. And therefore you must be often warned, that *The rod is upon your back*, (as the wise King speaks) or as the Baptist more forcibly,

forcibly, that *The ax is laid to the root of the tree*; that the Eye of your Maker is in every place open and fix'd upon you, that his Hand is stretch'd out to cut you down in your greener Sins. And when the Tree is fell'd, we know the Consequence, it lives no more: But that's not all; *In the place where the Tree falleth, there it shall be*, saith the Preacher. In what place soever you meet this fatal Blow, your Eternity depends upon it; your *Eternity*, that's the Blow: 'Tis the *Hand* of God that strikes, Death is the *Ax*, your selves are the *Tree*; and what is the *End*? *In ignem mittetur*, Cast the fruitless Tree into unquenchable Flames. *Et quis poterit habitare de vobis cum igne devorante?* And tell me, you that cannot endure the Sight of a Mortification, the Approach of an Affliction, the Want of a Repast, or a Superfluity, no nor of an Excess; *Who among you can dwell with the devouring fire?* *Who among you can dwell with everlasting burnings?* But what could raise the Indignation of our God to such a Flame against his Creature? against his own Likeness, the Likeness of a God, *who cannot forget to be gracious, nor in his anger shut up his tender mercies*; but because he is in the midst

Luke 3. 9.

Isaiah 33.

14.

Psalm 77.

9.

of us, and we know him not? Ah, Christians, let us enquire no farther, our Guilt is too evident.

THAT God is in the midst of us, is common to us with other Creatures; 'tis the Excellence of his Divine Nature, as well as the Subsistence and Advantage of the Created: But that *we know him not*, is the *specifick* Crime of Man, an Apostacy, that discriminates you from all other Creatures, which by an in-born Tendency to fulfil the Will of their Creator, *who said, Let there be light and there was light*; or by an obediencial Power, execute those Orders which they do not understand; as; *The ox knows his owner, and the ass the crib of his master; Israel autem non cognovit; but Israel knows not me*: You that excel all other Creatures, because you have the Power of knowing, know not me, that gave you that Power; the Faculty, that makes you little less than the Angels, sinks you below the Condition of Beasts. But if your Blindness and Insensibility rested there, I that can command *light to shine out of darkness*, might enlighten your Eyes, and melt down your Hearts: But that, which raises your Crime to an unpardonable Enormity, is, that *you are Israel, Populus meus,*

Isaiab. 1.
3.

2 Cor. 4.
6.

meus, My People, my Inheritance, which I have separated from the rest of the World, chosen out of all Nations, seal'd with the Blood of the Testament, enrich'd with my Spirit; and as I once told my Servant Da- 2 Kings 12. 8.
vid, If all these things are too little, I am ready to add far greater: But that you, after all, should not know me; that wilful, that design'd, that affected Ignorance, ties up the Hands of Mercy: I can no more, unless it be to cry to you like a Isaiah 42. 14.
woman in travail, quasi parturiens loquar: And have I been silent? Have not I exalted my voice like a trumpet? And have you not stopt your Ears, either refusing to bear the voice calling after you, or churlishly replied to your God, Scientiam viarum tuarum nolumus; We will not the knowledge of thy ways; We will not know thee, lest we should be converted, and thou shouldst heal us?

FOR, Christians, is it to know God, when your Life and Manners contradict your Belief? or, *to honour him with your* Matth. 15: 8.
lips, when your heart is far from him? or, to hear his Word like the *voice of an*
inchanter, to go away pleased with the Har-
mony, without a Design of submitting to
the Doctrine? If you do not believe the
Presence of your God in the midst of you,
 I

I must send you to the Heathen for Instruction: But I am affraid you are past that:

Matth. 6. 23. *If the light that is in you by Nature, be turned into darkness, by Obduracy in Sin, Tenebræ quantæ erunt? 'Tis more than Egyptian Darkness; 'tis that of Hell, from which their is no redemption. But if you believe there is a God, who in all Places beholds the Good and the Bad, you do well, says the*

James 2. 19. *Apostle; but the Devils also believe, Dæmones credunt; yet 'tis a dead Faith, unless you believe and tremble: Dæmones contremiscunt, the Devils too believe and tremble; but they do not repent. And what Name will you give those, who neither believe, tremble, nor repent? For assure your selves, if you do not tremble, you do not repent; and if you do not repent, you do not believe either the Presence of God in you by the Immensity of his Nature, nor his Presence with you by the Extent of his Power and Operation: Which is my Second Point.*

II. THE Presence of God in all things, and all Places, proved from the Extent and Universality of his Operation, was judged by the great Apostle, of sufficient Strength to level all Infidelity at a Blow, to convince the most haughty Spirit, and to waken the most

most heavy Heart into an awful Attention to the Deity. Therefore he put no other Argument to the People of *Athens*, and their learned Bench of Judges in the *Areopagus*: For having found an Altar with this Inscription, *To the unknown God*, he re-^{Acts 17.}proaches their Blindness, and shews, that^{23.} the *Divinity* cannot be confined to Temples built with Hands, because *he is not distant from any of us all*; and how does he prove that? *Because in him we live, move, and have our Being.*

A full and just Conclusion: For every *Agent* must be present to the Thing it acts upon, that is, the *Mover*, and thing *Moved*, must be together. Now, that there is a *First Mover*, imparting Motion to every Creature, is evident to the Light of Nature, and was acknowledged by the *Gentiles*. If there be a *First Mover*, there is a *First Cause* of all things; therefore, *ab ipso*, from it, we live, and move, and have our Being. But because God is a Mover, not only, when he first gave us Being, but also, while he preserves us in that Being (for Preservation is nothing, but the Creative Action continued) therefore, *in ipso*, in him, we live, we move, and have our Being: As he is the Cause *efficient*, we are from him;
omnia

omnia per ipsum facta sunt: as he concurs with all our Operations, giving us Faculties to act, Reason to discern, Liberty to chuse, Perseverance to accomplish, we are in him, and he in us, (according to the Prophet)

Isaiab 26. thou hast wrought all our works in us.

12.

FOR this wonderful Operation of God in all his Creatures, is still more admirable in Man, a Creature of such excellent Endowments, that nothing under God could be its Original; but a Creature so insensible of its own Perfection, so fallen from its native Beauty, and so continually tending to Nothing; and concurring to its own Ruin, that no less than an omnipotent Hand can stop him short on the Brink of the Precipice, whither he is running to self-destruction, by the Dissolution of the Elements, which compound his Body, but by far worse Dissolution of his Manners, which destroy his Soul.

To preserve this Creature, is a Province for a God, worthy an omnipotent Hand, and becoming *the strong one of Israel*. And in this he chiefly demonstrates, that

Deut. 20. there is a God in the midst of us. Portans,
implens, protegens, says St. *Augustine*. Bearing with, and supporting our Weakness, *Portans*; Filling our Emptiness, and re-
 pairing

4.

pairing our Decays, *Implens*; Covering us with his Wings, and defending us from our selves, the worst of our Enemies, *Protegens*. Did he not *sustain* us, we should at this Instant return into our own Nothing, by the sole Weight of our Infirmity; Did he not *bear with us*, we should be lost for ever; Did he not *fill* our Emptiness, we should be indeed but miserable; Did he not repair our Decays, *Salvation it self could not save us*; And infine, were he present to us as a meer Spectator, with an idle and unactive Presence, *Darkness would cover us*, and Hell would swallow us up. But his Presence is (as the Prophet elegantly expresses it) *a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time* Isaiab 42
from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and 6.
for a covert from storm and rain; a Presence of Protection and Succour. *Do not fear*, says he by the Mouth of the Priest, when the *Israelites* were upon the point of engaging the Enemy, *Dominus vester in medio vestri est*; *Your God is in the midst of you*, Deut. 20.
and will fight for you against your Enemies. 4.
The Victory is already in your hands, when the *God of Armies* is at your Head to lead you on, and do you fear the Success? He is at your Side to support you, and do you shrink from the *most fiery darts* of Satan?

He covers you with his Shield, and would any one in his right Senses throw away his Arms, and render himself a Slave to the Powers of Wickedness?

CHRISTIANS, *I said you are Gods, and all of you Sons of the most High, the Image of his Likeness, the Master-piece of his Works, the Darling of his Providence, the Object of his Cares, of his Vigilancy, of his more than paternal Solitude. For*

Isaiab 49. Tho' a mother should forget the child that hangs at her breasts, should she have no compassion of the son of her womb (a thing very unlikely, but not impossible) Ego tamen non obliviscar tui; yet I will never forget thee, 'tis absolutely impossible. Behold, I have written thee in the Palms of my hands, to have thee always before my Eyes. Imo non tantum in oculis Dei, sed etiam in sinu vivimus, says Minutius Felix; We live not only in the Eyes of our God, but even in his Bosom. And yet (O Prodigy of Ungratitude) we can forget this God, this Benefactor, this Parent, this Friend; and we do actually forget him as often as we sin. Alas! When is it that we remember him? All other things can find a place in our thoughts, and only He, that ought to be the Subject of our whole Attention, is excluded. The meanest and

most

most trivial Accidents, idle Discourses, and impertinent News, never fail of a welcome; but when the Name of God happens to crowd in (unless it be in Oaths and Imprecations;) when the Duties of Religion come into our Heads (unless it be to ridicule and blaspheme them;) when the Terrors of Divine Justice present themselves before us, the Door is presently shut upon them; and if they forcibly press in, as sometimes they will, there is presently a damp upon our Spirits, we fly from the Reflection *as from the face of a Serpent*: Company, Divertisement, and even Debauchery, are sought to rescue us from the dangerous Temptation of *remembering our Creator in the days of our youth.*

INDEED, my Christian Auditors, it is thought a *dangerous Temptation* by the Powers of Darkness, and much apprehended by the Enemy of Mankind; for the strongest Cords that he binds a Sinner with, are Oblivion, and Neglect of the Divine Presence. And we have an assurance of this from God's own Mouth; for having enumerated, in the xxii. Chapter of *Ezekiel*, all the crying Sins, and abominable Impieties of the City *Jerusalem*, he concludes the tragical Description with the greatest, the

Ezek. 22.
12.

Source and Original of all the rest, *Meique oblita es, Thou hast forgotten me*; and if thou hadst not, thou couldst never have prostituted thy self to such Impieties. And whence, I beseech you, issue so many bloody Revenges, scandalous Reflections, black Calumnies, shameless Commerces, and unbridled Liberties, I do not say among the *Africans* and *Tartars*, but within the Pale of Christianity, in the very Bowels of Religion, among the *chosen Generation, the royal Priesthood, the holy Nation, the peculiar People*? what are the poisonous Springs of these Rivers of Death? but *Meique oblita es*; You have forgotten that your God is present to you, either by the Immensity of his Being, or by the Extent of his Operations; and therefore you must be convinced, that he is present to you by his Wisdom and Knowledge, which is my last Consideration.

III.

THAT God is *Omniscient*, or knowing all things, is evident as well from the Excellence of the Divine Nature, as from the Immensity of his Being and Operation: For since he is in all things, giving them Existence and Motion, we should make him an irrational Agent, to question whether he knows the Works of his own Hands. Wherefore all those Productions which are so much

much in the dark to us, and so impenetrable to our Understanding, whether the secret workings of Nature, or the more difficult windings and recesses of the Heart of Man, lie open and expanded to the Eyes of God; *Neither is there any creature* (says Heb. 4. 13. the Apostle) *that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do.*

Now certainly, the only Presence of a great Prince, must needs put us upon our Guard, and make us study our Behaviour, our Gestures, and our Words, if we had nothing to do with him, and tho' he did not seem to regard us. But when he casts his Eyes towards us, and seems to attend to what we say or do, we cannot but have a greater Concern upon us; we cannot but add more than an ordinary Solitude, tho' he stands but as a meer Spectator, without a design to reward or punish, or so much as nicely to examine our Words, or our Deeds; but when he sits upon the Judgment Seat, surrounded with all the Pomp, and Terror of Justice, observing all our Motions, studying our Looks, weighing our Words, canvassing our Actions, diving into our very Intentions, demanding account of the *Talents* left in our Hands, and all
this

this with Life and Death at the point of his Tongue: Good God! What a concern would you be in if this were your Case? Would Riches, Honour, Voluptuousness, Greatness, or Ambition, work any more upon you than they do upon a Criminal that is dragg'd to Execution? Would you send for the Musician, or the Comedian to divert your Mind, lest you should become too serious in his Presence; or would you expose your self to his Indignation by foolish Dalliances, and Indecencies, in your Postures and Behaviour? but if the Prince should bid you draw near, and with a gracious and serene Aspect, encourage you to discourse familiarly with him, to expose your Grievances, and ask whatsoever might be conducing either to your Ease or Happiness; Is it possible you should so far forget your own Concern, that your first Address should be to defame your innocent Neighbour, or spend those blessed Moments in idle, or impertinent, or prophane Discourse; or even blaspheme the merciful Hand that affords them, and flie in the Face of your royal Benefactor?

THIS indeed *the unprofitable Servant* did, when in lieu of begging Pardon for neglecting to improve his Talent, he tells his
 Master

Master, that *he knew him to be an austere Man*, and as falsely, as impudently charged him to his Face, *That he exacted what he did not deposit, and reaped what he did not sow.* Luke 19: 21. What could Folly utter more absurd, or Impudence more provoking, or Ingratitude more injurious to his Lord? I know, beloved Christians, you conceive the greatest Indignation against such Wretches, that you have already pronounced Sentence in your Heart upon them, *To be bound hand and foot, and to be cast into outward darkness.*

BUT to draw the matter home, and this Discourse to a Conclusion; Christian, this is your own Case; this is no more than you commit every Day; no more did I say? 'Tis infinitely short of your Folly, your Insensibility, your Ingratitude, who dare sin *in the Face of your Judge.* For, pray, what Perfection, or Advantage would it be to God, if his Knowledge of our Actions were meerly *speculative*, without a Power to take an Account of them, to punish or reward them? Who of us would not be glad to want such a sterile Perfection? When Nature it self instructs every Creature to fly from that Violence and ill Usage, which we cannot remedy, and to shut our Eyes against that Suffering, which becomes double by
being

being seen. And hence we conclude, that *Epicure* destroy'd the very Being of a God, when he limited his Concerns to the Heavens, without caring what pass'd in the neather World.

FOR the Knowledge of God is inseparable from his Power; the Schools teach us, that he is a *Pure Act*; his *Knowledge*; therefore is his *Judgment*, and wheresoever his Eyes are open, his Tribunal is erected. He does not expect the general Summons to meet us in the Vale of *Josaphat*, nor the particular, to answer before him at the hour of Death; no, not so much as the Place where thou hast committed that Theft, that Injustice, that Extortion; but because *In medio vestrum stetit*, Because he is in the midst of you, because he dwells in your Heart, and sees your Wickedness in the Spring-head before it break out into Practice; there he passes the first Sentence, *Nisi pœnitentiam habueritis, omnes simul peribitis*; Unless you repent, not only of the Sins you have committed in the Eyes of Man, but also of every irreligious and indecent Thought, of every unlawful Desire, of every unchristian Design, you shall inevitably perish. *Faciam in medio tui Judicia*; I will do judgment in the midst of you: Partly because

Luke 13.
3.

Ezek. 5.
8.

because Sin takes its Birth in the midst of us, the Heart being the Womb where it is generated; and partly, because in the very Moment of its Conception, it prides it self in the very Eyes of God, who dwells there, flies in his Face, wishes his Destruction, upbraids his Knowledge, defies his Thunder, and infine, ejects the Presence of his *Grace*, and leaves only that of his *Severity*. And do you wonder that Patience thus provok'd can turn into Fury? *As I live, saith the Lord* *Ezek. 5: 11.*
God, surely because thou hast defiled thy Heart, my sanctuary, with all thy detestable things; and with all thy abominations, I will also destroy thee, neither shall my eye spare thee, neither will I have any pity on thee. Numerabo vos in gladio, says he by another Prophet, & omnes in cæde corruetis; I will put you all *Isaiab 6: 5, 12.*
to the Sword, you shall wallow in your own Blood, as Victims to my just Indignation: And why? Because you did evil before mine Eyes; Because, tho' you knew I am always in the midst of you by the Immensity of my Nature, by the Extent and Concurrence of my Operations, by the Infinity of my Wisdom and Knowledge, yet you have so little respect for my Presence, that you have the Impudence to assault me upon my Throne, and daily, nay hourly act what

Lucifer but once and in vain attempted: You wrest the Glories from my Temples, and place your selves *on the Mount of the Testament*; you entertain an unlawful Desire, you are pleased with it, *it comes out an Idol*, here you offer Incense, and your self in Sacrifice; And *these are your Gods, O Israel!* Yes, they are the Gods that lead you back into *Egypt*, into the House of Bondage; *But Israel knows not me, and my people will not consider.*

AH! Christians, it is enough, ah! It is too much, let us at last fix a Period to our Crimes, and, as *St. Augustine* advises, *Set our selves before our own Eyes* (it is the Business of this holy and penitential Time) and then we shall see our *Gold turn'd into Dross*, the most beautiful Creature distorted into the most hideous Deformity; while the Advantage of our Being has made us even Monsters in Nature, because *God hath stood in the midst of us, and we knew him not.* You know and believe that you are, and exist meerly by the Hand of his Power, that you subsist by that of his Providence, and that you have deserved to be cut off by that of his Justice; And did God extract you out of Nothing for a meer Experiment, to try how ungrateful you could be? How much

much better had you never been? Does he perpetuate your Being, meerly to exercise his Patience? How much better would it be for you to perish this Moment? But if you were made to serve him, and live to repent that you have not done it, lay hold on this *acceptable time*, this *day of Salvation*.

You know and believe, That you not only *live*, but also *move in him* (as the Apostle speaks;) That he gives you Powers to act, and concurs with the Exercise of them: And shall I make his Concurrence subser-vient to my Injustice? Shall I turn his own Weapons against him, and corrupt the Means of doing well, into the Instruments of my Crimes?

INFINE, You are fully perswaded, that you not only *live and move in him*, but also, *that he is in the midst of you*, as a King in the midst of his Dominions, as a Judge in the midst of Criminals, not only discerning all your Proceedings, but nicely observing all your Motions, weighing every Circum-stance in *the Balance of the Sanctuary*, *searching Jerusalem with Candles*, *numbering all the Hairs of your Head*, and pronouncing upon *every idle Word*; and that there is but a very small Interval between the Sentence and the Execution, a short flux of
Time

Time, an Accident, a Fever, an Apoplexy, or perhaps, a more sudden Death.

Now go on, and sin without Fear, or Conscience; give the Reins to your Appetites, and freely abandon your selves to such Abominations as the very *Gentiles* trembled to commit, tho' *they knew not God*. But 'tis impossible you should act thus, and believe; but if you act thus; ----- I will not, I am ashamed to make the Inference to those; who have the Reputation of being *Christians*, and what is now a days thought something more, *Men of Reason*. All that I desire of you, is to take *St. Bernard's* Advice along with you, *Ibi. pecca, ubi nescis Deum esse; Choose that place to offend in, whence God is excluded*; an Attention to whose most piercing Eyes will quench the most fiery Darts of the Enemy, a Sense of whose adorable Presence will keep a Rein upon the most unruly Appetites, and infine, an Apprehension of whose severe Judgments will make you *conceive and bring forth the Spirit of Salvation*, which is to prepare a way for a Saviour, whose Presence will be the Comfort of this Life, and the Happiness of the next. *Which I beseech, &c.*



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

W E L D - H O U S E,

In His Excellency the

S P A N I S H Ambassador's Chapel:

O N T H E

Third SUNDAY of *A D V E N T,*
D E C E M B E R 12, 1686.

By the Reverend FATHER

Br. JAMES AYRAY, Fryar Minor of the
Holy Order of St. *F R A N C I S,* Chaplain and
Preacher in Ordinary to His EXCELLENCY.

As publish'd, with Allowance and Special Order of Superiors.

Printed in the Y E A R, M D C C L X I.

2 E R M O N

W E A D - H O L D E R

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
PRESS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
54 EAST LAKE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607
U.S.A. AND CANADA
OTHER COUNTRIES: SEE LIST OF DISTRIBUTORS

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY RICHARD CLAY AND COMPANY, BUNGAY, SUFFOLK



S E R M O N III. †

Preach'd at

W E L D - H O U S E,

In His Excellency the

S P A N I S H Ambassador's Chapel: On
the Third *S U N D A Y* of *A D V E N T*,
December 12, 1686.



J O H N i. 19.

Tu quis es?

Who art thou?



TH E great Saint *Augustin* was of Opinion, That that Man had his Judgment best placed, who less esteeming the Science of all things else, did make it his chiefest Study perfectly to know himself: And that a Soul was to be condemn'd, who, without

making an Inquisition into her own Infirmities, did trifle away her time in learning the secret, and less useful Course of the Stars, and still remain'd ignorant of the true Way to Heaven. Grant and allow to worldly Knowledge the best and greatest Advantages imaginable, yet still this unavoidable Misery attends the Grandure of it ; That the most profitable Perquisites cease, when Life doth last no longer : And that what was acquired with the Expence of great Labour and Pains, measuring out the Shortness of Man's Breath, only, remains no more, nor is to be found after Death.

THE devout *St. Bernard*, writing to *Pope Eugenius*, doth humbly suggest unto him, *That the Gain of an Universe would never countervail the Loss of a Man's own self.* Read over and perfectly understand all the Scriptures ; measure the Heavens from East to West ; span the whole Circumference of the Earth ; sound and fathom the briny Deep ; and be ill read in the Science of *Nosce teipsum* ; be ignorant, *tu quis es*, and you will resemble a Man, who Building upon a Quick-sand, exposes his Foundation to certain Ruin : *So that he only hath Wisdom, who is wise for himself*, and suffers not the anxious Care of learning things less important

tant to turn to his own Prejudice: *A teipso incipiat consideratio, in te finiatur; tu tibi primus, tu ultimus; non es sapiens si tibi non es:* These are the Words of St. Bernard.

THE miraculous Birth of St. *John* the Baptist, to whom the *Jews* do send a solemn Embassy in this Day's Gospel, the Holiness and Austerity of his Life, his Retreat in Solitude, and his divine Preachings, are the occasion why they doubt whether he be the *Messias* so long expected: And therefore sending their Priests and Levites demand of him, *Tu quis es?* Who art thou? And this great Saint, great in the admirable Science of *Nosce teipsum*, waving all the Titles of Honour due to his Character, gives a slender account of himself, and saith only that he is a Voice, *vox clamantis in deserto:* Manifesting by this Answer of his, That he did perfectly understand all the Weakness and Infirmities incident to human Nature. And let our Condition in this World be never so elevated, our Employments never so glorious, the Advantages of our Lives and Fortunes never so illustrious, we are still so inconsiderable, that wanting all Solidity, we pass like a Voice that is dissipated by the Wind. It is this important Knowledge of our selves, that I would have this

John 1.
19.

John 1.
23.

pious

pious Auditory to learn of the great Precursor of our Saviour; some Precepts of which Science I shall deliver unto them, after having invocated the Assistance of the Holy Ghost, through the Intercession of the most knowing Disciple in this School; the ever Blessed Virgin *Mary* I mean, who stiled herself a Hand-maid, when the Angel did salute her full of Grace, AVE MARIA.

IT is too true, that Man doth know every thing better, and himself less than all things: Whereas did he know himself well, he would know all things else to Perfection. *Quid est nosse seipsum, quàm totius mundi naturam nosse?* says *Photius* in his *Bibliotheca*: Man knowing himself, would know the Nature of all the World; and diving into the eternal Secrets, he would there be inform'd of all the Divine Decrees framed by the Almighty, for the Good of the Universe; he would there learn, that when God did build that wonderful Structure above us, adorning and embellishing it with so many glorious Lights; when he extracted this dry Land from the brackish Element, inhabited with Beasts and Birds, chequer'd and enamel'd with Flowers and Woods; when he made that admirable

Mixture

Mixture of the *Four Elements*, and so mutually incorporated them with one another, he would learn that all the Productions, which he then created, were all for Man, and Man he design'd solely for Himself.

THE Saints, who have been educated in this School, and there commenced Masters, have left behind a certain and clear Method for the Acquisition of this Science. Consider, saith the devout *St. Bernard*, from whence you came, and the Contemplation of that vile and ignoble Nothing, out of which you did first derive your Origin, will be the Subject of your Shame and Confusion: Regard your present State, and this Place of Banishment, with the dangerous Disasters that surround you, will administer unto you Matter of Lamentaion: Call to mind the Journey you are to take, survey the Tomb where you are to be served up Meat for the Worms: Or, take a step further, and at a Distance look on Hell, where your poor Soul (which God forbid) may be the eternal Subject of tormenting Flames. Or, if you had rather arrive to this scientific and most beneficial Knowledge, by examining the several Stations of your Life, the Past, the Present, and the Time to come, make some serious Reflections

on the vain and unprofitable Use, and the inconsiderable Advantages you have made of the Time past: Consider how great a Circumspection is requisite for the Time present, and what Provisions you ought to make for the Time to come: The Profit we have already reap'd in Time past is so little, that it seems never to have been; we must be cautious in the Time present, which imperceptibly doth pass away; and a prudent Forecast for the future requires an ample Provision: These three Considerations shall be the three Points of our present Entertainment; the Oeconomy of this Day's Discourse, and the Subject of your pious and favorable Attention.

P A R T I.

T H E greatest Misfortune that can befall poor Man, is to let his Days and Years unprofitably pass away, resembling little Children, who unhappily die before they are fit to taste the Sweets of Life: The most numerous Part of Mortals are deprived of vital Breath, before they attain the Knowledge of living well; and notwithstanding they have measured over a long Series of many Years, yet they are ignorant why, and to what end they have so long enjoy'd
this

this common Air. Holy Job doth suggest these my Thoughts, *Fuiffem quasi non effem de utero translatus ad tumulum*: From the Cradle we are carried to the Tomb, and are hurried out of the World, before we could well know the Reason that first placed us in it; and forgetting all past Transactions, we live tepidly; and without reforming the irregular Course of our Life, may die full of Years, but young in Virtue.

WHAT is once past can never be recall'd, it is as if it never had been; nor can God himself, make that Day return, whose succeeding Night hath once eclipsed his Lustre. Recall to Mind all your past Pleasures, your Joys and Divertisements, the innocent Sweets you formerly tasted with so great a Gust; and the whole Remain lies lock'd up in your Memory, without any Sign or Mark else where. The Life of Man is like a Dream, and when awaked by Death, he is convinced that the whole Course of his Time hath been only Fancy and Illusion; finding both his Hands empty after his supposed large Possessions. *Dormierunt somnum suum, & nihil invenerunt omnes viri divitiarum in manibus suis.* *Psalm 75.* And can such imaginary Smoke make us lose the Thoughts of Heaven, slight the Menaces of our God, and despise his Friendship?

ship? Can we for the Love of such Trifles run the certain Hazard of Eternal Torments? *Quid nobis profuit*, say those unhappy Souls now arrived to their last and dismal Home; *Quid nobis profuit superbia, aut divitiarum jactantia quid nobis contulit? transferunt omnia illa tanquam umbra.* The End of all our Pride, the rich and gaudy Remains of all our Wealth, is an immortal Regret for having fooled away our Hearts on such airy Vanities. That Man, whom To-day you see interred, hath all his Pleasures, with the empty Titles of his Honour, wrapt up in a *Funeral Shroud*; and a *Winding-sheet* will be the only Portion shall fall to your Lot of all those ample Possessions you now enjoy with so much Passion.

NOTWITHSTANDING what is past can never be recall'd, and is in Effect as if it never had a Being; yet once it had a Being, and such a one as all the Powers under Heaven can never deface, or take away. *St. Bernard* hath well express'd this in his first Book of *Consideration*, and Twelfth Chapter: *Quæ priora transferunt & non transferunt, transferunt à manu & non transferunt à mente.* Our past Actions leave behind them their eternal Species in our Mind; nor can the damned in Hell, during the long Space of a whole

whole Eternity, deface the Memory of an Action perpetrated in a Moment: *Quod factum est*, saith the same St. Bernard, *factum non esse non potest; proinde etsi facere in tempore fuit, sed fecisse in sempiternum manet.*

L. 5. de
Consider.
c. 12.

Let the greatest Discretion moderate, and be the Rule of your Life, imitate the Saints themselves in their Perfection, yet all your Endeavours may, indeed, make Satisfaction, but can never obliterate a Crime once committed. The greatest, perhaps, amongst the Pains in Hell, is that sempiternal Remorse, the perpetual Remembrance of a past Crime foments in the troubled Minds of those afflicted Souls: And that Worm that eats and tears their disturbed Breasts, is a Torture above infernal Punishments. The Memory of a Crime guilty of their Eternal Ruin, begets a Grief beyond Expression, and the Impossibility of a recalling creates a Despair not to be decypher'd; but the strange Consequences, that follow such light Beginnings, and the Eternity of Torments, which must make an everlasting Amends for a momentary Fault, will certainly extort a most horrid Rage.

THE Succession of things denotes the Beauty of Order; and one thing preceding the other doth hinder Confusion. But

the Mind of Man receives and retains innumerable things without a Burthen, and remembering things of an ancient Standing, still reserves the Species newly imprinted. Contemplate the Collection of all your past Actions, and see what a Store of Iniquities you have there laid up: Turn over the great Wardrobe of your past Crimes, and you will find it fill'd with Lumber, with scarce any Moveables worth regarding. Should God communicate unto you the perfect Knowledge of one single Sin: Should he let you see that the Enormity of it is infinite, because committed against a Majesty that is infinite, the Horror you would conceive would be extream; and the Deformity of one Crime, rightly understood, is able to disturb a Brain most justly seated. What then shall the Terror be, to see all the Vices of our former Days stand rank'd in Order, and all their Ugliness attending on them, represented to our View in Shapes most dismal? To behold all our ill Thoughts, our sinful Desires, our vicious Habits, our immodest Discourses, our unjust Dealings, our Deceits and Lyings, our Pride and Vanity, all our Distractions and Irreverences in the Presence of our God, the Good we have neglected, and the Ill we have done,

with

with a thousand other things, which will then distinctly shew themselves in their most deform'd Dress? How great will then your Terror be, your Astonishment and Confusion? *Terrebit eum tribulatio.* By how much the more Satisfaction you did receive in the Perpetration, by so much greater shall be your Pain, and the Distaste you thence derive, equalizing the Pleasure you formerly had, shall augment your Grief, and Torment as much as heretofore they pleased you. Job 15.
14.

THIS Landskip of your past Life expos'd to View, whilst the Eyes of your Soul contemplate the Vanity of your Conduct, make some Reflections on the Words of St. Paul, *Quem ergo fructum habuistis tunc in illis, in quibus nunc erubescitis? nam finis illorum mors est.* Rom. 6.
21. What Fruit, therefore, had you then in those things, of which now you are ashamed? For the End of them is Death. If you cannot think on past Crimes, saith St. *John Chrysoptom*, without Confusion, your Stock of Impudence must needs have been large, when you did commit them; and tho' then your Passion did pervert your Judgment, and Pleasure, or Complaisance did induce you to please your Sense, or Man, before your God; yet the Construction you afterwards

afterwards shall frame, will certainly be opposite to your first Opinion, when you shall find, that Grief and Confusion will be the only Remnant of all your Possessions.

2 Kings
13.

REFLECT on the incestuous *Amnon*, whose Love changing Countenance, his Passion being once satisfy'd, did hate his Sister *Thamar*, more than ever he had Affection for her, *Ita ut majus esset odium, quo oderat eam, amore quo antè dilexerat.* Our first Parents had no sooner committed that Sin, the Guilt of which they left as a Patrimony to all their Children, but their Eyes opening, they did discover their own Misery, and fled each others Sight. You, who lead a vicious Life, and whose sinful Conversation doth grow into a Habit, I fear you are not truly sensible of that Displeasure which always springs from Vice; nor do you foresee those Evils, the Seeds of which you have already sow'd, and even now begin to blossom. Thus you see the Income of your past Actions, and the Harvest you are to reap of all your Time ill spent, is Confusion here or worse hereafter: For all your Sins must here meet with a Penance equal to your Life, or a Punishment as long as Eternity. Follow therefore the Advice of the Philosopher, *non tanti emo pœnitere,*
this

this Repentance is of too high a Price for me to purchase. And since the Fruits of your past Labours have been but inconsiderable, be circumspect and cautious, and retrieve your Loss with a prudent Distribution of the Time present, which is my Second Point.

P A R T II.

THE Extent of Man's Dominion is inconsiderable and short; and of all those Days that compose his Life, only the Time present is in his Power: The past is now no more, and the future is yet to come; so that he is Master only of the Time which now is, and that too is carried on such swift Wings as out-run his Thoughts, and leaving no Space for Consideration, outstrip Fancy it self. The Flashes of Lightning that pierce the Clouds; an Arrow that cleaves the Air; a Ship which with wonderful Swiftnes plows the salt Waves, and driven by an impetuous Gale doth till the Deep; the Stars themselves, who with their rapid Course do run through Spaces immense in an Instant, are only light Expressions of that prodigious Swiftnes; wherewith the Time present doth fly away: It is an Instant imperceptible, impossible to be cut in two: It is

a *Now*, which is now no more, no sooner here but presently gone, and dividing it self between the Past and the Future, reserves only a Point to save the Denomination of Present; and yet this single Point is the only thing at our Command; and our Orders reaching no further, we can only dispose of this imperceptible *Now*; and the Decision of our future Bliss or Pain doth really depend on this so momentary a Duration, *ex hoc momento pendet æternitas.*

METHINKS I see the King in the Gospel dividing his Wealth amongst his Servants, and reading a Lecture of Negotiation unto them: *negotiamini dum venio*, improve these Talents I now leave with you, and your Gain may easily double the Principal; make a provident Use of your present Time, and your Increase may reach the Infinite: But be sure not to let this Occasion imprudently pass, for *amplius non erit tempus.* It is bald behind; and once let slip, will probably never offer it self again: *post est Occasio calva.* It is a Folly next to Madness, founding yourselves upon deceitful Hopes, to delay your Penance to an imaginary Hereafter, and to put off the important Affairs of an Eternal Concern, to a Time, which shall, perhaps, never be. How many poor Souls are there
 now

Luke 19.

13.

Apoc. 10.

6.

now frying in Hell Flames, because, after once they had unhappily sinned against their God, they wilfully slighted the offer'd Occasion of one favourable Instant, allotted them by Mercy for a Reconciliation.

O H! How the Favours of our God are great, who prolonging our Lives doth solicit our hard Hearts by his divine Inspirations, to make good use of our present Time, and continuing us in this Pilgrimage of the Land of the Living, the Way to eternal Bliss, doth afford us means necessary to redress the Disorders of our ill regulated Consciences, and lay up the Store requisite for Heaven: *Ex hoc momento pendet æternitas.*

WHATEVER we have been heretofore, or whatsoever we are like to be hereafter, doth not fall under the Consideration of our God: He will forget our past Crimes, which a true Repentance hath cashier'd: He doth not consider what we may arrive to be, but as he doth actually find us, so he frames his Judgment. Pass therefore a general Review, and take a full Cognizance of all your Spiritual Concerns, and learn from thence what Reason you have to Hope or Fear: See how you stand with your Obligations, and what Esteem you have had of Works of Council and Supererrogation.

CONSULT your Conscience and pronounce Sentence against your self, it is the only way to avoid the Severity of the Divine Decrees; ^{1 Cor. 11.} *probet autem seipsum homo*, see if any Mortal Sin lieth yet knowingly conceal'd; whether Envy or Hatred, or any impure Desires lie cover'd in your Breast; if in frequenting the Sacraments you have not committed some Sacrilege, and prophanely abused to your own Damnation, those things, which were instituted a Means to purchase Heaven; if your Affections lean not too much to the Creature, and, despising your God, pay the Tribute of your Adoration to an unworthy Object.

IF this Review convinces you faulty, if this Scrutiny discovers Defects in you, banish all Delays, and let this present Season be the serious Moment of your Reformation: The Obstacles you do now meet with, hereafter will wax but stronger; and the now offer'd Graces will be less frequent, and not so efficacious; your vicious Habits will grow into a second Nature; and Sin it self, taking hold more firmly, will very hardly be rooted out. *Modò, modò, & illud modò non habebat modum*, said heretofore a great Sinner, tho' now a great and glorious Saint: By-and-by, presently, and yet this By-and-by

by did see the length of many Days expire : So hard it is, seriously, to go about the Work of a true Conversion ; what you now do: *Qui hodie non est, cras minus aptus erit.* For hereafter you will not be able, at least not more willing : You will want Time ; or, if you have that, you may be destitute of Grace ; if Grace present it self, your Will accusom'd already to refuse, will then not know how to comply. Hell is full of Spirits, who, presuming on the Mercies of the Almighty, let slip the blessed Time of their Conversion ; and, neglecting what was in their Power, grounded their Repentance upon the Contingency of Uncertainties: *Amplius non erit tempus.* Now they will have Leisure to lament and weep their fill: Heaven's Gate is shut, and the Treasures of divine Mercies are all lock'd up.

*Apo. 10.
6.*

EXAMINE the present State of your Soul, and look into your former Life, and see what Progress you have made : I fear you will have Reason to say with Holy *Job*, *Quis mihi det ut sim juxta menses pristinos :* *Job 29. 2.* Would to God the Comportment of my former Years were now discernable in my Behaviour ; or that my Carriage, at this Age, were suitable to the Modesty of my Youth.

THAT Man, who aims at little, is with any thing satisfy'd; and he, who will do only what he is bid, grows lazy, and easily neglects his Duty; and, notwithstanding all the Projects he may have for the Future, he still remains in the same Condition, without any Sign of a better Fortune: He doth truly resemble those *Jews*, who, when desired to repair the Temple, answer'd, *fig. 1. 2. Nondum venit tempus*; The Time was not come. So wretched Man is still put off with, *It is not yet Time*: As soon as I shall have settled my Affairs in the World; as soon as my Children shall be disposed off; as soon as I shall purchase this Estate, that Office, that Employ; as soon as I shall have gain'd this Law Suit: As soon as I shall be at Liberty, and free from the Cares and Troubles of the World, I will then begin to think of serving God, and study the Advancement of my own Soul.

BUT, *Quis es tu?* Who are you, inconsiderate Creatures, that do thus capitulate with Heaven, and imposing Measures on your God, do lay your vain and fruitless Projects for Eternity? *Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile*: Behold now is the Time acceptable: The Future as yet is not, and, perhaps, will have no Being for you, but in your own

own senseless Fancy: Nay, should it ever find an Existence, it may be incumber'd with more and greater Obstacles than now you meet with. When those imaginary Designs are brought to pass, which now so powerfully impede your Progress in the way of Virtue, that working Head of yours shall be fit to create new Difficulties ten times more intricate and hard. Your Cares and Solitudes, your more urgent Occasions, if you make a right Use of them, will rather further you in the way to Virtue; and what you now falsely deem a Hindrance, will certainly promote Perfection. All things do assist and co-operate with the Just; *omnia* Rom. 8.
co-operantur in bonum iis, qui secundum pro- 28.
positum vocati sunt sancti: and drawing Advantages from all Occurrences, they providently do lay up a plentiful Provision for the Future: Which is my Third and last Point.

P A R T III.

THIS Future, or Time to come, besides that it doth hold us in Suspence, uncertain of our End, whether Good or Bad, giveth us moreover Reason to question, whether there shall ever be any Time to come for us at all; how it may continue; and if it is like to be favourable or averse.

Matth. 25.
13.

THE Son of God, in the Gospel, doth command us still to be upon our Guard ; because we are wholly ignorant, not only of the Hour, that must put a Period to our Life, but even of the Day, that is to be Witness to our Death ; *vigilate, quia nescitis diem neque horam.* And Holy Writ doth suggest unto us one fatal Moment, which will turn all the Delights of this World into Bitterness ; *Et in puncto descendunt in infernum.* They, whose chiefest Study is an idle Indulgence of their own slothful Ease, and who senselessly content themselves in the Enjoyment of vain worldly Pleasures, do often find themselves grasp'd with the cold Hands of a sudden Death, when they imagined themselves most secure ; and in a Moment they make a most sorrowful Change, parting with their darling Earth for the Flames of a Hell-Fire ; *Et in puncto descendunt in infernum.*

Job 21.
13.

ALL the Moments of our Life are subject to the decisive Stroke of Death, and every Hour may send us a melancholy Messenger to Eternity : And as in Time past every Moment might have been our last, so in this Time to come every Particle may be the sad Beginning of our Misery. Wherefore be always watchful, and keep yourselves

selves always in such a State as may send you to an Eternity, that may be Happy and not Unfortunate; let not Death surprisè you unprovided, lest that very Instant you design'd for Vice, be the last of your sinful Life, and the first of your Pains.

THE Continuance of this future *Hereafter* is uncertain, and should it conduct our gray Hairs to the cold Tomb, its Duration were but a Day in respect of Eternity; *tanquam* *Psalm 89.*
dies hesternæ, quæ præterit. Imagine what's to come, by what's already past; and by that dram of Life, which hitherto you have lived, guess at the Instability of what's to come Hereafter. How stupid then must that Man be, whose chiefest Design is to frame a wretch'd Fortune here, and (exposing himself to a thousand Hazards) finds himself with all his Projects dash'd in an Instant? Oh! Were it not much better, and more secure, to labour for an Eternity of Blis, and, studying to increase your Fortune, lay the Foundations of it in a Kingdom that will last for Ever.

HOLY *Job*, when most of all favour'd with Prosperity, dreaded the unlucky Strokes of Adversity; and, being ignorant of the Event, still remain'd prepared for the worst of Accidents; *timor quem timebam evenit* *Job 3. 25.*
mibi,

mibi, & quod verebar accidit. A prudent Fore-sight renders Evils less troublesome, and a prepared Will receives Misfortunes with a greater Calmness; *minùs jacula feriunt, quæ prævidentur.* A Will perfectly resign'd kisseth the Rod before it strikes, and placeth the Disasters of this Life in the Number of Celestial Favours: It is arm'd by Providence against the worst, and plainly discovers the Hand of God in all its Accidents; and, intirely relying on Divine Wisdom, leaves it self to be conducted by that God, whose eternal Decree was the Happiness of his Creatures; *omnem hominem vult salvum facere.*

1 Tim. 2.
1.

IF Doubts and Fears still attend the present State of your Affairs, the Expectation of our Eternity must needs be anxious: None can dive at once into all the Parts of his Life, much less can he know his End. I will now suppose you Good, believe you Virtuous, and deserving a *Celestial Crown* for your Duty and Obedience to your God: But who knows the Disorders that may follow a Will subject to Inconstancy; and a Mind, impatient of Command, may at length spurn at Heaven, and contemn the Orders of his Maker.

SOLOMON, the Son of so great a Father, the Miracle of Wisdom, endow'd
with

with a Knowledge from above, did lay so glorious Beginnings as the World never knew, or shall ever be acquainted with: Stray'd at last out of the Way, began a sinful Journey, and such Crimes he did there embrace as gave occasion to his lasting Posterity to suspect his final End. O Devout Christians, *Who are you*, compared with this Prophet, and Son of a Prophet? *Tu quis es?* O never more presume on your own Force, but let the Admonition of the Apostle be your Guide, *Cum metu & tremore salutem vestram operamini*: With Fear and Trembling work your Salvation. Do not imitate those Persons over confident, who promising themselves the Joys of Heaven, do Day by Day remit the Works of Penance; and falsely think the Extremity of Time sufficient to redress the many Disorders of their disturbed Consciences. Oh! Unhappy Souls, you do but vainly imagine your Names register'd in the Book of Life; for, for all you know, the Sentence of an Eternal Death is ready to pass upon you: Should you now at this very Instant leave this earthly Stage, the Assurance you have of Heaven, would, perhaps, dwindle to a Nothing, and your big Hopes be frustrated with an unexpected and everlasting

Death. The great St. *Augustin* was never so afflicted, as when the dubious Inquiry of his eternal Inheritance molested his Mind; and the Desire to know, how he might stand in the Affections of his God, was a Vexation that did perpetually torment him.

Ecclef. 9.

1.

Nemo scit an odio dignus vel amore sit. The Saints themselves lived in perpetual Apprehensions; and the continual Alarms they receiv'd about their final Happiness, did incessantly disturb their Quiet.

Gal. 6. 10.

THE Wise-man doth frame for Mortals a Lesson of Instruction, from the Labours of the industrious Ant, who laying up in Summer her necessary Provision, doth pass the Winter in a greater Plenty. The Profit of our past Actions is but small, if any; and if we intend to live for Heaven, *dum*

John 1.

26.

tempus habemus operemur bonum, let us Work whilst we have Time. Cast an Eye back and reflect a little on the Answer St. *John* made to the Priests and Pharisees in this Day's Gospel; *Medius vestrum stetit, quem vos nescitis*; there hath stood in the midst of you one, whom you know not. Consider that God is always present with you, and it will be a Bridle to curb the irregular Motions of your evil Passions, and squaring all those Actions you shall then perform to the
divine

divine Rule, shall adorn them with a Rec-
titude suitable to their Model.

I could wish I was able to persuade you,
that Almighty God is always with you;
and when any foul Temptation doth sollicite
your less-well-regarded Heart; remember
that God doth look upon you; and if ever
you intend to be wicked, be so prudent in
your own Concerns and for your own Sake,
as to follow the Counsel of that great Light
of the Church, St. *Augustin*; find out some
obscure Place, where you may secretly com-
mit your Crimes unseen by Heaven: Find
out a House of all the Town the least re-
garded, and in the darkest Hole of that ob-
scure Retreat, search diligently into all the
Beds and Chairs, lest your God lie there
conceal'd; and if you can be so fortunate
as to find a Place hid from his all-piercing
Eyes, go there triumphantly, commit the
worst Misdeeds, and escape unpunish'd. But,
wretched Soul, if all the Mansion be full of
Eyes, if God not only be in your Chamber,
but in the very midst of your own self, *est*
in medio tui, How dare you presume to do
that in his Presence, which you would be
ashamed the Eyes of Man should see?

Psal. 115.
9.

It is not sufficient to abstain from evil
Works, *Medius vestrum stetit, quem vos nescitis.*
Almighty

Almighty God is present with you, therefore *lucernæ ardentes in manibus vestris*, you must have lighted Candles in your Hands; and, imitating the prudent Virgins, your *Lamps* must be well *stored with Oils*, your *Designs* must be the Practice of good Works; and, laying up a *Treasure* for Eternity, you must endeavour by your Prayers, Fasts, Alms-Deeds, and the Love of God to *purchase* Paradise. Your good *Works* alone will bear you Company; and if your *Provision* be but small, you will have Reason to apprehend an eternal Dearth. A wise Traveller provides a *Viaticum* proportionable to his Journey; and we are all bound for the new World, and our *Abode* there is to exceed the Length of Time. Let us therefore be *Provident*, and make so good use of the Time, which now is, as we may redeem the Time already lost; and, employing the whole present to the best Advantage, we may make such large and ample *Provisions* for the Time to come, as enjoying the Fruits of our Labours, through the Merits of our *Lord and Saviour Jesus*, we may be admitted to praise and glorify him for an Eternity with the Saints in Heaven; which God of his infinite Goodness grant us all. *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Amen.



A

S E R M O N

O F T H E

NATIVITY of our LORD,

Preach'd before the

KING and QUEEN,

A T

WHITEHALL, 1687.

By *BONAVENTURE GIFFARD,*
Doctour of SORBON, Chaplain in Ordinary, and
Preacher to their MAJESTIES.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY'S Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCLXI.



S E R M O N I V.
O F T H E
N A T I V I T Y of our L O R D,
Preach'd before the
K I N G and Q U E E N.

Gloria in altissimis Deo, & in terrâ Pax
Hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

*Glory in the highest to God, and in earth,
peace to men of good-will.*

*These Words were sung by a full Choir of Angels
at the Birth of our Saviour, as we find related
by St. L U K E ii. 14.*



STABLE! A Manger! A little
Hay! Some poor Swadling-
Bands! A helpless Infant! A
desolate young Maid! An Ox!
An Ass! What great Matter
of *Glory to God*, or Subject of so much Joy

to the *Angels*? What is there in all this poor *Equipage*, that should deserve to call down these noble *Spirits* from *Heaven*, to solemnize its Triumphs upon Earth? *Oh God!* How different are thy Judgments from those of *Men*? And by how opposite Ways dost thou seek thy *Glory*, from those which *Men* take to establish theirs? *Men* place all their *Glory* in great Riches, magnificent Houses, brave Apparel, sumptuous Entertainments, numerous Attendants, and such like Supports of their Vanity and Misery. But all the *Glory* *God Almighty* designs to draw from the great Work of the World's *Redemption*; behold he grounds it on the Poverty, Humility, and Abjection of his *eternal Son*. Hence, as you see, for his *Royal Palace*, he has provided him a ruinous *Stable*; for his *Bed of State*, a hard *Manger*; for his noble and numerous *Attendants*, an *Ox*, an *Ass*, or at best, some few poor *Shepherds*. In fine, instead of mighty *Treasures*, and great Plenty of all things, the utmost extremity of *Poverty*.

THIS, *Christians*, this is the Conduct *Almighty God* has used with his *eternal Son*, at his first coming into the World: This is the Method he has taken to purchase that *Glory* to himself; to give that *Peace* and
Joy

Joy to Men, which the *Angels* this Day publish to the World in their *Christmajs* Carol, of *Gloria in altissimis Deo, & in terrâ Pax Hominibus bonæ voluntatis.* Luke 2.
14.

DIVINE SPIRIT! Enlighten my Mind, inspire my Thoughts, help me to apprehend the Design of thy eternal *Wisdom* in this astonishing *Mystery*. I beg this of Thee, by the Intercession of the *Virgin-Mother*, who this Day brought forth that heavenly *Child*, which she conceived by the Operation of thy Virtue, at the same time that the Angel saluted her. AVE MARIA, &c.

Glory in the highest to God, and in earth, peace to men of good-will.

THE *Glory*, which Almighty God had in the *World* before the coming of our Saviour, seems to have been much eclips'd, and reduced to a very small Point; for the *Devil* (who no sooner became his *Enemy*, but also turn'd his *Rival*) since he could not become like to *God* in *Heaven*, resolv'd at least to be adored for God upon *Earth*: And thence (as *St. Gregory Nazianzen* observes) he has endeavour'd to possess that *Divinity* in the Opinion of *Men*, which he could not steal from the uncommunicable Nature of his

his *Maker*. *Qui Divinitatem in Cœlis habere non potuit, in Terris habere conatus est.*

AND indeed, if the Worship of *Men* could increase or lessen the *Majesty* of *God*; if his *Glory* were to be calculated by the Number of his *Adorers*; one might thence think (which otherwise to imagine were a *Blasphemy*) that *Lucifer* had got the upper hand: Since, if we reflect on the sad Condition the whole *World* was in, before the Birth of our *Saviour*; we shall find, that this proud and rebellious *Spirit* was more worship'd, more glorify'd by *Men*, than his Sovereign *Lord* and *Maker*. For if the true *God* was then worship'd by the *Jews*; false *Gods* were adored by all other *Nations*. If *God* had some zealous *Prophets* to pronounce his *Oracles*; the *Devil* had many *Idolatrous Priests* to publish his *Lies*. If *God* had an *Altar* consecrated to his Service in *Hierusalem*; the *Devil* had many *Temples* dedicated to his Honour throughout the rest of the *World*. If *God* was honour'd by the Sacrifice of *Beasts*; the *Devil* was worship'd by the Slaughter of *Men*. So that we are forced to own and lament, that before the coming of the *Messias*, the external *Glory* of *God* (which consists in the Worship of *Men*) was shut up within a narrow *Compass*;
confined

confined to one little Corner of the *Earth*.

Notus in Judæa Deus.

Pſalm 75.

BUT on this *Day*, God Almighty begins to do himſelf *right*; He has ſent down his eternal *Son* to vindicate his Honour, to eſtabliſh his *Glory*, to ſubdue his proud *Rival*, to diſpoſſeſs him of the *Empire* he had gain'd over the Minds of *Men*. St. *John*, the faithful *Interpreter* of his Deſigns, tells us, That 'tis for this the *Son of God* is come into the World, to deſtroy the Works of the Devil. *In hoc apparuit Filius Dei, ut diſſolvat opera Diaboli.* And the way he has taken to do this, is as ſtrange in it ſelf, as it has proved efficacious in the effect.

¹ *John* 3.
8.

THE *Devil* grounded all his *Glory* on the deluding Imaginations of his *Followers*. To make them *Idolaters* of his falſe *Deity*, he firſt poſſeſs'd them with an erroneous Con-
ceit of their own *Greatneſs*. To perſuade them to offer Incenſe to the *Statues* they had raiſed in his *Temples*, he firſt taught them to adore the *Idols* he had ſet up in their *Minds*; *Honour*, *Riches*, *Pleasure*, are the three great *Gods* he places on the *Altar* of their *Hearts*; to theſe, he makes them ſa-
crifice all their Thoughts, all their Affec-
tions, their Body, their Soul, their Eternity,
their All. He perſuades them, that all their
Glory

Glory consists in worldly *Greatness*, all their *Happiness* in an Affluence of temporal *Riches*, and their chief *Beatitude* in a full Enjoyment of sensual *Satisfactions*.

To destroy this *Work* of the Devil, to disabuse Men of these false Notions he had imbu'd them with, the *Son of God* is come into the World after the manner, in which our present *Solemnity* represents him to us; to shew us, how little esteem we ought to make of all the *Glory* and *Greatness* of the *World*; He would become a *Child*, He would appear little and abject: To quench in us that ardent Thirst we have after *Riches*; He has reduced himself to the greatest *Poverty* imaginable: To take out of our Hearts that inordinate Love of *Ease* and *Pleasure*; He begins his Life all in *Sufferings* and *Mortifications*.

'TIS thus that *Jesus Christ* most Successfully establishes the *Glory* of *God*, because 'tis thus that he most powerfully triumphs over those *Vices*, which keep Men Slaves to the *Devil*: And hence, when the *Angels* saw him laid thus low in the *Manger*; then it was that they begun to sing *Glory* to *God*, and *Peace* to *Men*. *Glory* to *God*, because *Jesus* is come to cure our *Pride* by his *Humility*; our *Avarice* by his *Poverty*; our

Excesses

Excesses and Intemperances by his Mortifications. Gloria in altissimis Deo. Peace and Joy to Men of good-will; to Men that are willing to learn of such a Master; to Men that are willing to be instructed by such an Example; to Men that are willing to be saved by such a Saviour. Pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. 'Tis thus the *Angels* divide their *Canticle*; and 'tis thus I shall divide my present *Discourse*. The First Part whereof shall shew you, what our *Saviour* did this Day for our Instruction; The Second, what we must learn from his Example. What *Jesus* did to be a *Saviour* to Men; what *Men* must do to be saved by *Jesus*. These two Points make the Division of my Sermon, and Subject of your Attention.

THE FIRST PART.

IF the *Union* of the eternal *God* to our human Nature, be astonishing; the Manner of his coming into the World is not a little surprizing! For tho' an Excess of Goodness might have carry'd him to this strange Communication of himself; tho' the Love of Men might have moved him to become *Man*; yet methinks, he might have done it after the most honourable manner; he might have appear'd at the full Stature of a Man, and accomplish'd with all the Perfections human

Nature is capable of. But to cloath himself with our *Mortality*, in its meanest Dress; to shut himself up for nine Months in the *Bowels* of a *Woman*; to come into the World under the Form of a *Child*; to have Reason in its highest Perfection, and yet to be reduced to the Condition of an *Infant*; This is what astonisheth *Heaven* and *Earth*; this is the Admiration of *Angels* and *Men*.

AND certainly, *Christians*, whosoever should reflect well on the *Majesty*, *Infinity*, *Immensity*, *Eternity*, and the rest of *God's* glorious *Attributes*, and then should behold a *Child* newly brought into the World; questionless, he would stand amazed, to think that the *Majesty* of *Heaven* should inhabit within such an inconsiderable piece of *Flesh*; that so boundless an *Ocean* should be shut up within so narrow a *Channel*; that the eternal *God* should become a *Child*. And yet thus it is, *Christians*, the great *God* of *Heaven* is become a *Child*; the *Ancient* of *Days* is newly come into the *World*; the eternal begotten *Son* of the *Divine Father*, behold, he is born an *Infant*. *Parvulus natus est nobis, & Filius datus est nobis.*

Isaiab 9.
6.

WHATSOEVER therefore you have seen; whatsoever you imagine to be the Condition of other *Infants* at their *Birth*; think the same of your great *God*, for he is become

come exactly like them in all things, excepting only Sin. He is born naked and needy, like other *Infants*; weak and feeble, like others; He weeps and cries like others; He is wrap'd in Swadling-Cloaths like others; He feeds at his Mother's Breast like others; and something below the meanest Condition of all other *Infants*, instead of a *Cradle*, He is laid in a hard *Manger*, expos'd to the sharp Winds of a Winter Night, the Wants and Incommodities of a desolate Place: *Pannis eum involvit, & reclinavit in præsepio.* Heb. 4.
15.
Luke 2. 7.

O Blessed *Jesus!* How does this poor Lodging suit with Thee, who hast *Heaven* for thy *Throne*, and the whole *Earth* for thy *Footstool*? How does this *Manger* agree with Thee, who reposest in the *Bosom* of thy *Divine Father*? How do these Tears become Thee, who art the Joy of all the Angels in Heaven, and God of all Consolation here upon Earth? How does this want of Cloaths, this need of a little Milk fall upon Thee, who featherest the Birds, feedest the Beasts, and art absolute Lord of the whole Universe.

Al! *Christians!* Let us stop and pause here a while; let our Heart speak by its Affections, what our Tongue cannot utter by Expressions; let us behold with a silent Asto-

nishment, what we cannot discourse but with Admirations and Exclamations!

THE great *God of Heaven* become a *Child!* The increated *Wisdom and Word of God, silent and speechless!* The *King of Glory* lodged in a *Stable!* The *Lord* of all things, in *Want and Poverty.*

OH Heavens! What think you of this? Or rather, dear Christians (since 'tis for you He is born) what think you of this? Why, think you, has the great God of Heaven thus humbled himself upon Earth? Why did He choose to come into the World after this strange manner? I say, why did he choose? For we must not imagine, that these Things happen'd thus by *Chance.* 'Twas not the Unkindness and Inhumanity of the hard-hearted *Bethlemites* that forced him into a *Stable:* 'Twas not their refusing his *Mother* a *Lodging,* that obliged him to lie in a *Manger.* Oh no! He that can soften the Hearts of *Tygers,* could have made his *Mother* find a *Welcome* amongst her own *Relations.* He that places *Kings* on the *Throne,* could have raised himself a *Palace* in the *Fields of Bethlehem.* 'Twas not therefore any want of *Power* or *Forecast;* 'twas not any *Necessity,* or *Chance* that reduced him to this *Condition.* Other *Infants* indeed, have it not in their *Power* to choose the *Time,* the *Place,*
and

and Manner of their Birth; but this Divine Child, had all these things at his own Choice and Disposal. And why then did he choose to be born in the Depth of Winter, and Obscurity of the Night? Why did he choose a Stable, a Manger, for his Lodging? Why did he call only poor *Shepherds*, to give him the first Welcome into the World? Ah! *St. Bernard* gives the true Reason, when he tells us, All this was to confound the *Pride* and *Vanity* of the *World*; to condemn the *Luxury*, *Ease*, and *Excesses* of Men. *Cur stabulum Christus elegit? Planè ut reprobet mundi gloriam, ut damnet sæculi vanitatem.* To instruct us by *Example*, before he could teach us by *Words*; to convince us (says *St. Augustin*) by his own Choice, what little Esteem we ought to have of all the *Glory*, *Greatness*, *Riches*, *Pomps* and *Pleasures* of this *Life*; He contemn'd them all. *Omnia terrena bona contempsit Christus, ut contemnenda monstraret.*

HE chose to be *poor*, that rich Men might not think themselves happy; He would not be *rich*, that poor Men might not think themselves miserable. He would want all that the *World* most esteems; He would suffer all that the *World* most abhors; that we should neither place our *Happiness* in the one, nor fear any *Adversity* from the other.

Ut

Ut nec in istis quæreretur felicitas, nec in istis timeretur adversitas.

CHRIST saw that Men would lose the Glory of Heaven, by their ambitious Desires of temporal Greatness; and therefore He made himself so little. Christ saw that Men would forfeit their eternal *Inheritance*, by fixing their Hearts so much on the Goods of the Earth; and therefore He appears so poor and indigent. Christ saw that Men would lose the Joys of *Paradise*, by indulging their Ease and Pleasures in this Life; and therefore He chose to lie in a Manger. *Omnia terrena bona contempsit Christus, ut contemnenda monstraret.*

O my God! 'Tis here I own the Greatness both of thy Mercy, and our Misery; 'tis from the Strangeness of this Remedy, that I come to understand the Depth of our Wounds; *Ex consideratione remedii, periculi mei æstimo quantitatem.* Ah Christians! How dangerous was our Condition? How desperate was our Distemper, that stood in need of such a *Physician*? To what a height had our Pride carry'd us; that it should be necessary for the great *God of Heaven* to descend into a Stable to abate it? How strongly was our Heart fasten'd and wedded to the Riches and Pleasures of the *Earth*; that it should be necessary for the

King

*St. Bern.
Serm. 3.
de Nativitate.*

King of Glory to lie in a Manger, to disengage it? *Ex consideratione remedii, periculi mei aestimo quantitatem.*

BUT, *Christians*, will all this suffice? Is the Remedy great enough for the Disease? Has *Jesus Christ* laid himself low enough for your *Example*? The great *God of Heaven* has made himself the least and lowest of *Men*: You great Ones of the Earth, will you thence learn to be *Humble*? You little Ones, will you leave to be *Envious* or *Ambitious*? The *King of Glory* has made himself the poorest of *Men*: You rich Ones of the World, will you learn not to set such a value on your Riches? You poor Men, will you learn not to repine for your Poverty, or murmur against Providence? The Author of all Blis and Happiness, lies shivering in a cold and hard Manger: You delicate *Christians* of this Age, will you learn to suffer?

AH *Christians*! What can be more convincing, than these practical *Arguments* of our divine *Saviour*? What can be more persuasive, than the *Rhetoric* of this silent *Babe*? What can be more powerful than his *Example*, to disabuse Men of those false Notions, those wrong Ideas, which Opinion and Custom, the Principles and Practices of the World have fix'd in them?

FOR,

FOR, *Christians*, if our *Sovereign Lord* and *Master* came thus into the World; if He that had it in his Power to appear all in *Glory* and *Majesty*; if He that could have abounded with all Plenty and Magnificence; if He, I say, chose the Poverty and Ignominy of a Stable; what follows then, but that terrible Consequence *St. Bernard* draws from thence, *viz.* That either Christ is *mistaken*, or the World is in a great *Error*; either Christ knew not how to make a good Choice, or Men are convinced to make a very bad one: *Aut Christus fallitur, aut Mundus errat.* Christ made choice of Poverty, and Men fly it as the greatest Misery. Christ chose to be in Want, and Men seek nothing but Plenty; Christ chose to appear Little and Abject, and Men strive all they can to grow Great and Glorious; Christ chose to lie hid in the Obscurity of a dark Night, and Men seek all Means to publish and proclaim themselves to the World: Christ chose to be born in the Depth of Winter, to lodge in a cold Stable, a hard Manger; and Men seek nothing but the Ease, Commodity, and Satisfaction of their Body. Oh! How contrary is their Choice? How opposite are their Ways? They are in two Extremes; they cannot both be in the right; therefore, either Christ

St. Bern.

Christ is deceived, or Men are under a great Mistake. *Aut Christus fallitur, aut Mundus errat.* St. Bern.

AND what think you, my beloved Brethren? For whom will you pronounce? Is *Jesus Christ* in the right? Has the eternal *Wisdom of Heaven* made a good Choice here upon *Earth*? Do you approve of his Choice? Do you approve of his coming into the World, after that poor manner, in which our *Solemnity* represents him unto you? Does his Stable, his Manger, his poor and low Condition please you?

IF you approve of his Judgment in making such a Choice, why then do you govern your selves by such opposite *Maxims*? If you like his *Ways*, why are you so unwilling to tread in his *Steps*? If you esteem the Poverty and Humility of the *Infant Jesus*, why do you so greedily thirst after the Riches and Honours of the *World*?

ALAS! 'Tis here that we Christians too often imitate the *Jews*, who had a high Esteem, a great Veneration for their *Messias*, whilst he was at a distance; whilst they beheld him in their glorious *Prophecies*; but when he came amongst them, they would not take notice of him. The longing Expectation of so many *Ages*, the desired of all *Nations*, the so much wish'd for *Messias*;

John 1.
30.

when he came into the World, they would not know him, because of the low and abject Condition he appear'd in. *In mundo erat, & mundus eum non cognovit.*

AND just thus it goes with us *Christians*. We honour, we esteem *Jesus Christ* at a distance; but if He come near us, or begin to draw us near to himself; Oh! Then we presently fly from him; we are ashamed of his Company; we find him troublesome to us. He appears all in Poverty, and we can esteem nothing but Riches and Plenty; He talks to us of Humiliations and Abjections, and we desire to be esteem'd and honour'd; He speaks of Sufferings and Mortifications, and we love nothing but our Ease and Pleasure.

THUS you see, we imitate the *Jews*; we honour *Jesus Christ* at a distance, but when he comes near us, we know him not; we esteem the Poverty of our *Saviour*, so long as it remains with him in the Stable; we admire and bless his Sufferings, his Mortifications, provided that he keep them close shut up with himself in the Manger; but if he bring any of his Poverty into our House, into our Family; if he communicate any Share of his Sufferings to us; Oh! Then we are of another Mind; then we find a thousand Reasons to disapprove of them;

them; we have a thousand Pretences to excuse our selves from admitting of them.

HENCE, at the same time that we seem to approve, we really disapprove of Christ's Choice; we like, and dislike his Ways; we esteem, and condemn his Judgments, whilst we only discourse of Things; whilst we speak of him and his Proceedings, we are even ravish'd at this admirable Conduct of his Wisdom. That our *God*, that our great *God* should become a *Child*; that he should be born in a *Stable*, lodged in a *Manger*; that he should come into the World after such a poor and humble manner. Oh! 'Twas the most incomparable Method he could take, to cure the Wounds of our Souls; 'twas the wisest Choice he could make, to shew himself our *Saviour*.

BUT when he would apply this Remedy to us; when he would make the same Choice for us, which we so much approve of in him; Oh! Then we are of another Judgment; then we do not stick to say (at least by our Actions and Behaviour) we do not stick to say, *Christ* is deceived; the eternal *Wisdom of Heaven* is mistaken in the Choice he would make for us. *Christus fallitur*. Titles of Honour, Places of Respect, Worldly Dignities, Riches and Plenty, are much better for us; the World knows best how

to make a good Choice for us ; the World is in the right ; *Christ* is deceived. *Christus fallitur, Mundus non errat.*

BUT, *Christians*, how then shall *Jesus Christ* be a Saviour to us ? How shall he give *Glory to God* ; or bring that *Peace and Joy to Men*, which you heard the Angels publish this Day ? Must we desire this Divine *Infant* to return back again to *Heaven* ; to take some new Instructions, to resolve on some new Counsels, some other Methods ? Must we desire him to come to us after another manner, than that we now behold him in ? He thought this the most proper to glorify *God*, and save *Men*. His eternal Father is well pleased with it. He has sent down a multitude of Angels to express his Satisfaction : These Blessed *Spirits* no sooner beheld the Humility and Poverty of his *Birth*, but they presently sung *Glory to God*. And, I must tell you, all that desire to have any share in that *Peace and Joy*, they publish'd at the same time to *Men*, must be of the same Judgment : All that will be saved by *Christ*, must conform themselves to the Measures and Methods he has taken to be their Saviour. What he came from *Heaven* to teach, we must learn upon *Earth* : What *Jesus* did to save us, we must do to be saved by *Jesus* ; which is what I am to discourse of in my Second Part.

SECOND

SECOND PART.

'TIS hard to say, whether it be more astonishing, that *God* should not disdain to become like *Men*, or that *Men* should disdain to become like *God*? That *God* should come down from Heaven to teach *Men*, or that *Men* should be unwilling to learn of such a *Master*? That he should undertake to be their *Physician*, or that they should refuse to make use of his *Remedies*.

IN the First Part of this Discourse, we have seen how *God* has made himself little poor, and abject; to teach us a Lesson of Humility, Poverty and Mortification. We have seen also, how this heavenly Physician is come down to the Bed-side (as *St. Augustin* observes) of sick Man; and he not only prescribes him Remedies, but also to make them go down the easier, he first makes tryal of them himself. *Ad sanandum grandem ægotum descendit omnipotens medicus; humiliavit se usque ad mortalem carnem, tanquam ad lectum ægotantis.*

BUT who is willing to practise the Lessons he teaches? Who is willing to apply the Remedies he prescribes? Which of you is resolved to make his Humility an Antidote against your Pride? Which of you is resolved

Prior bibit Medicus sanus, ut bibere non dubitaret Ægotus. St. Aug. Serm. 59. de verbis Domini.

to draw from his *Poverty*, a Motive to abate something of that *Vanity* in your Apparel; that *Superfluity* in your Furniture; that *Excess* in your Table? Let every one (says *St. Bernard*) examine himself, and see what Effect these powerful Remedies have wrought in him. *Cogitet unusquisque quantum in eo operentur tam salutaria medicamenta.*

BUT, Alas! My dear Brethren, is it not true, what the same holy *Father* adds? Is it not true, that there are some *Christians*, to whom *Christ* is not yet born; who are not willing to be saved after the manner he has taken to be their *Saviour*; who are not really glad that *Christ* is come into the World? *Sunt quibus nondum natus est Christus.*

THE *Angels* were full of Joy at his Birth; and they made haste to communicate this good News to Men, to carry them the joyful Tydings, that their *Saviour* is born.

Luke 2.

19.

Evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum quia natus est vobis Salvator.

BUT, *Christians*, are you glad to hear this good News? Is it a Joy to you, to hear your *Saviour* is born? Certainly, all that are in Misery, must needs be glad to hear of a *Saviour*: And methinks every one in this *Assembly*, speaks the Content of his Heart, by the joyful Air of his Countenance; every one seems well pleased to hear from the
Angel,

Angel, that our *Saviour* is born. But, *Christians*, are you glad (let me once more put the Question to you) are you glad to have the *Infant Jesus* for your *Saviour*? Are you willing to be saved after the Method he has taken to be your *Saviour*?

I must then tell you plainly, he can no otherwise be a *Saviour* to you, than by taking out of your Heart that Pride, that Ambition that Avarice, which have so long kept possession there:— He cannot be your *Saviour* (once more hear it) but by taking out of your Heart that Love of the World, that Love of Honour, that Love of Riches, that Love of Pleasure, which has been so long *Master* of your Heart. And are you glad to hear of such a *Saviour*? Are you willing, that he should free you from those pleasing *Enemies* of your *Salvation*? Are you willing, that he should tear from your Heart, those so long settled Affections? Are you willing that *Jesus Christ* should make a total Change, an entire Conversion, a thorough Reformation in your Soul? Are you willing that he should settle the same Judgments, the same Affections, the same Inclinations in you, which this Day you have seen appear in him? In a word, Are you willing that he should make you like himself, as he has made himself like you.

THEY

THEY that are not willing he should do this; they that will not permit him to do this, must look for some other *Saviour*; they must with the *Jews*, expect the coming of another *Messias*: The Divine Child of *Bethlehem*, is no *Saviour* for them; the *Infant Jesus* is not born for them: *Sunt quibus nondum natus est Christus*. He is a *Saviour*, because he is *Humble*; he is a *Saviour*, because he is *Poor*; he is a *Saviour*, because he suffers. Whosoever will not partake of his *Humility*, of his *Poverty*, of his *Mortifications*, shall have no share in his *Redemption*: He will be no *Saviour* to them. *Sunt quibus nondum natus est Christus*.

AND what? Must then *Rich Men* divest themselves of all their *Possessions*? Must *Noble Men* turn their *Beds of State* into *Mangers*? Must *Kings* and *Queens* leave their *Thrones*, and retire into *Stables*, to partake of this *Day's great Blessing*; to be saved by a *Messias*, who appears all in *Poverty* and *Humility*?

No, no, *Christians*. The Divine Child of *Bethlehem*, whom this *Day* you see worship'd by poor *Shepherds*, twelve *Days* hence you will see adored by *Kings*. 'Tis not therefore the exterior Marks of *Honour* or *Humility*, of *Plenty* or *Poverty*, but the interior Disposition of the *Heart* that he regards; 'tis *Poverty* of *Spirit*, 'tis *Humility* of *Heart*, that he

he requires in all those that will be saved by him. Alas! There are many, who under a poor and abject Appearance, cover ambitious and covetous Minds; who are still complaining, repining, and murmuring against *Providence*; and these *Persons*, tho' they are poor and abject, yet have no Comfort in the Poverty and Humility of the *Infant Jesus*. On the contrary, there are others, whom *God Almighty* has placed in eminent *Stations*, who, by the Disposition of *Providence*, not by any Ambition of their own Heart, are raised to high *Dignities*; who possess vast Treasures; but, as *St. Augustin* says of them, amidst all the Honours and Poms of the World, conserve an humble Heart to God. *In superbo cultu cor humile*. Who, whilst they behold their *Saviour* in his Stable, look upon themselves with a holy kind of Contempt, to see their Condition so different from his: In fine, who often pronounce in their Heart, what we read of the incomparable *Queen Hester*; who, when she was at the Height of all the Greatness and Glory a most powerful *Monarch* could raise her to, yet confidently told *Almighty God*, that he knew she was so far from taking any Complacence in those Honours, that she rather submitted to them by Necessity, than affected them by Vanity.

*St. Aug.
Epist. 199*

Tu scis necessitatem meam, quod abominer *Esther 14.*

16.

signum gloriæ meæ, quod est super caput meum, ni diebus ostentationis meæ.

To wear rich Apparel, to have a House well furnish'd, to receive the Respects and Submissions of Men, may be a Decency due to the *Rank God Almighty* has placed you in; but to take Pride in those Honours, to delight in those fine Cloaths, to busy your Thoughts much about them, to set your Heart upon them, is a *Vanity* our *Saviour* condemns, by the Humility and Poverty of his Stable.

To be Great, to be Rich, may be a Blessing of *Heaven*; but to place ones Happiness in such Things, to thirst vehemently after them, is that great, that general Crime of the World, which the whole Life and Doctrine of our *Saviour* was a Condemnation of.

THOSE Persons therefore, whose Minds are always big with ambitious Designs, who are continually gaping after some new Preferment; whose Hands are open on all sides to receive Money, who gripe all the Wealth that comes near them. Oh! These are they, who have no share in that *Peace*, that *Joy*, which our *New-born Saviour* brought this Day into the World.

How much then are they deceived in their Devotion, who, because they were present last Night at the Divine *Office*; because they heard the Three *Masses*; because they received

ceived the Blessed *Sacrament*; therefore think they have done all that is requisite to honour this great *Feast*? Alas! All this is but the exterior of this Day's *Devotion*. The true Honour due to this *Solemnity*, is the disengaging of our Heart from the Love of this World: 'Twas for this, that *Christ* was born in a *Stable*; 'twas for this that he came down from *Heaven*, that (as the *Apostle* speaks) he might *disengage us from this wicked World*; that we might renounce all *Impiety*, and *worldly Desires*.

WHOSOEVER therefore will cherish in his Heart any of those *Desires*, any of those *Passions*, which *Christ* came to free us from, will find no *Comfort* in the *Birth* of his *Saviour*. No, no, *St. Bernard* tells us plainly and truly, the poor *Stable* of *Bethlehem*, will afford no *Comfort* to those, that set their Hearts on *Riches*; *Christ's* low and humble *Manger*, will afford no *Comfort* to those that aspire at *Titles* of Honour, high *Places* of *Preferment*; His poor *Swadling-Bands*, will afford no *Comfort* to those that delight in fine *Cloaths*. *Non consolantur panni ejus ambulantes in stolis, non consolatur præsepe & stabulum, amantes primas Cathedras in Synagogis.*

*St. Bern:
Serm. de
Nati-
vitate.*

THOSE Persons also, that live always out of themselves, that will be always abroad, always

in Company and Entertainments, neither will they find any Comfort in the *Solitude* and *Silence* of the *Infant Jesus*; they that will be always in Mirth and Jollity, will find no Comfort in the Tears of this weeping *Babe*.

St. Bern.
Serm. 5.
de Nativitate.

Non consolatur Christi Infantia garrulos, non consolantur Christi lacrymæ cachinnantes.

No, no, *Christians*; They that will find Comfort in *Jesus*, must not seek it in things which he banish'd far from himself. Riches, Honours, Plays, Divertisements and great Entertainments, are not to be found in his *Stable*; and therefore, who sets his Heart on these things, will never find Content in his *New-born Saviour*.

You know well, two Persons can never live easily together; they can never find Satisfaction in each other; they can never make up a lasting *Friendship*, unless they be something alike in their Judgments, in their Humours and Ways. You see what are the Ways of the *Infant Jesus*; you see his *Humour*, his Inclination is to be in *Solitude* and *Silence*. 'Tis for this, that he chose rather to be born in the *Fields* than Town of *Bethlehem*; that he might be far from the Noise and Disturbances of this busy World; 'tis for this, that the publick *Inns* were no place of Abode for him; he chose rather to lie in a *Stable*, than not to be in *Retirement*.

Whosoever

Whosoever therefore desires to make up a *Friendship* with him, must be of the same Humour; he must sometimes withdraw himself from the Conversation of *Men*, and Noise of worldly *Affairs*, if he will enjoy the Company of *Jesus* in his solitary *Stable*.

You see also what is his Opinion, what Judgment he makes of things, what Spirit predominates in him; You see, he esteems Poverty, Humility, Lowliness, Mortification. Whosoever pretends to be his Friend, must be of the same Opinion, the same Judgment; he must be acted by the same *Spirit*: For the *Apostle* tell us plainly, he that has not this *Spirit of Christ*, does not belong to *Christ*; he cannot be one of his Friends. *Si quis non habet spiritum Christi, hic non est ejus.*

CHRISTIANS! Do you rightly apprehend this terrible Expression of the *Apostle*? Reflect a little on it. Not to belong to *Jesus Christ*! To have no Share in his *Friendship*! To have no Part in that *Peace* and *Joy*, which he brought this Day into the World! Oh God! What a dismal Sentence is this? *Si quis non habet spiritum Christi, hic non est ejus.*

HE that has not his *Spirit of Humility*, his *Spirit of Poverty*, his *Spirit of Mortification*; he does not belong to *Christ*. *Non est ejus.*

EXAMINE therefore well your Hearts; see whether you have this *Spirit of Christ*, and that

that you may not be deceived; (for alas! The Heart of Man, is an *Abyss* of Darknes; They that are continually searching into it by their most serious Considerations, and pious Meditations, have difficulty enough to discover the secret Springs, and hidden Source of that Pride, Avarice and Ambition, which lie deep rooted in our Nature) Therefore, that you may not be deceived in the *Judgment* you make of your Heart, observe how you behave your selves in the Occasions and Trials your *Saviour* gives you of manifesting his *Spirit*, of imitating his *Humility* and *Poverty*. When therefore, you see others preferr'd before you; when you see them raised to great Honours, and your self neglected and unregarded: If you repine and murmur at this; when God Almighty takes away some temporal Advantage from you; when he lessens your Riches by such Misfortunes as he permits to fall upon you: If you are transported with Trouble and Disquiet of Mind; 'tis a terrible Sign, that your Esteem of his *Humility* and *Poverty*, was only in Fancy and Imagination; 'tis an evident Mark, that your Heart is strongly tied to the Honours and Riches of this World; 'tis a convincing Proof, that you are govern'd by some other *Spirit* than that of *Christ*; that you are guided by other *Maxims*, than those he preaches from his *Manger*. ALAS!

ALAS! Dear Christians, *Jesus* was rich; and he became thus poor for our Sakes, that he might quench in our Hearts that ardent Thirst we have after Riches. He was at the Height of Honour, Glory and Greatness; and he has made himself thus little and abject, that he might beget in us a Contempt of all worldly Greatness. He was incapable of suffering any thing in his own *Nature*; and he has taken ours, that he may suffer in all Kinds; and thereby give us an *Example* of Penance and Mortification.

*Propter
vos egenus
factus est,
cum esset
dives.
2 Cor. 8.*

LET us awaken then (dear *Christians*;) Let us awaken out of that Dream, which the *Father* of Lyes has so long deluded us with. Let us withdraw our Thoughts from those Impressions, which Custom and Opinion, the Principles and Practice of the World have imposed upon us: Let us leave the World to think, and speak according to its Rules and Maxims. But for us, that are *Christians*, let us govern our selves by the Maxims of *Christ*; let us hearken to him, who is come from Heaven to be our *Master*: And no where does he teach us more efficaciously, than in the *Mystery* of this Day's Solemnity. The *Stable* of *Bethlehem*, is the proper *School* of *Christians*; the *Manger*, is the *Pulpit*, from which this great *Evangelist* first began to preach to the *World*,

LET

LET us therefore often enter into this *School*; let us draw near to this *Pulpit*; let us hearken to this divine *Preacher*. He is silent, but every thing (as *St. Bernard* observes) has a Voice; every thing preaches: His *Stable* preaches, his *Manger* preaches, his *Swadling-Cloaths* preach; his *Tears* preach, his very *Silence* preaches. *Clamat stabulum, clamat prae-*

St. Bern.
Serm. 5.
de Nativitate.

sepe, clamant panni, clamant lacrymae, ipsa infantilia membra clamant; & quid clamant?

And what is it they preach? They preach *Humility*, *Poverty*, *Penance*, *Mortification*, *Contempt of all worldly Riches*, *Pleasures* and *Honours*. *Clamant humilitatem, paupertatem, poenitentiam, contemptum opum, deliciarum, & commodorum mundi.*

St. Bern.
ibid.

THESE are the great *Lessons Christ* preaches from his *Manger*; these are the important *Instructions*, *Christians* must learn from this divine *Master*. By this, we shall join with the *Angels* in giving *Glory* to *God*, and fit our selves for that *Peace*, which *God* is come to give to *Men*. This *Peace* is the great *Blessing* our *New-born Saviour* has brought us from *Heaven*; the greatest *Happiness* we can enjoy here upon *Earth*; and an *Earnest* of that eternal *Peace* and *Joy*, we hope to find hereafter in *Heaven*. Which *God* of his infinite *Goodness* bestow on your *Sacred Majesty*, and all this pious *Assembly*. *Amen.*



A

S E R M O N

O F T H E

NATIVITY of our LORD,

Preach'd before the

QUEEN-DOWAGER;

I N

Her Chapel at *SOMERSET-HOUSE*, on
CHRISTMASS-DAY, 1686.

By *T H O M A S G O D D E N*, D. D.
Preacher in Ordinary to Her MAJESTY.

As Publish'd by Her MAJESTY's Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

MEMORANDUM

TO THE HONORABLE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON, D. C.

DATE

BY

FOR



S E R M O N V.

Preach'd before her MAJESTY the

QUEEN-DOWAGER,

ON CHRISTMASS-DAY, *Anno* 1686.

L U K E ii. 15.

Pastores loquebantur ad invicem, transeamus usque ad Bethlehem, & videamus hoc verbum quod factum est, quod Dominus ostendit nobis.

The shepherds said one to another, let us now go even to Bethlehem, and see this word which is made (or this thing which is come to pass) which our Lord hath made known to us.



THE *Fulness* of *Time* for the Redemption of Man being come, a *Time*, when all things were in quiet Silence, and the Night was in the midst of her swift Course, the *Omnipotent Word* of the

eternal Father descended from his Royal *Throne*, and took up his Lodging in a *Stable* of *Bethlehem*. No sooner was he arrived there, but he presently dispatch'd an *Angel* to carry the News of his *Birth* to certain *Shepherds*, who were at that time keeping the watches of the Night over their Flocks in the Fields adjoining. The Messenger, to shew that he was the Minister of the *Son* of Justice, cloathed himself in a glittering Robe of *Light*, and so great was the Brightness, which enlightned the Place, that the Gospel calls it *Claritas Dei*, the *Brightness of God*; and those Words of *David* may be said to have been then literally fulfilled, *Nox sicut dies illuminabitur*, that the *Night* should be as *light* as the *Day*.

Psalms 138.
11.

THE Shepherds terrify'd as well with the Presence of the *Angel*, who stood beside them, as with the Unusualness of the *Light*, which shone round about them, were ready to fall to the Ground for Fear, when the heavenly Ambassador bid them be of good cheer, for that he came not to bring them Tidings of *Dread* and *Terror*, but of *Joy*, and great Joy to them, and to all People, that on this bright Day there was born in *Bethlehem*, the *Saviour* of the World. And that their own Experience might further satisfy them
of

of the Truth of what he had said, he gave them a *Sign*, by which, if they would take the pains, they might find the New-born Infant, *Hoc vobis signum, This*, said he, *shall be to you a Sign; you shall find the Infant wrapped in Swadling-clothes, and laid in a Manger.* O King of Glory! Is not this the Day, in which the Angels invite the Daughters of *Sion* to go forth, and behold thee in the *Diadem*, with which thy Virgin-Mother Crown'd thee in the day of thy Espousals in her purest Womb? And must a *Manger* be thy *Cradle*? O Treasure of Heaven! Who would have sought for thee in a little Hay or Straw? Who would have thought to have found thee in a *Manger* of Beasts? Surely the Shepherds, who were terrify'd with the Light, must have been much more surprized with the seeming *Disproportion* of the *Sign*, had not a multitude of the heavenly Host presently join'd themselves with the Angel, praising God, and saying, *Gloria in altissimis Deo, Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will.*

WITH this Canticle of Joy the *Angels* return'd into their former Heaven above; and where may we think were the *Shepherds* Souls, but in the *new Heaven* below in the Stable of *Bethlehem*? And that their Bodies might

*Stabulum
visum est
esse Caelum
in Terra.
Epiphan.
Orat.
de Deipara.*

might be there too, to pay a double Homage to this New-born King, *Loquebantur ad invicem, They said one to another, Let us now go even to Bethlehem, and see this word, which is made, which our Lord hath made known unto us.* And the Resolution was no sooner taken, but presently put in Execution. But give me leave, devout Shepherds, to ask you, whither away so fast? Were not you keeping the watches of the Night over your Flocks? And will you now *leave* them in the open Fields? Are you not afraid, that they may go astray in your Absence, or the *Wolves* break in and devour them? No, we are going to find out the *Lamb*, which is come to take away the Sins of the World: This *Lamb* will take care both of the Shepherds and the Flocks; And should we sustain any *Loss* for his Sake, it would still be our greater *Gain*. Piously resolved indeed; But have you forgotten what happen'd of old to another of your Profession, when God appearing to him in the *Bush*, he said as you do now, *I will go and see this great Sight?* Have you forgotten, I say, how he was commanded not to draw near, but to stand at a distance, and put off his Shoes; and how he turn'd away his Face, that he might not see? And are you not afraid to meet

meet with the same Prohibition he did? Nothing less. The Scene is now changed. God in a *Burning Bush* is an Object of *Terror* indeed; but God in *Swadling-clothes* and laid in a *Manger*, is so great an Attractive of *Love*, that we fear nothing but to lose Time to go to see it. They went therefore *with haste*, and being admitted by the sacred *Virgin*, (whose Leave no doubt they would ask) to *see* and adore their New-born *Saviour*, the Evangelist says, That *they returned glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, as it had been said unto them.*

THIS is the Sum of what is contain'd in the second Gospel of this Great Day. What I have made choice of for the *Subject* of your present Entertainment, is the *Pious Resolution* of the Shepherds to go to *Bethlehem*. That we may *enter* with like Devotion into the Consideration of this Great Mystery, and *return*, as they did, glorifying and praising God for all we shall hear and see, let us instead of asking *leave* of the *Virgin-Mother* to visit the *Manger*, humbly beg her Intercession at the *Throne of Grace*, for a Blessing upon my Endeavours, saluting her with the Words of the Angel, AVE MARIA.

Tranſeamus

Tranſeamus uſque ad Bethlehem, &c.

The ſhepherds ſaid one to another, Let us now go even to Bethlehem, and ſee this word, which is made, which our Lord hath ſhown unto us.

'T I S the Opinion of St. *Cyprian* and others of the Fathers, that theſe Shepherds, at the ſame time that the *Angel* made known unto them the Nativity of the Saviour of the World, the ſo long expected *Meffias*, had their Underſtanding illuminated by the *Holy Ghoſt*, to know and believe, that it was He of whom the Prophet *Iſaiab* had foretold, that his Name ſhould be called *Emmanuel*, that is, *God with us*; and who ſhould verify thoſe glorious Attributes given him by the ſame Prophet of *Admirabilis, Deus, Fortis, Princeps Pacis*, that is, of *Wonderful, God, Mighty, and Prince of Peace. Magiſterio Spiritus Sancti intus edocti, quem parvulum vident conſitentur immenſum.* And hence it is, that whereas the Words of my Text in the Original are capable of a *double Tranſlation*, that is, of being render'd in English, *Let us ſee this Thing which is come to paſs,* or, *let us ſee this Word which is made,* I have made choice of

Iſaiab 9.
6.

Τὸ ρῆμα
τῆτο τὸ
γεγονός.

of the latter with *Venerable Bede*, as more suitable to the *Intention* of the Shepherds, and more expressive of the *Mystery* we celebrate this Day, of the *Word* being made *Flesh* for our sakes.

Verbum quod semper erat, videamus quomodo pro nobis factum sit. Quod enim videre non poteramus, dum erat verbum, videamus factum, quia Caro est.

TAKING the Words therefore in this Sense, two things offer themselves at the first View to our Consideration. The first is, the *Resolution* of the Shepherds to go to *Bethlehem*, *Transseamus usque ad Bethlehem*; *Let us now go even to Bethlehem*. The second, the *End* they proposed to themselves in going thither, which was *to see the Word which was made*. And accordingly I shall divide my Discourse into these two principal Parts. In the first, I shall let you see the *Devotion* of the Shepherds in so readily *resolving* to go seek their New-born Saviour. In the second, the *End* we are to propose to our selves in seeing *this Word* which was made *Flesh*, as the Creed declares, for *us men*, and for our Salvation. *For us men*, I say, as the *Object* of our Worship; and then again, *for our Salvation*, as a *Pattern* drawn by God himself for our Imitation.

I begin with the first, the *Devotion* of the Shepherds in their *Resolution* to go to *Bethlehem*.

The FIRST PART.

Sum. 22.
q. 82. a.
1mo.

DEVOTION, as it denotes a particular Virtue, is defined by St. *Thomas* to be a *Preparation* or *Disposition* of the *Will*, by which a Man promptly and readily, *tradit se*, gives himself up, (or as we use to say) devotes himself *to execute the things, which belong to the Service of God*. Some of these things are expressly *commanded* by God himself, others *intimated only* or *commended* as pleasing to him. And whereas there is this difference between them, that every *Command* of God is a *Sign* of his Will, but every *Signification* of his good Pleasure is not a *Command*, 'tis manifest, that as the Perfection of Devotion consists in a Readiness to comply with both, so it shews it self chiefly in the Execution of the latter. And such was that of the Shepherds of my Text. They went to find out the New-born Christ, without being commanded. The Angel, as you have heard, gave them a *Sign*, by which, if they would take the pains, they might find him, which was that they should find him *wrapped in Swadling-clothes, and laid in a Manger*. But it is no where express'd in the Gospel, that he bid them go. We do not read that the Angel said unto them, *Ite Pastores,*

Pastores, Go to *Bethlehem*; but only, *Hoc vobis signum*; This shall be to you a sign; and yet they presently resolved to go. And we need not go far to seek the Reason. The Angel in the Proclamation he made of Peace upon Earth, when he return'd to Heaven, sufficiently signify'd them to be Men of Good-will, that is, as holy *David* describes such Persons, Men, whose Wills are in the law of God: *In lege Domini voluntas ejus*: And the Law of God in their Wills: *Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius*. And where the Will and the Law are thus reciprocally in each other, in order to the Service of God, a Command serves but for a Sign, and a Sign becomes a Command.

Psal. 1.

Psal. 36.
31.

I. To Men of Good-will, a Precept serves them but for a Sign, to point out what they are to do. And this is what the great Apostle *St. Paul* gives us to understand, when he says, that *Lex Justo non est posita*; The law is not made for the just man, but for such as are unjust and refractory. And why not for the just Man also, if he cannot be just without the Observance of it? But because, as you heard before, the Will of a just Man is in the Law, and not under the Law. 'Tis one thing, says *St. Austin*, to be in the Law, and another to be under the

1 Tim. 1.

9.

St. Aug. in
Psal. 1.

Law. He, whose *Will* is in the Law, *Secundùm legem agit*; acts indeed conformable to the Law. But he whose *will* is under the Law, *Secundùm legem agitur*, is driven or forced by the Law. The *Law*, like a severe *Adversary*, stands over him with Threats and Menaces to compel him to the Performance of what it commands; and therefore our Saviour, as the same St. *Austin* expounds his Words, *Matthew* v. 24. bids us to agree with *this Adversary*, that is, to conform our Wills to his, quickly whilst we are in the way of this Life, lest at any time (and we know not how soon) he deliver us to the *Judge*, and the *Judge* to the *Officer*, and we be cast into a *Prison*, from whence there shall be no Delivery, till we have paid the uttermost Farthing, *Nihil sic adversatur peccantibus ac præceptum Dei*, Nothing so opposite to Sinners as the *Law* of God; because their *Will* is in the *Sin* they would commit, and not in the *Law*. Nothing so agreeable to the *Just* as the *Law* of God, because their *Will* is in his *Law* that they may not sin. To those the *Law* is a *Weight* which lies heavy upon them, and presses them down; to these, it is a *Weight* also, but such as that of *Wings*, which bears them up, and carries them, *Christi sarcina pennas habet*:

De Serm.
Dom. c.
21.

St. Aug.
In Psalm
59.

to those it is a Curbing-Bitt, which restrains their licentious and irregular Appetites; to these, a gentle *Bridle*, which serves only to turn them into the Way they are to go: To those, it is a *Rod of Iron*, which compels them for fear not to do, what otherwise they would, *Reges eos in virga ferrea, thou shalt rule them* (that is the Refractory) *in a Rod of Iron*; To these, a *Rod of Direction*, to point out to them, what their Wills are ready to perform; *Virga directionis, Virga Regni tui; The Rod of thy Kingdom* (and such are the Just) *is a Rod of Direction*. In a word, such is the Force of Love, that if it possess the Heart, that which is a *Precept* to the Unjust and Refractory, serves but for a *Sign* to Men of *Good-will*. But this is not all. 'Tis the Property of Love to *dilate* the Heart it possesses, and render it so pliant to the Motions of Grace, and ready to execute what is pleasing to God, that,

II. To Men of Good-will a *Sign* becomes a *Command*. Their Hearts, like that of *David*, are doubly ready, *Paratum cor meum, Deus, paratum cor meum*, ready to do what God *commands*: And again, ready to do what he *signifies* only to be his Good-will and Pleasure. Their Will as (I said before)

*Erænum
quo pulchrè
agitur St.
Chrysof.
Hom. 2.
in 1 Tim. 1.
In morali.*

Pfal. 2. 9.

*Pfal. 44.
8.*

before) is in the Law of God, and the Law of God in their Will. And what is the Product of this happy Union, but that the *Will*, as consider'd in the *Law*, changes a *Command* into a *Sign*, because it performs it willingly; and the *Law*, as consider'd in the *Will*, improves that which is but a *Sign* into a *Command*; because the *Will* performs it exactly. This is the happy State of Men of *Good-will*. Let them but have a *Sign*, an Intimation of what they are to do; their Hearts are ready, and they presently set themselves to put it in execution.

WHAT moved the *Wise-men* of the *East* to undertake so long and *dangerous* a Journey, to find out, and adore the New-born *King of the Jews*? All the Account they give of it, is, *vidimus stellam ejus*, that they had seen *his Star*, that is, his *Sign* in the *East*. They had heard, if not read, what *Balaam* had prophesied of old, that a *Star should arise out of Jacob*. They expected the rising of this *Star*; and no sooner did it appear, but, as the Church represents their Devotion in one of her *Antiphons*, they said one to another, *Hoc signum Magni Regis est*, This is the Sign of the Great King, who is to be born, *Eamus & inquiramus eum*, let us go and enquire him out, *& offeramus ei munera*,

munera, Aurum, Thus, & Myrrham, and offer to him Gifts, Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. And what can be more parallel to the *Devotion* of the *Shepherds* in my Text? No sooner had the Angel given them a *Sign*, by which they might find out the same New-born *Saviour* of the World, but presently they said one to another, *Transeamus usque ad Bethlehem, Let us now go even to Bethlehem.* Those *wisest* of Kings saw but the *Sign*, and went without delay, *vidimus & venimus.* These *faithfulest* of Shepherds heard but, *hoc vobis signum*, this shall be a *Sign* to you, and went with haste, *venerunt festinantes.* O the incomparable *Devotion* both of Kings and Shepherds! How happy should we be, would we follow their Example, and not neglect, or (which is yet worse) reject so often as we do the holy Inspirations which God is pleased from time to time to give us for the Amendment of our Lives, and settling our selves after a more serious manner to his Service, to comply with the *Modes* of the World, and our own *Ease* and *Humour*? O how different is this Comportment from that of these Kings and Shepherds? A *Sign* is to them, a *Precept* and an *Intimation* in lieu of a *Command.* And by whom may we think were they inspired with this *Devotion*,

but

but by the *Divine Infant* himself, whom they went to seek, of whom *Albertus Magnus* saith, *Voluntas & complacentia Patris Summum præceptum fuit; That the Goodwill and Pleasure of his Father, in order to Man's Redemption, was to him as the greatest and strictest of Commands.*

GOD, when he vouchsafes to speak to us of himself, is pleased to speak to us after *our own manner*, and in *our own Language*; And we can speak no otherwise of *Him*. Whatever we affirm, says the great *St. Dennis*, of God, is by reason of the Narrowness both of our Thoughts and Words, *incompetent* and unsuitable to what he is in Himself, as always carrying some Tincture of *Imperfection* in it. Whilst therefore I endeavour, as I may, to express what my own low Thoughts have been able to conceive of this gracious *Concurrence* of the *Son*, with the good *Pleasure* of his *Father*, in relation to the great Design of his *Incarnation*, and perhaps in Words not reaching my own Conceptions, your *pious* and *charitable* Attention, will, I hope, help to *supply* the Defect of the one, and make *Allowance* for the other.

THE *Eternal Father* (whose Goodness is equal to his Knowledge) fore-seeing from all Eternity the *Fall* of Man, out of the

Bowels

*Affirmation-
es de
Deo sunt
incompac-
tæ.*

St. Dionys.

him of all things both Future and Possible, together with his *Essence*, a Prospect (as I may call it) of a human *Body*, so to be framed, as might serve for a decent *Tabernacle* for the *Divinity* to dwell in, and a fit and proper *Instrument* for him, who was the *Word*, to accomplish the Redemption of Man, by *uniting* himself to it. How readily he concurred with his Consent to this gracious *Intention* of his Father, thus communicated to him, is seen by the Blessed in Heaven, in the Unity of one and the same Will in Both; but can be discern'd only by us in this State of Obscurity in its *Effect*, as in a *Glass*, which *reflects* the Beams that are darted upon it. And such is the *Account* which the Royal Prophet gives of *its Execution* in his xxxix *Psalms*, where he represents the *Son* at his coming into the World, addressing himself to his *Father* in these Words, *Sacrificium & Oblationem noluisti*, I see, O my Eternal Father, that *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* are rejected by thee as insufficient to make *Satisfaction* for the Sins of Men, and to appease thy Wrath so justly enkindled against them. But withal I see, *Corpus aptasti mihi*, that thou hast framed a *Body fit for me*, and me alone, as the Means thou hast made choice of for this
 great

great work. And what follows then, but *Ecce venio, Behold I come?*

NOR was a like *Concurrence* of the *Holy Ghost* wanting to the compleating this great Design, as may be gather'd from those Words of the *Angel* to the *Blessed Virgin*, on the Day that it was to be put in execution, when he told her, that *the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the Power of the Most High should over-shadow her, and therefore the Holy Thing, which should be born of her, should be called the Son of God.* Thus, as the great *St. Leo* excellently observes, *Divisit sibi opus nostræ reparationis misericordia Trinitatis, the Three Persons of the most Sacred Trinity, in that Co-eternal and mutual Design they had of repairing lost Man, divided (as I may say) the Work of his Redemption amongst them, not by way of Command, but out of that pure Mercy and Goodness, which is the same in them All. Pater (as the same St. Leo goes on) ut propitiaretur; Filius, ut propitiaret; Spiritus Sanctus, ut igniret.* The *Father*, by communicating together with his Essence his *Propension* to accept of a *Propitiation* for the Sins of Mankind: The *Son*, by mutually concurring to make the *Propitiation*; and the *Holy Ghost*, by as readily undertaking to execute what

Serm. 3.
Pentecost.

was the Good-will and Pleasure of both. From all which it appears, that tho' the *Son* (the *Decree* of the *Incarnation* supposed) received a *Command* from his *Father* to lay down his Life for the Redemption of Man (as consider'd subsisting in our *human Nature*, and in that consideration *inferior* to him) yet the *Source* and *Origin* of his undertaking to *make* a Propitiation for our Sins, was not any *Precept* (of which, as consider'd subsisting only in the *Divinity* he was not capable, being *equal* to his *Father*) but a *Communication* only, he received in his divine *Procession* from him, of his *Good-will* and *Pleasure*, that he should *unite* himself personally to our human Nature to Redeem us. And as he, most *willingly* and readily *concurred* with this gracious Design (but in a manner infinitely transcending what the Understandings of the highest Angels are able to *comprehend*;) So as soon as he was born into the World he inspired the Shepherds to do the like: He only gave them a *Sign* or *Intimation* by which they might find him, and presently without delay they resolved to go seek him out. *Loquebantur Pastores ad invicem, The Shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even to Bethlehem.*

THUS,

THUS, *Dear Christian Auditors*, was this *Divine Lover* of our Souls pleased both to prove and make known to us the *Devotion* of the Shepherds, when he came into the World: And now that he hath finish'd his Dispensation upon *Earth*, and is return'd to *Heaven*; has he left us no *Sign* of his Good-will and Pleasure, to *provoke* our Love, to *solicit* our Affections and shew our Devotion to him? Yes: *Corpus aptavit nobis*, he has left us also a *Body*, the same *Body* which his Father framed for him, and he gave to the Shepherds; but in a different manner to *them* and to *us*: To them as wrapped in *Swadling-clothes*, and laid in a *Manger*: *Hoc vobis signum*. To us, clothed with the Forms of *Bread* and *Wine*, and laid upon the *Altar*, *Hoc nobis Signum*. And what greater *Sign* could he give us of his Love, than to give us that very *Flesh* to be our *Food*, which he had given for the Life of the World? Admirable is the Reflection which *St. Chrystom* makes upon this Passage. *Mothers*, says he, *ostentimes put forth their Children to be nursed and fed by others, But not so I, (and he speaks in the Person of Christ) I feed you with my own Flesh; I set my self before you for food, so to breed generous spirits in you, and fill*

Hom. 61.
ad Pop.
Antioch.
Ego autem
non ita;
sed carni-
bus meis
alo, & me-
ipsum vo-
bis appono,
vos omnes
generosos
esse volens,
&c.

you with hopes of future glory; since you cannot think, but that I, who have given myself to you here, will do it in a much more excellent manner hereafter. That I took Flesh and Blood upon me, was out of the desire I had to become your Brother; and now behold I give the same Flesh and Blood to be taken by you, by which I became so nearly related to you. These are the Words of that great Father and Light of the Church St. Chrysostom, by which he declares the Faith of the Church of his Time (which was between the *Third* and *Fourth* of the four first General Councils) to be the *same*, which the *Catholick* Church professes at this Day.

AND NOW, dear Christians, that this Divine Lover of our Souls has left us so great a *Sign* and *Pledge* of his *Good-will* and *Love*, shall we not make haste with the devout *Shepherds* to go to *Bethlehem*? *Bethlehem* in *English* signifies *The House of Bread*. And St. Gregory observes, that our Lord would have the *Place*, in which he was to be *born*, to be called long before by *this Name*, to signify to us, *That he who appeared there in our Flesh, is the living Bread, which came down from Heaven to nourish the Souls of his Elect to everlasting Life.* And now, as I said, that he has given us
so

Volui Frater vester fieri.

Vobis vicissim ipsam Carnem & Sanguinem, per quæ Cognatus vester factus sum, trado.

St. Greg. Hom. 8. in Evang.

To incomparable a *Sign* of his Good-will and Pleasure, shall we not make *haste* with the Shepherds to *Bethlehem*? Shall we let this *holy Time* pass over, or rather shall we trifle it all away in *Pastime* and Merriment, without ever approaching to this *holy Table*? Such was the Fervour of the *First Christians*, that they were wont to *communicate* every Day. And necessary it was in those Times of Cruel *Persecution*, to arm themselves daily with the *Bread of Life* against the Fear of *Death*. But no sooner was *Peace* restored to the Church in the beginning of the fourth Age, but *Piety* began to languish; so much more hard is it for *Virtue* to bear up against a *Prosperous*, than an *Adverse* Condition: Which gave *St. Chrysostom*, before that Age was ended, Cause to inveigh so frequently as he does, against such as were present at the Divine Mysteries, without communicating. But the *Malady* went on increasing, and Christians grew so *tepid* in the Performance of this Duty, that the Council of *Agde*, in the beginning of the sixth Age, thought fit to declare, that those, who did not communicate at the Three great Feasts of the Year, *Christmass*, *Easter*, and *Whitsonide*, were not to be believed to be *Catholicks*, nor reputed for such: And the

Conc. A-
gath. An.
506.

the Council of *Tours*, in the beginning of the Eighth Age, found it necessary to admonish them anew to communicate, *if not oftner, yet three Times at least in the Year*, viz. at the three aforesaid Feasts. And if the Church in these later Times, as still more remiss, have thought good to lay no farther Obligation upon all the Faithful of both Sexes, than of receiving once a Year, and that at *Easter*, yet the Addition of the Words, *ad minus* (that it must be done then *at least*) sufficiently shews the Desire she has that they would do it oftner, and that a *Command* were not at all necessary to compel, where there is so great an *Attractive* of Bounty to invite. *Lex Justo non est posita*; *This Law was not made for the Just*, for Men of Good-will, who are led by the Spirit of Love, but for such *servile* and degenerate Spirits, as are acted only by *Fear* of Punishment: And it is much to be fear'd, that those, who, in this matter, will do no more than just what the *Letter* of the Law obliges, would not do that neither, but for *Fear* of the *Censure* annex'd.

O the *Prodigious Sloth* and Negligence of such careless *Christians*, whom so great *Signs* and Pledges of their dear Saviour's Goodness cannot *draw*, without the Necessity of a
Precept

*Precept to drive them to him! What will they pretend for their Excuse? That they cannot, that is, will not leave their Sins? Few will be willing to own this; but such as have lost all Fear of God's Justice, and Care of their own Souls. Will they say they have no Time? But has God then given us three hundred sixty five Days in a Year, and shall not we afford to give him one at least in the hundred? Or finally, will they pretend, that they do not find themselves worthy to come oftner than once a Year to this Divine Table? This indeed carries some shew of Religion in it, but such as St. Cyril doubts not to call *damnosam Religionem: A mischievous sort of Religion*, which the Devil makes use of to persuade remiss and slothful Christians; to deprive themselves of the Food of Life: But alas! As the same holy Father saith, if they find themselves *not worthy* now, when will they make themselves so? Will it be easier to do it after Ten or Twelve Months, than after One, or Two, or Three? Or will it require less Pains to make themselves worthy, after their Sins by long Continuance, and repeated Acts, have taken deep root in their Hearts, than whilst they are yet green and tender? *Caveamus ne loco laquei damnosam Religionem Di-**

*St. Cyril.
Alex. l 4.
in Jo. c.
17.*

abolus nobis prætendat; Let us beware, that our Enemy do not ensnare us to our Ruin under a feign'd Pretence of Religion: Or rather, let none be deluded with such irreligious Pretences as these, to make him abstain from frequenting this Holy Table. And that we may do it worthily, let us go with these devout Shepherds to Bethlehem, and there see the Word which is made Flesh for our sakes, first to adore him as our God and Saviour; and then to adorn our Souls with those Virtues, of which he has given us so precious an Example, which is the Subject of my Second Part.

The SECOND PART.

Videamus hoc verbum, quod factum est.

Let us see this Word, which is made.

'TIS so natural to Man, who draws all his Knowledge from the Impressions of his Senses to desire to see what he is to worship, that not being able to see the true God with his Eyes, he fell to worshipping the Creature, rather than the Creator, changing, as St. Paul says, the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed

footed beasts, and creeping things. Thus did they become vain, as the same Apostle says, in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned, resolving to worship what they saw, because they could not see, whom they were to worship. Four thousand Years had this Error over-spread the World, excepting only the little Corner of Judea, when God commiserating the sad Condition of Man, and knowing, as St. Peter Chrysologus says, *visendi se desiderio cruciari, lassarique mortales*, with what anxiety Men desired to see him, and that nothing could content them, but a visible Deity, *unde se visibilem faceret, hoc elegit*; out of his Infinite Goodness was pleased to take upon him the Nature of Man, that he might be seen by them. This Remedy alone was left to cure the Blindness of human Nature, because this Object alone was able to draw the Eyes of Men from all other visible things, and fix them upon itself. And of this our Saviour himself was pleased to give us a Figure in the miraculous Cure he wrought upon the blind Man, John ix. by anointing his Eyes with a Mixture made of his sacred Spittle and the Dust of the Earth, in which was represented the Union of the divine Wisdom with human Nature;

Serm. 147.

cacatis luminibus (as St. *Anselm* elegantly expresses it) *collyrium suæ Incarnationis apponens*; applying the Eye-salve of his Incarnation to the Eyes of Men, that those, who could not behold him in the Splendors of his *Divinity*, might see him appearing in the Form of *Man*. O the Riches of the Goodness and Mercy of God, in condescending thus graciously to the Weakness of our Nature, and making himself *visible* to satisfy the Desire we had of *seeing* with our Eyes the God, whom we are to worship! This the *devout* Shepherds did, as you heard before, when they found him in his *Crib*; and this must we do, as often as we present our selves before him at his *Altar*.

BUT was this all? Was this the only End, why he was pleased to appear to us in this *visible* Manner? No: St. *Austin* tells us of a farther Design he had in it, when he says, *Sapientia Dei hominem ad exemplum unde viveremus suscepit*; that the *Wisdom of God*, that is, *God the Word*, the Second Person of the *Trinity*, took the *Nature of Man* upon him, to give us an *Example* how to live well by living like him. 'Tis the particular *Privilege* of this *divine Word* made *Flesh* for our sakes, that, whereas other *Words* are, properly speaking, the *Objects*
not

S. Aug. l.
83. Quæst.
25.

not of the *Eyes*, but of the *Ears*, this *Word* not only speaks to our *Ears* by his Doctrine, but much more to our *Eyes* by his *Example*. And hence it is, that that great Devote of our Saviour's Nativity, St. *Thomas de Villa Nova*, calls the *Manger*, in which he first appear'd, *Magna Cathedra*, the great *Divinity-Chair* or *Pulpit*, which his Eternal Father had prepared, for him, as soon as he should make himself *visible* in our Nature, to teach us the Doctrine of Salvation.

Serm. 1.
de Nat.
Dem.

DRAW near then, O Christian Souls, and *bear*, or rather *see* (says this Holy Saint) the Lessons, which the *Word* made Flesh preaches to your *Eyes* from the Pulpit of his Crib. *Discite Paupertatem*; Learn of me, says he, to be truly *Poor*, that is, you who are *Poor*, not to repine at your Condition, and you who are Rich, not to set your *Hearts* upon the Riches of this World, but to abridge your selves in *Superfluities* to communicate to those that are in *Want*; because I, who am the *Lord* of the *Universe*, and can dispose of all that is in it, at my pleasure, have no other *Mantles* to shroud my tender Body, but such as a *poor Carpenter's Spouse* could provide me with, and no other *Cradle* to repose my Head in, but a *Manger*. *Discite Humilitatem*, Learn of me to be truly

Phil. 2. 3.

truly *Humble*, each esteeming others better than themselves; because I, who am the *most High*, have humbled my self so low, as to become the *Companion of Beasts*. *Discite Mansuetudinem*, Learn of me to be truly *Meek*, forgiving from your Hearts those that offend you, since I, who am the *Person offended*, do here water my hard *Couch* with my *Tears* to make an attonement for the Sins you have committed against me. *Discite Patientiam*, Learn of me to be *Patient* in all your Sufferings, because I, who am *Omnipotent*, lie here exposed in an open *Stable* to the *Contempt* of the World, and the *Rigor* of the Elements. *Discite Obedientiam*, Learn of me to be *Obedient* to your Superiors, because I, who am the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, have submitted my self as a little *Infant* to the Disposal and Conduct of a young and unexperienced *Virgin*. *Discite Charitatem*, Learn of me, to *Love* your Neighbours for my Sake, since I, who am *true God of true God*, have made my self *Man* for yours. *Discite denique verum bonorum omnium hujus sæculi contemptum*; Lastly, Learn of me a true and real *Contempt* of all the Goods of *this World*, since I, who am the *Wisdom of God*, have *despised* and *rejected* them as *false* and counterfeit,

to teach you by my Example the *true Way* to Heaven.

THESE are the *Lessons*, which this Divine *Word* preaches to our *Eyes* from the *Pulpit* of his *Crib*. And if the Scholars of *Pythagoras* had so great a Veneration for their Master, that, whatever he said, they believed it, because he said it, *quia ipse dixit*; Now that a greater than *Pythagoras* is here, now that *God* himself is become both our *Master*, and *Pattern* in his own *Person*, shall we not much rather do what we see him do, *quia ipse fecit*, because he has done it, and not only so, but *quia ipse factus est*, because himself was pleased to be *made Man*, that we might see him with our *Eyes*, and learn from his *Example* the true *Way* to Bliss? And when shall we do it, if we do it not now?

HOLY *David* astonish'd (as we may say) to see the general Depravation of Mankind in his time, how their *Hearts* were bent upon nothing, but the Love of the things of this *World*, as their only Happiness, calls upon them to bethink themselves of their *Error* in these Words, *Filii hominum usquequò gravi corde! Ut quid diligitis vanitatem, & quæritis mendacium?* *Psalm 4.*
O ye sons of men, how long will you let your hearts lie groveling 3.

groveling upon the Earth! Why will you set your affections upon vanity, and seek after a lie, meaning the transitory and deceitful Goods of this World? And St. Austin to extenuate, as it were, in some measure their Fault, subjoins, Saltem usque ad adventum Filii Dei error vester duraverit; that possibly this Error of theirs, might continue till the coming of the Son of God into the World. But then considering the depraved Lives of too many Christians, he changes the Prophets usquequò, and cries out himself, Quid ultrà graves corde estis? O ye Sons of Men, why are your Hearts still possessed with this Error, now that the Son of God is come in the Flesh to teach you the true Way of Life? Quando habituri finem fallaciarum, si, præsente Veritate, non habetis! O, when will you make an end of suffering your selves to be cheated with the fallacious Maxims and Fashions of the World? If you do it not now that Truth it self has taken a Body, and presents it self visible to your very Eyes, to teach you by its own Example what you are to chuse, and what to avoid.

Is it possible, dear Christians, that we can think that to be good and desirable, which he, who is Truth it self, has rejected and

and contemned, or that to be vile and contemptible, which he has made Choice of and embraced? If our Judgment and Conduct be not conform to his, one of the two must follow, *Either that he was deceived, or we mistaken.* And no doubt, but the *Mistake* will be found to be on *our side*, if we think to go to *Heaven* by any *other Way*, than that, by which he went himself. If he, who was *Innocent*, chose not only to walk upon *Thorns* in this *World*, but wore them for a *Crown* upon his *Head*, must we, who are the *Criminals*, expect to have the *Way* strew'd with *Flowers*, and our *Temples* crown'd with *Garlands* of *Roses*? Let me tell you, *dear Christians*, that 'tis as much an *Article* of *our Faith* to believe the *Way* to *Heaven*, as to believe *Heaven* it self: And if he, who has told us, there is such a Place prepared for us, as *Heaven*, if we take the *Right Way* to it, has told us also, that that *Way* is no other, than what himself calls, *The strait* *Matth. 7.*
Way, viz. the *mortifying* of our sensual *Appetites*, *renouncing* the *Pomps* and *Vanities* of the *World*, *crucifying* the *Flesh* with its inordinate *Desires*, bringing the *Body* into subjection to the *Spirit*, by *Praying*, *Fasting*, and other *penitential Works*, giving *14.*

what is above *Necessity*, and true *Christian Decency*, in *Alms* to the Poor, *denying* our own *Wills*, patiently *bearing* the Afflictions and *Crosses* which God sends, meekly *forgiving* those that offend us, and the like *Christian Duties*; either we believe this to be the *only Way* to Heaven, or we do not? If we *do not*, why do we believe there is such a Thing as *Heaven* at all, since *he* who has told us the *one*, has told us the *other* also. When he said of himself, *Ego sum via, veritas & vita, I am the way, the truth and the life*, he placed *Truth* in the middle, between the *Way* and the *End*, as *equally engaged* for both.

John 14.
6.

BUT then again, if we *do believe*, the *strait Way*, and which himself made Choice of, to be the *only Way* to Heaven, why do we chuse to walk in the *Broad and beaten Road* of the World, as if that would bring us thither? Is it by *pleasing* the *Senses*, *pampering* the *Body*, *mispending* the *Time*, which God has given us to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, in indulging to our own *Ease* the best part of the Day, and throwing away the rest in *vain*, and too often *criminal Conversations and Pastimes*, and the *Riches* he has bestow'd upon us,

to *secure* our own Salvation by relieving his poor and necessitous Brethren, in purchasing to our selves, all that may conduce to the *gratifying* of our *Fancies*, and the *satisfying* of our sensual *Appetites*; Is it, I say, by doing these things, that we can think at last to arrive à *Heaven*? O no; we are convinced of the contrary both by the *Doctrine* and *Practice* of God himself *made Man* for our sakes. And when shall we put an End to this *fatal Cheat*, if we do it not *now*? Let us then no longer suffer our selves to be deluded with the *vain* and *transitory* things of this World. But, *transeamus usque ad Bethlehem*, passing over, let us with the *devout Shepherds* go to *Bethlehem*; and *see this Word*, which is *made Flesh* for our sakes, which our Lord hath shewn unto us. Let us in a Word, *see* and *do* according to the *Pattern* which is shewn us in the *Manger*, purifying our *Hearts* from all *sinful Affections*, and *transcribing* those *Virtues*, of which this *fair Original* has given us so lively an *Example*, into the *Copy* of our own Lives. So shall we be prepared *worthily* to receive him here under the *Sacramental Veils*, in which he lies *wrapped* upon the *Altar*, no less *truly*, than he did in
his

his *Swadling-clothes* in the *Manger*; and be found *worthy*, when he shall come the *second time* into the *World* with great *Power* and *Majesty*, to behold him *face to face* in his *Glory*; which *God* of his *Infinite Mercy* grant us all, to whom in *Unity* and *Trinity* be all *Honour* and *Glory*, now and for ever. *Amen.*



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

KING and QUEEN,

I N

Their MAJESTIES Chapel at St. *JAMES's*,
on NEW-YEAR'S-DAY, 1685-6.

By the Reverend FATHER

Dom. PHIL. ELLIS, Monk of the Holy
Order of St. *BENEDICT*, and of the *English*
CONGREGATION, Chaplain in Ordinary to His
MAJESTY.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY's Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

2 B R M O N

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18

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S E R M O N VI.

Preach'd before their

M A J E S T I E S,

On *NEW-YEAR'S-DAY*, 1685-6.

L U K E ii. 21.

Postquam consummati sunt dies octo, ut circumcideretur puer, vocatum est nomen ejus JESUS.

When eight days were accomplished, for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS.



AFTER the Evangelist in this Chapter had given us a short Account of the Method and Oeconomy of our Redemption, and set down, as it were in the Minutes, the more remarkable Circumstances of our

Saviour's Nativity, his painful Journey to *Bethlehem*, the more afflicting Rejection when he arrived there, his still more stupendous condescending to be born in a Stable, and what surpasses all the rest (according to the Measures of human Prudence) his manifesting and revealing himself in the first place to the meanest and most contemptible sort of Mankind, inviting poor *Shepherds* to adore him, and inspiring them to become his first *Evangelists*: The holy Penman, I say, of this History, having by such Degrees wrought up our Imaginations to so high a Point, seems as tho' he would leave us there, leave our suspended Minds to contemplate this great Vision, leave us full of Wonder and Amazement, and concludes, *Omnes qui audierunt mirati sunt*. All these Particulars were so exceeding marvellous, and all that heard them were so strangely transported, as if nothing could be added to the Subject of their Admiration, as if *Admiration* itself could rise no higher: *Mirati sunt omnes*.

BUT the Continuance of his Narration, which is the Subject before us, renders all these complicated Miracles but *seven days wonder*; for *When the eighth day was come, that the child should be circumcised, his name was*

was called *JESUS*: That the blessed Child was circumcised, is an accumulative Miracle; a wonderful Dispensation of the eternal *Father*, inflicting upon his beloved *Son* the Punishment due only to the rebellious *Slave*; a wonderful Severity of the blessed Infant upon himself, voluntarily submitting to the Rigour of the Law, which he had never violated, and taking the Badge of the Sin he had never contracted. But Oh! The more than heroical Courage of his most tender *Mother*, assisting at this bloody Ceremony, without a Sigh, without a Tear, excepting those, which by necessity gush'd at the same instant from her Heart, and from his Wounds; *For in every Part of the Child you may find the Heart of the Mother.*

BUT when the Child was circumcised; that his Name should be called *JESUS*, awakens us out of one Admiration into a greater; *Abyssus abyssum invocat*; The Abyss of *Humility* calls upon the deeper and wider Ocean of *Charity*: Here the Eye of Reason loses all Objects, and only Love can comprehend the Height and the Depth, can fathom and measure the most extended, and most profound Operation of the Divine Goodness.

THAT the Child was circumcised, is a Miracle of Humility, exceeding that of being born

Psalms 41.
8.

born in a Stable, that he takes upon him the Mark of a Sinner, is more than assuming the Form of Man; *Jam non solum formam hominis* (cries the devout St. Bernard) *sed formam etiam habet peccatoris.* But while he makes light to spring out of Darkness, and with the black Characters of Death, forms the bright Name of *JESUS*, while from under the Cloud, and Appearance of Sin, *The Son of Justice rises to us, with Healing, with Salvation in his Wings;* while he appears so beautiful in his Tears, so lovely in his Sufferings, so charming in the Vermilion of his own Blood, (*Dilectus meus candidus, & rubicundus*) so amiable under the goring Knife, a suffering Infant, but a saving *JESUS*: O how these Considerations swallow up our Thoughts, transcend our Conceptions, leave all created Understanding far below! And do you still expect they should be the Subject of my Discourse, and of your Attention? No, Christian, I can only lead you to the Stable, which is now become an *Altar*, where the Lamb of God lies bleeding for your Sins, that is, by your Hands; I only ascend the Chair to imitate that Orator, who carried the bloody Garment of *Cæsar* into the Pulpit, I come only to shew you the precious Blood shed

this

Mal. 4. 2.

Cant. 5.
10.

this Day, in the Circumcision, and to acquaint you, that it is the Blood, not only of a *Cæsar*, yet that is an unsufferable Prospect of our Treason and Parricide; not only that of a Parent, or of a Brother, yet, that is a horrible Spectacle to Flesh and Blood; not only that of an injur'd, and wounded Friend, yet, that would pierce a Heart; which is not turn'd into Stone; but the Blood of a *JESUS*, a Name above all Names, that comprehends all the most endearing Epithets, that comprises all the Terms of *Alliance*, of *Friendship*, of *Love*, of *Honour*, and is a Sermon in a Word. And may the Cries of this Blood (for that too has its Voice, *if your Ears are circumcised to bear it*) drown my Words, *for it speaks* (says the Apostle) *better things than that of Abel*. And may this sacred Name plead for itself unto your Hearts, whither my Voice can never reach, and which my Mouth cannot pronounce (according to the Apostle) to your Instruction, *Nisi in Spiritu Sancto*, unless the Holy Ghost give Motion to my Lips, Force to my Words, and Efficacy to my Doctrine. Let us implore his Assistance by her Intercession, who is so great a Part of this Day's Solemnity; and who, as being the greatest Instrument in the Work of

our

our Redemption, by bearing our Redeemer, is also the greatest Sharer in his Sufferings, and the most concern'd in the Honour of that Name, which she learn'd from the *Angel* when he saluted her. AVE MARIA.

Rom. 11.
33.

ALTHOUGH the Mercies as well as the *Judgments of God are unsearchable, and all his ways past finding out*; altho' when we contemplate his *supernatural Works*, Nature ought to be silent, and Reason plunge itself into an *O altitudo! O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* And joyfully despair of finding out the *Sense of our Lord*, or reducing within the narrow Compass of an human Mind, the Operations of an illimited Power, which are not the Subject of a curious Disquisition, but of an humble Belief; yet as far as a created Understanding can dive into the great *Arcanum*, and secret Conduct of the *Riches of that Wisdom* in the Work of our Redemption, the holy Fathers observe, that in it the Son of God propos'd to himself two excellent Methods, corresponding to our double Necessity. The one, by putting himself in such a Condition as might qualify him to deliver us from a *sovereign Evil*, to which we became obnoxious by
the

the Apostacy of our first Parent: The other by assuming such a Capacity as might restore us to the forfeited Possession of a *sovereign Good*. This could not be perform'd according to the Rigour of Justice, but by the Person of a God, cloathed with the Nature of Man, which is my first Point: Nor according to the true Notion and Rules of Satisfaction, without his submitting to the Penalty of Sin, as it was enacted by the Law of Circumcision, which is my second Point, and which merited to him the glorious Name of *JESUS*; a double Subject of your Royal Patience, and favourable Attention.

I. THE Wounds of human Nature are so wide and apparent, that I need not bring any Proof to evince what every one does too much experience; or if any one be so insensible as to question whether our Nature be corrupted, at the same time he confirms it, and gives in Evidence, that his is so. For it is impossible that a God, *whose Nature is Goodness*, and *whose Works are perfect*, should create us with such an Aversion to Good, such a Propension to Evil, so cover'd and surrounded with Imperfection, or put us in a Condition so diametrically opposite

to the End of the Creation, and to the Happiness of the Creature. Wherefore, all those Instances which prove us *miserable*, demonstrate that we are *criminal*; for nothing could defeat the merciful Purposes of *the Divine Will*, but the voluntary Abuse of our own *Liberty*, which first sets us in opposition to God, and renders us unworthy both of his *Grace* in this World, and of his *Glory* in the next; and then, as by a necessary Consequence, subjects us to Afflictions and Death here, and to eternal Torments hereafter, *which is the second Death*. Wherefore, *Magna miseria*, (says St. *Augustin*) *magnâ indiget medicinâ*; the Extremity of our Condition required no less than an infinite Skill, and an omnipotent Hand to cure us, and our Servitude call'd for a Redeemer willing and able to perform two things, which no one could do but himself; the *First*, to acquit us before the divine Justice, of the Contract we had made with Death, to cancel the fatal Covenant, and reverse the Sentence of our Condemnation; and *Secondly*, to restore our Title to eternal Happiness, to level the *Partition-wall*, to work us first into the Favour, and then introduce us into the Joy of our Master.

Rev. 21.
8.

Ephes. 2.
14.

Now

Now since both those divine Qualifications, the *Reconciling* and the *Meritorious Property*, are essential to, and inseparable from the Person of a *Saviour*; it evidently follows, That no one could deserve that Style, who did not unite in himself the Perfection of the Divine Nature, and the Innocence of the Human. He was to be Man, the Rules of Justice requiring, that the Nature which contracted the Debt should pay it, that the Satisfaction should issue from the Principle, which had committed the Offence: But upon the same Account that he was to be *Man*, he was not to be a *Sinner*; for how can one Criminal justify another? How can a Prisoner, loaden with Irons, enlarge his Fellows? How could one that was already the Object of the Divine Hatred, and Subject of his Vengeance, plead the Pardon, or merit the Release of all Mankind, having nothing to answer for himself, but standing convicted of the same Treason?

He must therefore be innocent, and exempt from that hereditary Stain which is in-born to every one, that, after the ordinary manner, descends from the Mass of corrupted Nature: But since he was to be Man of the same Stock, which contracted

the Stain, he was to be born of a *Woman*; but because Man innocent, he was to be born of a *Virgin*, pure and unspotted, as a Beam of Light flows from the Sun; and no more endamaging the Integrity of his blessed Mother, than that does the Crystal through which it passes, not violating, but illustrating. So clear is it, that the Redeemer of Man ought himself to be Man, and that *Man innocent*. But, *secondly*, unless he were God too, it is as evident that he could not be qualify'd for that great Work; for by a Divine and Immutable Decree of strict Justice, Apostate and Rebellious Man was sentenced to a Death, severe indeed, but no less than Treason and Rebellion deserve, an Infinite Punishment; *Infinite*, I say, not in reference to the Punishment consider'd in its own Nature; for no Evil can be properly Infinite: Or if it could be so, yet a Finite Being, as ours, is not susceptible, is not capable of an Infinite Suffering: Infinite therefore it must be as to its *Duration*, that is, Eternal, corresponding to Sin, which is of an Infinite Malignity, not in its own Nature, being the Action, or rather the Deformity of an Action, proceeding from a limited Agent; but in order to the

Object

Object against which it is directed, the Infinite Goodness and Majesty of God.

AND since, in criminal Matters, the Dignity and Excellency of the Person satisfying is the Measure of the Satisfaction; an Offence of an Infinite Enormity calls for an equal Reparation, and that for an Infinite Person to make it: Wherefore no less than the Person of God, in Union with the Nature of Man, could expiate the Crime of Man against an offended God.

SUCH is JESUS CHRIST; and so he makes good the glorious Title of *Mediator between God and Man*, uniting both the Natures in one Person, *Suffering in what he borrow'd of us, but satisfying in what he had of his own*, says St. Augustin. As Man he suffers, as God and Man he redeems; as Man he pleads our Pardon, but merits it as the Person of a God; as Man he sheds his precious Blood, and in this Day's Suffering begins the painful Journey of the Cross. But these Drops issuing from the Veins of an incarnate Divinity, are of an inestimable Value, of an infinite Price, and alone would be a *plentiful Redemption: Sed amanti nihil satis*: As where Nature finishes, Grace does only begin; so the highest Point of Natural Love is but the

the Foundation of the Divine; and my second Point will shew, that the Score of *Love* is longer than that of *Sin*, and that the Circumcision was but the first Line, the Beginning of the one, which might have been the full Payment and Period of the other.

II. *WHEN* the eight days were accomplished, that the Child should be circumcised; his name was called *JESUS*. But was not his Name called so before he was conceived in the Womb? The Angel verifies the thing, and St. Bernard gives the Reason; Because (says he) it was not an Additional, but an Essential Appellation: *Innatum est ei nomen, & non inditum*. Other Children are named after they are born; and if a St. John Baptist, or perhaps a Jeremy, were privileged to receive it before, yet it was after they were conceived in the Womb; for that which has no Being, can have no Name. But since *JESUS* received the Style of a Saviour, before he assumed the Nature of Man, we learn from the same Father, that it flow'd from his Eternity, and was the Property of his Divine Person: *A naturâ propriâ habet ut sit salvator*. But then what Relation between this glorious Title, and the ignominious Badge of a Sinner? Was the

St. Bern.
Serm. de
Circum.

Ibidem.

the Circumcision such a necessary Circumstance, that from the Date of that Penal Ceremony, that Mark of Servitude, he should calculate the Beginning of his Reign? Was Subjection to the Law the properest Matter to instance in the first Act of his Sovereignty? Or the dying his Purple in his own Blood, a Demonstration that he was the Prince of Peace? In fine, What had a *JESUS* to do with Circumcision? Or what had Circumcision to efface in a *JESUS*?

I am not ignorant that Circumcision was to the *Jew*, what Baptism is to the *Christian*, and the Means of taking off Original Sin from all the Male-kind descended of *Abraham*, with whom that Covenant was made. I know it was a distinctive Character, by which the Receiver was matriculated, and enter'd into the People of God.

BUT these Reasons do not subsist in the Person of *JESUS*, who, as the Son of God, ought not to wear the Mark of Servitude; as Original of Innocence, was incapable of that of Sin; and as a Redeemer, *his hour was not yet come*. Indeed he enacted that Law, but for Sinners; he enacted the Law, *sed Princeps legibus solutus est*; But Princes are not subject to the Laws they

Ulp. & J. C. passim. Vid. D. Johnston of Govern-

ment, cap.
19. Licet
legibus so-
luti sumus,
tamen se-
cuudum le-
ges vivi-
mus. Instit.
quib. mod.
Test.
infirm.

they make, farther than their great Prudence judges it expedient to condescend to the Infirmary of the Subject. Here I begin to see Light, and to discover the admirable Methods of the Divine Wisdom in the Oeconomy of our Redemption, mixing and (as I may say) confounding the Power of the Divine Nature with the Weakness of the Human, to express the otherwise incomprehensible Union of the two Natures in the Person of *JESUS*. And of this we have as many Proofs, as there are Circumstances in his Nativity, Passages in his Life, and Prodigies at his Death. But I must not exceed the Limits of my Time, and ought not to transgress the Bounds of my Subject; wherefore, to keep close to the Matter: For this very Reason the glorious Name of *JESUS* is join'd with the Pain and Ignominy of the Circumcision, the Style of a God with the Character of a Sinner, that while the afflicting Ceremony speaks him true Man, the Name of Saviour may proclaim him true God, and oblige us to acknowledge, that if he level himself to our low Condition, it is to raise it; if to our Weakness, it is to strengthen it; if to our Slavery, it is to redeem it; if to the Appearance and Image of Sin in the Circum-

cision,

cision, it is to apply the Antidote in the Name of *JESUS*.

THUS when eight Days were accomplish'd for the Circumcision of the Child, his Love carried it above his Power, and the Child was circumcised. Had he pleaded his Exemption as innocent, he would have rent the *Vail* before the proper Time, and *Col. 1. 26.* laid open the *Mystery*, à *seculis absconditum*, which was to be hidden from the World till his last expiring on the Cross. Had he overruled the Law by his absolute Authority, he would not have acted consequently to his Commission, which was *not to annul, but Matth. 5. 17.* to fulfil it, not to vacate, but to improve the Shadow into the Substance, the Figure into the Reality, the Corporal Circumcision into the Spiritual, the Law of Severity into that of Mercy, a heavy Yoke into a light Burthen, the Laver of Blood into the Baptifinal Ablution, and as *in re*, so *in nomine*, and therefore *his Name was called JESUS*. For before that Instant, his Appellation was only Prophetick, *σωσει*, saith the Angel, *Matth. 1. 21.* He shall save his People; but now, he enters upon his Province, he begins the Work of our Salvation, he officiates as a Saviour. For since he resolved to fix no Period to the Vehemency of his Affection, nor stem the

Current of his Blood, while there was a Drop left in his Veins, he look'd on the Cross as at vast distance, a thirty three Years Journey, before he could arrive to *the desired Chalice*; he thought the Hours, the Days, the Years would come on slowly, and with Lead upon their Feet, and therefore transported with the Impatience of a Lover, he resolves to set out early, and by a Stratagem of Love he converts the *Stable* into a *Calvary*, the *Manger* into an *Altar*, the Circumcision into Crucifixion, writing himself a *JESUS* in the Characters of his own Flesh, and in the Tincture of his own Blood. But to leave a Stock for Multiplication, for the Matter of a greater Suffering, and a more copious Effusion, he makes the wounding Knife only a Prelude to the galling Scourge, to the piercing Nails, and to the searching Spear, when the true *Mount Calvary* should finish what *Bethlehem* began; and whom that City beheld, not only rejected, not only born, but also bleeding in a Stable, *Jerusalem* should one Day see rejected in the Prime of his Life, and Glories; and at last, *Extra portam passum*, once more suffering without the *Gates*.

Hebr. 13.
12.

ET

Et nunc filiae Jerusalem egredimini.
 And now ye Daughters of Jerusalem, the Spouses of the Lamb, whom he affiances in his own Blood, come forth and behold a most doleful, and calamitous Spectacle, which at the same time wounds the Eye, and the Heart, forces your Compassion, and exacts your Affection, if your Breasts are not harder than the *Flint* that made the Wound. *Egredimini*, draw all your Soul into your Eye, and behold your Beloved in the first dawning of his Life, lying upon the Brink of Death, struggling for that little Breath he had scarcely received, and groaning under those Wounds which perhaps would be mortal, were not his Love immortal; Wounds that crown him as a Sacrifice to the Altar, not to live longer, but to die later, and to suffer more.

HE was descending from Jerusalem to Jericho, and behold, at the very setting out, he is fallen into unmerciful Hands, and more cruel Hearts, which neither the Tenderness of his Age can mollify, nor the Majesty of his Countenance can deter, nor the Rhetorick of his Tears can persuade, nor the Sweetness of his *Name* can charm; but having wounded him, left him weltering in his own Blood; *Semivivo relicto*,

and half dead, they walk away as if they had no hand in the Parricide, *They wipe their Mouths, and cry, what have we done? Egredimini,* and will no body come forth? Will no pious *Samaritan* make a halt? Will no one turn from his wicked Courses, or step aside out of the Paths of Sin; to bind up his Wounds, to wipe off his Tears, to assuage his Pains? Will no body pursue the Assassins? Will no body seize the guilty Hands? When any unfortunate Accident befalls a Child of yours, the House is presently in an Uproar, your Closets fly open, your Cabinets are rifled, every Hand is fill'd with Cordials, neither Expence nor Diligence is spared: And behold the Child *JESUS* wounded and all for your sake; still naked in the Poor, still bleeding in the Hearts of the Widow and of the Orphan, and calling upon you, not for your Silks or Velvets, the gaudy Trappings of wanton Luxury, but for a cast Garment to cover his Nakedness, to staunch his Blood; but your Wardrobes are full, and your Hands are empty: Calling upon you, not for your high Cordials, your Pearl, or your Bezoar; but only for a small Sprinkling of *Oil* and *Wine*, that is, the common Elements to sustain Nature; and yet *the Little*

ones

ones, and, in every one of these, no less than a *JESUS*, ask Bread, and there is no one to break it to them. This unnatural Cruelty of yours opens his Wounds afresh, and the Lamb, that was slain from the beginning of the world, through your want of Charity and Compassion to his and your own Fellow Members, will bleed to the End of it.

Lam. 4. 4.

Rev. 13. 8.

BUT had any one treated, I do not say a Child or a Parent, I do not say a Relation or a Friend, but even a Servant of yours, half so outrageously, all the Neighbourhood would be raised against him, Vengeance would overtake him as swift as Lightning, and fall upon him like Thunder. But here is a *JESUS* wounded, and no body concern'd; a *JESUS* wounded, and no body did it; no Inquest is made after the Murderers, no Justice lays hold on them: And what can be the Reason of this Insensibility, but that you are Complices in the Crime? And for a Proof *Manus vestrae plene sunt sanguine*, Your hands are still full of his blood. For while you persecute the Godly, while you defame the Innocent, while you charge them with Crimes in their Morals and Religion, Crimes of your own Invention; while you draw
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Ija. 1. 15.

the Sword upon your Brother for private Revenge, while you expose your selves to such Excesses as blunt your Reason, and set an Edge upon your Passions, you shed the Blood of *JESUS*, but shed it in vain, not to make the Price of your Redemption, as in this Day's Solemnity; but to evacuate and frustrate it, and to leave your selves (according to the Apostle) *no more sacrifice for sin.*

Heb. 10.
26.

FOR it is a first Principle in Christian Divinity, and an unquestionable Point of our Religion, That as nothing could draw the Son of God out of the Bosom of his Father into this Vale of Tears, besides the Redemption of Mankind; so nothing could make him suffer in it, but the Sins of Man. It was not therefore the Rigour of the Law which subjected him to the Circumcision: For, as the Law-maker, he was superior to the Law; and as Innocent, he was exempt from it; *The law is not made* (says the Apostle) *for the just, but for the unjust:* But more forcibly to recommend his great Charity to us, and to antedate the Torments of the Cross, he abandons himself into the Hands of Sinners. His Love was only consenting and *passive*; but our Hands were the *Actors* in the Tragedy: And O that our
Eyes

1 Tim 1.
9.

Eyes were so too! But we stand insensible without Emotion, without Compassion, without a Tear, looking on him we have pierced. We look upon the annual Revolution of this Solemnity as a meer Ceremony; We keep it too, but as the Heathens did their *New-year's-day*, to consecrate their Vices. It is our Jollity marks out our *Calendar*, not our Devotion; and we owe even the Memory of our Feasts to the Regularity of our Excesses.

BUT the time was (my Bretheren) when Grief sate upon the Face of every Christian, for the Suffering of a Christ; when *Love*, as well as *Compassion*, bathed their Eyes in Tears, for this *Earnest* of our Redemption; when a Sense of Gratitude obliged them to enter into themselves, to withdraw into their Closets, to spend this Day in Prayer, to shew they interess'd themselves in the Sufferings of a *JESUS*, and hoped to reap the Fruit of this blessed Effusion: When the Memory of the ancient Circumcision, which *JESUS* submitted to, put them in mind of the spiritual you stand obliged to, and which, in your Baptism, you solemnly promised, you solemnly vowed to perform; to divest your selves of the *old man*, and to *walk before him in the newness of life*; to

Rom. 6. 4.
circumcise

circumcise every Concupiscence, to pass the Razor over every Superfluity, and infine, to conform to the Example of this Day, to consecrate your tenderest Infancy to Mortification, to seal up the Fountain of Corruption, or at least to check the Effervescency of Nature with the Practices of Penance and Abstinence, and to render your maturer Age a continual Martyrdom; *Vita Christiani jube Martyrium*. But alas! The Old Law is come upon us again; we are wash'd, but we are not cleansed; we are *cured*, but we are not *heal'd*; *Curavimus Babylonem, & non est sanata*: and the Blood of J E S U S cannot so fast wipe off our Stains, as we put new ones in their places. We consider as little the Importance of this Blood, as when it was first applied to us; we knew not when we made our Baptismal Promises, and know not when we shall perform them: We can give no better account why we took the Livery of Christ, than why we wear such Garments; because (forsooth) it is the fashion to be Christians, an Honour transmitted to us from our Ancestors, and while we can sever the *Title* from the *Burthen*, the *Name* from the *Duty*, our Pride and Reputation is concern'd to keep it up. But the Attempt is as vain as it is impious; for if *Circum-*
cision

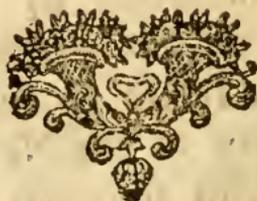
Jer. 51.
9.

cision must make way for the Name of *JESUS*, *Suffering* must merit the Name of *Christian*; *If it behoved Christ to suffer* Luke 24. 26. *before he could arrive to that Glory*; what an irrational Fondness is it to promise your selves the End without embracing the Means? If Humility be only crown'd, what Reward must Presumption expect? If Innocence be treated so severely, what Punishment is reserved for the impenitent Sinner? If Christ submitted to the Rigour of the Law, what Torments does the Christian deserve, who *feigns Labour in the Precepts* of the Gospel, who *repines at the easy Yoke*, and *shakes off the light Burthen*, who applies to every Commandment of God, and his Church, the *Capharnaites Durus sermo*, *This is a hard Saying, that is a hard Lesson*; *this is a human Imposition*; *that I cannot do, this I cannot understand*, and therefore Psalms 35. 4. *will not understand to do well.*

BUT these (O Blessed JESU) were the Corruptions of the *Old Man*, the Excesses of the *Old Year*. But since thou, O *Second Adam*, hast vouchsafed by thy precious Blood to wash off the *Reproach of Egypt from us*, O divine Infant, to sanctify the first Period and Entry of the New-born Year, we resolve to desist from our ancient Prac-

Ephef. 4.
23.

tices, to change our ancient Courses; *Renovari spiritu mentis nostræ, to be renew'd in the spirit of our mind*, in our Opinions, in our Sentiments, in our Judgments, as well as in the Conduct of our Lives. We renew the Covenant of a spiritual Circumcision we made with thee in our Baptism; and according as thy Word advises, we intend to make it the principal Business of our Lives, and *to grow old in the ways of thy Commandments*. A hearty Sorrow for the Offences of the Old Year, and a firm Purpose of Amendment for the New, is all the Return we can make thee for the inestimable Present of this Day. With most humble Acknowledgment, we accept, and offer it again to thy Eternal Father, as the First-fruits of our Redemption from Sin, and as an Earnest of that Glory which is promised us in the Name of JESUS: *Which I beseech God of his infinite Mercy to bestow upon us, through the Merits of JESUS.*
Amen.



A

S E R M O N

O F T H E

E P I P H A N Y,

Preach'd in the

QUEEN-DOWAGER'S

Chapel at *SOMERSET-HOUSE*, upon
TWELFTH-DAY, *January 6, 1686.*

By *JOHN BETHAM*, Doctor of *SORBON*,
and Preacher in Ordinary to His *MAJESTY*.

As Publish'd by Her MAJESTY'S Command.

Printed in the *YEAR MDCCXLI.*

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S E R M O N VII.

O F T H E

E P I P H A N Y.

M A T T H. ii. 1, 2.

Ecce Magi ab Oriente venerunt Jerosoly-
mam, dicentes: Ubi est, qui natus est
Rex Judæorum? vidimus enim Stellam
ejus in oriente, & venimus adorare eum.

*Behold, there came wise-men from the east to
Hierusalem, saying, where is he that is
born King of the Jews? for we have seen
his star in the east, and are come to adore
him.*



W H E N the World's Redeemer
was born in *Bethlehem*, a solemn
Ambassy was sent from Hea-
ven, to acquaint poor Shep-
herds, that the *Messias* had
then began his Reign. About the same
time, a Star was appointed to summon from

remoter Countries, three crown'd Heads, to pay Adoration to this New-born King. In the Shepherds, who were near at hand, he was discover'd to the *Jews*, to whom he was first sent, and amongst whom, he was to be born: In the Wise-men, who came from foreign Parts, he was made known to the *Gentiles*, who were at a dreadful Distance from God and Heaven. *Manifestatus est, Judæis in Pastorum propinquitate, gentibus in Magorum longinquitate*, says St. *Augustin*. The Shepherds were invited to this Honour, because the meanest and poorest sort of Men: The Wise-men, because as St. *Augustin* observes, *Magicians* (tho' in this differing from many other Fathers, who say the Word *Magi* signifies Philosophers) but St. *Augustin* will have them *Magicians*, and consequently enormous Sinners. These Passages were a Preludium to the Doctrine our Saviour afterwards preached and practis'd, in choosing the meanest and most contemptible things in this World, and labouring chiefly for the Salvation of Sinners: to the end, St. *Augustin* says, *Ut nullus magnus superbiret, nullus infirmus desperaret: That the Great Ones here on Earth, might not swell with Pride; and that no Sinner, how heinous soever, should be dejected and cast into despair.*

Serm. 3.
de Epiph.

By this, our Saviour proved himself the great Corner-stone, *Lapis Angularis*, as the Scripture calls him, uniting to the same Head, and in the same Faith, the heretofore so opposite People, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and with them raising one spiritual Building, the Catholick Church composed of them both, *fecit utraque unum*. Here the old Feuds between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that had so long divided the World, were at last ended, and the Prophecy of *Isaiab* made good; That the time should come, when the *Lamb* and *Wolf* should peaceably feed together in the same Pasture; and the *Lyon* and the *Ox* eat quietly in one Manger; *Lupus & Agnus pascentur simul, Leo & Bos comedent paleas*: That is, the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, heretofore as irreconcilable as ravenous *Wolves* with innocent *Lambs*, as hungry *Lions* with *Sheep* or *Oxen*, this Day are reconciled at the Manger of our New-born *Jesus*, joyfully united in the same Faith of the true *Messias* there present, by which their Souls were nourish'd and made able to seek after eternal Glory. Here was verify'd to the Letter, what the same Prophet affirms; *Puer parvulus minabit eos*; the mention'd Savage and ravenous Creatures, shall forget their natural Cruelty, their bloody Antipathy, and become so gentle, as to be join'd together in the

Ephes. 2.
14.

Isaiab 11.
22. 62.
25.

the same Yoke, with what they used to devour; render'd so tame, that an Infant-child shall lead them.

GOD'S Mercy never appear'd so astonishing, as in this miraculous Call of the *Gentiles* to the true Faith; Man's Weakness never can prove more fatal, than by abusing so signal a Favour. Happy we *Gentiles*, who were called after so admirable a Manner; thrice unhappy *Gentiles*, if we abuse so infinite a Blessing. The Prodigy of Mercy that ever most astonish'd the World, was the calling us *Gentiles* upon this happy Day to the true Faith, as I shall prove in my first Part. The greatest Misery Man can fall under, is not to correspond with so undeserved a Grace, as I shall shew in my second Part. These two Points make the Division of my Discourse, and the Subject of your favourable Attention, which I shall crave, after we have invoc'd the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, begging the Virgin Mother to join with us in so necessary a Petition. AVE MARIA.

THE Birth of our great *Messias*, and the miraculous Discovery of it made to the *Jews*, was a gracious Effect of his ever to be adored Mercy; yet we may in some measure truly term it an act of Justice; because

cause in this, we find fulfilled several Divine Promises, made by God in recompence of that signal Faith, and absolute Obedience, so eminent in many of his Loyal Servants.

First to an *Abraham*; *Benedicentur in semine tuo omnes gentes, quia obedisti voci mee: And in thy seed all nations shall be blest, because thou hast obey'd my voice.*

Gen. 22.
18.

And then likewise to *Jacob*, that the Royal Scepter shall not depart from the Race of *Juda*, till the *Messias* appear'd, *Non auferetur sceptrum de Juda, donec veniet qui mittendus est.* And often to *David* in confi-

Gen. 49.
10.

deration of his good Government, his faintly Life, his Zeal in his Maker's Service. By these Promises we find the Prophets raised to a pious Impatience, for the Arrival of that happy Moment; *Propter Sion non tacebo, & propter Hierusalem non quiescam, donec oriatur ut splendor justus ejus. For Sion and Jerusalem I will never rest, till the bright son of justice its Saviour shall rise as a fire, as a burning lamp.* At other times

Isaiab 62.
1.

they beg of the Heavens to *shower him down*; and sometimes beseech him to *break through them*; so impatient were they for his Appearance: These zealous Petitions, these languishing Sighs after the World's Redeemer, deserved some little Consideration in the Court of Heaven, merited in some manner,

as Divines observe, the actual Appearance of this celestial Comforter: Therefore God Almighty told them at last for their Comfort, *Propter miseriam inopum, & gemitum pauperum, nunc exurgam, dicit Dominus: For the miseries of my afflicted and disconsolate people, for the sighs of my poor servants who have long languished to see and feel the effects of my saving providence, I will now come to their assistance.*

ALTHOUGH they were often a rebellious Nation, they were the Children of an *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*; Names sacred both in Earth and Heaven, for whose sakes alone, God had spared them, in the worst of times: And therefore, when *Moses*, their Prophets and Governors, stood in need of a favourable Audience, they generally petition'd in the Name of these great Men, to whom God had tied himself by Oath, as *Moses* minds him, after their Apostacy, in adoring the Golden Calf, *Quibus jurasti per te metipsum.* Although it be true, that they too too often fail'd, yet they and their Ancestors, were the only People, that had brought down the Worship of the true God from Man's Creation; never wanting, in the height of their Disorders, some faithful Servants of Heaven, true Worshippers of the only Divinity; as appears by the Answer made to the Prophet

Prophet *Elias*, when he thought Piety at the lowest ebb: So among both Living and Dead, they never wanted powerful Advocates to plead their Cause, to interpose between the People and their offended Maker. Some had fail'd, others had still faithfully served him; some blasphemed his holy Name, others sung his Praises Day and Night: When there was one of the Race of *Jacob* so weak that he sacrificed to Idols, by the Command of *Antiochus*, there was a *Mattathias* so zealous, as to immolate the unfortunate Wretch, upon the same Altar, and so repair'd the Insolence. When there was a *Zimri* so impious, as to defile himself with an unfortunate *Midianite*, there was a *Phineas* so replenish'd with the Zeal of the Lord, that he could not suffer the Indignity, but sacrificed upon the Place, the two Criminals to the Divine Justice, *Perfodit ambos simul, kill'd them both*; and so by his Zeal saved the Race of *Israel*. Nay, at the very Time the *Messias* appear'd, although there was a monstrous *Herod*, then a *Jew* by Profession, that thirsted after the Blood of this innocent Lamb; there was at the same time an old *Simeon*, replenish'd with the Holy Ghost, who expected with Impatience the happy Moment, desiring to live for no other end, but that he might only see this

3 Reg. 19.
3.
Maccab.
1. 2.

Numb. 25.
8.

Luke 2.
29.

sweet Babe, and embrace him in his Arms; after which Happiness, he ask'd for his own Dismission from this World: *Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine*: Begging his Life might be clos'd with that Extacy of Love, with which he was wrapt at that charming Passage. Infine, although few honour'd him, as Redeemer, when first born; yet we find within the Precincts of *Judæa*, a Band of pious Shepherds, a Prophetess *Anna*, a faithful *Joseph* and *Mary*, that gave him the Honour and Adoration due to his Divine Majesty. From hence we may conclude, that although the *Jews* Call to believe in, and adore the true *Messias*, was an Effect of God's infinite Bounty and Mercy, yet it was in some measure proper and convenient.

Rom. 1.

AFTER this, dear Christians, should I lay before you the sad Condition of the *Gentiles*, when our Saviour came to redeem the World, as 'tis describ'd by *St. Paul*, 'twill appear the most deplorable, that unfortunate Man was ever condemn'd to. They knew the eternal Power, the invisible Majesty, of an incomprehensible God, by the Creatures he had made; yet they were so senseless and stupid, *Stulti facti sunt*, as to give the supreme Worship due only to this adorable Divinity, to Birds, Beasts, Crocodiles,

flies, and Serpents: And so preferr'd the
 last, and most despicable of Creatures, be-
 fore the All-Puissant and Eternal Creator:
Servierunt creaturæ, potius quam creatori. Rom. 1.
25.
 And therefore, St. Paul says, God justly
 deliver'd them over to the Tyranny of the
 most ignominious of Passions, *in passiones* Verse 26.
ignominie; Men and Women perverting the
 Order of Nature, by the most infamous, and
 monstrous ways, that human Corruption
 could invent; most inhumanly revenging
 themselves upon one another, and this as the
 Chastisement, and just Reward of their Ido-
 latries, and other Crimes; *Mercedem, quam* Verse 27.
oportuit, erroris sui in semetipsis recipientes.
 So abandon'd by their Maker, whom they
 had first forsaken, he *delivered them over to*
a reprobate Sense, that they might act more
 like brute Beasts, than reasonable Creatures;
Ut faciant ea, quæ non conveniunt: Verse 28.
 defiled and infamous by all sorts of Iniquity, Ava-
 rice, Impurity, Pride, Sediton, Murder,
 Theft; envious, malicious Enemies to Man-
 kind, and hateful to God, *Detractores, Deo* Verse 30.
adibiles; void of all Sense, of all Modesty,
 of all Good-nature, of all Fidelity, without
 Pity, without Mercy, *Insapientes, absque fæ-* Verse 31.
dere, absque misericordia. Such Monsters of
 Vice, that scarce any thing above Hell,
 could be an Emblem of them, as appears

Acts 10.

by what St. *Peter* saw in his Vision, that told him, they were not excluded from the Gospel; they were then laid before him, as *brute Beasts, Serpents, savage Creatures*, as the *Greek* Text relates it. Nay, they were so despicable to the Jewish Nation, that God Almighty did not think any thing could more mortify the *Israelites*, than to tell them, their Crimes had lessened them so in the sight of God, that the very *Gentiles* should be preferr'd before them. *Provocabo eos in eo, qui non est populus*: I will provoke them to Jealousy, and Envy, in seeing those abandon'd Wretches, preferr'd before them, who were never treated as yet, but as People design'd for Slaughter: *In gente stulta irritabo illos*; I will provoke them to Rage and Fury, in seeing such Sots and Idiots, become my Favourites; a People, with whom he had never vouchsafed to treat, to whom he had never made the least Promise of Mercy: *Promissionis spem non habentes*. The sacred History is fill'd with the formidable Effects of his Justice; as when the *Israelites* were commanded to murder whole Countries, Man, Woman, and Child, without any Distinction of Age, Sex or Condition; Whole Kingdoms massacred by one another; the *Chaldeans* by the *Persians*, the *Persians* by the *Grecians*, the

Deut. 32.
12.*Ephes.* 2.
12.*Grecians*

Grecians by the *Romans*; and this for the Space of some thousands of Years, without any account of particular Persons, for whose Salvation we have ground to hope. Then if we proceed farther, and cast an Eye over the vast Continent of *Europe, Asia, Africa,* and *America,* we shall find all these vastly extended Countries, infamous by all the Abominations, that reprobate Man could invent; scarce a Creature so despicable in whole Nature, as Crocodiles, and Serpents, that by some or other was not treated as a God. The detestable Disorders of this nature were not only found in some Corner of the World, but in all Nations where the Sun gave Light; except that poor Spot of Ground call'd *Palestine*: This not for a Year or two, but for thousands of Years, without affording any Servants of the true God; that might mediate for the rest; verifying to the Letter in whole Empires, what *David* said of the *Jews*, by Exaggeration, *Non est qui faciat bonum, non est usque ad unum.* *Psalms 52.* In innumerable Kingdoms, not one † that we can name; and in the whole World of *Gentiles*, we have Certainty of no ones Salvation, but of one poor single *Job*, among so many Millions, from the Days of *Abraham*, till the coming of the *Messias*. As for all our unfortunate Fore-
fathers

fathers near Home, in *Britany, France, Germany,* and all *Europe*, we cannot name one, nor have any good reason to affirm, that Heaven had one true Servant amongst them; all Pagans, all Idolaters, all justly, for their Crimes, hated by the Almighty, and excluded from Heaven.

THIS is the real Description, and true Character of the *Gentiles* for so many Ages. What must we then say of that Mercy, which takes such Monsters into Favour, instructs them in the true Faith, puts them in the certain Way that leads to Heaven? This is the highest Instance of an infinite Mercy, that the World ever admired; it seems the great Master-piece, by which he proves his Mercy to be above all his Works. To indulge such as once faithfully served him, though so unhappy as sometimes to run astray; to bless that Race, whose Ancestors have been Loyal, to preserve a Country, which never wanted some true Servants of God, although many fail'd in their Duty, seems worthy a divine Bounty; but to court such as had never been Loyal, to take whole Nations into Favour, whose Forefathers to a Man (for what appears to us) had been false and treacherous, to pour his Benedictions upon vast Kingdoms, that had never produced (that we know of) one truly

truly obedient Creature ; this seems, according to our Comprehension, acting above the Rules of Mercy.

THAT Expression of St. Paul, That God's Grace never so overflow'd, as when Iniquity ran at the height, was never so verified to the Letter as in the Transactions of this Day ; *Ubi abundavit delictum, superabundavit & gratia.* A Physician's Skill never appears so admirable, as in curing a desperate Disease; God's Mercies never so adorable, as in pardoning, where there seems not to have been the least Inducement. The *Gentiles* Crimes and Abominations had cried out to Heaven for Vengeance ; during many Ages, they had infected the whole Universe, they had debauched whole Nations, perverted the Use of all Creatures, prophan'd all the Elements, stood at Defiance with God and Heaven, almost ever since the Creation ; their Understandings buried in Darkness and Blindness, their Hearts harden'd and stupified with Sin and Sensuality, their whole Natures perverse and malicious in the highest Degree. Therefore, that Grace, that must clear and illuminate these clouded and dark Understandings, that must soften these obdurate and stony Hearts, that must rectify these crooked and depraved Wills, that must change the Nature of such habitually
perverse

Rom. 5-
20.

perverse Wretches, that must make them hate what they loved and adored, honour and embrace what they hated and abhor'd; that Grace, which works these Miracles, is justly called a miraculous and prodigious Grace, a superabundant Grace; *Superabundavit & gratia*. Likewise that Mercy that can forget so many *thousands* of Years Provocations of his Justice, that can remit so many *Millions* of Blasphemies and Idolatries, with which whole Lives have been prophaned, whole Ages have been defiled; this Mercy that pardons such Abominations; those Graces that reform and sanctify such perverse and malicious Souls, and fix them wholly upon God and Heaven; such Graces must surpass all the Favours ever bestow'd on Man, since the mention'd Enormities exceed all the Crimes ever committed against God: *Ubi abundavit delictum, superabundavit & gratia*.

IT was, dear Christians, upon this Day we were made happy, by that inconceivable Mercy, and prodigious Grace; when that propitious Star invited us *Gentiles* to the sacred Crib of our New-born *JESUS*, where we were made Partakers of those saving Truths, for want of which our unfortunate Ancestors were miserably lost. It was in these *Three Kings*, at *St. Leo* observes, that the whole

whole Body of the *Gentiles* (notwithstanding their Rebellions and Enormities of so old a Date) was honour'd and bless'd with a gracious Admittance, both to believe in, and adore then present, the only true God and Author of all things: *Adorant in tribus Magis, omnes populi, universitatis Authorem.* And now the Knowledge of the true *Messias*, the so long unkown Way to Heaven, the Adoration of the true God was no longer the Prerogative of the Race of *Jacob*, a Privilege of the Country of *Judea*, but a Benediction extended to the whole World: *Non in Judea tantum Deus; sed in toto orbe sit notus.*

Now it was; that *Abrahami* began to multiply his Race, by the numerous Addition of the *Gentiles*, call'd the Sons of *Promise*; and we heretofore the undutiful Children, who in our Ancestors shamefully degenerated from so faintly a Parent, enter this Day upon the Possession of that glorious Title of the Sons of *Abraham*, by inheriting his Faith. *Intret in Patriarcharum familiam gentium plenitudo*, says *St. Leo*; The whole Body of the *Gentiles* begin this Day to be incorporated in the holy Family of the Patriarchs. *Electi generis dignitatem, Fides omnibus facit esse communem*; One Faith communicated to *Jews* and *Gentiles*,

has render'd the Dignity of being the chosen People of God common to them both. Oh, inconceivable Mercy! Oh ever to be adored Bounty! We, who, as *St. Paul* observes out of the Prophet *Hosea*, were never yet honour'd so far, as to be own'd a People belonging to God, regarded by Providence, are this Day honour'd both with the Title, and Advantage, of being call'd and treated as his chosen People; *Vocabo non plebem meam, plebem meam*. We, the Object of Heaven's Hatred for so many thousands of Years, called the detested People of God, this Day changed the dreadful Quality of Enemy to God, into that of Friend and Favourite of Heaven, *Vocabo --- non dilectam, dilectam*. We, that seem'd excluded from any Share in his Mercies, mark'd out by his Justice, for Chastisement, and Slaughter; without hopes of Pity or Pardon, are this Day the Object of his Love and Mercy; *Vocabo ----- non misericordiam consecutam, misericordiam consecutam*. We, who, as the same Apostle observes, had no Title to claim any Share in the *Messias*; *Eratis sine Christo*; never included in any Treaty or Covenant made with God, *Hospites testamentorum*; So utterly abandon'd in all appearance, that he calls us People, for whom Providence seem'd not concern'd; *Sine Deo*

Rom. 9.
25.

Epl. ef. 2.
12.

in hoc mundo; without a God in this world. After these great and innumerable Calamities, and Scourges; after this fatal and long Oblivion of God and Heaven; after so many Ages being destitute of all efficacious Means to Salvation: after those seeming irreconcilable Feuds of so ancient a Date, that divided us from the People of God; we are now miraculously united with his dearest Servants and Friends, in the same Faith, in the same Hope, in the same *Messias*; who is the common Peace-maker between us both, *ipse enim est pax nostra*; Ephes. 2. 14. who has happily united us both, in one Church, in one Mystical Body; *Qui fecit utraq̄ue unum.* The ancient Separation, that kept us at such a distance both from God's People, and his Kingdom; that dreadful Wall, that hindred all Communication with God and his Servants, is this Day broken down; *Medium parietem maceræ solvens.* No more distinction of *Jew* and *Gentile*; Mercies are equally extended to them both; the so long hidden Way to Heaven is now laid open to all; *Jew* and *Gentile* have free Access, by CHRIST, to the Eternal FATHER, being directed by the same Divine Spirit: *Per ipsum habentes accessum ambo, in uno spiritu, ad patrem.* Verse 18.

These illegitimate Children, these Sons of

Bondage and Slavery; these Dogs, as our Saviour himself styl'd them, shall be now call'd, as they are, says St. Paul, *Vocabuntur filii Dei vivi*; *Fellow citizens with the saints, and domesticks in the same house of God*. Nay, he added, that we now are honour'd, in being Part of that sacred Structure, in which God himself pleases to reside, by his Divine Spirit; *Vos coedificamini in habitaculum Dei, in Spiritu*. Those Hearts that were defiled with all Impurities, those Powers that were prophan'd with all Enormities, those Souls that were possess'd by the Father of Darknes, deform'd and hideous, as become his Habitation, are now more beautiful than the rising Sun; so enrich'd with all the Ornaments of Grace and Virtue; so happily beautify'd and adorn'd, as to be chosen for that agreeable Mansion, where God himself resides: *Vos coedificamini in habitaculum Dei*. Did ever the divine Mercy work such Wonders as in making such Enemies worthy to be his bosom Friends? Such hideous Monsters, Angels of Light; such Sons of Darknes, shining Pillars in the Heavenly *Hierusalem*? This, without dispute, dear Christians, is the most eminent Act of Bounty and Mercy, ever perform'd in the behalf of Man: But if abused by our Ingratitude, will make us the most unfortunate

tunate of Creatures; as I shall prove in my Second Part.

S E C O N D P A R T.

GOD's Mercies never appear'd more eminently above his other Works, than in the Call of us *Gentiles* to the true Faith: Yet we find his Justice to have left whole Kingdoms, which still miserably lie waste. How many Millions have never heard of the true *Messias*? How many Countries, that once received him, have again fallen off, and are over-run with Infidelity? How many, that pretend to follow him, obey only by halves, admitting his Doctrine in Part, and reject what they please? In fine, dear Christians, how many here present, have the Grief to see their Friends, Kindred, and nearest Relations, unfortunately engaged in Schism and Error? whilst they themselves are so happy, as to be Partakers of the true Faith, which can only lead to eternal Bliss. If any here ask, how it comes to pass, that some have been Call'd, others Abandon'd; that we are Christians, others Pagans; you Partakers of the true Faith, others left in Schisms and Heresies; you the happy Object of his Mercy, another of his Justice and Wrath: Here human Reason is at a stand, and must with all Humility and Submission cry out with the great Apostle

Rom. 11.
33.

Apostle, *O altitudo divitiarum sapientie & scientiæ Dei!* O the profound Abyfs of the Treasures, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! His Secrets are too deep for our Fathom; his Oeconomy and Conduct are above our Reach; his Ways are incomprehensible, his Judgments inscrutable; *Incomprehensibilia sunt judicia ejus, investigabiles viæ ejus.* To whom has he ever open'd his Secrets? Who has he ever made his Counsellor? Therefore St. *Augustin*, contemplating the Inscrutability of this Mystery, why one was Call'd, another Left, declares frequently in his Works, he can give no other Answer to it, than what St. *Paul* has left us: *O Altitudo!* O the profound Abyfs! And for such as are not satisfy'd with this Answer, he bids them consult some more learned than *Augustin*. *Quærant Augustino doctorem:* But he advises them to be careful they meet not with such as are too presumptuous: *Sed caveant ne inveniant presumptores.* His Scholar St. *Prosper*, esteems it a Mystery lodged only in the divine Breast, far enough above the Reach of human Comprehension, and of which *none* ought to attempt the Knowledge; *Nec possibile comprehendere, nec licitum investigare.* And therefore this Knowledge ought to satisfy every Christian; that no Man is in the Way of Salvation, that is

De spu. &
Lit. Cap.
33.

In Obec.
14.
Vincent.

not

not call'd by God's Mercy, and sustain'd by his Bounty; and that no Man sins, but by his own perverse Will; and no Man perishes, but by his own Sin and Malice; and this, without further Search or Curiosity, may and ought to satisfy every Christian: *Cum scire sufficeret, ab illo esse quod statur, & ab illo non esse quod ruitur.* 'Tis most certain, no Man ever miscarried but by his own Fault; no Man was ever saved, but by God's Grace. But if you will farther know, why his Mercy draws one happy Creature, out of the Mass of Perdition, and why his Justice leaves another abandon'd to a reprobate Sense: *O Altitudo!* The calling the first, was an inconceivable Mercy, the leaving the latter, an Act of irreproachable Justice.

THEREFORE, dear Brethren, how infinitely great is the Obligation of all Christians, who have been the *Chosen* Favourites out of Millions! To whom God has fully proved himself to be what St. Paul calls him, *Pater misericordiarum; the Father of mercies.* Such privileged Persons, may justly cry out with holy David, *Non fecit taliter omninationi;* all Countries and People, have not been treated with that Tendernefs and Mercy as you have been; for all which we can give no Reason on our Side, that could deserve this Preference. For if we consider the Inclinations

Psal. 147.

20.

clinations of thousands of Infidels; they surpass us in the Gifts of Nature; more mild; more humble, more compassionate; more charitable, more just in their Dealings, than thousands of us Christians; and in all Appearance, had they been call'd to the true Religion and Worship, would have excell'd us in Christian Virtues. Yet by an inscrutable Secret of God's Judgments, they are left in Sin, and Infidelity, for everlasting Reproach and Contumely, *Vas in contumeliam*: whilst you are preferr'd, without the least Desert; chosen for everlasting Honour and Glory; *Vas in honorem*. One is justly abandon'd for his Sins, another is one of the Elect, who deserved as little: A *Peter* is call'd to Repentance, a *Judas* dies in Despair: This made *St. Paul* invite all *Gentiles* to enter into the Contemplation of this surprizing Mystery: *Vide ergo bonitatem & severitatem Dei*: Behold the bounty and severity of God; his Severity, to those poor Creatures, who were never call'd, who have sinn'd, and never rise again; *In eos quidem, qui ceciderunt, severitatem*: And his Bounty and inscrutable Mercy to you, *In te autem bonitatem Dei*; who have been call'd before Millions to the true Faith, and true Church. Happy we, if grateful and faithful in our Master's Service! *Si permanferis in bonitate*; If you remain in that

Rom. 9.
21.

Rom. 11.
22.

that happy State, his Mercy has placed you in; if you conserve that Faith, correspond with those Graces he has heap'd upon you; otherwise you will be cut off from that divine Olive, into which you were grafted, *alioquin & tu excideris*. As it is an ineffable Blessing to have been call'd to the true Faith, before thousands more deserving than We; so the abusing so signal a Grace, so infinite a Favour, will prove so fatal an Ingratitude, a Crime of so black a Die, as to render us more unworthy, more execrable in the sight of Heaven, than those unfortunate Pagans, that never heard of God or Christ.

THIS will evidently appear by a familiar Example: Had any Person here two Servants both negligent and undutiful to an exorbitant Degree; one, for his Fault, you justly turn out of your Service, banish him your Sight, leave him without all hopes of ever being received in Favour: The other, tho' equally guilty, is by pure Favour pardon'd his past Faults, admitted into your Family, made your Favourite, trusted with your Secrets, disposes and governs all things under you, with more Freedom and Confidence than before he offended. Should this Favourite prove so ungrateful a Wretch, as to abuse your Goodness, slight your Kindness, vilify your Favours so far, as wilfully to re-

lapſe into all thoſe Faults, for which your Goodneſs once pardon'd him, and to which he returns again, without the leaſt Senſe of Gratitude, for your Bounty toward him, in preferring him before his Fellow-ſervant, who deſerved no worſe than he. Had any here ſo unworthy a Servant, would you not eſteem this Ingratitude, infinitely more criminal, than all the other Servants, whom you pardon'd not, ever did againſt you; who, although faulty, yet never abuſed your Patience, never inſulted over your Bounty, never deſpised your Favours, after ſo gracious a Pardon, as this other was Partaker of.

OUR Crime, dear Chriſtians, is infinitely more enormous than ſuch a Servant's; if we abuſe this ineffable Mercy, with which we *Gentiles* were bleſt on this Day, in being call'd to the Faith of Chriſt. We were all unprofitable and criminal Servants, equally guilty in our Firſt-parents, and afterwards by our own Wills, infinitely perfidious, infinitely rebellious againſt our Divine Maſter; for which Enormities, millions of millions of unfortunate Wretches were juſtly abandon'd, juſtly excluded from Faith and Heaven: When you, by an inſcrutable Mercy, have been call'd in your Fore-fathers, to the true Faith; had your Pardon granted, your Crimes remitted; you made Members of the True Church; inſtructed in thoſe Heavenly Myſteries; made Partakers of thoſe
 ſanctifying

sanctifying Sacraments, without which no Salvation; placed in the certain Way to Heaven, fortify'd with divine Graces, instructed by faintly Documents, encouraged by most fatherly Promises, animated by the powerful Example of God made Man. 'Tis true, that Christ came for all, did sufficiently for all, Died for all, yet Millions were so unfortunate, as, for their Sins, to be justly deprived of the Knowledge, Use, and Application of so infinite and sovereign a Remedy to their unfortunate Souls; whilst you, dear Christians, who were equally undeserving, equally stupid, equally blind, equally harden'd by Vice, equally criminal, should have your Eyes and Understandings open'd, and illuminated by those saving Truths our SAVIOUR came to teach; your Hearts warm'd, and your Affections inflam'd with his precious Blood, and bitter Passion: Your Sins blotted out by the infinite Value of that inestimable Ransom, sufficient to redeem an hundred Worlds. *O Altitudo!*

THIS makes us, dear Brethren, the most happy of Creatures, if our Lives are a constant and grateful Acknowledgment of so signal a Mercy and Favour; if we concur, and correspond on our Parts, with these surprising Graces: But on the contrary, if we live so, that our Behaviour is not a constant Expression of our Gratitude for so undeserved a Preference, and Blessing; if the *Gentiles*

(as *St. Paul* complain'd of the Converts of his Days) are scandaliz'd and tempted by our Behaviour, *To blaspheme the Name of GOD*: This will be the Crime of Crimes, after so signal, so miraculous, so undeserved a Preference of us before the greatest part of Mankind; after this, to contemn him in our own Persons, and render him despicable to others, when we have been honour'd by him, in the highest degree our Nature was capable of. This Contempt of the highest instance of his Bounty and Mercy, this enormous Sin of Ingratitude, is so hateful in the Sight of our infinite Benefactor, that he declares, nothing so insupportable, as the unjust, and unworthy Returns of such, as were once honour'd with his Favour, and enrich'd by his Bounty: For as the Prophet *David* declares; *Si inimicus meus maledixisset mihi sustinuissem utique.* If my Enemy, whom I always treated as such, keeping him at a just Distance, if *Turk* or *Pagan*, to whom as yet I have never open'd the Secrets of Heaven, and Mysteries of Salvation; if they, my always declared Enemies, should blaspheme my holy Name, *maledixisset mihi*; The Insolence, tho' great, might have been supported, *sustinuissem utique*: But for you, *Homo unanims, dux meus & notus meus*; You, to whom I had united myself as one Heart and one Soul; my dear and intimate Friends, lodged you in my own Sanctuary, fed you at my own

Table

Table, with the sweet and delicious Food of Angels; *Qui simul mecum dulces capiebas cibos:* Placed you in my Catholick Church, made a perfect Reconciliation and Union, between you and Heaven, *In domo Dei ambulavimus cum consensu:* After I had chosen you before Millions, prefer'd you before whole Nations, saved you from Perdition, rescued you out of the Jaws of Hell: And that, after all these high Expressions of Love and Mercy, these innumerable Titles that cry out for Gratitude, and Obedience, you should turn my bitter Enemies, and side against me.

WHAT can the Divine Justice pronounce severe enough, against this barbarous and monstrous Ingratitude? The same Prophet *David* tells us in the following Verse, God will not have Patience to expect their natural Death, but will hurry them away without the least Warning; give them no Time to repent, no Time to cry for Mercy; surprise them by a sudden and unprovided Death; *Descendant in Infernum viventes: Let them sink alive into Hell.* This Contempt of God's Favours and Mercies, this Sin of Ingratitude turns his Love into Hatred, as the same Prophet *David* explicates at large in his hundred and fifth *Psalms*, where he Numbers the Favours received by the Children of *Israel*; their Delivery out of Bondage; their passing the Red-Sea; their Preservation in the Desert, with their ungrateful Returns; their murmuring,

Psalms 54.
16.

Psalms
105.

muring, their Sedition, their Schism, their Infidelity, their Idolatry, their inhuman Sacrifices: All which Abominations God had suffer'd for many Centuries at the Hand of the *Gentiles*, that knew him not; but when his chosen, and beloved People, his darling *Israel*, was so stupendously ungrateful, as to vilify all Favours received, and provoke him with these Abominations; his Patience could not bear it, but his Love was turn'd, as the Prophet observes, not only into Anger, but Rage and Fury; *Iratus est furore Dominus in populum suum*. Fury, as Philosophers observes is not a common sort of Anger, but a Rage, that is restless till it gluts its self, with Blood and Revenge: A Rage, which the Wise-man calls that kind of Anger, that punisheth without Bounds, Chastises without Pity, or Mercy; *Non habet misericordiam erumpens furor*: A Rage that is accompanied, as *Moses* says, with a devouring Fire; *Ignis succensus in furore meo*: A Fire, that searches every Corner of those melancholy infernal Caves, and will burn, as long as Hell shall last; *& ardebit usque ad Inferni novissima*.

Prov. 27.
3.

Deut. 32.
22.

2 Pet. 2.
20.

THIS dreadful Consequence of Man's Ingratitude, this inhuman Return for such eminent Favours, made *St. Peter* explicate himself at large upon this Point, that we might be sensible of such unworthy Proceedings. *Si refugientes coinquinationes seculi, in cognitione*

cognitione Domini nostri, & salvatoris Jesu Christi; Whosoever have been so happy, as by the Assistance of God's Grace, to fly from the dangerous Infection of this World, when blest with the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus; *His rursus implicati superantur*: yet shall be so unfortunate, so ungrateful, as to plunge themselves a second Time in their once renounced and forsaken Disorders. What will be the Consequence of such Relapses, but that their present Condition, is much more deplorable than their former; *Facta sunt posteriora, deteriora prioribus*. Wherefore the same Apostle concludes, *Melius enim erat illis non cognoscere vias justitiæ*; They had better have remain'd in their Ignorance and Blindness, in their Abominations and Idolatry, never to have been blest with the Faith of the true *Messias*, the Knowledge of the Law of God; never to have known the Paths that lead to Heaven; *Quàm post agnitionem retrorsum converti*: Then to be so miserable, as after such divine Lights, to return again to our Ways of Darkness. St. Paul in like manner told the *Jews*, who avail'd themselves upon the account of Revelations, which had been made to them, that God had confided to them the Secrets of his Worship, the Prophecies of their own, and the World's future Happiness. But alas! What Advantage would they reap from these Privileges,

2 Pet. 2.

21.

Rom. 2.
25.

if their Lives were not an exact Observance of this Law; if their Lives were not squared to its Rules and Precepts? *Si prevaricator legis sis*, says St. Paul, if you break its Commands; *Circumcisio tua præputium factum est*: Your having that Pledge of God's Kindness put into your Hands, his Divine Law; your being mark'd out for his peculiar People, your Circumcision, and all your Privileges, make you no less miserable than the poorest Pagan. Had not the *Israelites*, that apostatiz'd under *Jeroboam*, better never have known the Law of the Lord of *Israel*, than to have turn'd his Honour to the Temples of *Idols*? Had not *Judas* better have remain'd the worst of most obstinate *Jews*, than to have heard the Law of Christ, and to betray its Maker? Therefore our Saviour told the *Pharisees*, who were so zealous in gaining Profelites, that if their Conversion to the *Jewish* Law were not accompany'd with an absolute Change of Manners, in such as embraced that Worship; *Facitiseum filium Gehennæ duplo quam vos*. The poor Convert was more miserable than ever, sentenced a double Damnation, for abusing so signal a Call.

Mat. 23.
15.

BUT our Saviour, in St. *John's* Gospel, comes yet more home to our present Point, when he told the *Jews*, to whom he preach'd, before whom he wrought so many Miracles, to convince them he was the true *Messias*; the only Way to Heaven, as he calls himself:

self; that all those Advantages not rightly used, would avail them nothing; but on the contrary, they had been more happy, never to have heard of the true *Messias*, or his Law: For as our Saviour said, *Si non venissem, & locutus fuisssem, peccatum non haberent.* John 15. 22. If I had not appear'd amongst you, and preach'd my Gospel, you had not been so criminal: But now, since I have open'd your Eyes, convinced you with Miracles, proved my Mission by your own Law and Prophets, *Excusationem non habent de peccato suo*; they are left without Excuse. This, dear Christians, will be apply'd to us, who have been call'd before thousands, who in appearance deserved the Grace better: Since he has, as you have heard, prefer'd you before your Neighbours, Friends, and nearest Relations; given you a full Knowledge of your Crimes; provided you with infallible Remedies against them; placed you in the certain Way, if you will walk in it, of obtaining everlasting Bliss: Therefore such as correspond not with these Graces, make not the right use of these Mercies, *Excusationem non habent de peccato suo*, will be destitute of all Excuse and Defence, that might help to save them. We cannot answer, with Heathens and Infidels, that we knew not the Law; for it has been preach'd unto us: That we were ignorant our Lives were so guilty and enormous; for our Crimes

have been clearly laid open before us: We cannot complain we wanted Means to heat our *fear'd Consciences*; for most sovereign Remedies have been put into our Hands: We cannot complain we knew not the World's *Messias*; for he has publish'd his Coming and Appearance, by innumerable Miracles, made known unto us: We cannot pretend the Paths of Heaven are still inaccessible; for they have been beaten, and made plain to any that does not wilfully shut his Eyes; you have been set in them with such certain Directions, that nothing but a wilful Blindness could hinder you from walking steadily to eternal Bliss: Therefore, if we run astray, it's wholly our own Fault, we are deprived of all Defence, struck dumb by a Self-conviction, *Excusationem non habent de peccato suo*, no Excuse left to lessen our Doom.

LET me therefore, dear Christians, conclude, earnestly beseeching you, as St. Paul did the *Ephesians*, *Obsecro ut dignè ambuletis vocatione, qua vocati estis*; to live as becomes Men honour'd with so merciful a Call: A Call that was the most undeserved, most signal, most astonishing Grace that sinful Man could ever receive from Heaven; and consequently our Behaviour ought to be the most humble, the most grateful, most faithful and steady Performance of all Christian Duties, that ever was seen in Creatures. Let our daily Meditation be, how, upon this Day, by an
 Omnipotent

Ephes. 1.

1.

Omnipotent Mercy, after so many thousand Years Rebellion, after the Crimes of so many Ages, the Contempt of GOD, the Abuse and Prophanation of all his Creatures, for which we seem'd justly abandon'd for evermore to the Slavery of Hell, we were happily snatch'd out of the Lion's Jaws; rescued, as *St. Paul* says, out of the hands of *the power of darkness*; *Eripuit nos de potestate tenebrarum*; and happily translated, *In Dei lumen & gloriam*, to the Light and Glory of GOD; made Partakers of the Light of his divine Gospel, which will, if follow'd, certainly direct you to the more bright and refulgent Rays of Eternal Glory. Remember hourly, as *St. Leo* says, *Memento cujus capitis & corporis sis membrum*; to what Head you are this Day United, and of what Body you are made happy Members: In a Word, says he, *Agnosce, Christiane, dignitatem tuam*; Own, Christian Man, and contemplate thy new Dignity: *Et noli in veterem vilitatem degeneri conversatione redire*; for Shame degenerate not so far, disgrace not your selves to that degree, as to return to those mean unworthy base Ways, that dishonour'd the Life of Man, before this happy Call and Conversion.

Col. 1. 13.

*Serm. 1.
de Nativ.*

LET'S imitate the First-fruits of us *Generales*, those generous and glorious Kings; who were no sooner call'd to the Faith of Christ, but they were raised above the Charms of this World. Neither the Love of Ease or their own Homes, not all the Poms and Magnificence

Magnificence of *Herod's* Court, the greatest, according to *Joseph*, that perhaps the World had seen; neither this, nor the Apprehensions of most imminent Dangers could stop them in the Search after this New-born King, nor hinder their Zeal from publick Adoration: Nor was this perform'd in a slight Manner, but by an intire casting of themselves and all they possess at his Royal Feet. This was fully done and signify'd, as *St. Bernard* observes, by the three Offerings they made; in the Gold they consecrated to his Service, all the Treasure and earthly Substance they possess in this World. In the Frankincense, which signifies Prayer, they testify'd an intire devoting themselves to a spiritual Life for the future; for Prayer is nothing else but an ardent Desire of God and Heaven. By Myrrh, which keeps things from Putrefaction, they dedicated themselves to Penance and Mortification, which, as *St. Bernard* observes, conserves from the Corruption of Sin; *Ne diffluens in vitia putrescat*; lest by the Dissolution of Sin, the Soul may be tainted and perish: These were Emblems of their future Behaviour, during the rest of their Lives; they were careful never to return to their old Ways, in which they had walk'd before their Conversion, but went Home, as the Scripture tells us, another Way, *per aliam viam*: Let us follow them, dear Christians, and never stop, till we arrive, as they did, at the heavenly *Hierusalem*. Amen.

*Hom. 3. de
Epiph.*



CATHOLICK LOYALTY:

Upon the Subject of

Government and Obedience.

Deliver'd in a

S E R M O N

B E F O R E T H E

K I N G and Q U E E N,

In His MAJESTY's Chapel Royal at

W H I T E H A L L,

On the Thirtieth of JANUARY, 1687.

Per me Reges Regnant. *By me Kings Reign.*
P R O V. viii. 15.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY's Command.

By the Reverend FATHER
E D W A R D S C A R I S B R I K E,
Priest of the SOCIETY of J E S U S.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

IN

SEVEN VOLUMES

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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TO HIS SACRED

M A J E S T Y.

S I R,



IN Duty and Obedience to Your Majesty's Order, and in a most Profound and Reverential Acknowledgment of the Honour of Your Royal Command, I have presumed to lay these Papers at Your

DEDICATION.

Sacred Feet, as the truly
CATHOLICK DOCTRINE
of that Society, whereof the
Author hath the Honour to
be a Member; and who is, to
the highest degree of Vene-
ration,

S I R,

The most Dutiful of

your Majesty's Subjects,

EDWARD SCARISBRIKE.



S E R M O N V I I I .

CATHOLICK LOYALTY :

Upon the Subject of

GOVERNMENT and OBEDIENCE.

PROV. viii. 15.

Per me Reges Regnant.

By me Kings Reign.



HERE is a whole Sermon
(Sacred Majesty) wrapt up
in a short Text, of only
*four Words, Per me Reges
Regnant* : And in this plain,
short Text, the Wisdom of

God preaches to the Sons of Men. It preaches, I say, to All, without Exception ; to Rulers as well as to Subjects. It admonisheth Kings, by whose Commission they
Govern,

Govern, and instructs the People at the same time, whom they are to *Obey*. If the *irrefragable Doctrine*, and the *uncontestable Authority* of this *emphatical* Portion of holy Writ, had been taken into Thought and laid to Heart, when time was, as it ought to have been; there would have been no Occasion for the rueful Solemnity of this Day's meeting: No Subject for an *Anniversary*, in perpetual Memory (and Detestation) of so execrable, treasonable and barbarous a *Regicide*: A *Regicide*, committed in the Face of the Sun, in *cold Blood*, and under a Pretext of Law; Nay, and to consummate the Wickedness, by the Hands of *rebellious Subjects*, and before the very Gate of their Sovereign's Royal Palace.

THIS is not a Place or an Argument for high Flights, or florid Discourses; but without more Words, it was a *Diabolical Violence* upon the *Person* and *Dignity* of a *Lawful*, a *Just*, a *Merciful* and most *Excellent Prince*. Now if *Innocent Blood* shall defile a Land, even in a *private, single Case* of *Murder*; and barely for defacing the Image of God in a kind of *Theological Allusion* or *Figure*: What Judgments may not a Nation reasonably dread, and expect, from God's *Justice* and *Vengeance*, for so

National,

National, so Daring, so Complicated a Murder as this was! A *Murder*, that carried *Oppression, Treason, Sacrilege*, and the whole Roll of *Crying Mortal Sins* in the Veins of it. A *Murder*, that struck at the *Divinity* of Power, as well as at the *Administration* of it; and at the same time attacked the Life of the *Prince*, and bid a *Defiance* to his *Royal Character*.

UPON this Consideration it is, that we are called together to humble our selves before Almighty God, with Fasting and Prayers, to implore the *Divine Mercy* to accept of our true Repentance and hearty Contrition for all our by-past heinous Sins, and grant us his holy Grace, that we may live hereafter in perfect Union and Charity, and in a dutiful Obedience to God and our Governors, and in Love, Peace and Agreement with one another. For this Reason it is, that we are now met to prostrate our selves before the Father of Mercies, most fervently to beseech him in his infinite Goodness, to be gracious to our Brethren, as well as to our selves; and to avert that destroying Vengeance, which we may so justly fear, and cannot but tremble under the thought of, for the almost inexpiable Sin of Blaspheming God's Anointed, and for the Effusion of his
Blood.

Blood. Not but that I do in Charity hope, and in a full Persuasion of Reason presume, that every Soul, that hears me this Day, can lay his Hand upon his Heart, and acquit himself of having had any Part in this Hellish Tragedy, either in Thought, Word or Deed, in a direct Tendency to so black an End. We cannot so much forget the Duties of our Profession, either as Christians, as Catholics, or as Subjects, for we have been taught better things; but a National Wickedness, we know, calls for a National Punishment. And briefly, Be it what it will, we are all Offenders, all Provokers, and every good Christian, is to bear his own Burthen without criminating *Instruments* or *Parties*. No, beloved Christians, *Repentance* and *Forgiveness* is the Work and Duty of the Day: And it would have a very ill Grace, whilst we are upon our bended Knees, in Supplications to the Dispenser of all Mercies, for an Act of *Oblivion for our selves*; at the same time not to allow an *Amnesty one to another*.

BUT to hasten to my Business, Here is a horrid thing done, which most certainly would never have been done, if the Doers of it had but kept seriously in their Thoughts these Words, *Per me Reges Regnant, By me Kings Reign*; and I do not know a better
 Preservative

Preservative for the future, against these Principles and Practices, that wrought all our former Misery and Woe, than a plain Expounding upon this Text, *Per me Reges Regnant*. St. Paul speaks to the same purpose, *Non est potestas nisi à Deo*, C. xiii. V. 1. *ad Rom.* That is to say, *Government it self*, and all the *Powers of Government*, are of Divine Appointment and Institution: And this shall be the first Point of my Discourse.

Now if it be granted, that *Government* is of God, it follows necessarily, that *Subjection* must be so too; for *Order* is the *Excellency of Power it self*; and they derive both from the same Fountain: *Superior* is *Nonsense* without *Inferior*: And the *Relatives* cannot stand one without another. If *Governors* be from God, so are the *Governed*; if *Power*, so is *Subjection*. Briefly, I find one Proposition here involved in another; and that the *Obedience* of the *Subject* falls as naturally within the prospect of my Text, as the *Power* of the *Prince*: And since they cannot be separated, I shall treat of both. First, of *Government*, how sacred it is, as being of *Divine Authority*. Secondly, of *Obedience*; with *Doctrines*, and *Applications* suitable to the *Matter* and *Occasion*. They are both join'd in the *Methods* of God's *Providence*,

dence, in *Nature, Reason, Religion, Policy, Law, Practice*: In a word, the same Power which appoints Kings to *Command*, obligeth *Subjects* to *Obey*. To understand these two important Truths, we must beg the Assistance of the King of Kings and Lord of all Powers, by the Intercession of the *Virgin Mary*. AVE MARIA.

The FIRST PART.

IT is observable, that in the whole Book of Life, we do not find any thing more plainly set down, more accurately read upon, or oftner inculcated, than the Doctrine of the *Sacredness* of *Governing Powers*, which is no more at last than what naturally results from the very Words of my Text: *By me Kings Reign*.

To begin with the *Institution* of *Power*, give me leave to put three short *Queries*:

- I. This *Power*; *Is it so sacred?*
- II. *Are we very certain that it is so?*
- III. With Reverence to the Supposition, *What if it be?*

I answer in order: *First*, That it is as sacred as the having God the *Author* of it, can make any thing. *Secondly*, We have the *Veracity* of *Scripture* that so it is; and *Lastly*, *If so it be*; there is no contending
with

with an *Almighty Power*, who hath placed Governors and Rulers over us; no expostulating with an *Infallible Wisdom*, who knows what is best for us; no playing fast and loose with an *All-seeing God*, who inspects the Thoughts as well as the Actions: There is no room in this Case either for *Fallacy*, or *Force*; *Arms* or *Arguments*: But the Decretory four Words here in my Text, *By me Kings Reign*, confounds all *Sophisms*, dissolves all *Scruples*, stops all Mouths, and silences all Disputes. The Challenges of the People, as if Authority were radically in them; the contradictory Perswasions of *Co-ordinancy*, that is to say, of a sharing of *Sovereignty* amongst *Subjects*; the Fancy of a *Conditional Power*, and a *Conditional Duty*, as if *Kings* were only the *Trustees* of the *People*; the Paradox of a *singulis major, universis minor*; the Conceit of erecting *Government* upon the sandy Foundation of a diffusive *Multitude*: Take all these Cavils and Objections, and as many more of the same kind as were ever hammer'd out by the Malice and Wit of Hell, and corrupt Nature: In these two little Syllables, *Per me, By me*, they are all answer'd and put to flight, like the Dust before the Wind, and beyond all Thought or Possibility of Resource: Unless

they will appeal from the *Potter* to the *Clay*; from *Omnipotence* to *Flesh* and *Blood*; from the Truth of the *Scriptures*, to the *Dreams* of some here and there---- What shall I say? Some disaffected *Achitophel*, or *Man of State*. To proceed: By whom was the World made? *By me*, saith the Divine Wisdom. Whence had the *Stars* their *Influences*? The *Celestial Orbs* their *Motions*? *Vegetables* and *Minerals* their *Virtues*? Who was it, infine, that made every thing out of nothing by *one* Word; and by *another* drew *Order* out of that *Confusion*? This was all done *Per me* still; and the Original of *Government* was as much the Work of God's *Providence*, as the *Creation* was of his *Power*. The holy Fathers speak so home, and so unanimously to this Point, that the multiplying of Instances and Authorities, would but weary out your Patience, and burn Day-light.

You will do well to observe and still keep in your Mind, that the Doctrine of the Institution of *Power*, as I have here deliver'd it, is no other than that, which hath been faithfully transmitted unto us by the blessed *Author of Power* himself. *Per me*, *By me*, is a *sufficient Testimonial* that it is of *Divine Authority*. But then there is *Reges* and *Regnant*, yet to come. And here we are to take
notice

notice of the *Extent* and *Term* or *Duration* of this *Commission*. It is spoken to all Kings, to all *Sovereign Powers*, under what Form soever; and so it is to all *People*, in all *Places*, at all *Times*, and for ever; without any sort of *Condition*, *Limitation*, or *Restriction*, in respect of *Customs Decrees*, or any *Political Sanction*, or *Provisions*. I speak this with all Reverence imaginable to the Dignity of *human Laws*, and to the Order of *human Society*. But my Meaning is, that as *God is the Fountain*, the inexhaustible *Fountain* of *Power*; and incomprehensible in all his Attributes, beyond what the Spirit of a Man is able to conceive: So we cannot, without *Blasphemy*, so much as fancy to our selves, that *Wisdom it self* can ever mistake its Measures: Which Contemplation brings me to the Point I am now speaking of; which is, That all *human Powers* are but as Emanations out of the Bosom of God's Eternal Providence, without any other respect to Mankind, than as a Rule and Direction for them to Govern by. Not but that Men are apt, instead of carrying the *Copy* to the *Original*, to bring down the *Original* to the *Copy*. But still, *By me Kings Reign*, is a *Doctrine* not to be *questioned*; an *Authority* not to be *disputed*, and a *Foundation* never to be *undermined*.

BUT

BUT it will be said perchance, That the *Universality* of this Proposition goes too far, and that the Canon of our *Scripture* is no Rule to a *Pagan*: I answer, This is a Truth founded in reasonable *Nature*; A *Truth* that every Man finds writ in his *Heart*; and in short, a *Truth* that is calculated for all *Meridians*, for all Religions, for all Nations, *Civil* or *Barbarous*, with a particular regard to the *Comfort*, the *Peace*, and the *Well-being* of *Mankind*. There are in the World that take upon them to bound *Sovereign Powers*, by certain *State-Measures* and Models, according to popular Conceptions of their own, and to furnish plausible Arguments to the common People upon this Subject. But these are Governments of Man's making, not of God's: And a Sort of Kings, that King *Solomon* never dream'd of, in his, *Per me Reges Regnant*; *By me Kings Reign*.

You have had here the Dignity of Power secured, and the Officer commission'd; and the last Word of my Text does now hand us forward, from the *Faculty* and *Signature* of *Power*, to a Consideration of it in the *Exercise*, with a respect to the right *Use* or *Abuse* of it. I shall not need to enlarge upon it, that in all Power there is first a Regard to be had to the Character; and then again
to

to the *Use* or *Administration* of it. The first is *wholly Divine* and *Perfect*; the second liable to the *Frailties* and *Passions* of *Flesh* and *Blood*: So that as the *Divinity* of the *one* shall in no sort excuse the *personal Failings* of the *other*; Neither shall the *Sacred Image* of *God*, that is stamped upon *Sovereignty*, suffer any *Diminution* of *Reverence* for these *Mistakes*. On the other hand, it is not in the *Power* of the *Person* to *Un-king* the *Office*; and much less in the *Power* of the *People* to call *God's immediate Minister* to an *Account*: It is, *Per me Reges*; *by me Kings*: Not *per me Senatus Populusque*; *By me the Senate and the People Reign*, in an *Imperial State*. There is no room for *Intruders*, betwixt the *King of Kings* and his *Vice-gerents*. Be this spoken to the *Shame* of *Calumniators*, and to the *Confusion* of those that instead of trying the *Crooked* by the *Straight*, bring the *Straight* to the *Crooked*; and force the *Oracles* of the *Holy Scriptures* to the *Bent* of their own *carnal Lusts*, *Interests* and *Designs*. Is a *Prince Religious*, *Just*, *Gracious*, *Merciful*? Is he *Resolute* in *War*, and *Temperate* in *Peace*? Is he *Firm* to his *Honour*, to his *Word*, to his *Conscience*? Is he *Tender* of his *People* and his *Friends*, and *Placable* to his *Enemies*? Is he *all this*, and as much more

as might be added, to make up the most consummated Character of a Governor after God's own Heart? *Per me Regnat, He Reigns by me.* On the contrary, is his Government Heavy upon us by Oppression, by Injustice, by all sorts of Vexations? *Per me Regnat* still. The Good and the Bad Prince are Creatures both of the same Power, stamped with the same Impress, and as inviolably Sacred the one as the other. Happy is that People, however, whose blessed Lot it is to fall under the Influence of so Divine a Conjunction; as when the Person that Governs is previously adapted by Grace and Nature to all the ends of his Office and Employments. I cannot pass this Hint without a thankful Consideration of God's infinite Mercy and Goodness to us, in the Person of Our Dear and Dread Sovereign. It is no Flattery, but Duty, Truth and Gratitude, to own the Comforts we enjoy in the Confluence of all those Royal Endowments in the Ruler, whom God hath set over us, which may make a Prince, Great and Glorious, and a People Happy. A Blessing that hath scarce left us any Temporal Comforts further to pray for, beyond the Continuance of what by God's Mercy we at this Day enjoy. A Prince, under whose Protection

tection we are safe; in whose Clemency we are free and easy: A Prince, whose *Benignity of Nature* hath left us nothing to *fear*; and whose overflowing *Piety* and *Goodness* hath hardly left us any Place for *more* to *hope* for. It would be as endless to enumerate the Mercies, that we are *possess* of, as it would be difficult to say what we *want*. Blessed be God's holy Name, for the Share we have (all that are here present) in so inestimable a Blessing; a Blessing, that hath been snatch'd out of the very Jaws of so many several Deaths, by as many Miracles. May the same *watchful, powerful Providence*, still and for ever cover that sacred Head; And preserve Him hereafter, as hitherto, from his open and from his secret Enemies; and, in one Word, from the Raging of the Seas and from the Tumults of the People. I have done with the Division of my Text in the several Parts of it upon the Heads of *Government*: It remains only to speak a Word of the *Whole*, by way of *Innuendo* or Application, taking it all together.

PER me Reges Regnant, By me Kings Reign. These few Words, in the Context, preach this Doctrine to all *Kings* and *Governors*: *By me, it is, you Monarchs of the Earth*, saith the Almighty, *that you Reign*:

You hold your Commission at my Will and Pleasure; There is no other Power, that hath any thing to do with you. I have placed you in the Throne of my Greatness, invested you with the Robes of Dignity. I have arm'd you with the Sword of Justice, I have deposited all the Ensigns of Majesty in your Hands: Not for your selves to alienate or dispose of, but in Trust, as you shall answer it at my Tribunal. Who then shall dare to oppose You? You Reign by my Order, and who shall presume to dispute your Authority? You Reign in my Name, and who shall question your Deputation? In few Words, you Reign for me, in me, by me; stick to the Order I have given you, and execute it. I will have no Sharers in Royalty; I will suffer no Popular Competitions, whether the Prince or Subject shall be uppermost; or, which is the same thing, whether God or Man shall be Master. Do you maintain the Dignity and Prerogative of your Commission; and I will maintain the Sacredness of your Persons. Do not suffer your selves to be transported in the Contemplation of the dazzling Splendor of a Crown: But look up to the Original of all your Greatness and Glory, in whom you Live, you Move and have your Being; And by whom Kings Reign; Per me Reges Regnant,

BUT

BUT it is time now that I speak a Word to the *Subject*, upon the Point of the *Obligation* of his *Obedience*; for the *same Power* (as I have said) which *ordains Kings to Command*, *obligeth Subjects to Obey*.

The SECOND PART.

IN this Member of the Partition I shall observe the same Method of Distribution I did in the former. *Per me, &c. By me Kings Reign*. That is to say, *God makes Kings*, and commissions them to *Govern*. Do they Govern well? Thank *God*, and bless *Heaven* for it. Do they *Misgovern*? There is no affronting the *Minister*, upon any account whatsoever, without falling foul upon the *Ordinance*, and consequently breaking in upon the *Divine Authority it self*. The common Objection upon this Topick is this; *Rulers are to be a Terror to evil Doers, not to those, who do well*; and that the Almighty Wisdom never gave a Commission of *Power* to destroy the main Ends of *Government*, which consists in the *Order* and *Peace* of *human Society*. Put the Case that this Power may be sometime perverted. Is Fire and Water ever the less necessary for the Use and Comfort of *Life*, because of now and then a *Deluge* or *Conflagration*? The

Possibility of an Abuse of Power is *Incontestable*; for a Prince cannot defend or protect his People, without such a Force as may enable him to oppress them. But what need many Words? Every Man stands or falls to his own Master: He that *gives*, may *take*; he that *sets up*, may *cast down*. *By me Kings Reign*, is exclusive of *any other Commission*. It sounds as much, *as by me alone they Reign*: Which is all one with saying, therefore *To me alone shall they account for the Execution of their Trust*.

IT would be well, if all the Despisers of Dignities, and the Murmurers against the ordinary Courses of God's Providence in the Government of the World, would thoroughly weigh and consider the Force, the Intent and Authority of this same, *Per me*, in my Text, before they enter into censorious Expostulations with God himself, about the Prerogative of his Ordinance of *Power*; or with God's Ministers, about certain *imaginary Conditions*, which they fancy to be implied or included in their original Grant. If they would but give themselves time for one sober Thought upon this matter, it is impossible but they must be convinced of the Vanity and Folly of all those *Popular Schemes* and *Systems* of Power, which *Ambition* and
Carnal

Carnal Policy have fashion'd to themselves. Are they afraid of *Tyranny*, and not of *Anarchy*? The *one*, at the worst, is only *Personal, Temporary, Local*; the *other* extends to *all Men*, to *all Times*, to *all Purposes*, to *all Places*, and Embroils *human Society* in a *Civil War* over the Face of the whole Earth. But what is it at last that the Troublers of *Publick Order* contend for? Would they be *Uppermost*? There is no *Uppermost* upon a *Level*; and that's the very Point before us. As for *Liberty* and *Property*, there's no such thing, where all is *Common*. Our Reason tells us so, and upon woful *Experience* we have found it so. There is no thought of removing the Bounds that God hath set us: No place for *Reforming* or *Refining* upon the Regulations of *Providence*; *Government* and *Governors* are *Sacred* and *Inseparable*: God hath join'd them, and Man is not to divide them. It hath a more pardonable Appearance, I must confess, to wage War with *Man*, than with *God*. But what is the Difference betwixt saying to the Almighty, We will have none of *your Governors*; and we will have none of *your Government*. *Non te abjecerunt, sed me*, says God to *Samuel*, *They have not cast you off, but, in you, Me* they have rejected. For it is not only *Per me, By me, But Pro*
me,

me, For me, that Kings Govern: That is to say, It is in God's stead, as well as by his Divine Commission that they Reign; they are cover'd over with the Rays of his Glory, and are the Instruments of his Wisdom, as well as the Creatures of his Power.

*PER me (By me) that Kings Reign, is a Word of Comfort to the Obedient, seeing they have the Creator of Heaven and Earth for their Protector: And it is a Word of Terror, on the other Hand, to the Stubborn or Rebellious; when they consider that they fight against God, and have the Lord of Hosts for their Avenger. And there is no place neither for doubting whether it be *Per me*, or not; for *Truth it self* hath made *Proclamation* of it, in the very Syllables of my Text. There seems to be a certain kind of *Rhetorical Dignity* in the very *marshalling* of the *Words*; a particular *Emphasis* in this same *Per me*, that puts a little stop to a Man's Thought, as if it were to bespeak a Reverence for that which follows: The very *Stile* imports a Declaration, with a *Be it known to Men and Angels, to Heaven and Earth, that By me Kings Reign.* So that as the Obedient are sure of *God's Favour and Indulgence*, so the Almighty takes to *Himself* all the *Indignities*, that are offer'd to *Majesty*. They
that*

that make no Conscience of laying violent Hands upon the *Thrones* or the *Persons of Kings*, would not spare the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, if they could *reach* him. Whosoever strikes at the Divine *Order* of the World, strikes at the Power and Wisdom that created it. Take away that *Order*, and what's the remaining Mass without it, more than the *Chymists Caput mortuum*, that serves for no Use or Purpose?

I cannot but take notice here, over and above, of the indubitable *Truth* and *Authority* of the *Affertion*; that, *By me Kings Reign*, carries a much greater Weight and Force with it, than, *Kings Reign by Me*. The latter imports only a bare Answer to a plain Question; As if a Body should say, *By whom do Kings Reign?* *By me*, says my Text. The other, with a wonderful Energy, determines the Question by *Anticipation*. He goes too far that doubts. The whole *Scheme of Power* is accurately delineated and in the uttermost Extent of it, as fully comprehended in these four Words: The very *Stamp* consecrates the *Matter*; and challenges a *Resignation*, even before and without knowing what our Obedience is to be exercised upon. For all the measures we have of Good or Evil, are the Proportions our
Thoughts

Thoughts, Words and Actions hold to the holy Will and Pleasure of our Heavenly Father. It is *Per me*, that teacheth the *People* their Duty, sets them right, and keeps them right: It prevents Mistakes, clears all Cavils, and answers all pious Ends: And, in all cases of Difficulty, Claim or Dispute, whither should we fly, but to the *Original* of *Power*, with our last *Appeals*? It is *Per me*, infine, and only *Per me*, that decides all Controversy.

WE are now come in Course to the two remaining Parts of my Text, *Reges* and *Regnant*, *Kings* and *Reign*. These Words give the People to understand, that their Governors are God's Ministers, and so there is no meddling with them; and, as the *Prerogatives* of *Government* are *God's Powers*, so there is no controlling them.

IT would be hard, after all this yet, if the Opposers of *Loyalty* and *Royal Prebeminences*, should not find something at last to say for themselves in *Excuse*, at least, if not in *Defence* of their Departure from the Doctrine of the Revealed Will of God, as we read it both in his *Holy Word*, and in the common Principles of *Reason* and *Nature*. It is their way to hold their Disciples in Hand, that the *Per me* here in the Text, doth not

so much import an *authoritative Institution*, as a *Permission* of Government; as if Order were the Work of *Passion*, *Interest* or *Chance*; and an Effect rather of *Human Necessity*, than of *Divine Appointment*. The very *Fancy* of such a *Permission*, is little less than *Blasphemy*: For it lays the Foundation of all *Policy*, in *Blood* and *Confusion*; so that out of *War*, and from plain *Cutting of Throats* comes forth the *Whimsy* of their Distinction of a *Divine Permission*.

THERE are others again, that will allow *Kings* to Govern as *God's Ministers*; but for the behoof of the *People*, infer a Forfeiture of their *Right to Govern*, from a Violation of their *Commission*. These People are not aware, that the *Character* does not depend upon the *Administration*: For whatever the *Man* be, the *King* is *God's Ruler* still, and the *People* are still the *King's Subjects*. The *Administration*, I say, does not dissolve the *Relation*. To sum up all in a few Words; *Kings* are *God's Deputies*, and the *Powers* of their *Commission* are of no less *Authority* than the *Character* of their *Creation*. It is *God* that is the Author of both; and the *Duty* of our *Allegiance* is of the same *Extraction* with the *Function* of the *Government*. What is *Reigning*, without *Subjection*? What

is the *Dignity of Power*, without the *Obligation of Submission or Obedience*? Or what is *Government* itself, but such a *Chain of Connection*, as if but one *Link* of it be taken out, the whole *Frame* would be in danger to fall to *Pieces*? To pass now from the *Doctrine* to the *Application*. How vain, how foolish, and how impious is it for *Men* to contend with an invincible, and irresistible *Power*, and to oppose *false Glosses and Reasonings*, to the undeniable *Voice of Truth*? In a Word, the *Foundations of Power* are laid in the *Decrees of God*, and there is no undermining of them. *By me Kings Reign*, denounces a thousand *Woes* to the *Undutiful and Seditious*. Who shall dare to say they shall not *Reign*, when God says they shall? And especially upon the *Terms of a, Qui resistunt, sibi ipsi condemnationem ferent.*

THIS minds me of the *Celebrity* of this Day; a Day for *Sackcloth and Ashes*: A Day of *Blackness and Horror*: A Day not to be mentioned, not to be thought of, but with *weeping Eyes*, and *bleeding Hearts*: A Day of *Sin*, and a Day of *Judgment*, meeting in the same *Act*, as in a kind of deplorable *Contention*, which of the two should exceed the other. No *Age*, no *Story* can match either the *Transcendent Degree*, or the

the *Daring Pomp* and *Ostentation* of this Wickedness. In short, behold a Great, a Glorious, and a Gracious Prince, exposed upon a Stage as a *Criminal* of State: *Arraigned, Tried* and *Sentenced* as a *Traitor* to his own Subjects; and his Head severed from his *Body* by the *Common Ax*, under a Form of *Justice*. You have here before you the Fruit of a *Rebellion*, that perfected the Ruin of *Three Kingdoms* in the *Murder* of their *Sovereign*. The Common-People felt on't too; and by contending for an *unnatural Freedom*, became the most wretched and contemptible of *Slaves*. I shall not need to run into History, and rifle the *Journals* of those Days, for Instances of merciless, and of inexorable Cruelties. The Havock that was made upon the *Subjects Liberties* and *Properties*; the *Depredations* upon the Revenues of the *Crowns*; the *Oppressions* of *Widows* and *Orphans*; the *Sacrilegious Abuse* of *Holy Places*, and *Holy things*; the concurring Evidences of the *numerous Train* of crying Sins, which were cast in, to enflame the Reckoning. This was our miserable Condition. *This*, and as much *worse*, as it is possible for any Man to imagine. And how could it well be otherwise, so long as the Laws were either silenced, or turned like Guns against their Master:

And all Controversies left to the Decision of the Sword.

WHAT have I to do now, beloved Christians, but to beseech you to ponder well these things, and by a close and affectionate Application of matters, to see what Good may be drawn out of Evil. Here was *Resistance* with a *Vengeance*. A *Resistance* attended with all *sorts of Sins*, to draw on all *sorts of Calamities*: And the *Punishment* still treading upon the heels of the *Wickedness*. I would beg of you, as you love God and your Sovereign, your Souls, Bodies, Liberties and Estates; as you tender your Religion, your Country, Peace of Conscience, and a good Name; do but look back now into the leading Causes to these dismal Effects. Consider the reasonable *Tendency* and *Operation* of them; and how naturally one thing passes into another through the whole Series of this History, from first to last. You will find upon the Scrutiny, that this Bloody *Rebellion* began in *Thought*, *Thoughts* broke out into *hard Words*, and those *Words* were follow'd with *Blows*.

THEY began first with *Jealousies*, *Fears*, *Misunderstandings*, *Misinformations*, *invidious Reflections*, *false Reports*, *false Appearances* of things; and from thence, sprung *impotent Passions*, *provoking Language*, *bold*
and

and *intemperate Words, audacious Prints and Discourses* in Diminution of the *Royal Dignity, Character and Administration*, for the making of the *Prince cheap and contemptible*. And at the same time, *clamorous Remonstrances and Complaints* were blown about to render him as *odious* to the Common-People; whilst the Multitude in the mean while were misled by *false Doctrines* about the *Original and Sacredness of Power*, by *false Notions of qualifying Conditions*, *Cases of Government mistated, false Descants upon the Laws*; and the *Liberties of the Subject* set above the *Prerogative of the Prince*. These were the intoxicating Amusements, that poison'd the Understandings of the Ignorant; this was that Licence that put things to Extremities; and, without Consideration either of Heaven or Hell, hurried us into those barbarous Confusions, that brought *Charles the First of happy Memory* to the Scaffold. This was the Root of all our Woes; and from thence we may gather the necessity of setting a Guard upon our *Actions*, our *Lips* and our very *Thoughts*. Upon our *Thoughts*, not only by the Exclusion of *rash Censures*, but with a regard to the *Reverence of Imperial Edicts and Commands*. And so upon our *Words*; for the *Reviling of a Prince*, is a foul step towards the *Beheading*

ing of him. The wounding of him in his *Honour*, is only a slyer way of striking him to the *Heart*. But pray take notice, I do not speak of *Words* only, of *Outrage* and *Disrespect*; for the *Sins of Omission* are *Sins of Commission*, in *this* Case: The Want of *Love* and *Affection* is a grand Failure in *Duty*. Neuters are lost to the Ends and Service of *Government*; and *Men grow cold by Example*. The Ways of *Flattery* and *Reproach* are in some sort somewhat akin. That is the most dangerous *Flattery* that is cover'd under an artificial Appearance of *Reproof*; and that the most Popular and *Operative Calumny*, that is couch'd under the Countenance of *Good-Faith*, *Compassion* and *Respect*; with the Sting of a *But* in the Tail of it. We are not only to *Obey Kings*, but to *Please* them also, in all things not repugnant to the Will and Commands of a just and a gracious God. Nay we do but discharge our Souls towards God himself in so doing. Let me add, that *Obedience* at last is not so much the *Ornament* of a Christian, as a peremptory *Obligation* upon him; a *Duty* that he is bound to, upon a *Penalty*. But to *perfect* the *Character*, there must be certain *Free-will Offerings* over and above: There must be a *Study to please*; and *Industry* to find out what
will

will please ; a Joy in the *Discovery* of it, and *Cheerfulness* in the *Performance*. Lord, cries out a *Pagan* upon this Topick, *If I had known thy Will, my Obedience should have prevented thy Command*. Shall the *Feet* presume to direct the *Head*? Or the *animal Nature* take upon it self to give *Laws* to the *Reasonable*? Such as the *Soul* is to the *Body*, such is the *Ruler* to those, that God's *Wisdom* hath placed in a *State of Subjection*. 'Tis the *Office* of the *One* to *Direct*, and of the *Other* to *Excuse*: Without the *indisputable Authority* of the *One*, the *Obedience* of the *Other*, is but *Precarious*; and it is left at the *Choice* of the *Multitude*, whether they shall think fit to be *Above*, or *Below*; what *Government* to resolve upon, or whether there shall be any *Government* or no. My *Words* are too scant for my *Affection*, and my *Time* for my *Matter*. But before I conclude, I beseech you turn your *Eyes* yet once back again upon the *Judical Tragedy*, that hath occasion'd this *Anniversary*. Be not imposed upon hereafter by *false Maxims* and *Rumors*; let us be *Wise*, though at the *Cost*, upon miserable *Experiment*, of *Royal Blood*, and *Three desolated Kingdoms*. Beware of *Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing*. May
God

God open your Eyes, that you may see and discern the Blessings which you do this Day enjoy ; and grant that the Calamities of the last Age may be documental to the present, and those Ages that are yet to come. In a Word, I shall commend to every one this General Rule to walk by: Where-ever you find *private Medlers in Politicks*, commenting upon the King's *Prerogatives*, or *haranguing* to the *People*, upon the Subject of *Male-Administration* ; know it to be a *seditious Post*, and *Practise*; that they have taken up, for the *undermining* of the *Crown*, and that there is most certainly a Snake under that *Leaf*. These are not *Liberties* to be either *given* or *taken* ; for when Men are once possess'd with cross Principles, so as to set up *Conscience* against *Duty*, to make *God* and the *King*, *Plantiff* and *Defendant* ; the *honestest* the Men are, the more *desperate* is the *Conspiracy*.

I am not unmindful that I have pass'd my measures ; but it is the Goodness of God's Providence many times to turn *Mourning* into *Rejoycing* ; and to improve our deepest *Humiliations* into an occasion of *Thanksgiving*. We have proceeded thus far in a dutiful, and a sorrowful Reflection upon the most execrable

execrable Murder of one of the best of Princes; whose Memory ought to be for ever tender and dear to us, not only for the sake of his *Royal Blood, Function* and *Qualities*; but as he was moreover the *Instrument of Divine Providence*, in transmitting unto us the Blessings, (in Compensation of so inestimable a Loss) which through God's Mercy we at this Day enjoy, in the *Life, Virtues, and Government* of our most *Gracious Sovereign, whom God long preserve*. A Prince, in short, of *Piety, Tenderness, and Justice*, to the perfect *Wish* of all *Good Men*, and to the uttermost *Possibility* of *Flesh and Blood*. May the Spirit of Grace and Wisdom rest upon his Sacred Head. May his Life be long, and his Reign happy; happy in Himself, in His *Illustrious Consort*, and in a *never-failing Succession*, to inherit the *Virtues* as well as the *Crown* of their *Royal Progenitors*. And it is, finally, our Fault, beloved Christians, if we do not contribute all that is possible, by a *cheerful* and an *indisputable Resignation* and *Obedience*, to the further Comfort and Satisfaction of a Prince, whom God, in a manner, miraculously hath placed over us. For a Conclusion, I wish the Words of my Text, *Per*

S E R M O N VIII.

me Reges Regnant, By me Kings Reign, which have been so often in my Mouth, were deeply writ in your Hearts; that so having discharged our Duty in this Life towards God, and our King, we may come all in the next to Reign for ever, with the King of Kings; which God of his infinite Goodness grant us. *In Nomine Patris, &c.*



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

QUEEN-DOWAGER,

In Her MAJESTY's Chapel at

SOMERSET-HOUSE, on QUINQUAGESIMA Sunday, February 6, 1686-7.

Being also the ANNIVERSARY-DAY of
His late MAJESTY King CHARLES the II.
of Blessed MEMORY.

By THOMAS CODRINGTON,
Preacher in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

As Publish'd by Her MAJESTY's Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

SEERMON

QUEEN-DOWAGER

WILLIAM D. THOMAS, JR. QUEEN-DOWAGER

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

CHICAGO, ILL. U.S.A.

1954

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS



S E R M O N IX.

Preach'd before the

QUEEN-DOWAGER,

O N

Quinquagesima SUNDAY, *February 6, 1686-7.*

Being also the

ANNIVERSARY of His late MAJESTY.

Cæcus quidam sedebat secus viam mendicans; ---- Et clamavit, dicens; Jesu Fili David, miserere mei!

A certain blind man sat by the way side begging; ---- And he called out, saying; Jesus Son of David, have Mercy on me!

Words taken out of the xviii. Chapter of St. Luke 35 and 38 Verses, and read in the Gospel of this present Sunday in Quinquagesima.



HIS Morning's Gospel (Sacred Majesty) were I Master of my own Choice, would lead me readily to a Subject, not unwelcome to your Royal Ears, offer'd to me upon the Occasion of the

Anniversary Remembrance of a *Doleful*, and yet a *Happy* Day; *Doleful* for the Departure of Our late *Sovereign* from this Life, yet *Happy* for the manner of his Preparation for it. If we look upon his Life, then turn our Thoughts upon the manner of his Death; we shall easily discover, both from the one and the other, how particularly my present Text belong'd to him: *A certain blind man begg'd, and he called on Jesus to have mercy on him.* We may fitly parallel the *Blindness* of our Beggar in the *Gospel*, with the *Darkness* which obscured for a time his Royal Sight; and the *Cries* of that same Beggar, with the *Penitential Tears*, which bath'd his Death-Bed, and those *ferocious Ejaculations*, which reach'd so effectually the *Ears* of Christ, that now with joy before his *Altars*, we celebrate the *Anniversary* Remembrance of that miraculous Effect of his infinite Mercy and Goodness. How gladly should I enlarge myself upon this Theme, and lose myself in the Ocean of a long Discourse; were I not check'd in my Forwardness by a Compliance I owe to the Ceremonies of the Church, which admits not of Funeral Rights and Solemnities on Days (like this) particularly devoted to her Service. I must therefore forcibly let this Subject fall, and take up

up another (though none so proper) to entertain Your Royal Prefence with, And thus I begin.

THE Connexion of those Sacred and Divinely inspired Writings the Holy *Gospel*, (although peradventure it appears not so clearly in the Letter) yet may easily be traced by the diligent Observer in the Mystery. This may particularly be remark'd in our present *Gospel*; the former Part whereof (though with little Appearance of Connexion in the Letter) leads us mysteriously to a Knowledge of those Truths, which may be gather'd from the Moral of the latter; that Part I mean, which I have assum'd for my Text. At the opening of this *Gospel*, our Saviour is said to have called aside his twelve Disciples, and to have made to them, a-part from the rest, a pathetick Discourse upon his approaching Passion; but the *Evangelist*, who mentioneth this, saith also of those same *Disciples*, That they understood him not; *Et ipsi nihil horum intellexerunt*: And they understood not a Word of all this.

OUR Holy Mother the *Catholick Church*, following the Conduct of her great Master, reads to us *Christians* her Disciples the same Discourse, to prepare us against this Holy
Time

'Time of *Lent* for a fruitful Communication of his Sufferings. But truly this dismal Lecture of the Passion of Christ is read to us at a Season, in which the Hearts of some loose Livers are so little prepared to receive the intended Advantages thereby: (This being the Merry time of *Shrovetide*, a Season dedicated to Sports and Riots; so to forestall the rugged Time of *Penance* with Excesses too too Criminal, and Pastimes at the best but dangerous enough) Their Hearts, I say, at this loose Season are generally so little prepared for a Lesson of Suffering and Mortification; (as that is of the Passion of *Jesus Christ*) that of too too many bearing the Name of *Christians*, with much more Reason may be verify'd, what was also said of his Disciples, *Ipsi nihil horum intellexerunt*; they did not understand a Word of all this; that is, of all those weighty Maxims of our Religion, which this Morning's *Gospel* did open to them.

THIS argues a strange Blindness in the Hearts of Sinners: For the Cure of which, as this mention'd Passage hath led me to the Choice of my present Text, so I shall endeavour to draw from it those Instructions, which the Moral of it may supply me with, both for a right Knowledge of this Spiritual Malady, and of the proper Means to cure

it by. Following therefore the Method of my Text, I shall consider in my *First Part*, The Blindness of Sinners, as figur'd to us in the Blindness of that poor Beggar. *Cæcus quidam sedebat secus viam mendicans.*

IN my *Second*. The Means which Sinners are to use, like that same Beggar, for the Recovery of their Sight. *Et clamavit dicens, Jesu Fili David, miserere mei!*

THESE are the Considerations I shall insist upon; having first implored the Divine Assistance to favour us with a Ray of Heavenly Light, to dispose our Understandings for the Reception of these Truths; by the Intercession of the Blessed Mother of God in the Angelical Salutation, AVE MARIA, &c.

FIRST PART.

CÆCUS quidam sedebat secus viam mendicans; *A certain blind man sat by the way side begging.* The Blindness, *Christians*, of this poor Beggar, represents to us (according to the common Gloss of Holy Fathers) the Spiritual Blindness occasion'd in the Soul by Mortal Sin. *Ambulabunt ut cæci, quia Domino peccaverunt*, saith the Prophet *Sophonias*; *They shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned to the Lord:* Soph. 1. 17. 2. 21. And the Book of *Wisdom*, *Excæcavit illos Malitia eorum; The Malice of Sinners hath made*

made them blind. This Spiritual Blindness then is the Effect of Sin, as it is properly its Punishment too; it being the want of a right Understanding on the part of a Sinner, to consider throughly the deplorable Condition he is in. *Peccavi* (saith the Sinner) & *quid mihi accidit triste?* I have sinned, and what hath happened to me amiss? I Eat, I Drink, I Sleep as I did before; my Meats are as Relishing to my Pallate; and my Slumbers on my Downy-Pillow as undisturb'd. I enjoy a perfect Health, and solace my self with the Satisfactions of a voluptuous Life. *Quid mihi accidit triste? What hath happened to me amiss?* What hath happened to Thee amiss? Poor Wretch! Didst thou but rightly understand the Damages (perhaps irreparable) which thou suffer'st by Mortal Sin, thou soon wouldst change thy Note; and bathe thy self in Tears, at the Sight of thy Unhappiness, who now art drown'd in Jollities, because thou seest it not.

THIS Blindness therefore being the Effect of Sin: The chief Causes of it are as many, as there are in number Capital Vices; which, like fruitful Mothers, give a Birth and Beginning to all the rest. Let us then run over in our Thoughts the different Natures and Properties of those Radical Sins; we shall easily discover, in discoursing on their Effects,

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how every single *Species* of that number brings with it its respective Blindness to the Soul. *First* then, of *Pride* this Truth is manifest; that Sin consisting properly in an inordinate Desire of some Excellency deserving the Honour and Esteem of others; *Appetitus inordinatus excellentiæ, cui debetur honor & reverentia*, saith St. Thomas: Hence 'tis that the proud and haughty Man either arrogates to himself what he deserves not; or bears himself confidently above others, as justly deserving that Tribute of Honour, which he ambitiously covets to be paid to himself alone. And these are equally the Effects of Blindness; for were not the Eye of his Understanding extremely defective, he would both discover his own Unworthiness, and at the same time the real Merits also of his Neighbour.

COVETOUSNESS also blinds the Possessors of Wealth; according to that of *Moses* in *Deuteronomy*, *Munera excæcant oculos Judicum; Bribes do hoodwink the Eyes of Judges.* *Gluttony* and *Luxury* have their Parts also in the spiritual Darkness of the Soul. *Drunkenness* (saith St. Basil) is the very *Origine of all Impiety; the Occasion of forsaking God; it being an obscuring of the Intellectual Faculty, by the means of which we arrive to the Knowledge of him.* Blind-

Deut. 16.
19.

Isa. c. 5.
v. 22.

ness also was the Punishment of the *luxurious Sodomites*; a Figure of that Interior Blindness, which struck their Souls; *Percusserunt eos cæcitate*. And 'tis observable in the Parable of the Beggar and *Dives*. (An Example both of *Gluttony* and *Lust*) *That, Elevans oculos suos in tormentis vidit Lazarum*; *Lifting up his Eyes, whilst he was in Torments, he saw poor Lazarus*: And then indeed he knew him, whom, whilst he lived in Pleasures, he saw not; such is the Darkness the Souls of *voluptuous Livers* are buried in; *in Tormentis vidit Lazarum*. Anger obscures the Eye of the Intellect, falling down upon it like a fiery Cloud, and interposing itself between the *Sun* of Truth and it; *Super cecidit ignis, & non viderunt solem*. And how many in their Passion, have fallen foully upon their dearest Friends; who, when their Eyes are open'd to the Rays of Reason, are ready to expiate so horrid an Ingratitude, with the very Sacrifice of their own Blood! *Envy* also blinds our Sight, that we cannot distinguish rightly the true Object of our Sadness, whilst we are dejected at another's Good, *Invidia* (saith the mention'd *St. Thomas*) *est tristitia de alterius bono*. But Sloth, above all the rest of her vicious Company, declares herself the most malicious in inflicting this wretched

Punishment

Punishment on the Souls of Sinners. For whence proceeds this Coldness in the Spirit of *Christianity*? Whence this Drowsiness in the Service of God Almighty? This Neglect in complying with the Obligations of our Religion? But from a *slothful* Ignorance, and Unacquaintance with them. We understand not the Ties of our *Christian Duty*; but the Fault is fix'd at our Doors, that we put not our selves in the occasions of being acquainted with them. We are destitute of those comfortable Lights, that quicken Devotion, because we are easily tired with the Practice of it; we receive not the promised Helps of Grace in our Temptations, because we endure not long and perseverant Prayer: That properly may be verify'd the Saying of *St. Peter*, in regard of such; *Cæci sunt, & manu tentantes: They are blind indeed, like those who search about them with their Hands*; As conscious to themselves sufficiently of their own Unhappiness, though ignorant of the true Occasion why they suffer it.

*2 Peter 1.
9.*

THESE are the different Causes of the Blindness of a Soul in Sin. Now if we will consider this *intellectual Defect* in its own Nature, we shall find it distinguish'd into two Kinds; into the Blindness of such as see not with their *Eyes shut* (and that is no.

wonder) and the Blindness of such, as see not with their *Eyes open*, which certainly is the strangest Blindness of all. *Apertis Oculis nihil videbat*, saith the Scripture of the *Persecutor Saul*, when he was struck from Heaven with a sudden Privation of Sight: And in this he was the Figure of those poor

Act: 9. 8. Wretches, who have indeed their *Eyes open*, but see nothing; *Apertis oculis nihil vident*. Now if you ask me, who those blind Men are with their *Eyes open*; with Sorrow I must answer you, They are *Christians*; The *Gentile*, *Jew*, or what other *Misbeliever* there is, are all *blind*, *Having* (saith the *Apostle*) their Intellect obscured and sealed up in Darkness of Infidelity. They are blind indeed, and blindly follow the Passions of this World; because the Eye of their Understanding is not open by the Light of *Faith* to behold the Advantages promised to us *Christians* in the World to come. This is the Misery of poor *Infidels* and *Misbelievers*, whom the Gospel hath not illuminated with the Rays of Truth. And these are properly those blind Men, who see not indeed, because their *Eyes* are *shut*. But we *Christians*, who have the Eye of our Understanding clear and open by the Light of *Faith*; we, who are assur'd that there is a God, a Heaven, a Hell, Eternity, a Punishment

nishment for Sin in the next Life, and a Reward for Virtue: We, I say, whose Eyesight *Faith* hath clear'd to behold all this; and yet to live, as if we saw it not! as if these Truths were so many Raveries of a Man in a Dream! What a dismal Blindness is this with the *Eyes open!* to believe like *Christians*, and yet to live like *Pagans!* *Christianè credere, gentiliter viventes!* saith *Petrus Damianus* upon the like occasion.

THAT the *Pagan* gives up the Bridle to Concupiscence, his Excuse is tolerable; because he knows no better: But intolerable in a *Christian*, who hath learn'd the Lesson of the *Apostle*; *That Livers according to the Flesh shall die: Si secundùm carnem vixeritis, moriemini.* Rom. 8. 13. That the *Jew* hath Crucified his own Redeemer, this he hath to say, that he knew him not; but what can the sinful *Christian* reply, who firmly believing in him as truly such, yet Crucifies him again by every Mortal Sin: *Rursum crucifigentes sibimet ipsis Filium Dei, & ostentui habentes,* saith *St. Paul* of Sinners: *Crucifiging again to themselves the Son of God, and exposing him to shame and scorn!* Heb. 6. 6. That the *Misbeliever* neglects the Means our Saviour hath left us in his Church for our Salvation, it is, because he understands not the Value of them: But how unpardonable is it in the *Christian*
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and *Catholick*; who believing the Sacraments to derive their Virtue from the Merits and Sufferings of a dying God, yet prophanes them so easily by so many imperfect Confessions and unworthy Communions! Oh sinful *Christians*! Your Eyes then are open'd, but to render you more admired, and less compassionate for your Blindness. Your Eyes are open'd by Faith to behold the Horror of a gaping Hell for Sinners: And yet you behold not the imminent Danger you yourselves are in, in following them. Your Eyes are open'd to discover the dreadful Consequences of Mortal Sin: And yet you discover not the desperate Risk you every Moment expose your selves unto, continuing in it. Your Eyes are open'd to consider speculatively, that the Life of a *Christian* is a Life of *Penance*: And yet particularly you consider not how little your easy and voluptuous way of living accords with it. Are not we then properly, we sinful *Christians*, those Unhappy ones, in whom is discover'd that extravagant sort of Blindness; *That their Eyes indeed are open, but they see nothing; Apertis oculis nihil vident?*

BUT as those Wretches are miserable indeed, whose Eyes are either quite sealed up, through the want of *Faith*; (such are *Infidels* and *Misbelievers*;) or open'd by *Faith*,
but

but to *see nothing* ; (Such are *believing Christians*, yet insensible of their Misery :) so again thrice happy and fortunate are those Sinners, whose Eyes indeed are open'd, to *see* : Such are mercifully illuminated with the Rays of Divine Grace, to look in time with an Eye of true Repentance into the sorrowful Condition of their sinful Lives. The Passage in *Genesis* of *Adam's* Prevarication (take it according to the Mystery) seems to acquaint us with this Truth. For properly may be said of every repenting Sinner, what *Moses* said of our first Parents upon their Fall ; *Aperti sunt oculi amborum ; The Eyes* Gen. 3. 7. *of both were open'd, and something then they saw.* Oh how better was their Condition than of those blind Wretches who see nothing ! But let us enquire into the same Text, what it was poor *Eve* and *Adam* then discover'd, when their Eyes were open'd ; *They discover'd that they were Naked ; Cognoverunt se esse nudos.*

THIS *Nakedness* of our first Parents, represents to us the Nakedness of a Soul despoil'd of Grace. And such is the Misfortune of every Sinner, who travelling, like the *Pilgrim* from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, through the troubled and dangerous Ways of Sin, falls into the Hands of *Thieves*, the Devils, who rifle him of this sacred Ornament of his Soul.

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THIS dangerous Way was that poor *David* walk'd in, when he fell into his Sin; and the barbarous Usage of the *Thieves* infesting it (I mean the Devils) is passionately express'd by him, who had experienced the sad Effects of their Fury and Rage. *Ad nihilum redactus sum* (cried poor *David*, when he was robb'd of Grace) *Ad nihilum redactus sum*; O my God! I am brought to nothing! I am plunder'd! I am bankrupt, I am robb'd of Grace, the precious Covering of my Soul, and nothing now remains to me but my own Nakedness: Where is now the sweet Harmony of my Soul: The ready Obedience of my inferior Powers to their Superior; of my Passions to the Rule of Reason? Now nothing but Disorder and Rebellion reigns within me. Where's the Collection of all my good Works, my meritorious Actions? All become the Spoils of Sin! All lost! In the State I am at present, lost! Oh my Treasure of Grace! Oh my Inheritance to Glory! *Ad nihilum redactus sum*: I am rifled, I am ruin'd, I am reduced to nothing. *Et nescivi*; and that which proved the most fatal Loss of all, I lost the very *Sense* of my Misfortunes; *Ad nihilum redactus sum, & nescivi*. Thus complain'd *David* then a Sinner, when his Eyes were open'd to behold his Misery.

THIS same Road also did *Adam* take before him, and lighted into the Hands of the same *Robbers* upon the Way, the Devils, as he *descended* from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*; from the State of Innocence to the State of Sin. And after him all we Sinners march on blindly in the same Track, and light into the same Disasters upon the Way. For (as *St. Austin* makes the Reflection) *Omnes nos Adam sumus*; We are all figured in this *Adam*; *We are all Adams too*. We ought then to turn our Thoughts upon our selves, and consider, that it is not only his Misfortune, which deserves our Tears, but much more our own; so that our *First Adam* may properly speak to us in the Phrase of our *Second, Jesus Christ*: *Nolite flere super me, sed super vosmetipsos flete*; *Shed not, my Children, your Tears on me, but on your selves*. And certainly, *Christians*, there is just reason so to do, if we consider seriously how *Adam's* Misery accords with ours; not only in what we suffer by Original Sin, but also in what we suffer by our Actual, those Sins, which after Baptism we our selves commit; for in these, as well as that, *Omnes nos Adam sumus*; *We are all Adams too*; That is, we all, like *Adam*, are rifled of our Robe of Grace and Justice; although we are not all, like *Adam*, fortunate in dis-

*Aug. in
Psal. 125.*

*Luke 23.
28.*

covering our own Nakedness; Cognoverunt se esse nudos.

THIS happy *Discovery* of our own *Nakedness* being the first Disposition to a true Conversion, We ought (as we are Sinners) to make it our first Request to God Almighty in the Words of our *Beggar* in the Gospel, *Domine, ut videam; Lord, that I may see.* Our Saviour ask'd him what he desired of him; he humbly answer'd, it was, *To see; Domine, ut videam.* Let us then, dear Sinners, with this good Beggar, demand of God the Recovery of our Sight; that so we may arrive to a right Understanding of our *Nakedness* and Misery; *Domine, ut videam! Lord, that I may see,* how poor and naked a Wretch I am without thy Grace, and what a Treasure I have lost, in losing Thee! Cure then my Heart of its Insensibility, and suffer me no longer to remain cold and indifferent, sinning on unconcernedly without the least Remorse of Conscience; or without the least reflective Thought of what I have done: *Quid feci? Domine, ut videam! Lord, that I may see,* How bountiful thou hast been to me in the Offers of thy Grace: And how ungrateful I have been in neglecting or abusing them! How often thou hast called upon me, and I have answer'd not! How easily I follow

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low the Maxims of the World, rather than those of thy School: The base Sentiments of Flesh and Blood, rather than the Lessons of thy *Gospel! Domine, ut videam! Lord, that I may see* the manifold Malice of my SIN! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Law-giver*, prevaricating against thy Divine Commands! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Lord*, refusing Obedience to thy Sovereign Will! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Last End*, neglecting the Beatitude thou hast courteously promised me! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Creator*, abusing the bountiful Effects of thy Creation to affront the Bestower of them; my Memory, my Understanding, and my Free-will! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Redeemer*, setting no Value upon the inestimable Worth of thy dearest Blood, and bitter Death thou hast endured for me! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Judge*, expressing my self so little concern'd at the future Terrors of thy Tribunal! At the Severity of thy final Sentence, and the dreadful Effects thereof! How much I have despised thee in quality of my *Friend*, setting little by thy Grace, by which I correspond with that Title! And finally, how much I have despised thee in

quality of my *Father*, forfeiting my Inheritance to thy Kingdom, and the unparallel'd Dignity of being called thy *Son*. All this I did, when I offended thee; and yet without the least Concern for what I had done: *Quid feci?* But now unseal the Eyes of my senseless Heart, and I will publish the Wonders of thy Mercy! *Revela oculos meos, & enarrabo mirabilia!*

THIS Lesson, *Christians*, may thoroughly acquaint us, of what Instruction the Passage of our *Beggar* in the *Gospel* is to us; what a Truth is clear'd to us by his *Blindness*, and how his *Wants* may teach us how to Pray. What ought to be the Subject of a Sinner's Supplications, he hath already shew'd us in what he ask'd for, *Lord that I may see!* Now, as he hath taught us, what we are to Pray for; so he also teacheth us how we are to Pray. This shall be clear'd to you in my *Second Part*; favour me accordingly with your Attention.

SECOND PART.

ET clamavit, dicens; Jesu Fili David, miserere mei! *And he called out, saying; Jesus Son of David, have mercy on me!* I have represented to you a *blind Man* begging for the Recovery of his Sight; now I shall acquaint you with the efficacious Means, of which

which he served himself in his Address, that so his humble Suit might reach our Saviour's Ear, and be consider'd by him as he pass'd by. *Clamavit*, saith the *Gospel*, *He cry'd out*; He called on our Saviour with a loud Voice. Now what's the *Christian* meaning of calling on God Almighty with a loud Voice? It is to accompany our Prayer with our Works; that so our Actions, as well as Words, may speak the real Sentiments of our Hearts; and our Lives remain not Mute and Dumb, whilst our Tongues do cry for Mercy: *Ne forte simus strepentes vocibus & muti moribus*; saith *St. Austin*, *Sermon xviii. de verbis Domini*. Who is then this Beggar (continues the holy Doctor in the same place; whose Thoughts I shall follow in the Sequel of this Discourse) Who is then this Beggar, that calls on *Christ* with a loud Voice, to be cured of his Interior Blindness? *Quis est, qui clamat ad Christum, ut pellatur interior cæcitas, transeunte Christo?* He answereth himself, *Clamat ad Christum, qui spernit sæculi voluptates*; *Clamat ad Christum, qui dispergit, & dat pauperibus*; *Clamat ad Christum, qui dicit non linguâ sed vitâ, mihi mundus crucifixus est, & ego mundo*. That Sinner truly calls aloud on *Christ*, who retaineth no longer an Affection for the World; that Sinner truly

truly calleth aloud on Christ, who distributeth his Charities to the Poor and Neceffitous ; that Sinner finally calleth aloud on Christ, who witneffeth not by his bare Discourses only, but by the manner of his Life, *That the World is truly crucified to Him, and He to the World.*

THESE difficult ways of Calling on God Almighty, altho' so earnestly recommended to us by that great *Teacher* of his Church, yet are but rarely practiced by Sinners, because they are as rarely understood. Let us therefore examine, how such acceptable Works of *Penance* do speak aloud for the Doers of them, and make themselves be understood as far as Heaven. Our first *Call* then on God Almighty for the Recovery of our Sight, is (with *St. Austin*) a rejecting of the sinful Satisfactions of this Life. *Clamat ad Christum, qui spernit sæculi voluptates.* This Heroick Action (and Heroick it is indeed, to gain a victory over Flesh and Blood) this Heroick Action of true Christian Courage speaks strongly in the Favour of a Sinner to Jesus Christ; it pleads his Cause at the Seat of Mercy. It is an Assurance on the part of the Sinner of the Sincerity of his Conversion: How sensible he is of the Condition of his Soul: How unfeignedly desirous to be heal'd of his Infirmity: And how

how vigorously on his part he contributes to the Cure, by removing those Obstacles, that may prevent or hinder it: Those Obstacles are our Passions for the World. How strong a *Call* then, and how forcible in the Ears of Jesus Christ is a Christian-like renouncing of those worldly Enjoyments, our Passions for which have proved the occasion of our Blindness! *Clamat ad Christum, qui spernit sæculi voluptates.*

We call (with St. *Austin*) in another *Voice*, that reacheth also the Ears of Jesus Christ, as often as our charitable Assistances do reach the Necessities of the Poor; *Clamat ad Christum, qui dispergit & dat pauperibus.* In the Book of *Proverbs* we read a threatening Sentence, able to chill the Hearts of uncharitable Men; *Qui obturat aurem suam ad clamorem pauperis, & ipse clamabit, & non exaudietur; Who stoppeth his ears to the cry of the poor, he also shall cry, and shall not be heard.* From whence we may draw this rational Conclusion, that the opening of our Ears to the Cries of the Poor, is the opening of the Ears of Christ to us. And such a Call undoubtedly is both loud and piercing; since we employ as many Tongues, as there are Mouths we fill, to speak for us. *Clamat ad Christum, qui dispergit, & dat pauperibus.* A third *Call* also

Prov. 21.
13.

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(with St. *Austin*) is of a Sinner, whose Life is truly crucified to the World, and the World to it. And can there be a *Voice* more charming, more inviting the Mercies of Jesus Christ, than to behold a Sinner suing to him in that same Posture, as He himself did sue for the World's Redemption to his Father upon a *Cross*?

BUT perhaps (Devout Christians) you are desirous of a clearer Notion of so celebrated an Expression, and yet peradventure so little understood: I mean, *A Crucifixion of a Christian to the World, and of the World to him*: I'll therefore give it to you in an easy and familiar Thought. To be crucified to the World, and the World to us; is to have our Judgments and Practices directly contrary, the one's to the other's, In the Judgment and Practice of the World it is a Cross, to live in the World without enjoying it; but in the Judgment and Practice of a Christian, those very Enjoyments are a Cross, because they hinder us in the way of Virtue. The World sets a value upon its Gifts, its Wealth, its Honours, its Delights; St. *Paul*, on the contrary, esteems them as Dirt, as they are put in Ballance with Jesus Christ: *Hæc omnia arbitror ut stercora, ut Christum lucrî, faciam.* Oh how truly was the Apostle crucified to the World,

World, and the World to him! When two are fasten'd upon the same Cross, they necessarily must turn their Backs the one to the other. This ought to be the Practice of a *Christian*, in his reciprocal Crucifixion with the World. The World turns his Back on you, turn yours also upon the World. The World laughs at you, because you live up to a Practice different from his: Laugh at him also, or rather pity him, because (through Blindness) he understands no better. The World loves you not, because you are no longer in the Number of his Followers: Then love not you the World, and so will little Love be lost between you. He whose Life corresponds with this Lesson of Indifferency, may confidently call on Jesus Christ, with a *Mundus mihi crucifixus est, & ego mundo.*

SUCH Christian-like Performances are, according to the Reflection of the great *St. Austin*, so many loud and sounding *Voices*, with which our Lives do call on God, and not barely our Mouths only. But as the virtuous Actions of the devout Christian sound harsh and gratingly in the Ears of Worldlings; so is he frequently checked by them, and desired to hold his peace. The same also happen'd to our *Beggar* in the *Gospel*, who was rebuked for his Cla-

mour by those, who in the Company of our Saviour went before him, and by them commanded to be silent: *Et qui præibant, increpabant eum ut taceret: And those who went before, rebuked him, that he should hold his peace.* This very Particular of our Gospel, is also a Figure of what too frequently passeth in the Church. Those *Rebukers* of the clamorous Beggar, are lazy and scandalous Christians, who make it their endeavour to impede the virtuous Purposes of the Good: *Bonos Christianos mali & tepidi prohibent.*

No sooner doth the Sinner begin to enter seriously upon a Change of Life, to deny himself those hurtful Liberties, which before he took, to withdraw himself carefully from the Occasions of Sin; In a Word, to live up to the Obligations of his Baptism and Religion: No sooner can a Sinner resolve on this, but presently he is opposed in his virtuous Designs: *Qui diligunt sæculum, contradicunt;* The Lovers of the World rebuke him for it. They interpret his Conversion an Excess of Folly, his new Course of Life some Fit of Melancholy, or indigested Zeal, and a Singularity tacitly condemning the Lives of so many others, who bear in the World the Name of Christians as well as he. *Et nunquid alii non sunt Christiani?*

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And are not others Christians too? Such and such Persons are not so scrupulous; they think it time enough to take up yet. This Gallant, for Example, continues still his customary Disorders, his Riots, his Debauches, his Excesses in Drinking, Swearing, Gaming, and the like; Yet ask him, what he is? He answers you, a Christian, and (though we hardly gather it from his Life) perhaps a *Catholick* too. That Lady still exposes herself to dangerous Liberties, to scandalous Privacies, which are Encouragements to Sin; still she sleeps away unconcernedly the better part of her precious Hours (every Moment of which might gain her an Eternity) or she dreams them away waking upon new Garbs and Fashions: As if for that Concern alone she thought her self placed in this World; she is still most lavishly expensive in her Dress, which makes her as narrow-hearted to the Poor; and yet she is a Christian, and a *Catholick* too. In fine, they still conform to the Maxims of the World: They little concern themselves in the great Affair of their Salvation, and yet they all pretend to a Place in Paradise as well as we. But tell us not, continues the holy *Doct̄or*, tell us not, how such and such do Live, but how the *Gospel* teaches them to Live; Let them not invite us by their ill Example, but rather by the

Rule of their Religion, the Doctrine and Life of Jesus Christ. *Non dicant, quomodò isti vivunt tam multi, sic vivamus: Quare non potiùs, quomodò dicit Evangelium?*

BUT as the maliciously subtle World, resolved to nip our religious Commencements in the very Bud, proposes on the one Side the scandalous Examples of vicious Livers to invite us: So on the other Side, it objects the apparent Difficulties, which occur to us in the exercise of Virtue, to deter and fright us. It makes a Change of Life appear a thing impracticable by Flesh and Blood: The conquering of our Passions, a Combat to be undertaken by more than Man: Mortification the burying of one's self alive: Infine, it represents to us *Penance* with such a ghastly and frightful Visage, that many Sinners have scarcely Courage to look upon it: But this is a Cheat the World puts upon us. The Face indeed of *Penance* is a little rough, but her Conversation is sweet and delightful. We may properly apply to this Subject the Words of the learned Moralist *Seneca*, which he himself made use of writing to his Friend, *To arm him with Courage against the Fears of Death*. *Tolle*, said he (addressing himself to Death without the shew of Fear) *Tolle istam pompam, sub qua lates & stultos territas; mors es, quam nuper servus meus,*

meus, quam ancilla contempsit! Take, take away that frightful shew, with which thou appearest to scare Fools; Remove those Sables, cover that earthly Paleness, dry up those Tears of Relations and Friends! Take, take away the appearances of Horror that disguise thee! *Mors es*, Thou art no more than Death, that Bugbear nothing, which lately my very Bond-slave encountered with Scorn; *Mors es, quam nuper servus meus, quam ancilla contempsit.* The same proportionably may we also say of a Life of Penance; *Tolle istam pompam, sub quâ lates:* Take, take away that Mask of Terror, which disguises thee, to frighten Cowards in Religion! Silence those hard and terrifying Names, of *Mortification, Self-denial, Struggling and Combating with Flesh and Blood!* Shew thy self to us in thy proper Colours! *Pœnitentia es;* Thou art but Penance: A Life, this ignorant Ploughman, that tender Girl have passed through with Courage, and are crown'd for it. *Et tu non poteris quod isti & istæ?* And cannot you do like these and these? Know you no better things than that vile Peasant? Own you yourself to have a lesser Heart than that poor Girl? And shall these snatch from you the Kingdom of Heaven? Take, Convert! Take
this

*Aug. lib.
Conf.*

this Thought to Heart! You'll find a Life of *Penance* no such Monster, when such and such have Courage enough to tame it! And their Examples as sharp a Spur to egg you on in the way of Virtue, as those can be of vicious Livers to draw you back!

THEN let us not be daunted at the frightful Arguments of the World; but rather set before us the Example of the Beggar in the *Gospel*, and take his Method for our Rule. The Multitude indeed rebuked him for his Clamour; but he increased it, instead of being silent at their Check: *Increpabant eum ut taceret; ipse verò multò magis clamabat.* This remarkable Circumstance recommends to us most particularly the Virtue of Constancy and Perseverance in the Practice of good Works, as the surest Means of surmounting those Difficulties, which are often objected to us by Flesh and Blood, to deter us from the Accomplishment and Perfection of them: *Perfèctio boni operis perseverantia est.* Had the Beggar been daunted at the Rebuke of the Multitude, his Prayer had not arrived to the Ears of Christ. And if every Opposition can make us turn our backs, we may often enter the Lists to fight, but our Cowardise will not suffer us to be crown'd.

WE must do in our Conversions to God Almighty, as *Abraham* did in his Sacrifice. When the Birds descended to disturb him in it, *Abraham* (as we read in the Book of *Genesis*) had prepared the Flesh of certain Victims clean and neat, to offer them in *Holocaust* to God Almighty: But whilst he was occupied in this religious Care, *Descenderunt volucres super cadavera*: Certain unclean and hungry Birds of Prey (drawn thither peradventure by the Scent of the Bodies) came fluttering about him, attempting with their dirty Beaks and Talons upon those sacred Limbs design'd by him for the *Holocaust*. What did that holy Patriarch in this Distraction? In this Disturbance of his Devotions? *Abigebat eas*; He drove them unconcernedly away: And as they return'd, he drove them away again; pursuing still with greater Fervour that *Holy Work*, the greater was the Molestation he suffer'd in it; 'till at last they left him, and undisturbedly he finish'd his Sacrifices. So it is with those Sinners, who prepare themselves by a Change of Life, to offer up to God Almighty a grateful Sacrifice of a contrite Heart. They meet indeed with *Unclean Birds*, that flutter about to disturb them too; These are the Temptations of their

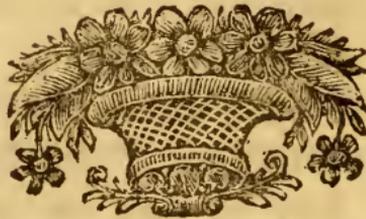
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past Life, which often return in their Devotions, attempting to pollute the Purity of this new Victim with unclean Thoughts. *Luxury* flings Dirt upon our good Resolutions of living chaste; *Gluttony* upon our Purposes of quitting our riotous and debauched Lives; *Sloth* upon our Vigilancy in the Service of God, and the great Concern for the Salvation of our Souls; and so for the rest. But drive those *Birds* away: Parley not with your Temptations, and as they turn upon you, drive them away again. Doubt not, at last they'll leave you, that you may undisturbedly compleat your Sacrifice; that is, may perfect the Work of your Conversion, and the Church with Joy may see the Fruits thereof.

THESE, *Christians*, are the weighty Reflections, that offer themselves to our most serious Thoughts upon the moral Examination of this Text. The corporal Blindness of that poor Beggar represents to us the spiritual Blindness of a Soul in Sin. Which Blindness (if we form a right Conceit of it) is so deplorable in regard of sinful *Christians*, who have their Understanding open'd by the Light of Faith, and yet remain insensible of their Misery, that properly, with their Eyes open, they see
nothing;

nothing ; *Apertis oculis nihil vident.* Those indeed amongst us, who are desirous to have their Eye-sight clear'd, to discover their own *Nakedness* (such a Discovery being a principal Disposition to a true Conversion) have also a Method given them by our blind Beggar, how to address themselves to Jesus Christ for the Recovery of their Sight : *Domine, ut videam ! Lord, that I may see !* He called on Christ with a-loud Voice, *Clamavit* ; and so must we ; but (in a ready Compliance with St. *Austin's* sage Advice) let not bearly our Tongues call on him, but our Lives also. The Beggar heard himself *rebuked* by the Multitude, and commanded to hold his peace ; *Increpabant eum ut taceret.* The same rough Usage must we expect from the Temptations of the World and worldly Livers, whose malicious Endeavours are to retard our Progress in the way of Virtue. Let us then no more regard them than the blind Man did the Peoples Check, that so *Our Voice may reach the Ears of Christ.* Vouchsafe us then, dear *Son of David*, as thou didst the blind Man in the *Gospel*, a gracious *Respice, Look up, and see !* Clear our Understandings of those Clouds, which Passion and Ignorance have drawn before them ! Grant us the Exercise

of a lively Faith, to discover those sacred Truths, which are conceal'd from the Eye of the World! Purify our Souls from Sin, and render them capable of beholding that invisible *Being*, which is only the Object of a *clean Heart*. That arriving to the right Knowledge of thee in quality of our *last End*, and *chiefeft Good*, we may love thee, praise thee, and enjoy thee for Ever. *Amen.*



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

KING and QUEEN,

I N

Their MAJESTIES Chapel at St. *JAMES'S*,
upon the First WEDNESDAY in *LENT*,
February 24, 1685.

By the Reverend FATHER

Dom. PHIL. ELLIS, Monk of the Holy
Order of St. *BENEDICT*, and of the *English*
CONGREGATION.

As Publish'd by His MAJESTY'S Command.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

RESEARCH REPORT

1951

BY [Name]

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of [Degree]

under the supervision of [Supervisor]

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



S E R M O N X.

Preach'd before the

K I N G and Q U E E N,

Upon the First *Wednesday* in *LENT*.

M A T T H. XII. 41.

Viri Ninivitæ surgent in iudicio cum generatione ista, & condemnabunt eam: quia pœnitentiam egerunt in prædicatione Jonæ.

The Men of Ninive shall rise at the Day of Judgment against this Generation, and condemn it; because they repented at the Preaching of Jonas.



THE Holy Fathers (most Sacred Majesty) taking a general View of the sinful World, and diving into the Causes of its Irregularities and Corruptions, divide Sinners into three Classes or Degrees. The

first consists of such as offend out of *Ignorance*, proceeding from a criminal Neglect either of their own, or of their *Teachers*. The second is composed of such as fall through *Infirmity* and *Inadvertency*; whose Lapses are less hurtful, and more easily recover'd. In the last are ranged the *Impenitent* and *Obdurate*, who wanting neither Knowledge of their Duty, nor Divine Assistance to comply with it; neither Strength to stand firm, nor Grace to recover their footing when they are down, stretch themselves on the Ground, fall asleep in the Mire, rest because they will not think, and owe their *Ease* to their *Insensibility*.

To the first sort of these Men we *Preach*, that they may be enlighten'd; for the second we *Pray*, that they may be strengthen'd; but the last, says St. *Augustin*, we turn over to the Justice of God, *as sinning against the Holy Ghost*: For, *such as will not shake hands with their Errors and darling Vices*, says St. *Bernard*, *will not stretch forth their Arms to embrace the Truth*, when it presents it self before them, are seized with a mortal Lethargy, nay, with Obstinacy of Devils, *Obstinatione Diabolica*; and It is a folly, adds *Hugo* of St. *Victor*, *to go about to convert them*; *Obstinos corripere insipientia est.*

Indeed

*Aug. in
Enchir.
cap. 38.*

*Bern.
Serm.
1 Advent.*

*Hugo Vic-
torin. de
Inst. Novit.
cap. 14.*

Indeed the Scripture warns us that it is a hard Province; *Perversi difficile corriguntur.* Eccles. 1. 15. But while the Holy Ghost only declares it very difficult to reduce the Obstinate to a sense of their Misery, the same Words, that seem to discourage the *Undertaking*, give hopes of the *Success*. For tho' we read of a *Nabal* so inebriated with Wine and Pleasures, that neither the peaceful Admonitions of a friendly *David* could persuade, nor the Power of an incensed Enemy could terrify him, when Destruction was almost at his Gates: Tho' we read of a *Pharaoh* so infatuated with Pride and Presumption, that neither the smooth Tongue of *Aaron*, nor the rough Hand of *Moses*; neither the *Eloquence* of the one, nor the *chastising Rod* of the other, could mollify him, when the Judgments of God pour'd in upon him like a Torrent: Infinite, tho' in this *Gospel* we behold one of the most astonishing Pieces of *Obduracy* in the *Jews*, who after a Devil ejected out of a possessed Person, and this before their Eyes, and this demonstrated to be perform'd by the Power of God, still call for a *Sign*: Yet after all these Discouragements, I will not despair of this *Generation*, since a *Ninive* was converted at the

the preaching of *Jonas*; since a *Ninive* not only *did Penance in Sackcloth and Ashes*, but also preaches it to this Generation, before she rise in Judgment against it. If I should compare *this Generation* to the *Ninivites*; this *Metropolis* of our Kingdom, to that Head and Seat of the famous *Assyrian Monarchy*, it might be a Compliment in any other Subject than that of *Impiety*: But if the Comparison were drawn upon the Resemblance of our Lives, it would relish too much of the Satyr; and therefore neither to disgust nor to discourage my Audience, I am desirous to make the *Parallel* upon our *Repentance*. *Secutus es errantem, sequere pœnitentem*, said once a great *Preacher* to a great *Offender*, but a more illustrious *Penitent*. If we have transcribed the Lives of the *Ninivites* with all their Faults, let us not be ashamed to correct and blot out the *Errata*: If we have follow'd close at their Heels in wicked Courses, let us not be ashamed to acknowledge *we are tired in the ways of Iniquity*, and sit down with them, if not in *Sackcloth and Ashes*, at least to *repent*. We have the same *Opportunity*, it was at a Sermon; the same *Necessity*, as severe Punishment threatned, with this Addition, that those individual

individual Persons shall rise in Judgment against us; the same Method chalk'd out to us, with this Advantage, that it was successful to them, and will certainly be so to us. Their Sorrow was *heartly*, their Penance was *exemplary*, their Repentance was *speedy*. The last of which shall be the peculiar Subject of my Second Part: The other Two shall be discoursed in my First; while I endeavour to bring the History of their Conversion home to our selves, after I have begged the Assistance of the *Holy Ghost*, the Author of *Repentance*, by the usual Address to *Innocence*, AVE MARIA.

Division.

The Men of Ninive shall rise, &c.

IT is obvious to every one within these Walls, that the Son of God made this terrible Commination not only to strike a *Terror* into his Auditors, but also to raise in them a wholesom *Confusion*; not only to reproach their *Stupidity*, but also to animate them to a generous Emulation; protesting, that if the *Ninivites* could not be an Example to provoke their Repentance, they should one Day become their invincible Accusers. And to what end does our holy Mother the Church yearly repeat this Passage

page

sage of the Gospel, and daily inculcate the Sense of it, but to invite her Children to an Imitation, as the only Plea remaining, as the only Defence we can make against such a *cloud of Witnesses*, who will certainly bear us down, and convict us at the Day of Judgment, if they prove not our Instruction in the Day of Salvation.

NINIVE, the Capital City of the *Assyrian* Monarchy, was the *Babylon* of those Times, emasculated with a long Peace, effeminate with Ease, dissolved in Luxury, Banqueting, and Wantonness, under the Reign of a sensual Prince, a *Sardanapalus*, whose Life, says the Historian, was *more soft and infamous*, than his Name; *turpior vitâ, quàm nomine*; and whose Example had so corrupted the Manners, and stifled the warlike *Genius* of his People, that they were no longer *formidable*, but for their horrible Excesses; no longer *Masters of the World*, but by drawing others into an Imitation of their Crimes; no longer the *Brave Assyrians*, but for defying Heaven, and assailing the Throne of God, not as their Predecessors with the *Tower of Babel*, which they could not finish; but with the Height and Enormity of their Sins, which they brought to a Point; *Ascendit malitia ejus coram me*;

Jonas 1.

2.

Their

Their wickedness is come up before me; and reaches to Heaven. Now it was high time for Justice and Mercy to enter into Deliberation, whether this seduced People, and Seducer of Nations, should out of hand be converted or destroy'd; but while the one was preparing its Thunder and Lightning, its Showers of Fire and Brimstone, the other dispatches a Herald to warn them of their approaching Ruin. But the Prophet Jonas, the Man pitch'd upon to carry the unpleasent Message, out of a human Prudence, and too warm a Zeal, declines the Office. He was unwilling to expose his Master's Honour, and his own Person, among a People where he was like to be so little consider'd, that the God was as unknown as the Prophet. But if possible they should own his Character, and take the Subject of his Embassy into Consideration, That yet forty days and Ninive shall be destroy'd, probably they might repent, and more than probably God would pardon them if they did so, and Ninive would not be destroy'd, and by necessary Consequence Jonas must bear the Ignominy, if a false Prophet; which once detected, as it must be if the Judgment follow not the Sentence, the very Motive of their Conversion

Jonas 1.
3.

would prove a dangerous *Temptation* to return to their former *Impiety*. Wherefore the Prophet finding no other way to avoid the Points of this *Dilemma*, not only flies from the Employment, but also hopes to *escape from the Face of God*; he puts to Sea, makes all the Sail he can, and steers his Course as wide from the Coast of *Affyria*, as the Wind and his Fear could bear off. When behold, the Storm he would not prognosticate to others, was gather'd over his own Head! Besides his own Guilt, the Divine Hand points him out as the Occasion of it; yet he chuses rather to be cast over-board, than to tack about and make for *Ninive*; and tho' a *Whale* was ready to receive him to that end, yet his *Will* and his *Prayers* ran so strong the other way, it was three Days before she could unload her miraculous Burthen upon the detested Shore.

BUT he was no sooner out of the *Whale's* Belly, than he enters into himself; and terrified with the Idea of the Dangers he had passed, admiring his own no less wonderful Stupidity, and revolving his strange Deliverance, *incredible* almost to himself, he joyfully embraces the Employment he had so obstinately refused, and
abating

abating both of his Zeal and Apprehension, he was contented *Ninive* should falsify his Prediction, and by a timely Repentance prevent the Destruction he was going to denounce.

HE enters the vast City, and stopping in one of the most frequented Places, he summons the Inhabitants, *Adhuc quadraginta dies & Ninive subvertetur ; Yet forty days and Ninive shall be no more.* The Novelty of the Thing, the strange Figure of the Man, his Mien, as if he had newly risen from the Dead ; the Particularity of his Habit, as if he came out of another World ; the Brokenness of his Dialect, soon drew the Herd about him, to listen and gaze a while, and then to laugh ; and without doubt the *Wits* and Libertines to rally him, and some in Office to threaten him. But the *Preacher* goes on as insensible to their Affronts, as they were at first to his Doctrine ; he follows his Text, and they him, till at last, as *Laughing* and *Crying* are perform'd with the same *Muscles* of the Eyes and Face, so the same Words which at first provok'd their Laughter, now spread Sorrow, Fear, and Amazement upon their Countenances, and fetch Tears out of their Eyes, but could not work a *thorough Reformation*

mation in their Hearts; till the Voice of this *Unknown* penetrated thro' the Town into the Court, and reach'd the Ears of the King, *Pervenit verbum ad Regem Ninive.*

THIS King had as little reason as any of his Subjects to be satisfied with his own Life, and more reason to apprehend the Verity of *Jonas's* Prediction, being conscious to himself into how dreadful a Precipice his ill Example had drawn a People, never so complying, never so obedient to the Prince as in his Vices. Infine, he believes the threatned Judgment so much more probable, as he knew it was too much deserved. He rises therefore from his Throne, lays by the *Ensigns of Majesty*, puts himself in the state and posture of a Criminal, preaches and enjoins the Penance that he practices; Fasting and Sackcloth become the Mode, the Court and Town are presently in it, and follow it with so much Eagerness, Vigour and Perseverance, that the Storm which was ready to break upon their Heads, disperses of it self, the Heavens clear up, the Anger of God is disarm'd, and, as the Prophet foresaw, he draws in the menacing Hand.

LET us make a stand here, Christians, and rest a while in Contemplation of a History as instructive as it is astonishing;

a Record of what pass'd in *Ninive*; an Account of the present State of most Cities in the World; and, I hope, a Prophecy of our Repentance. It is like a good Picture, which seems to fix the Eye upon every one that regards it. I promised not to offend your Ears with any rude Comparison, or to apply *Cautsticks*, to use a burning Iron, where a Balsam, a gentle Remedy may work the Cure. Yet I beg leave to put you in mind, that *Ninive* is still threatned, but is not yet destroy'd; that it survives in every City, whose Impieties, whose Irreligion, whose Extortion, whose insatiable Avarice, and detestable Luxuries, cry to Heaven for Vengeance, and to avert whose total *Overthrow* a *Jonas* is dispatch'd. *Et plus quàm Jonas híc.* And how far we are short of *Ninive*, how little we want of equalling their Crimes, and *filling up the number of our Sins*, he only can tell, *who is more than Jonas*, who numbers the Sands of the Sea.

NINIVE a Pagan Town, the Centre and Fountain of Superstition and Idolatry, buried for so many Ages in the Darkness of Gentilism, where the *Sun of Justice* never shone, the saving Faith never shed a Beam; amidst an infinity of Deities without the Knowledge of God, labouring under a double

ble Night, of Infidelity and of the blackest Crimes.

BUT *Ninive* at the Preaching of a *Jonas*, a meer Stranger, without any thing to make himself considerable; a Man never heard of before, a Man contemptible for his Person, with Distraction and Amazement in his Countenance, still frothy and reeking from the Belly of the Whale; without any Credentials or Proof of his Mission, without any Miracle to back his Doctrine, or other Testimony to support it, than what he gave himself; and this to a People so little prepared to receive it, that in all likelihood, he might as well have preach'd to the Rocks and Waves, from the Entrails of the Leviathan. Yet this *Unknown* preacheth, these Infidels believe, these wicked Men, these Monsters of Nature, even *Sardanapalus* is converted: *Sardanapalus* sheds manly Tears, *Sardanapalus* does Penance; such exemplar Penance, that the Holy Ghost thought it material to transmit each Circumstance to Posterity; *Surrexit de Solio*, says the Text, *He rises from his Throne*, he detests that *unfortunate* Power which enabled him to sin without *controll*: *Abjecit vestimentum*, he casts the Purple from his Shoulders, which he had not only stain'd,
but

but even drench'd with his repeated Crimes: *Indutus est Sacco*, he changes it for Sackcloth, to chastise that Flesh he had so pamper'd and indulg'd: *Et sedit in cinere*, and is not contented till his Mortification is accompanied with the profoundest Humility; and therefore he prostrates and rolls himself in Ashes. *Res admiratione digna*, &c. (cries St. *John Chrysoſtom*) O what a Spectacle! Delightful and new to the Heavens, and worthy the Admiration of the whole Earth! Sackcloth and Haircloth imperiously invade and banish the Purple; Ashes and Dust tarnish the Lustre of the Crown. He had sinn'd, and he repents like a King. He resolves the Example, which had been such an Incentive to *Vice*, should be no less exciting to *Repentance*. He deposes the Marks, but not the Power of a King. His Obedience to the Voice of God, does not abate of his Authority with his People: While he lies prostrate as a *Criminal*, he enacts Laws, and enjoins a solemn Fast thro' all his Dominions; *Homines & jumenta non gustent quicquam*. And when did he issue forth this *Proclamation*? After he had call'd a Board to debate it, after he had taken the thing into Deliberation, or advised with his Council and Sages? No, says the Text, *Et pervenit*

peruenit Verbum, as soon as this Word came to his Ear, without balancing, without hesitation, *Motu proprio*, immediately at the very Instant he falls to work; He was already doing Penance while he was commanding it; binding his People to comply first by *Example*, and then by *Precept*.

BUT where is it that I speak? Is it not to a Christian Assembly, to a Christian Town, an ancient Theatre of Religion, and once the Metropolis of this Kingdom as well in Piety, as in Grandeur and Commerce? Is it not a Court once peopled with Saints, once a Nursery of Heaven, illustrated with the Morning Brightness of the Gospel, and reflecting its Light thro' the whole World? Is it not before the Successor of St. *Lucius*, the first Christian King, and to the first Christian Kingdom of the *Western* World? Is it not to a People early born into, and long educated in the Bosom of the Church, having Kings for *Nursing-Fathers*, and Queens for *Nursing-Mothers*, nourish'd with the *Bread of Heaven*, and the *Fat of the Earth*? And yet amidst such an Overflow of Divine Blessings, such infallible Helps, such efficacious Sacraments, such moving Exhortations, we remain unshaken to the Menaces, insensible to the Promises, rebellious
to

to the Light, and deaf to the Voice, not of a *Jonas*, but of a *JESUS*. One unknown Preacher converted the most heathenish, the most corrupted, the most populous City of the World, at one Sermon; while we, who speak your own Language, nay even your own Sense, preach what you believe, and menace what you apprehend, speak what you know to be just and reasonable; We, whose *Mission* you acknowledge, whose *Character* you reverence, whose *Authority* you do not dispute, think it a great Victory if we convert the meanest of this crouded Auditory after a *hundred* Sermons. And do you wonder, that the *Ninivites* shall rise in the day of Judgment against this more *criminal* (I must say it) because more *obdurate* Generation; which, amidst so much Knowledge of its Duty, amidst such pressing Motives, such strong Convictions, such cogent Arguments, such illustrious Examples, puts off its Repentance from Day to Day? But to press this is my Second Point.

IT was a notable Advice, and becoming its Author, the wisest of Men, *Non tardes converti*; Do not slacken to be converted to our Lord, nor put it off from day to day. II. *Eccles* 5.^{8.}

For one of the most crafty Sights of the Devil to keep an unhappy Soul in his Possession, one of the falsest Steps we make, one of the most dangerous Errors we slide into, is the deferring our Repentance from time to time, till it be past *time*. An Error not only most pernicious, because in the highest Concern, but also the most wicked, as proceeding not from Surprise, Weakness, Inadvertence, or Ignorance (the Heads whence other Mistakes arise) but springing from the most affected Wilfulness, and down right Malice. People will not believe daily Experience, will not credit their common Sense, will not hearken to their own Reason and Conviction; but in despite of Sense, Reason, Conscience, and Experience, will still persist in a vain and groundless Presumption, That *after forty days their Ninive shall not be destroy'd*; that they shall have a much longer time to repent in. Yet you see Funerals pass every Day under your Windows, you meet them in the Streets; you behold your Friends, your Children, your Husbands and your Wives expiring under your Roofs, giving up the Ghost in your Arms; you see them die, who had as much reason to promise themselves a longer Date of Life; you see them

them die, you see *Ninive* fall (for when one dies all the World dies to him) you see them die unprepared, one without any Sense of a future Life, another in Despair; one is suddenly cut off, another falls in a Duel, in Drink, in Adultery: And these are dreadful, but late and almost daily Examples. You see them die impenitent, and hear them bid you beware of the same Presumption, which brought them to their eternal Ruin; and yet you are deaf to all Persuasions. And if you will be so, who can help it? But then you must not wonder, that the *Ninivites* shall rise at the Day of Judgment against you; for they repented at the preaching, at the first Sermon of *Jonas*. Besides, they had forty Days allowed them to prevent their Ruin; but you hear Truth it self protesting, that you neither *do*, nor *shall know*, not only a certain Period of Days to prepare your selves in, but not so much as *one day*, no *not an hour*; *Nescitis diem neque horam*. You hear the Judge menacing, that Death, that Judgment shall steal upon you *like a thief in the night*, that is, when you rest securely, and dream of no such thing, when you are dissolved in your Pleasures, when you are intoxicated with Wine, when you are extended in Wantonness, that even

Matt. 25.

13.

Apoc. 16.

15.

Luke 12.
20.

this Night, perhaps, your Soul shall be raviſh'd from you, *Stulte, hęc nocte, &c.* And yet in the Sound of this dreadful Alarm, in ſight of the threatenng Hand, which is writing your Sentence upon the Wall of your Chamber, upon the Brink of this frightful Precipice you lie as ſupinely, as unconcern'd, *as if you had the works of the Juſt,* or rather as if you were already dead, and aſleep, not in your Beds, but in your Graves, *Aug. Ad tantum tonitruum qui non evigilat, non dormit, ſed mortuus eſt.*

THIS Stupidity, this affected Inſenſibility of ours, provok'd our Bleſſed Saviour to ſuch a Degree, that, contrary to his uſual Meekneſs, he call's ſuch People *Fools, Stultos,* inſenſate, ſtupid, brutiſh, and irrational, beyond all that can be imagined. Your God is your *Accuſer,* and the *Ninivites* are your *Judges*; but you pronounce the Sentence upon your ſelves; all the other Actions of your Life are your Condemnation. For who of you all is ſo ſenſeleſs as to truſt the ſmalleſt temporal Concern to ſo great a Hazard, as to expoſe your Life and your Eſtate, when you may eaſily ſecure and enjoy both the one and the other, and to run the riſque of loſing all, for want of a little Care, of compounding for a ſmall Fine,

Fine, a little Trouble, a well-timed Sigh, or a seasonable Tear? Should your House take Fire, and your Friends and Neighbours run in to give you Notice of it, before the spreading Flame has taken hold of the main Timber; would you phlegmatically reply, There is no Haste in the Business, it will be time enough to bring the Engines when the Fire has reach'd the Foundations? Would a Man need a great Stock of Philosophy to convince you, that you are a *Fool*, or a Madman, which is all one, since Madness is but a *raging Folly*? Why, your Soul is all in Flame with a long Habit of Sin; *Ignis in ossibus*; you are burnt up with unlawful and lawless Desires, with Passions more raging and more destroying than Fire. The *Preacher* comes as a Friend to advertise you of it, bids you make haste to stop the Conflagration, lest it swallow you up in *unquenchable Flames*. You bid him not trouble you with that yet a while, thirty or forty Years hence, perhaps, you may give him a hearing, that is to say, speaking your Sense in the other Circumstance, Let me alone till the Fire has insinuated it self into the very Heart of the Building, till it has taken such hold upon me, that it will be impossible to lay it, impossible to rescue me

me from the devouring Element, beyond Hopes of your Assistance, or Power to help my self, when Horror reigns without, and Confusion within, till I know not where I am, what to do, which way to turn me, which way to go about to draw Tears out of my parch'd Eyes, or press Sorrow out of my petrified Heart, which is the only Water can quench the ciminal Flame.

STULTE! Foolish and insensate Man! Should you find your self overcharged with a heavy Burthen, which even grows upon your Shoulders, and which you are obliged to carry, or sink; would you refuse to stir a Step while you are in the Flower of your Age, in the Height of your Strength? Would you tell such as advise you to *work while it is yet day, before night come upon you*, to get to your Journeys end as soon as you can, That it is time enough, you will begin when you grow Old? That is to say, you will begin when you should end, when your Nature is decay'd, your Spirits exhausted, your Nerves debilitated, and have more need of being carried your self. Sinner, your Crimes are a great Load; *Sicut onus grave gravata sunt super me*; even your God, *the Strong one of Israel*, groans under the Weight, he can bear them no longer;

he

John 9:

4

Psalms 37:

5

he gives you warning, that he is just ready to withdraw the Hand of his long-suffering Patience, and leave you to your self; *Unusquisque onus suum portabit.* 'Tis in your own Choice whether you will, now you have Strength and Opportunity, work them off, and lay them down at the foot of the Cross, by embracing a Penitential Life, or sweat under them till they sink you into Hell. And do you still deliberate upon the Point? Is the Matter so difficult, is the Case so perplex'd, that you cannot tell which Party to take? Or rather, is not the Necessity so evident, so pressing, so irresistible, that to demur one Day upon it, is to renounce as well your *Senses* as your *Faith*, as well your *Reason* as *Religion*? You promise your selves late Years to repent in, when you have not the Assurance of one Day; Is not this as great a Shock to *Reason*, as it is an Affront to *Religion*? Is it not to invade the Prerogative of God, by *placing the times and moments in your own power and disposition*? And certainly those Purposes of Repentance you so much rely on, those Resolutions you so often break and so often renew, those Promises, which have so often deceived both your self and your Confessor, cannot

cannot be true, real and unfeigned, if the *Term* you assign be false and imaginary. But there is no such thing as *forty Years hence*, there is no such thing as *twenty Years hence*, there is no such thing as *To-morrow*: Procrastinated Repentance is *nothing*, but a present Impenitence.

Now go and complain you are hardly dealt with, you have not time allow'd you to *repent*, because you have not more Years allow'd you to *offend*: Complain, that the *Ninivites* had more Favour shew'd them than you have, because they had *forty Days*, and you have had *forty Years*. Quarrel with the Divine Providence, because *they* were call'd, and repented the *first Day*; you were call'd the first, and think much to repent on the last. Be very angry at the Preacher for discomposing you, and stopping you short in the Career of your Sins, with a Whisper in your Ear, That the Term is just expiring, that the Sword is unsheath'd over your Head, and the Hand of Vengeance is lifted up to give you the fatal Blow: Tell him, he is troublesome and impertinent, because he does you the best Office in the World, and bid him go preach to *Ninive*.

HE has done, and is ready to leave the *Chair*; but assure your selves, the Men of *Ninive* will immediately succeed in his Place; you shall not be able to impose Silence upon them, their Voice shall ring in your Ears, either till their Preaching convert, or their Sentence burst your Hearts. They shall follow you thro' all the Windings and Mazes of Sin, they shall meet you in every crooked Path, which themselves traced out, and you follow; They know your Haunts, which themselves frequented; They shall meet you at the Theatre, at the Masquerade, at the Rendezvous, at the Gaming-house, at the Tavern; They shall insinuate themselves into your Cabinets, and your most studied Recesses shall not exclude them. *Clamabunt etenim & non silebunt*; Their *Sackcloth* shall confound your Niceness and Gallantry; Their *Ashes* shall condemn your Pride and Vanity; Their *Fasting* shall upbraid your Gluttony and Drunkenness; Their *Humiliation* shall check your Ambition; Their *Sighs* shall play the Ground to your Musick and Merriment in this time of Sorrow; Their *ready Obedience* to the Voice of the *Preacher*, shall exprobrate the Insensibility of your seared Hearts; And

their *Examples* shall give the Lye to all your Excuses. Infine, those lamentable Cries of Men, Women, Children, and Animals, suing to the Throne of Mercy to prevent the Overthrow of that City, shall cry Vengeance against this, and echo it thro' the whole World, that God desires not the Damnation of *Christians*, who was so merciful to *Heathens*; That you deserve indeed not so much warning, because your whole Life has been one continued Advertisement; That, because they offended against the Law of Nature, they deserved an Eternity of Suffering, and to pass out of one Darkness into another; But, because you have openly resisted the Holy Ghost, *Rebelle lumini*, miserable, not for want of Light, but impious, because you rebell'd against it, you have merited the *Outward darkness, the nether hell*. Yet to shew, that *God wills not the death of a Sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live*, *Extendit terminos tuos*, He suspends the Sentence of your Condemnation till the Remainder of this *forty Days*, this *Penitential Season* is elapsed; and sends his *Prophets, the Interpreters of his Word*, to acquaint you with the peremptory Term.

AND

AND now to sum up this Discourse, as *Moses* did all his Remonstrances to the People of *Israel*, *Testes invoco hodie cælum* Deut. 30. *Et terram, quòd proposuerim vobis vitam Et* 19. *mortem, &c. I take heaven and earth to witness this day, that I have proposed to you life and death, and set the Blessings and the Judgments of God before your Eyes, and within your reach, to stretch out your Hand to which you please; The Heavens, which are peopled with Saints, who desired to see* Matt. 13. *those things, which you see, and did not see* 17. *them; to hear those things which you hear, and did not hear them; who were destitute of the many Advantages, which you enjoy; the Earth, a great Part of whose Inhabitants is still cover'd with Egyptian Darkeness, and involved in the Sins of Ninive, yet at the first Sermon would repent in Sackcloth and Ashes. And I call even Hell to witness, which is throng'd with so many justly condemn'd for Crimes, incomparably less than you daily commit, That God has not been wanting on his part, that the Bowels of his Mercy are as fruitful, that his Arms are as much extended, that his Heart is as open, that his Call is as vigorous, that his Hand is as powerful and as*
 ready

ready to save this Generation, as when he pardon'd the *Ninivites*, whom we copy in our Vices, and who sit to us as a perfect Model of a *heart*, of an *exemplar*, and of a *speedy* Repentance,

Which God of his infinite Mercy, &c.



A

S E R M O N

O F T H E

Transfiguration of our L O R D,

Preach'd before the

QUEEN-DOWAGER,

I N

Her Chapel at *SOMERSET-HOUSE*,
on the Second *SUNDAY* in *LENT*, 1687-8.

By *T H O M A S G O D D E N*, D. D.
Preacher in Ordinary to Her *MAJESTY*.

As Publish'd by Her MAJESTY's Command.

Printed in the *YEAR* *M D C C X L I*,

2 R R M O N

Government of the Forest

OUR DOWNGER

1850

1850

1850

1850



S E R M O N XI.

O F T H E

TRANSFIGURATION of our LORD,
Preach'd on the Second SUNDAY in *LENT*.

M A T T H. xvii. 1.

Assumit Jesus Petrum & Jacobum & Joannem fratrem ejus, & ducit illos in montem excelsum seorsum; & transfiguratus est ante eos.

Jesus taking Peter and James and John his brother, leadeth them into a high mountain apart; and was transfigured before them.



IN the last *Sunday's* Gospel, as St. *Matthew* relates, the *Devil* took our *Saviour* up into an exceeding high *Mountain*, to shew him all the *Kingdoms* of the *World*, and the *Glory* of them: In this present

*Matth. 4.
8.*

Gospel our Saviour himself leads three of his Disciples into another high *Mountain*, to give them a Prospect of the *Glory*, which is prepared for the Just in *Heaven*: Opposing Mountain to Mountain, and Glory to Glory; the Glory of *Heaven*, to that of *Earth*, to defeat the Designs of the Tempter by the same Method he had made use of to overcome. But as the *Objects* were different, and the *Mountains* too; the one deservedly called by Historians, *Mons Satanæ*, the Devil's Mount, for having been the Theatre of his greatest Temptation; the other by St. Peter, *Mons Sanctus*, the Holy Mount, for the *excellent Glory* which was represented on it: So was the *manner* of ascending them different also. For whereas the *Devil*, as St. *Matthew* says, *took* our Saviour *up* into an exceeding high Mountain; that is (according to the Explication best agreeing with the Context) carried him through the Air, as an Angel had formerly done *Habakkuk*, without giving him the least trouble or *pain* to ascend; the same St. *Matthew* tells us, that our *Saviour* did not *so* with his Disciples, but that he *led them up*; *duxit illos*, that is, *went* himself before them, and caused them to follow him, *on foot*, to give us to understand, that the *Way to Perdition*

Adrichom.

2 Peter 1.
18.

Dan. 14.
35.

is pleasant and easy; *ducunt in bonis dies suos*; those who walk in it, *pass their time in mirth and jollity*, Job xxi. 12. But the Way to true Glory is hard and difficult; *Strait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life*, Matth. vii. 14.

BUT how strait and narrow, how hard and difficult soever it be, the Greatness of the Reward more than recompenses the Labour of acquiring it, as appears by what passed with the Disciples of my Text; for being arrived at the Top of the Mountain, our Saviour there became *transfigured before them*, so that the *Brightness* of his Face vied with that of the Sun in his richest Attire of Light, and the *Whiteness* of his Garments with that of the Snow when array'd in its whitest Dress. Which of us, dear Christians, had he been present at this glorious Sight, would not have cried out with St. Peter, *Domine, bonum est nos hic esse; Lord, it is good for us to be here!* And who is there of us now, that is not inflamed with a holy Desire, or, as I may call it, *Curiosity*, as Moses was when he beheld the *burning Bush*, to know *how* it came to pass that the Body of our Saviour, which till then had appear'd different in nothing from the Bodies of other Men, should be suddenly invested

Exod. 3.

3.

invested with a *Brightness* like that of the *Sun*; and *what End* or *Design* he had in the doing of it?

To satisfy this two-fold Demand of *how* and *why* he would be thus transfigured, is what I have design'd for the Subject of my present Discourse, and accordingly shall divide it into Two Parts. In the First I shall give you an Account (as God shall enable me) of the *Mystery* it self, that is, *how* it came to pass, that the *Body* of our Saviour was so *transfigured*, that it became *bright* and shining as the *Sun*. In the Second, *why* he would work this wonderful Change in his *Face* and *Garments*, and that in the *Sight* of his Disciples: *Et transfiguratus est ante eos; And he was transfigured before them*, or in their Sight.

WHILST the Disciples were absorpt with Wonder at this glorious Spectacle, the Evangelist says, that a *bright Cloud* over-shadow'd them; which Cloud, St. *Augustin* says, was a Symbol of the *Holy Ghost*, in which he appear'd (as he formerly had done in the *Figure* of a *Dove* at our Saviour's Baptism) to grace the Solemnity with his Presence: That the Assistance of this *Divine Spirit* may not be wanting, whilst we treat of this glorious *Mystery*,
let

let us humbly implore it by the Intercession of that *Sacred Mother*, who in the Conception of her *Son* was *over-shadow'd* by the same Divine Spirit. AVE MARIA.

The F I R S T P A R T.

Et transfiguratus est ;

And he was transfigured.

TO give an Account *how* the Body of our Saviour was so *transfigured*, as to become bright and shining as the *Sun*, it will be necessary to enquire into the Meaning of the Word *Transfiguration*. When we say a thing is *disfigured*, every one understands the Meaning of it : But if we say a thing is *transfigured*, the Sense is not so easy and obvious to all, at least to the Unlearned, as not to require some Explication : Which yet I shall endeavour to manage so, that whilst I am instructing those of the lowest Form, such as are in a higher Class may not lose their Time ; remembering, with the Apostle, that I am a *Debtor* to both ; *Sapientibus & insipientibus debitor sum.*

A thing then is said to be *transfigured*, according to the proper Acceptation of the Word, when its *Shape* or *Figure*, not its *Essence*, is alter'd, so that it puts on
another

another Appearance, more noble and glorious than it had before; for the Particle *trans* here signifies an *Excess*, or *passing beyond* or above what is commonly and usually found in the Thing. An Example of this we have in a *Cloud*, which of it self is nothing but a *dark Vapour* or *Mist* exhaled from the Bowels of the Earth: Yet dark and misty as it is, no sooner is it penetrated by the Rays of the Sun, but presently it becomes *bright* and *shining*; and what before seem'd a *black Veil*, which muffled the Light of that glorious Planet, having now drank in his Beams, is transform'd into a radiant Mirror, in which he seems to rejoice to behold himself so gloriously reflected. This *Change* of the Cloud so much for the better, may fitly be called its *Transfiguration*; and gives us, tho' not a *Parallel*, yet a Glimpse at least of what pass'd in the *Transfiguration* of our Saviour; when his *Body*, till then dark and obscure, like those of other Men, became *bright* and *shining* like the *Sun*.

BUT now, because this *Transfiguration*, or Change so much for the better, may proceed from a two-fold Cause; either from *without*, as in a *Cloud*, when penetrated with the Rays of the Sun; or from *within*,

as when a *Globe* of Crystal is enlightned by a burning and shining *Lamp* set in it: The Question still remains, whether this bright Illumination, which discover'd it self in the Face and Garments of our Lord, proceeded from some cœlestial Splendor *without*, like that, which appear'd to the Shepherds at his Birth; or from some intrinsic *Principle*, or Fountain of *Light*, which, like the *Lamp* upon the Crystal, diffus'd it self upon his Body?

THE Solution of this Question depends upon that general known Doctrine of Divines with St. *Thomas*, that the *Soul* of our Redeemer, by virtue of the hypostatical Union with the Word, enjoy'd the *beatifical Vision*, or Sight of the Divine Essence, and so was full of *Glory* and *Brightness* from the first Instant of his Conception; And that from hence, as the Stream flows from the Fountain, there ought to have issued, by a connatural Emanation, a Communication of proportionable *Glory* and *Brightness* to his *Body*. For, as St. *Austin* says, *Tam potenti natura Deus fecit animam, ut ex ejus plenissimâ beatitudine redundet etiam in corpus plenitudo sanitatis, id est, incorruptionis vigor*: God created the Soul of Man of so powerful a Nature, that from

3 P. q. 34.
a. 4.

Ibid. q.
45.
a. 2.

Ep. 56.
ad Diojco-
rum.

the Fulness of its *Bliss* there should redound also upon the Body a *Fulness of Health*, or *Vigor of Incorruption*; under which Terms he comprehends all the four Prerogatives of a *glorified Body*, viz. *Clarity* or *Brightness*, *Agility*, *Immortality*, and *Impassibility*. All these *Qualities* then were *due* to the *Body* of our Saviour, as being united to his *glorified Soul*, from the first Instant of his Conception. But the end of his coming into the World being to suffer and die for our Salvation, 'twas necessary his *Glory* should remain shut up within his *Soul*, without being communicated to his *Body*; for had his *Body* been *glorified* as well as his *Soul*, he had not been in a Capacity to suffer for us. Thus did the Desire, he had to suffer for us, cause him to work a constant and prodigious Miracle upon Himself, by forcing, as I may say, the *Stream* of his *Glory*, like the Waters of *Jordan*, to roll it self up, and stand on a heap, without pouring it self forth upon his *Body*, which otherwise it would have done. But now the Time being come, in which the Divine Wisdom thought fit, not so much for his own Sake as for ours, that his pure and innocent Body, before it suffer'd, should enjoy one *Sun-shiny Day* among so many *Cloudy* ones: Behold he

opens

opens the *Sluice*, as I may call it, of that *Light* and *Glory*, which till then had been kept shut up within the Flood-gates of his Will, and gives it leave to pour it self forth in a full *Stream* upon his *Body*, which presently was so penetrated and steep'd in a glorious Flood of *Light*, that (as the Text says) *his Face shined like the Sun, and his very Garments became white as Snow.*

THUS it was, dear Christians, that the *Body* of our Saviour became so gloriously *transfigured*, not by an Illumination from *without*, but by an Irradiation from *within*; by which it appears to have been not so much the Effect of a *new Miracle*, as the *Suspension* or Discontinuation of a former one. For as in the Waters of *Jordan* the *Miracle* consisted in this, that they stood on a heap, and not that they afterwards *flowed* into the Sea, for that was their natural Course: So in the *Transfiguration* upon Mount *Thabor*, the *Miracle* was, that the *Stream* of *Glory* should remain pent up within the *Soul* of our Redeemer from the first Instant of his Conception, without any other Bank than that of his own Will, and not that it poured it self afterwards upon his *Body*, for that was but the natural Consequence of the *Glory* of his Soul.

AND now, dear Christians, (to make some Application of this to our selves) how much are we bound to our dearest Redeemer, both for the One and the Other! First, that he *repressed* his *Glory*, and kept it from communicating it self to his Body, through the whole Course of his Life, for the space of three and thirty Years; and then that he let it *flow* and manifest it self in his *Transfiguration*, in the *Brightness* both of his *Face* and *Garments*, since both were done for our Sakes! Had he not been pleased, once at least, to permit that *Flood* of *Glory*, of which his Soul was full, to pour it self forth upon his *Body*, we might have been, if not wholly Ignorant, yet not so sensible, at least, of his *Love* and *Mercy* in miraculously *suspending* its Emanation, all the rest of his Life, that he might be in a Condition to suffer and die for us. And is it not reason, that, now we know it, we should both *thank* him for it, and make it, in the best manner our Condition will permit, the Pattern of our *Imitation*? Not that we can *transfigure* our *Bodies* as his was; this is a Privilege reserved for the next Life: But that we *may* and *must* prepare and dispose these vile and mortal Bodies of ours to be *configured* (as the Apostle saith) *to the brightness*

ness of his glorified Body hereafter, by repressing within us at present a Flood of another nature, that Flood I mean of Original Corruption, which we bring with us into the World from our first Parent *Adam*. For such is the Condition of Man since his Fall, that the *Soul* is no sooner united to the *Body*, (which is in the very first Instant of its Creation) but it contracts the *Guilt* of *Original Sin*, and, together with it, a strong *Propension* or *Inclination* to the *Love* of itself, and of all those Objects, which are grateful to *Flesh* and *Blood*. So that the *Heart* of Man is like a corrupted *Fountain*, out of which, as our Saviour himself hath told us, *proceed evil Thoughts, Murther, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, false Witness, Blasphemies, and the like.* Mat. 15. 19. And altho' the *Guilt* of *Original Sin* be wash'd away by the Waters of *Baptism*, yet as (the Council of *Trent* hath declared) *Concupiscence*, or the *Propension* to these and the like Vices, is permitted to remain even in the *Regenerate*, for the Exercise of their *Virtue*, in withstanding the *first Suggestions* of *Sin*, so as not to suffer it, as the same Apostle saith, *to reign in our mortal Body,* Rom. 11. 12. in such manner as *to obey it in its inordinate Lusts and Desires.*

THIS

THIS is what we obliged our selves to do in the solemn *Promise* we made in *Baptism* of renouncing the Suggestions of the *Devil*, the Desires of the *Flesh*, and the Poms and Vanities of the *World*. And that the doing of this is a *Miracle*, and such an one as *may* and *ought* to be done by us, the Son of *Sirach* declares, when speaking of the *Just man*, whom he calls *Beatus*, or *Blessed*, he lays this down for one of the Conditions of his *Beatification*, that he has done *Miracles* in his Life; *Fecit enim mirabilia in vita sua*: And that we might know what *Miracles* these were, he presently adds, *Qui potuit transgredi, & non est transgressus; facere mala, & non fecit*; He, says he, is the Man, that hath done *Miracles* in his Life, who, *when it was in his Power to transgress, transgressed not; and when he could have done the evil, to which his corrupt Nature inclined him, withheld himself from committing it*. And for this reason it is, that when our *Saviour*, among other *Signs* or *Miracles*, which he foretels should be done by those that believed in him, puts *this* for one, that *if they drink any thing that is deadly, it shall not hurt them*: St. Gregory tells us, that *then* it is this *Miracle* is wrought in a more Sublime, because Spiritual manner, by
the

Eccles.

31.

Mark. 16.

St. Greg.

Hom. 29.
in Evang.

the Faithful, when feeling in themselves the venomous Suggestions and Persuasions of the Devil, or their own corrupt Nature, they are not drawn by them to commit any thing that is evil. *Dum pestiferas suasiones audiunt, sed tamen ad operationem pravam minimè pertrahuntur; mortiferum quidem est quod bibunt, sed non eis nocebit:* In this Case, saith he, they drink that which indeed is deadly of its own Nature, but not consenting to it, it shall do them no harm.

AND now, if the repressing the first Motions of Sin be so miraculous in respect of other Vices; how much more in regard of that of *Pride*, which is the Source and Spring of all the rest? *Whoever has thoroughly considered, says St. Augustin, or which is more, experienced in himself the different degrees of difficulty, which occur in the subduing of Vices, knows very well, that the Sin of Pride and Vain-glory is the chief, if not the only one, to which those, who have attain'd to Perfection, are obnoxious; and as it was the first, which infected the Soul, so also it is the last that is overcome.* From whence *St. Peter Damianus* doubted not to affirm, that if so great a Man as *Elias* could shut his mind from admitting a thought of *Vain-glory*, 'twas a greater Miracle than the shutting

*In Ps. 7.
Quo primo
vitio lapsa
est anima,
hoc ultimi-
mum vin-
cit.*

*Serm. 60.
Facilius
obserare
Cælum,
quam Ani-
mum. Jac.
5. 17.*

ting Heaven by his Prayer, that it rained not for three years and six months together.

HERE then it is, that a *Christian* truly shews himself to be a *Thaumaturgus*, or *Worker of Miracles*, when finding thoughts of *Pride*, *Envy*, *Gluttony*, *Impurity*, *Anger*, *Blasphemy*, *Revenge*, and the like, to arise in his *Heart*, ready, like an impetuous *Flood* to overflow, by his *Reason* or *superior Will*, assisted with the *Grace of Christ*, which was given him in *Baptism*, he forces them back, and will not suffer them to gain upon his *Consent*, nor to reign in his mortal *Body*; *Fecit mirabilia in vita sua*; he hath done *Miracles* in his *Life*: And by depriving himself of those *undue Delights* and *Satisfactions*, which are the natural *Consequences of Concupiscence*, he both prepares and disposes his own mortal *Body* to be configured to the *Brightness* of the *Body of his glorified Redeemer*; and shews his *Gratitude* to him, for having deprived himself of that *Glory* and *Brightness*, which was due, and, as such, would and ought to have redounded upon his *Body*, from the *Glory* of his *Soul*, (had he not miraculously repress'd and kept it back) from the first *Instant* of his *Conception*, to the *Day* of his *Transfiguration*. *Why* he permitted it then to pour
it

it self forth in a glorious *Flood* of Light upon his *Body* and *Garments*, and that in the *Presence* and *Sight* of his Disciples, is what I come now to treat of, as the Subject of the Second Part of my Discourse.

The S E C O N D P A R T.

Transfiguratus est ante eos;

He was transfigured before them.

A N D why *before them*, or in their *sight*, but to *excite* them *more efficaciously* to labour for the obtaining of so glorious a *Reward*? To give light to this Answer, it may not be unuseful to premise, what the Scripture relates to have pass'd with the Patriarch *Jacob*, when his Sons brought him the News of his Son *Joseph's* being alive. The Case was this :

J O S E P H being now *Vice-Roy* of *Gen. 45.*
Egypt, and having made himself known to his Brethren, commanded them to go tell his Father *Jacob* of *all his Glory*, and to bring him along with them into *Egypt*, to preserve him from the Famine, which was yet to last five Years. To accomplish this Design, he provided them of Carriages, and all things necessary for the Way, add-
V O L. I. X x ing

ing over and above a Present of the *good things of Egypt*, which might serve as an Earnest or Pledge of the Riches of the Place, to excite him to the Journey. No sooner were they arrived in the presence of their Father, but they acquainted him with the good News; *Joseph, Filius tuus, vivit, & dominatur in universa terra Ægypti*; *Joseph*, that Son of thy Love, whose *Absence*, not to say *Death*, thou hast so bitterly lamented for so many Years, is yet *alive*, and is *Governor* over all the Land of *Egypt*, and nothing is wanting to compleat his Happiness, but to have his Father *Jacob* with him. How may we imagine was the Heart of the holy Man transported with Joy at the *bearing* of this News? and how would he give order to get all things ready for the Journey, that he might go and enjoy the presence of his beloved *Joseph*? This indeed might have been expected; but not a Word of any such thing. On the contrary, the Scripture saith, that, when *Jacob* had heard these things, *his heart fainted within him*; or (as the *Vulgar* hath it) he remained as a Man *awaking out of a heavy sleep*, without knowing what to think, for he did not believe them; *Quo audito, Jacob quasi de gravi somno edigilans, tamen non credebat eis.*

eis. What then was to be done? They give him a more particular account of *all the Words* of *Joseph*, which he had said to them. And when this availed as little as the former, they shew'd him the *Waggons* and *rich Presents*, which *Joseph* had sent him; and the Text saith, that, when he had *seen* them, *cúmque vidisset plaustra & universa, quæ miserat*, his Spirit revived within him, *revixit Spiritus ejus*; and, as if he were now no more the same Man, but another, he said, *It is enough*, I am now convinced, that my Son *Joseph* is yet living; and so, without regarding either the Feebleness of his old Age, or the Difficulties of the Way, he resolved to go and see him before he died. Behold here, how much *more powerfully* our Affections are moved to act by the things we *see*, than by those we only *hear*! And can we then wonder, if our dearest *Redeemer*, whose *Wisdom* suggested, and *Goodness* prompted him, to make use of the *most efficacious* Means to inflame our Affections with the Love of Heaven, led the Disciples of my Text up to the top of Mount *Thabor*, and was there *transfigured before them*!

HE had often *told* them of the *Glory* of *Heaven*, and proposed it as a *Reward* to all

those, who should *deny* themselves, and take up their *Cross* and follow him. He had foretold them also, that himself would *rise again the third day*, as the first Fruit of those that slept, and promised, that his Followers should *shine like the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*. And what did all this work upon them? If they did not look upon it as a *Dream*, they remain'd at most but as Men awaken'd out of a deep Sleep; for St. *Luke* says in express Terms, that when he spake to them of his Passion and Resurrection, *Ipsi nihil horum intellexerunt*; they understood nothing of these things, and what he said affected them no more, than if he had spoken in some unknown Language; & *verbum hoc erat absconditum ab eis*. What *Remedy* then to *disengage* their Understandings from this Stupidity, and *engage* their *Wills* to labour heartily for Heaven? The *Remedy* was (and blessed be his Goodness in condescending so graciously to our Weakness) to suffer himself to be *transfigured before them*, and by communicating that *Glory* to his Body, which hitherto he had kept restrain'd within his Soul, to give them a *Sight* of that *Glory*, of which he had so often discoursed to them: And that they might not doubt but that a *Participation*

Mat 13.

43.

Luke 18.

34.

icipation of the *like Glory* was design'd also for his Servants and Followers, he caused *Moses* and *Elias* to appear in like *Majesty* and *Brightness* with him. The same was also signified in the *Brightness* of his *Garments*, which (as *St. Thomas* observes upon this place) were a *Type* or *Figure* of the *Saints*; of whom the Prophet *Isaiab* saith, that *he shall* Isa. 41.
cloath himself with them as with a robe of 27.
glory, and wear them for an ornament in
the day of his nuptials. From whence the devout *St. Austin*, with his wonted *Acuteness*, took occasion to apply those Words of holy *David*, *He giveth his Snow like Wool* Pf. 147.
Merito
fulgebat
Vestis
Christi
sicut Nix,
tanquam
de illa lana
jam facta
erat Tunica.
St. Aug.
in Pf. 147.
 (the usual matter of which *Garments* are made) to what pass'd in the *Transfiguration* of our Lord; giving us to understand by his appearing then, as it were cloathed with *Snow*, what kind of *Fleece* his *Garment* of *Glory* was to be made of, that is, of those, who had *washed their Stoles in the Blood of the Lamb*, and so were become *pure* and *white* as *Snow*; or, as *St. Paul* expresses it, a glorious Church without *spot* or *wrinkle*; without *spot*, as wash'd *white* in the *Blood* of the *Lamb*; and without *wrinkle*, as having been *extended* with him upon the *Cross*.

How much *more efficaciously* the Affections of the Disciples were inflamed to Action

tion by the *sight* of so *glorious* a *Reward*, than by what they had only *heard* discoursed of it, the *Transport* of *St. Peter*, and the haste he was then in to *building* of *Tavernacles*, and (when that was not permitted, as being out of *Season*, because before the time) the immense *Labours* both himself and the rest courageously undertook, and cruel *Torments* they chearfully underwent for the obtaining of it, are too well known to be insisted on. What concerns our selves, dear *Christian Auditors*, is to imitate the Example of those, who (as the same

2 Peter 1. 16. *St. Peter* saith) *have made known unto us the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, having been spectators of his Majesty, when they were with him in the holy mount;* and not to suffer our selves to remain so *dull* and *stupid* as not to be *moved* with it. When

2 Machba. 1. 22. *Nehemias* had restored the *Temple* and the *Altar*, he caused the *Sacrifices* to be sprinkled with a *thick Water*, which the *Priests* had found in a deep and dry *Well*, where their *Ancestors* had hid the *Holy Fire* when they went into *Captivity*. The *Sun* was then in a *Cloud*; and whilst he remain'd so, the *Water* also remain'd as before: But as soon as the *Sun* brake forth out of the *Cloud*, *accensus est ignis magnus,*
ita

ita ut omnes mirarentur; a great Fire was presently kindled, to the Wonder and Astonishment of all that beheld it. And will it not be a matter of great *Wonder* and *Astonishment*, if now that the *Sun* of *Justice*, after having so long remain'd under a *Cloud*, has display'd the *Beams* of his *Glory*, both in his *Face* and *Garments*, our Hearts shall still remain like *thick Water*, that is, cold and earthy, and not be converted into *Fire*? The Consideration of this made holy *David* cry out, *Filii hominum usquequò gravi corde?* Ye Sons of Men, how long will you suffer your Hearts to lie groveling upon the Earth? And why will you spend your Days in hunting after the *vain* and *transitory*, and therefore *false* and *lying* Goods of this Life, without aspiring to those *eternal*, and therefore only *true* and *substantial* Goods, which are prepared for you in *Heaven*? If a *Prize* be proposed to be run for of any considerable Value, how do those, that are to *run* for it, pluck up their Spirits, and *abstain* from all things, however otherwise pleasing and dear to them, that may hinder them in the *Race*? And if they do this to obtain a *corruptible* Reward, how much more, as *St. Paul* ^{1 Cor. 9.} presses the Argument, ought we to *abstain* ^{25.} ^{2 Tim. 2.} from ^{5.}

from all those things, that are *hurtful*, and may hinder us in our *Course* to *Heaven*; since what we contend for, is no less than a *Crown* of never-fading Glory? They, when they have done their *best*, may *miss* of what they *run* for, because *many* run, but only *one* can get the *Prize*: But for the *Prize* of *Heaven*, every one (to use the *Apostle's* Expression) that *runs lawfully*, that is, keeping the *Commandments* of *God* (tho' not with equal *Swiftnefs* and *Perfection*, for our *Saviour* tell us, that *in his Father's House* there be *many Mansions*) is sure to obtain it.

A L A S, dear *Christians*! had it been our hard *Lot* to have been born in some *barbarous Nation*, where there had been *no certain Knowledge* of the true *Reward* of *Virtue*; or to have been brought up among the *Philosophers*, of whom *St. Augustin* reporteth, that they had above two hundred different *Opinions* concerning the *last End* or *Happiness* of *Man*, not knowing which to *fix* upon, or to *prefix* to themselves, as the *Prize* they were to *run* for, or the *Mark* to which they were to direct the *Course* of their *Lives* and *Actions*: Some *shadow* of *Excuse* might have been pretended by us, why we pour'd forth our selves upon
the

the things of this World, and placed our Satisfaction in the Enjoyment of them. But now that we both know the *Prize*, that we are to *run* for, and that if we run *lawfully*, that is, observing the prescribed Rule of *God's Law*, we shall *certainly* obtain it; what can we pretend to save our selves from falling under the Sentence of *that Servant*, who because he *knew the Will of his Master*, and *did not do it*, was deem'd worthy, not only to be deprived of the *Reward*, but to be *beaten with many Stripes*? Let us not deceive our selves; one way or other we must be finally like to *Angels*. What our *Saviour* said of the *Just*, that they shall be as the *Angels in Heaven* (and who, says *St. Austin*, would have believed it, if he had not said it?) is as true of the *Wicked*, that they shall be like to the *Apostate Angels* in Hell. No *medium* to be expected; *Eternal Happiness* must be our *Reward*, or *Eternal Misery* our *Doom*. This may seem a *hard* Condition to the inordinate *Lovers* of this *World*, and perhaps to some *faint-hearted Christians*, who could wish to be in *Heaven*, so it might cost them nothing: But whoever thought the *Children of Israel* were *hardly* dealt with, because *God*, after he had led them on dry

Mat. 22.
26.

Ground through the middle of *Jordan*, let the Waters flow in their ordinary Channel, and hinder their retiring back, so that they were reduced to a *Necessity* of being either *Conquerors* or *Slaves*? This *happy Necessity* whetted their *Courage* to that Degree, that in a short time they became Masters of the *Earthly Canaan*, which was a *Type* and Figure of the *Heavenly One*. And God seems to make use of the same *Stratagem* to encourage us to fight for the Glory of *Heaven*, when, having led us through the Waters of *Baptism*, he puts us upon a *necessity* of making our selves eternally *happy*, if we will not be eternally *miserable*.

WHAT then if some *Difficulties* occur in *regulating* the inordinate Desires of our *corrupt Nature* to the *Law of God*? What if it cost some Pain and *Labour* to mortify and *repress* the absurd and extravagant *Suggestions* of our sensual *Appetites*? Is there any thing of *Satisfaction* even in this World (how short and momentary soever) but costs Pain and Trouble to obtain it? Does not the *Merchant* undertake long Voyages at Sea, and expose his *Riches* to the *Danger* of being lost, to *augment* them? Does not the *Soldier* undergo the greatest *Hardships*, and enter the *Combat* with manifest Hazard of
his

his *Life*, to gain the empty Honour of a *Triumph*? Does not the *sick* Person abstain from all things, which the Physician commands him, and swallow many a *bitter* Potion, to recover his *Health*, which may be *lost* again, as soon as re-establish'd? And if the *transitory things* of this World are not attainable without much *Toil* and *Labour* (which when they are gotten are upon the brink of being *lost*) can we expect that *Heaven* alone should be cast upon us without any *Pains* or *Labour* on our Part to obtain it? Surely nothing can be more unjust, nor more unworthy a Creature endued with *Reason*, than this *unequal* Proceeding. Nor can I imagine any other Cause of it, but the want of true *Faith*, or a supine *Neglect* to render it *lively* by framing a *right Judgment* of the *Greatness* of the *Glory* of the *next Life* in comparison of *this*? Did we do this, it were impossible we should not ardently desire, and heartily labour for it; and, instead of repining at the *Pains* we are to take for it, wonder, as *St. Austin* did, that so *great* a *Reward* should be exposed for so *little* Labour: *Miraberis tantum dari pro tantillo labore.* It were but just, says he, that *Eternal Labour* should be exacted of us for the obtaining of *Eternal Rest*; *Pro*

æterna requie, æternus labor subeundus erat. But because then the *Reward* could never be obtain'd, because the *Labour* would never be at an *End*, God has been so gracious as to order, that it shall not only be *temporal*, but *short*. *Non solum temporalem voluit laborem tuum Deus, sed brevem.* And I may add, not only *short*, but *momentary*: For if this *Globe* of *Earth*, on which we live, compared with the vast *Extension* of the *Heavens*, bears no greater a Proportion than that of a *Point* to the *Circumference*; what can the *few Days*, we have to live upon this *Point*, be, in comparison of *Eternity*, but a *Moment*? And yet how much of this *Moment* do we daily pare off, and squander away upon the *Vanities* of the *World*, as if a *whole Moment* of *Labour* were too much for an *Eternity* of *Glory*? Whatever our Conduct hath been hitherto, let us not henceforward be so *ungrateful* to the *Riches* of God's Goodness, and so *treacherous* to our own *true Interest*, as not to employ the *Remainder* of it, at least, in the *Duties* of a pious and holy Life, for the purchasing of so great and *glorious* a *Reward*.

To conclude, and sum up in Brief what I have discoursed in this Part, that, like
good

good Seed laid up in your Hearts, it may bring forth Fruit with Patience: God has allotted to Man *two Lives*, the *One* in *this World*, short, and subject to many *Miseries*; the *Other Eternal*, in the *next*, and to those, who *live well*, free from all Misery; and replenish'd with *all kind of Goods*. This supposed, nothing can be more evident, than that the *latter* is infinitely, and without comparison, to be *preferred* before the *former*. What then can we conclude from these *Premises*, unless we will renounce our *Reason*, as well as our *Happiness*, but a strong Resolution to set our selves *seriously* to work, and not suffer any Day, or Hour, or Moment of our Life to *slide* away, without making an advance towards the obtaining of so *great* a *Good*? What was represented on Mount *Tabor*, tho' great and glorious, as we have heard in the First Part, was but a *Glimpse* or Reflection of that *Essential Glory*, which the *Blessed* shall enjoy in *Heaven*. If then the *Labour* of acquiring it deters us, let the *Greatness* of the *Reward* invite us; so *great*, that St. Paul says, *Neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the good things, which God hath prepared for those that love him.* May his
infinite

infinite Mercy bring us to that *happy* Station, where we may behold him, *as he is, Face to Face*, and *see and enjoy* what here we cannot *comprehend*. In the mean time, let us say from our Hearts with *St. Paul*, 1 Tim. i. 17. *To the King of Ages, Immortal, Invisible, only God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*



UNTIMELY REPENTANCE.

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the Right Honourable

Lord P E T R E,

I N

His Chapel at *INGATESTONE-HALL*,
on *PASSION-SUNDAY*, *April 1*, 1688.

By the Reverend FATHER

R I C H A R D L E V I S O N,
Priest of the SOCIETY of *JESUS*.

Permissu Superiorum.

Printed in the YEAR MDCCLXI.

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S E R M O N XII.

U N T I M E L Y R E P E N T A N C E.

Preach'd before the Right Honourable

Lord P E T R E,

On P A S S I O N - S U N D A Y, *April 1, 1688.*

J O H N viii. 46.

Quis ex vobis arguet me de peccato?

Who of you shall accuse me of sin?



HE stubborn and ungrateful Jew, whom all the Favours and Miracles of Heaven could never endear unto his God, even after his prodigious Deliverance from *Egyptian* Slavery, and drowning of his Enemies in the Red-Sea, still murmurs against his Leaders, and still turns Idolater to his Maker. And does his patient God forbear? Does he extend his Mercies? Strange Patience! Unheard of Clemency! He sends his only begotten Son into the

VOL. I. Z z World,

Sic Deus dilexit mundum, ut filium suum unigenitum daret. St. Jo. cap. 3. v. 16.

World, to guide, instruct, and give the Knowledge of Salvation to his People, thinking they would respect him, embrace his Doctrine, obey his Commands, follow his Counsels, and imitate his Virtues: *Verebuntur Filium meum; They will reverence my Son.* St. Matth. xxi. 37. In vain, my God, in vain. He derides his Innocency, he scoffs at his Sanctity, he scorns his Virtue, persecutes his Justice, condemns his Doctrine as erroneous, and obstinately declares he will not follow it: *Recede à nobis, scientiam viarum tuarum nolumus; Depart from us, we will not the knowledge of thy ways,* Job xxi. 14. Though each Paragraph of the Law stile him Holy, all the Prophets celebrate him as a Just Man, all the ancient Figures represent him Innocent, though the Angel proclaim him Saviour of the World, though the eternal God name him the Beloved of his Heart, tho' the People reverence him as a Prophet, *Hic est Jesus Propheta, This is Jesus the Prophet,* St. Matth. xxi. 11. and declare he had done all things well, tho' the Devils adore him as Son of God, infine, tho' convinced by all the Oracles of Scripture, and his own broad Seal of Miracles, that he is the true *Messias* and Saviour of the World, yet he will not receive him:

him: *Nolumus hunc regnare super nos; We will not have this Man reign over us,* St. Luke xix. 15. So little Impression can the Preaching, Example, and Miracles of an Incarnate Deity work upon his stony Heart. But what? Shall his Stubborness conquer the Almighty, and Impiety banish Virtue in spite of Heaven? No: The God of Innocency, the Author of Sanctity, divine Truth, and great Champion of Virtue, Christ Jesus, makes a solemn Challenge To-day, in the face of *Jerusalem*, to his implacable Enemies the High-Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, in Vindication of the Innocency of his Life, the Sanctity of his Manners, and Infallibility of his heavenly Doctrine. Secure then of his own Innocency, and full of Godlike Majesty, he assaults them with a, *Quis ex vobis, &c. Who of you shall accuse me of sin?* He dares them to shew wherein he has offended. Tell me, have I sinned against my God or my Neighbour? Have I not observed the great Commandments towards them both, *Love thy God above all things, and thy neighbour as thy self?* Tell me in what have I transgressed? Have I ever violated the least *Iota*, the least tittle of the Law Divine, or Human? I have preached in your Synagogues, I have spoken openly;

examine my Doctrine, if it be not coherent with the Law and Prophets, if it be not divine, if it be not from God. I have taught daily in the Temple, in your hearing, shew a Word that I have not confirm'd by the brightest Evidence of irrefragable Miracles. *Quis ex vobis? Who of you shall accuse me of sin? Can your Cæsars? Can your Herods? Have I not punctually obey'd their Orders? Have I not paid them Tribute with all Exactness? Have I not given strict command to all my Followers, next unto God, to give Cæsar his Due? Quis ex vobis? &c. Who of you? &c. Can your High-Priests? Have I not commanded Respect and Obedience to the Chair of Moses? Can the Sinner or Publican? Have I not been zealous for his eternal Salvation? Did I not daily invite him to Repentance, offer him Pardon, and promise him eternal Reward in the Kingdom of Heaven? Ask Matthew the Publican, demand of Magdalen the Sinner, put the Query to Simon and Zacheus. Quis ex vobis? Can the Married? I have honoured their State with my Presence, and confirm'd it by Miracle. Can the Widows? I have supplied their Wants by my Prophets, commanded them to be honoured by my Apostles, and my self have raised their Dead to comfort them in Afflictions.*

fiCTIONS. Ask the Widow-Woman of *Sarepta*, go to the Gates of *Naim*, and you will hear and see the clearest Demonstrations. Can the Virgin? I have equalled her Condition to the sublime Degree of Angels. Can your Children? They were the bosom Darlings of my Heart, and I have entailed Heaven upon them for their Inheritance: *Sinite parvulos venire ad me; Suffer the little Children to come unto me*, St. *Matth.* xix. 14. Can the hungry Multitude? I fed them in the Desert by Prodigies. Can the Sick, Imprisoned, Lame, Leprous, Paralytick, or Possessed? Have I not visited them, cured their Infirmities, cast out Devils? What more? Of my Deeds the Dumb speak, the Blind see them, the Deaf hear them, and the Dead can give you Intelligence of them. *Quis ex vobis, &c. Who of you shall accuse me of sin?* Infine, he lays open the Truth so clear before their Eyes, that they could have no Excuse for not embracing it. *Si non venissem, & locutus eis fuissem, peccatum non haberent: nunc autem excusationem non habent; If I had not come, and spoken to them, they should not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin*, St. *John* xv. 22. And then demands, *Si veritatem dico vobis, quare non creditis mihi*

mibi? If I say the truth, why do you not believe me? St. John viii. 47. But what return? The People, indeed, ravished with the resplendent Truth of his heavenly Doctrine, applaud him with a, *Nunquam sic locutus est homo, Never did man speak as this Man, St. John vii. 47.* Yet the proud and haughty Pharisee, having nothing but meer Negatives to oppose, impudently blasphemes, *Nos scimus quia hic homo peccator est; We know that this man is a sinner, St. John ix. 24.* And consequently his Doctrine cannot be true, which filling the Jews with Envy, they take up Stones like unto their Hearts to through at him: *Tulerunt ergo lapides ut jacerent in eum; They took Stones therefore to cast at him, St. John viii. 59.* call a Council and condemn the Innocent, *Reus est mortis; He is guilty of death, St. Matth. xxvi. 66.*

CHRISTIAN AUDITORY, I will not waste my Time, nor your devout Attention, in accusing the stubborn Jew of Sin, for rejecting the divine Call of his *Messias*; I leave it to that dreadful Day, when he shall see him, whom he crucified, coming in the Clouds with Majesty. There is a Christian Jew, I mean the obstinate Sinner (for so he is, and so I call him) whom I accuse,

FIRST,

FIRST, Of a horrible Sin, in slighting the Inspirations and Graces of Almighty God, that daily invite him to Repentance.

SECONDLY, I will demonstrate the evident Danger he puts the eternal Salvation of his Soul in, by deferring his Conversion to the last.

DEAR Jesus, I beseech you by that burning Zeal, with which you sought the Salvation of the *Jews*, enlighten my Understanding, inflame my Will, and influence my Words with such Force and Energy, that piercing into the Hearts of my Auditory, I may awake them out of that dangerous and soul-killing Lethargy too too many sleep in: By your bitter Death and Passion grant, that in the most terrible Hour of Death, on which depends the Happiness or Misery of Eternity, the Enemy of Souls may never insult over any one here with a, *Prævalui adversus eum, I have got the Victory, Psalm xii. 5.* I humbly beg it by the Intercession of your Virgin Mother, whom I salute with the Angel. AVE MARIA, &c.

F I R S T P A R T.

IF I should accuse any here of Imprudence in their temporal Concerns, I were justly

justly.

justly to be condemn'd of a rash Imputation: You are all wise. For who of you has not the end of his Employment lively fixt before his Eyes? Who provides not all necessary Means? Who delays in the speedy Execution of them? Who embraces not all Opportunities of obtaining it? Each Step you take advances towards it. All your Study and Labours, your Care and Industry, your Thoughts in private, your Discourses in publick, your Conferences with Friends, your Vows in the Day, your Wakings in the Night, meet here as in their beloved Center. After this, each Motion of your Heart breathes, each Aspiration of your Soul mounts to this as to its Sphere of Rest. This raises the Scholar to a Benefice, brings the Lawyer to the Bar, enriches the Merchant with Treasures, advances the Courtier to the Favour of his Prince, and crowns the Soldier with Laurels. Hence I accuse my Christian *Jew*, my obstinate Sinner. Why not so much Diligence in the main Point, in the most important Affair, in that *unum necessarium* the eternal Welfare of thy Soul? Why does not the great Maxim of Salvation, taught thee by the God of Truth, *Quid prodest, &c. What doth it profit a Man, if he gain the whole world and sustain the damage of his Soul*, take up thy time but half

half as much, and dwell as near thy Heart? *Obstupefcite Cæli, fuper hoc, & portæ ejus de- Jer. 11.
folamini vehementer; Be aftonifhed O bea- v. 12.
vens, upon this, and O gates thereof be ye
defolate exceedingly.* He knows that at the
fame time he fins, he lofes the Friend-
fhip of God, his Right to Heaven, and
becomes a miserable Slave to Hell. And
yet, becaufe Heaven does not confume him
with Fire, the Earth does not open and
fwallow him alive, becaufe, like a *Baltazar*;
he is not fummoun'd from the midft of
his Pleafures, to give a ftrict Account at
the fevere Tribunal of Divine Juftice, he
boafts with the Wicked; *Peccavi, & quid
mibi accidit trifte? I have finned, and what
forrowful thing hath befallen me? Ecclef. v. 4.*
If you tell him with the Wife Man, that
Delays are dangerous, and found in his
Ear, *Ne differas de die in diem, &c. Slack
not to be converted to our Lord, and defer
not from day to day. For his wrath fhall
come fuddenly, and in the time of Vengeance
he will deftroy thee, Ibid ver. 8, 9.* Send him
a *Mofes* to know when he fhall pray
for him, and free him from the vexing
Plagues of Sin, *Appoint me when I fhall pray
for thee, Exod. viii. 9.* And with the fenfe-
lefs *Pharaoh* he answers, *To-morrow.* Let a
Jesus inculcate a thoufand *Videte's, watch,*

pray, you know not when the time is, you know neither the day nor the hour; he answers, he is sensible enough of his Condition, and would not for a thousand Worlds die in the State he lives in, and is resolved to repent when he comes to die; for to be saved it is not so absolutely necessary to live a holy Life, as to die a holy Death; and so eludes all the Remorses of his guilty and tortured Conscience, puts off all the Graces and divine Inspirations of God, that daily invite him to Repentance, with the unhappy Felix to St. Paul, Quod nunc attinet, &c. For this time go thy way: but in time convenient I will send for thee, Acts. xxiv. 25. He will make use of them another time, he will hear them when he is more at Leisure, when he grows old he will lay all other Concerns aside, and attend wholly to the Salvation of his Soul. Is not this a Miracle sufficient to astonish Heaven and Earth? That a Man of Reason, a Man that pretends to Christianity, should have so little Sense of his eternal Happiness, as to live as they did, who are now damned, to Feast, Drink, Sleep, and be Merry, as if he had not one Foot upon the very brink of Hell, but were on the Wings of a Seraphim, in his Flight to the Glory of Paradise; that he should have so

little

little feeling of his only Soul, *Unicam meam*, as with the Epicure to think it to be only like Salt unto his Body, to keep it from stinking? Pray tell me, what was the Ruin of *Pharaoh* and the whole Kingdom of *Egypt*? Was it not his Stubborness to the Calls of Heaven? Hear the most eloquent *St. Ambrose*: *Appoint me when*, says the God-like *Moses*; and senseless *Pharaoh* answers, *To-morrow*: *Whereas press'd by so great necessity he ought to desire him to pray now, and not defer it: He answers, To-morrow; But this delay cost the lazy and negligent Prince no less than the ruin and destruction of Egypt.* What was the Destruction of the famous *Jerusalem*? Was it not because she was deaf to all the Invitations of her God? Neither the Promises of *Isaiab*, nor Prayers of *Jeremiah*, nor Threats of *Joel*, nor so many Exhortations, Graces and Miracles of the Son of God himself could awake her. Our Blessed Saviour expresses the Cause in a Flood of compassionate Tears: *Eò quòd non cognoveris tempus visitationis tuæ; Because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.* *St. Luke xix. 44.* Because she did not hearken when called, repent when invited.

Cum deberet in tantâ postus necessitate rogare, ut jam oraret, nec differret; respondit crastinâ die, otiosus & negligens moræ pœnam Egypti soluturus excidio.

FOR my part, were I to write the Cause of their Damnation upon the Forehead of

the Damned, I would use no other Inscription than, *Eò quòd non cognoverint tempus, &c. Because they did not know the time of their visitation.* All these suffer, and shall suffer in Hell for Eternity, because they mispent their time in this World, and did not make use of Divine Grace when offer'd. There is not one of these but intended to save his Soul, as much as you do. But alas! They deferred their Conversion too long, then went to buy the Oyl of Mercy when she had shut the Gates against them: *Eò quòd non cognoverint tempus, &c. Because they did not know the time of their Visitation.* Do you not? O Angel, that keepest the Keys of *Death and Hell, Claves mortis & inferni, Apocal. i. 18.* Open I beseech you those dark Abysses, where all unfortunate Souls must eternally dwell; that, with the devout *St. Bernard*, we may descend in Contemplation to Hell whilst we live, never to come there when we are dead. Unhappy *Dives!* Who stript thee of thy Silks and Purple? What brought thee into this place of Torments? What torments thee in these Flames? Oh! I often heard a, *Væ vobis divitibus, Woe to you rich men, St. Luke vi. 24. Quorum Deus venter est, quorum finis interitus; Whose God is their belly, whose end is destruction.* Yet I clad my self in the richest

Phil. 3.
19.

Silks

Silks and Purples, eat and drank of the most exquisite Meats and choicest Wines I could get; I made my Belly my God, and spent my Youth in Mirth and Riot, still intending to fast, cloath my self with Ashes and Sackcloth, in my old Age, and save my Soul at last. But O! That *ducunt in bonis dies suos, & in puncto ad inferna descendunt*; They lead their days in Wealth, and in a moment go down to Hell, was my unfortunate *Exit*. I stopt my Ears when called by the merciful Admonitions of my God, deferred my Penance too long, and therefore, hurried away by sudden Death, am buried, am buried in Hell. I see the once-scorn'd Beggar in the Bosom of Delights; I beg of Father *Abraham*, not Oceans, nor Streams, but that the ulcerous *Lazarus* may only dip the tip of his Finger in Water to cool the unquenchable Thirst of my scorched Tongue, and cannot obtain it. Alas! All the Comfort I receive is a reproachful, *Recordare, fili, &c. Remember, Son, that thou didst receive good things in thy life-time, &c.* St. *Luke* xvi. 25. I omitted, when offer'd to drink of those Waters of Grace, which extinguish an eternal Thirst, and therefore, *Crucior in hac flammâ; I am tormented in this flame.* O miserable young Man! What sad Chance cut off thy bloomy
 Days

Days in their prime, and brought thee hither? It was Non-correspondence to the Admonitions of his Friends, Suggestions of his good Angel, and Graces of Almighty God, which so often with an, *Adolescens, tibi dico, surge; Young man, I say to thee, arise,* St. Luke vii. 14. called upon him to forsake that lewd Company, fly those occasions of Sin, and save himself, with *Lot*, from the Flames of *Sodom*. But he heard them not, he thought some Liberty might be given to Youth, intending when the Heat and Fervor of that was over, to become a *Joseph* in the Victories of Chastity, so goes on, spends his Strength and Estate too Prodigal-like, *vivendo luxuriosè*. But alas! Before he could return to the all-pardoning Embraces of his heavenly Father, a burning Fever, enkindled by the damnable Flames of Lust, posts him unexpectedly into another World of the same Temper, *Hell*. For the lustful flames of this life lead us down to the burning fire of that furnace. Poor unfortunate young Woman! How came you into these Shades of Horror? She weeps; Shame and Confusion will not permit her to speak. She often heard from her heavenly Spouse a, *Vides hanc mulierem? Do you see this Woman?* She follow'd *Magdalen* the Sinner, but neglected to imitate *Magdalen*

Libidinosum enim hujus vitæ incendium ad fornicis illius incendium ducit. Isidor. Pelus. Epis. 533.

Magdalen the Penitent, till the time of Repentance was elapsed, and therefore she weeps, and shall weep eternally, but never hear a, *remittuntur tibi peccata tua*; *Thy Sins are forgiven thee.* Unbelieving Soul! What shut thee out of Heaven, and condemn'd thee to an everlasting Death? Want of true Faith. I often heard a secret Voice in my Soul tell me, that there was but *one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism*, St. Paul to the *Ephes. iv.* And consequently among so many contradictory Religions, all could not be true Ways to Salvation; I always thought that to be the true Church, which by clear Texts of Scriptures, Authority of general Councils, Sentences of holy Fathers, and a never interrupted Succession of Supreme Pastors, could prove its self to have the Marks of Christ's true Church, as to be *One, Holy, Catholick and Apostolick.* I thought that infallibly must be the true Church of Christ, which, notwithstanding all the Attempts and Persecutions of Schism, Heresy, and Hell, was yet visible, and could shew it had maintain'd its Doctrine in its Primitive Purity, and taught now the same that Christ and his Apostles taught. But whether I were a Member of this Church or no, I omitted (through too much Love of the World, and Desire of Liberty)

to

to inquire, and therefore dying out of its Communion, out of which there is no Salvation, eternally perished.

THUS it will happen to all, who refuse to answer when God calls. Therefore, *Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.* The unbelieving Soul, if he will be saved, must bottom himself on true Faith. *Ergo;* Therefore, *if to-day you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.* The obstinate Sinner, if he will be saved, must answer when God calls. Did I say, To-day? Oh let it be this very Moment, before you depart from the Chapel, before you go Home, and it will be the Beginning of your eternal Happiness; and thus I conclude my First Point.

*Ergo dum
lucem ha-
betis, cre-
dite in lu-
cem, ut filii
lucis sitis,
St. Jo. c.
12. v. 36.
Hodie si
vocem ejus
audieritis,
nolite ob-
durare
corda vestra.*

S E C O N D P A R T.

THE most deluding Fallacy, on which the obdurate Sinner builds the Delay of his Conversion, is a presumptive Confidence in the Mercies of Almighty God, so much the more treacherous and deceitful, because it carries an outward Shew of Virtue. *St. Chrysostom*, on the second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, takes him to task, and thus discourses: *Dicis*, says he, *alii mali fuerunt, & salvi facti sunt, dabit & mihi spatium pœnitentiæ;*

pœnitentiæ: Others were bad and are saved; *David* was an Adulterer, *Zacheus* a Publican, *Saul* a Persecutor, and *Magdalen* a Sinner; and he will give me time to repent. So they speak, who sin with Confidence, and, as *Tertullian* said, are bad because God is good. The Saint replies and asks; *An verè dabit spatium pœnitentiæ? Fortasse, inquis, dabit*: But will he really give you time to repent? Perchance, say you, he will. The Saint urges very home: *Dicis fortasse? memento quòd de anima loqueris; Do you say perchance? Remember that you speak of your Soul*. In a Business of so great Concern, than which no Man has, or can have a greater, do you proceed with the Uncertainty of a perchance? When with so much Facility you may put your self almost in Security of your Salvation? You never admit of these Doubts or Uncertainties in the meanest Affair of the World. Nay, is your Friend condemned by some unfortunate Accident to the fatal stroke of Death, do you not use all possible Care, all imaginable Means, do you not employ all your Interest and Forces, to repeal the Sentence, to obtain his Pardon? Why then must only the Business of your eternal Salvation be managed with the Uncertainty of Time, which is not in your Power? *Fortasse dabit.*

dabit. And how numerous are they, to whom God has not given time to provide for the main Concern? And yet these very Men had continually in their Mouths, *Fortasse dabit, Perchance he will give us time to repent;* they spent their Days in Feasting, and lived pleasantly. It's true, says St. *Augustin*, and I err if you do not find written in the Gospel, with the Golden Characters of Light and Truth, that God promises *Pardon to all Sinners that repent:* But though you had a hundred thousand Eyes, you will never find registred by the Pen of God, in any Page of the Saered Volumes, that he has promised a Sinner *time to repent.* *Nemo ergo sibi promittat quod Evangelium non promittit;* Let no man therefore promise himself that which the Gospel does not promise. St. *Augustin*, De verbis Domini, Ser. 16.

BUT say what I will, my Christian *Jew* is become a *Rabbi* in the Synagogue of the Obstinate. He tells me with his Confederates in *Isaiab*, *Percussimus fœdus cum morte & cum inferno fecimus pactum, Isaiab xxviii. 15.* He has made a Truce with Death, and struck up a Bargain with Hell. What? That Death shall not seize upon you unprovided? That it shall give you time, by a perfect Contrition and Sorrow for your Sins, to reconcile your self to Almighty God, to
arm

arm your self with the Rites of the Church for that dangerous Passage; that your Death should be all mild, all pleasant, all melodious and joyful; that happy, as old *Simeon*, you shall close your Eyes with Jesus in your Arms, and depart in Peace, singing a, *Nunc dimittis servum tuum Domine, &c.* Now thou dost dismiss, O Lord, thy servant according to thy word in peace, because mine eyes have seen thy Salvation, *St. Luke ii.?* And we have made a Bargain with Hell. That you shall be free from all Temptations, that the Devils shall not molest you, that Hell shall not devour you? But you have cheated your self, as all the Adversaries of Virtue and Truth always do, either ignorantly, or willfully taking a Sentence, and not minding the Context. Had you read on, you had found a Salve to that damnable Error in the same place: *Et delebitur fœdus vestrum cum morte, Isaiah v. 14.* &c. And your league with death shall be abolished, and your covenant with hell shall not stand. But above all, methinks that terrible, *Ego vado, quæretis me, & in peccato vestro moriemini, St. John viii. 21.* I go, you shall seek me, and shall die in your sin, threatned by our Blessed Saviour to the *Jews*, should strike a Terror into the most obdurate Sinner. There will be a time for

certain, when you shall seek God and not find him, when you shall call upon him and not be heard. The Darknes of approaching Death will hide him from your Sight, and you, that have not found him by the Lights he gave you in your Life, will certainly never find him in the Shades of Death. In a Word, that Sinner seeks Christ, but finds him not, who repents too late, that is, lets Death surprize him in Sin, says Venerable *Bede*. Continue your favourable Attention and I will prove it.

*Hoc est
Christum
malè quæ-
rere, in
peccato suo
mori; & in
peccato suo
moriatur,
qui in pec-
cato suo
permanet
usque ad
mortem.*

THE Lamentations of the Spouse in the *Canticles*, because she could not find her Beloved, are certain, the Cause uncertain. *Quæsi in lectulo meo quem diligit anima mea, & non inveni*, Cant. iii. *I have sought in my little bed whom my Soul loveth, and have not found him.* To omit others, the Reason, in my Opinion, why she could not find him, may be, because she only sought him in the Bed of Sicknes, when the Darknes of Death grew thick upon her, because the Sun of Justice seldom or never enlightens those horrid Shades with the Rays of Mercy. That is, you that expect to find God merciful on your Death-bed, will be deceived. In vain you expect the Health of your Soul, among the mortal Distempers of your Body. It is in vain to think

think to gain Eternity in a Moment. It is in vain to cover your self with the Ashes of Penance, when the Dust of your Sepulchre is near. In vain do your Eyes pour out scalding Tears, when a cold Sweat of Death runs down your Cheeks. Your Sighs are ill-timed for Penance, when you groan for Life. What Force can Penance have in such a Weakness of Members? What Fruits can she produce, planted in the Ashes of a Carcase? Virtues will not grow in a Heart void of natural Heat and Strength. Wo then to the Soul, that only seeks her Spouse on her Death-bed. And Wo to thee, stubborn Sinner, that only beggest Mercy when thy gasping Soul hangs upon thy dying Lips.

I do not intend to condemn the Penance of many in their last Agony; perchance by labouring in the last Hour of the Day, they may deserve their Penny and receive the Reward of Glory. But I must tell you, that all the Holy Fathers look upon it as infirm, presumptive and to be suspected. St. *Augustin* affirms it to be very unsure and of little Value. We may be so fortunate as to find Mercy at the last Hour:

But it is a most dangerous Security we promise our selves in the last day. For it does not often happen, that he, who has lived a

Potest nobis extremi temporis Indulgentia subvenire; at periculossima est in ultimum diem pro missa securitas.
Lib. de 5,
p^{ca} 1.

Fool

Fool all his Life, becomes a Wise-man at his Death. And can there be a greater Fool than he, who commits his eternal Concerns to a dying Life? Not a feeble but a strong Voice is requisite to plead a Business of that Importance; it demands a weeping Eye not a dying one; exacts a grieving Soul, not a dead Body. Because, says St. *Augustin* Serm. lxxvi. *de temp. Parum est peccatori pœnitere, nisi pœnitentiam peregerit; It little avails a Sinner to repent, unless he perform his Penance.* Because, as we esteem not the Tree, but the Fruit, nor is the Plant commendable that renders no Fruit to the Gardiner, so Almighty God values not a fruitless Sorrow or barren Repentance. Our Saviour and St. *John* exclaim, *Facite fructus dignos pœnitentiæ; Yield fruit worthy of Penance,* St. *Luke* iii. 9. But in such Anguish of Soul, in such Pain of Body, in a Head full of other Concerns, in a distracted Mind, in a Heart not only barren of good Deeds, but holy Thoughts, what Fruits can Penance produce? And will you yet defer your Conversion? Do you know it? He that procrastinates in an Affair of that Importance, contests with his everlasting Ruin. Penance is a Traffick you may purchase a blessed Eternity with. But who is that slothful and unfortunate Servant,
that

that hid it under Ground? It is you that defer your Conversion, and think to do Penance in the End of your Life. You will be numbred among the foolish Virgins that repented too late, &c. therefore *Clausæ est janua; nescio vos; The Gate is shut; I know you not.*

BUT you think to deceive God, and rob him of Paradise, as the good Thief did on the Cross, reserving for your last Breath, a, *Domine, memento mei, &c. Lord, remember me, when you shall come into your Kingdom.* As if this were the Form of a Sacrament, that operates independently of the Merits of the Minister, and in Virtue of this, you were to do presently what you say, and Christ were suddenly to answer you with a, *Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso; This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.* The divine St. *Augustin* condemns you of a pernicious Error: *Ad emendanda crimina vox pœnitentis sola non sufficit, nam ad satisfactionem ingentium peccatorum non verba tantùm sed opera quæruntur; Ser. i. de pœn. To the Amendment of our Crimes the Voice of the Penitent alone is not sufficient, for to the Satisfaction of great Sins, not Words but Works are required.* What? Are the inveterate Sins of your obstinate Soul so many Flames that can be blown out with a gentle Sigh?

Sigh? Are they Spots that can be washt away with a Tear? Are they Wounds, are they Ulcers, that can be cured with the divine Inchantment of four Words: *Domine, Domine aperi nobis; Lord, open the gate?* So that at your Command Heaven Gates shall fly open, and your Soul be received in Triumph? *Ad satisfactionem, &c.* And if you are not able to satisfy for your Sins in that weak Condition, how is it possible for you to overcome an Army of Sins now in Possession of your Soul? How will you conquer those Legions of Devils, that lie encamped round about to defend it? Good God! Those Sins, that so many Preachers, thundring the Judgments of the Almighty against thee, could not drive out! Those Sins, that the Sword of Justice, hanging every Moment over thy Head, could not dislodge! Those Sins, that the Fear of Hell-fire could not vanquish, shall they now be conquer'd by a feeble Penance without Arms, without Forces, and as dead as thy dying Body? What shall I say but exclaim with the divine St. *Augustin: Pœnitentia, quæ à moriente tantùm petitur, timore & ipsa moriatur; That Penance, which a dying Man only begs to do, I am afraid it will die.* I fear she will be defeated, I fear she will die; and as the Body becomes

a Spoil to the Victories of Death, so she will fall a Victim of Sin, and a Prey to the Devils. Therefore if you intend to become victorious in the last and terrible Battle, why do you not quicken your Penance with the Vigour of Youth, arm it with the Weapons of Mortification, and, curbing your unbridled Passions, strengthen it with noble Resolutions, and the powerful Assistance of Christian Virtues? Assure your self a dying Age will never prove the fruitful Parent of a victorious Penance. *Pœnitentia, quæ à moriente tantùm petitur; &c.*

You then, O holy Penitent, and most bright Mirrour of Penance, O holy *Magdalen*, teach my Auditory what time you observed to hear those most comfortable Words, *Remittuntur tibi peccata tua*. Perchance you expected your Lips should wither, before you fix'd those chaste Kisses on the Feet of Jesus. You waited perchance for Death to break your Body, before you broke open your Box of Perfumes to anoint his Divine Feet. You staid perchance for old Age to rob you of those charming Locks, before you offer'd them to your dear Lord, to insnare him in your Love. You demurred perchance till your Sins left you, that you might run to God. *Ut cognovit*, Christian Auditory, *Ut cognovit*: As

Nec ipsa se ad hoc reservavit, ut in fine vitæ pœnitentiam ageret, sed dum adhuc peccare po-

*terat sic
Deo inspi-
rante vo-
luit pecca-
ta dimit-
tere, ut il-
lam de A-
dulteriis
suis, non
necessitas
subtrabe-
ret, sed vo-
luntas; &
ideo audire
meruit,
quo dei om-
nia fue-
rint pecca-
ta dimissa.
St. Aug.
Serm. 57.
de Paen.*

soon as ever she understood that her hea-
venly Physician was at hand, presently,
without any delay, changing her sinful Bold-
ness into a fruitful Confidence, she enter'd
where he was, and prostrate at his Divine
Feet, the Pillars of a *non plus ultra* to her
wicked Life, pleaded her Pardon with
the silent Groans of a contrite Heart,
and drown'd her Sins in a Sea of Tears.

Ut cognovit: As soon as ever she knew.
Therefore, *Quærite Dominum dum inveniri
potest; Seek the Lord whilst he may be found:*
Now, this Day, this Moment; when he
calls you, when he offers you his Grace,
when he expects your Return. Do not
defer till the Night of Death surprize you.
*Venit nox quando nemo potest operari; The
night comes when no man can labour.* It will
then be too late. You'll seek your Saviour,
but not find him. *Et in peccato, &c. And
then you'll die in your Sin.*

ANOTHER Reason, which renders thy
Repentance almost impossible, is thy Cust-
tom of sinning, which once having got
possession of thy Soul, is hardly rooted
out. Because, says St. *Augustin, Consuetudo
est quædam habituata natura; Custom is a
second nature.* And *Seneca* answers thee,
That when thy Vices are become thy Manners,
*there is no place for a Remedy; Tunc desinit
esse*

esse remedio locus, ubi quæ fuerint vitia mores fiunt. You read a strange Example of this in the third Book of *Kings*, *chap. xiii* King *Jeroboam*, by his frequent Idolatry, was become harder to the Voice of God than the Stones he adored. The Prophet *Semeia*, by divine Order, goes to him, and finds him standing upon the Altar, but directs his Embassy to the Altar, not to the King; *Altar, Altar.* St. *Chrysoftom*, astonish'd hereat, asks him, *Cum lapide verba facis?* O Man of God, what do you do? Do you think God has given the Marble Ears to hear your Voice? Is your Tongue an Instrument of Steel, that can imprint upon it the Character of your Words? Certainly upon this Altar you sacrifice your Words to the Winds. Why do you not speak to the King, who willingly hears you? Every one will judge you a mad Man, to treat Stones as Men, and Men as Stones. Do you think the King will not give you Audience? Much less will the Stones return you an Answer. If the one will not hear what you say, do you believe the other will execute your Commands? If *Jeroboam* has not Ears to hear you, much less has the Marble Capacity to understand you. But it was not so. For the Prophet found more Hardness in the stubborn Heart of the obstinate King, than in the senseless

Stone; and his Voice, which was not heard by the one, was obey'd by the other, opening its Bowels, and delivering out the commanded Victim, in obedience to the same Voice the stubborn King stopt his Ears to. *Etiam quando rex minus compos est sensuum quam lapis, & audivit lapis, ipse lapis in scissuras diffractus est, & victimam effudit, homo ille non audivit.* St. Chrysoptom in *proem.* in *Isaiab.* This we see daily, and lament. How many Preachers, by Sermons, Exhortations, and pious Discourses, tell the obstinate and habitual Sinner, the Danger he is in by delaying his Conversion? They propose to him the Patience of his God, his frequent Invitations to Repentance, his Threats, his Promises, his Rewards, his Punishments, nothing moves him. *Percussisti eos & non doluerunt,* says *Jeremiah* of the obstinate; *Thou hast stricken them and they have not grieved.* *chap. v.* In vain does Heaven punish here, in vain do you propose divine Benefits. *Ipsi fuerunt rebelles lumini;* They were rebellious to the Light, says *Job* of the same, *chap. liv.* A cursed Habit of sinning has rendred thy Heart more hard than the very Stones.

THE divine St. *Augustin* has a gentle Reflection upon three Dead, raised by our Blessed Saviour. The Prince of the Synagogue's Daughter dies. The heavenly Physician only takes

takes her by the Hand, not so much to feel the Motion of her Pulse, as to give it ; bids her Rise, and she returns to Life. The Widow's Son of *Naim*, interpreted the City of Beauties, dies in the Flower of his Youth, and Jesus meets the disconsolate Widow at the City Gates, calls the young Man with an, *Adolescens tibi dico, surge*, and in obedience to the Command he stands up alive, and Jesus dries up the Tears of the afflicted Mother with the joyful Sight of her raised Son. *Lazarus* dies and is buried, and Christ is troubled, sighs for Grief, breaks out into Tears, Groans, and with a loud Cry, calls him, *Lazare, veni foras ; Lazarus come forth*. And thus he rescues him from the Jaws of Death, and brings him Alive from the Sepulchre. But what sort of Death is this, my dear Jesus, that will not give *Lazarus* the Light of Life, unless your all-enlightning Eyes set in a Sea of Grief? That will not open the Grave and give up her Dead, unless you open your sacred Mouth to Groans? That will see you, Author of all Joy, full of all Sadness, before she rejoice the Spectators with their raised Friend? Why was there not need of this in the others? Whence this Novelty? *St. Augustin* answers the Query: Because in the young Persons was expressed a Sin newly

newly committed, not so much out of Malice as Frailty: But this signifies a Habit of sinning. *Cum consuetudinis malæ quasi mole terrena premitur animus, quasi in Sepulchro jam putet; When the Soul is oppress'd by a bad habit, as with a heap of Earth, it corrupts as it were in her Sepulchre.* And therefore the Voice of our Saviour was sufficient alone to raise the first. But here, *Fremuit in Spiritu, & rursus infremuit, & deinde magna voce exclamavit, Lazare veni foras; He groan'd in Spirit, and groan'd again, and then he cry'd out with a great voice, Lazarus come forth:* To demonstrate how difficult a thing it is for a Sinner to be converted, and do Penance at the Hour of his Death. It is a strange Observation of St. *Jerome* upon the Epistle of St. *Paul*, where mention is made of the general Judgment. At the first Sound of the Angelical Trumpet, which must summon all Men to the Vale of *Josaphat*, the Dead will presently arise and present themselves. But to the Living, which remain on Earth, the Voice of the Archangel will not be enough, the Voice and Command of God must be added. What means this? That it is easier to raise the dead Man to Life, than convert an obstinate Sinner. This will sooner come from his Grave, than that will

will leave his wicked Life. This will sooner awake from the Sleep of Death, than that will rise from the Lethargy of Sin. And God is sooner heard in Graves, than in Towns and Cities.

BUT my obstinate Sinner still replies, that the Mercies of God are above all his Works; that he will not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he be converted and live; that his Mercies have most of all triumph'd in the Hour of Death. He has invited, even then, the worst of Sinners to Pardon. *Manasses*, after a wicked Life, became a Penitent. He invited *Judas* with a Kiss of Peace, and saved a Thief on the Cross. It's very true, but here lies an Error that has peopled Hell. Are you sure, or do you only hope, that he will invite you? *Vix dici potest*, says *St. Augustin*, *quantos hæc inanis spei umbra deceperit*; It can hardly be expressed, how many this empty Shadow of vain Hope has deluded. Serm. c. de temp. This it was, that ruin'd *Judas* and made him *Dux eorum, qui comprehenderunt Jesum*; Captain of them that apprehended *Jesus*. And whence so great Boldness, such hardness of Heart in an Apostle, a worker of Miracles, who had lived three Years in the School and Company of Christ? *St. Chrysostom* found the Origine and discover'd it
for

for the Instruction and Correction of the like to him : *Confidebat nimium in lenitate Magistri, quæ res illum magis confundit, & omni venia privavit ;* He confided too much in the Meekness of his Master, which did more confound him, and deprive him of all Pardon. The sweet Behaviour of Christ to him, which ought to have made him love him more dearly, rendred him odious and despicable. He never saw him hurt any one, but do good to all, and therefore he betray'd him, because he did not fear him, but vainly confided in his Mercy. And tho' *Manasses* closed his wicked Life with a penitent Death ; yet his graceless Son *Ammon*, following the vicious Steps of his Father, died as he lived. Nor must you urge the Example of the good Thief. For in the Day the Son of God died to redeem Man, some extraordinary Privilege might be granted. But turn from the right Hand to the left, it is a short Passage, and you will see, that tho' he was converted and saved, yet his Companion, and a thousand of the Standers-by, died as they lived. This then is an Error the Blind may see palm'd on your self, not upon God. For he protests by the Mouth of the Wiseman, *Prov. i.* That he called, and you refused, you despised his Counsels, neglected

neglected his Reprehensions, and therefore he will laugh in your Destruction, and scorn when Tribulation and Distress shall come upon you. *Then, says he, they shall invoke me, and I will not hear them.* Oh, dear Sinner! What a terrible Menace is this to a poor Soul, to be forsaken at the last, and cast off by Almighty God.

BUT he has Eyes and will not see, Ears and will not hear, Feet and will not walk. He has affectedly lulled his Conscience asleep with the Drunkenness of his Sins; the Trumpet of Death and Judgment cannot rouse him; and he intends to awake at his Death, and live to Heaven, who living, was dead to Grace. Would you know what becomes of him? A Message is dispatch'd, for Mercy has given him over, and Justice will no longer endure him; perchance the same that was brought to King *Ezechias* on his Sick-bed: *Dispone domui tuæ, quia morieris tu & non vives; Take order with thy house; for thou shalt die, and shalt not live, Isaiah xxxviii. 1.* A Distemper seizes him, he is carried to his Bed, his affrighted Friends run to his Aid, with weeping Eyes they beg of him *Now*, for *Now* is the Time, or *Never*, to think on his Soul, to repent and reconcile himself to God; they mind him with most earnest Intreaties, of his so

often repeated Promises, *I will, I will, when I come to die.* And what does this deluded Soul answer? Thanks be to God he is not so ill as to think himself at that Point, in that Extremity as they imagine, who would have him die before his time; or modestly to hinder them from repeating what he would not hear, he gives his Friends many thanks in very obliging Terms, and says, he will do it speedily, as soon as the Dulness of his Head clears up, the Pain at his Heart relents, which at present hinder him from performing any thing with the Seriousness a Business of that Importance requires. Jesus! As he spoke he fell out of his Senses, he has lost his Speech, his Eyes are set in his Head, he breathes no more, he is dead. A Punishment justly due to the Merits of his Crime, that he, who living, never raised his Eyes to Heaven to desire it, dying, should not cast them down on Hell to fear it; who living, never thought on God, dying, should forget himself. I am sorry I cannot comfort his sad and afflicted Friends with a, *Requiescat in pace; The Lord's peace be with him.* The Antiphon that I would have Sung before and after every Funeral Psalm, should be that most true Sentence of St. *Augustin.* *It is the Punishment of every Sinner, that he forget himself when he comes to die, who whilst he lived was forgetful of God.*

CHRISTIAN Auditory, You are all created to eternal Happiness, all born to immortal Glory, and consequently, you have all Souls to save. But, *qui fecit te sine te*, says St. *Augustin*, *non salvabit te sine te*; He that made you without you, will not save you without you. Your Concurrence with the Grace and Calls of Almighty God, is of necessity to Salvation. If you have been ever called, and neglected it, how do you know you shall ever be called again? If you have not been yet called, perchance the first is the last. You have seen what sad and lamentable Ends have attended the Delayers. I have shewn the stubborn Sinner, how difficult a thing it is to do Penance in the last Hour, and laid down the Reason too of the sad *Exit* of one of thy Companions. And will nothing move thee? Will nothing mollify thy stony Heart? Come along with me to the Throne of Mercy. If I can't convince thee, I'll try at least if I cannot confound thee. Let's go to Mount *Calvary*. With your leave, Blessed Virgin; room, courteous Soldiers; Devout *Magdalen*, you have heard already an all-pardoning *Remittuntur tibi*, &c. *Thy sins are forgiven thee*. Cast up thy Eyes then, O Sinner, and look if thou canst for shame. It is thy God, that thought himself miserable, unless thou wert happy; who after three and thirty Years Preaching, Sweat, and Labour for thy Sake, died that thou

mayst live eternally. He is naked to cloath thee with the Robes of Immortality. He bows his Sacred Head to give thee a kiss of Peace; he stretcheth forth his Arms to embrace thee; he has his Side pierced to open thee a Passage to his Heart to shew he loves thee; he is crown'd with Thorns to crown thee with a Diadem of immortal Glory. Those Wounds from Head to Foot are thy Sins. He has made a Bath of his precious Blood to heal them. Those Wounds are so many Tokens of his bleeding Love. Those Wounds are so many eloquent Mouths, that cry to thy stony Heart, *Repentance, Repentance*. But I have something more to say, for thy God does yet more. He has written thee with Wounds in his Hands, for he cannot forget thee; with these he pleads thy Cause in Heaven to his eternal Father. I hear the Holy Spirit with unspeakable Groans cry out for Mercy. And does not this melt thee into Sorrow and Compassion? Art thou not yet a Penitent? I leave thee then to plead thy own Cause at the most severe Tribunal of divine Justice. But you, O Father of Mercies, by the bitter Death and Passion of your most Blessed Son, grant that so sad and lamentable an End may never happen to any one here. *In nomine Patris, &c. Amen.*

*Ipsc autem
vulneratus
est propter
scelera no-
stra, Isa.
53. 5.*



A

S E R M O N

O N T H E

P A S S I O N

Of our LORD and SAVIOUR

J E S U S C H R I S T.

Preach'd before Her MAJESTY the

Q U E E N - D O W A G E R,

I N

Her Chapel at *SOMERSET-HOUSE*,
upon *GOOD-FRIDAY*, *April 13, 1688.*

By the Reverend FATHER

A N G E L B I X, of the Holy ORDER of
St. *F R A N C I S*.

As Publish'd by Her MAJESTY'S Special Command.



Printed in the YEAR MDCCXLI.

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S E R M O N XIII.

O N T H E

P A S S I O N

Of our LORD and SAVIOUR

J E S U S C H R I S T.

Preach'd before her MAJESTY the

Q U E E N - D O W A G E R.

I S A I A H liii. 8.

Propter scelus Populi mei percussi eum.

I have struck him for the Sins of my People.



I S true, my angry God, 'tis true, you struck him indeed, you struck him within, and you struck him without; killing Agonies of Sorrow within, and dolorous Pains without; you struck his Head with Thorns, his Hands and Feet with Nails, his Shoulders with

with Rods and Scourges, his Heart with Spears and Launces; in a Word, you struck him all over, and never left striking till you struck him Dead upon a *Cross*. *But why? What's his Fault? What's his Crime? Quid enim mali fecit?* Is not he the Holy of Holies? Is not he the Lamb without Spot? Is not he the only Son of all your tender Loves? And the eternal Object of all your inflamed Affections? Why then, O why do you strike him? And strike him with such Severity as shakes the whole Frame of Nature, and sets all Heaven and Earth a trembling: *Quid enim mali fecit?*

'Tis true, replies the heavenly Father, my Son is *Innocent*, but since by an Excess of Love he has taken upon himself to pay the *Debts*, and answer for the *Sins* of Men, we are Friends no more, I have declared War against him, I'll open all the Flood-gates of my Anger at once, I'll give full Carriere to my Indignation, I'll arm my Hands with all the Scourges of my Wrath, I'll strike him to the very Heart *for the Sins of my People: Propter scelus populi mei, percussi eum*. Sin then, I see (dear *Christians*) Sin was the fatal Cause of all this *bloody Catastrophe*, Sin brought this Lamb to the Slaughter, Sin put the *Author of Life* to *Death*, Sin crucified the only begotten Son
of

of God, *Sin* provok'd the Justice of the eternal Father to lay on all these heavy Strokes upon the Shoulders of this *Innocent*: *propter scelus populi mei, percussi eum; I struck him for the Sins of my People.*

BUT here I find more Hands than one employ'd to strike this *Holy One*: three sorts of Hands; First, *Hands of Love*: Secondly, *Hands of Cruelty*: Thirdly, *Hands of Justice*. Hands of *Love* begin to make him smart for *Sin*; Hands of *Cruelty* increase his dolorous Pains; Hands of *Justice* close the deep and doleful Tragedy: Or, to express my self in clearer Terms, *Jesus* strikes his own Heart with the Hands of *Love* in the *Garden of Olives*; bloody Tormentors strike him with Hands of *Cruelty* in the *Great Prætorium* or *Judgment-Hall* of *Pilate*; and his eternal Father struck him Dead with the Hands of *Justice* upon the *Mount of Calvary*. Come then (dear *Christians*) let us with bleeding Hearts and weeping Eyes follow our suffering *Messias* through all those Places or Stations of Sorrow; where,

- I. The *Love* of his own *Divine Heart*,
 - II. The *Cruelty* of his *insulting Persecutors*,
 - III. The *Justice* of his *Angry Father*,
- struck him for the Sins of the People, and made him bleed to save us.*

Division.

BUT first let us cast our selves at the Feet of his compassionate Mother; for though she's even plung'd in a bitter Sea of Sorrow, yet all *Sorrow*, as she is, she'll not refuse her Maternal Assistance; nay, I dare assure you, 'twill be some Relief to her afflicted Heart, to hear us speak devoutly of her suffering Son, especially if we draw that Fruit from the *doleful Contemplation* of his Passion, which he and she desires: And this, *O dolorous Mother* of our expiring Saviour, this is the only Boon we now demand upon our Knees, with this mournful Anthem of the *Church*;

*Virgo Virginum præclara,
Nobis jam non sis amara,
Fac nos tecum plangere.*

*Eia Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi nostro validè. Amen.*

The F I R S T P A R T.

HA! No doubt, no doubt, but the Disorder of *Sin* is a strange Disorder, seeing nothing could ever satisfy for this Disorder but the Sufferings of a *GOD*: The Stain of *Sin* must needs be very foul, and of the blackest dye, which nothing could wash away

away but the Blood of the *Spotless Lamb*: And the Evil of *Sin* must needs be greatest of all Evils, which nothing could repair but the Death of *Life it self*. But when, or where did the Son of God begin to satisfy for this Disorder? blot out this Stain? and repair this Evil? Ha! *Christians*, 'twas in the *Garden of Olives*, 'twas in his own Hands, even the Hands of *Love*, that he may truly say, *propter scelus populi mei, percussi me*; *I struck my self for the sins of my People*.

AND yet to see a *Jesus* in his own Hands, has nothing in it sure that's rigorous; at least, according to all Appearance, it should be so; for as he knows his own *Purity*, his own *Sanctity*, his own *Innocency* better than all Men and Angels besides, so doubtless he'll be kind to himself, he'll spare himself without all *question*. Ha! No, no (dear *Christians*) would you believe it, the Love of *Jesus* strikes the first Blow upon the Heart of *Jesus*, that I may truly say, *Jesus* is become his own first Judge, and his own first Executioner; *propter scelus populi mei, percussi me*. In Effect, methinks I contemplate the boundless Love of his Heart, like an invisible Priest leading this Innocent Victim into this *Garden of Olives*, as into a Holy Temple, the fittest Place for such a
 E e e 2 Sacrifice;

Sacrifice; and he makes Choice of the Night, because then all Nature being clad in Mourning, or buried as it were under the dark Shades of Solitude and Silence, Love had more Power to act upon his tender *Heart*, and fill his afflicted *Soul* with such bitter Floods of Sorrow as forc'd him to groan forth this sad Complaint, *My Soul is sorrowful even to death: Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem. Matth. xxiv. 30.* But here to go on in order, let us with pensive Hearts contemplate the *Prayers*, the *Tears*, and the *Bloody Sweat* of our Agonizing Redeemer: Or here let us see, if Tears will give us leave to see,

Subdivi-
sion of the
First Part.

- I. How *JESUS* Prays,
- II. Weeps,
- III. And Bleeds *for the Sins of the People.*

WHAT odds there is between the Spirit of the World and the Spirit of the World's Redeemer! We see by frequent Experience, and it's obvious, that Persons of Honour, Courage, and Conduct, endeavour all they can to hide their inward Grief from the Eyes of others, though grounded upon the justest Motives, because they look upon it as a Weakness unworthy of a generous Heart: But Jesus the Lord of Glory, Jesus the strong God, Jesus the Power and the
Splendor

Splendor of the Father, who might have cover'd the interior Sorrows of his Soul under the dark Clouds of Night and Solitude, takes three of his Disciples to be the Witnesses of his hidden Dolours, as they had been of his publick Miracles: Tell us then, tell us, O you blessed Men, you chosen Favorites of your suffering Lord, you Privy Councillors to the King of Dolours, tell us what past in this Garden of Sorrow; express, if you can, those secret Agonies of Grief, which seized his Royal Heart: *Alas! Alas!* All they can say, is only this, *Factus in agonia, prolixius orabat: being cast into a deep Agony, he pray'd with more than usual fervour.* Luke xxii. 44.

P A T E R, si fieri potest, transeat à me calix iste: Father, if it can be done, let this Chalice pass from me. As if he would say, O my Eternal Father, I see *the Sins of the People* have arm'd the Hands of your Justice with Rods and Scourges; I see a bitter Chalice in your Hand brim full of Vinegar and Gall; (*Mark xiv. 35.*) and I must needs confess, my inferior Nature even shrinks and trembles at the Sight on't; and therefore, if ever this Tongue of mine has proclaim'd the Glories of your Name, hear now the groanings of my Heart, which calls you Father, *Abba, Pater*; and if it can
be

be done, *si fieri potest*, if the rigorous Decrees of your revenging Justice can dispense with a spotless Innocent; remove, O remove this bitter Chalice from me; *si fieri potest, transeat à me calix iste*: But if I must drink it, if you are resolved to strike me for the Sins of the People, if I must die, let me die a Death less painful, less rigorous, less ignominious, and more worthy the Divine Life of a God, which you have given me; *transeat à me calix iste*. But here you must be sure to understand me well, for the holy Fathers and learned Divines of the *Church* assure us, this Prayer of Christ was neither positive nor efficacious; for so the heavenly Father must needs have heard this Prayer, and sign'd this just Petition of his only Son, it being still in the Power of this *Holy One* to drink, or not to drink this bitter Cup, to lose, or not to lose his precious Life for us; in a Word, cries the Prophet *Isaiab*, liii. 7. *Ob-latus est, quia ipse voluit*; He was offer'd up a Propitiatory Sacrifice *for the Sins of the People*, because he himself would have it so. This Prayer then was only to signify the conditional Desires and imperfect Wishes of the inferior part of his Soul; as if he would say, Ha! sinful Souls for whose dear sake I suffer, *videte afflictionem meam*:

meam: (*Thren* i.) I leave you your selves to judge how bitter, how severe, how sharp my Sorrows are; since, though I know, 'tis the Decree, the Will, and the Pleasure of my Father, though I my self am resolved to lay down my Life for my Flock, and embrace my Cross with open Arms, yet I seek for a Dispensation, and am forced to cry, Father, if it can be done, let this Cup pass from me; *Pater, si fieri potest, transeat à me calix iste*. Thus we have heard him Pray, now let us see him Weep for the Sins of the People; *propter scelus populi mei*, &c.

II. THE divine *St. Paul*, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, tells us, (*Heb.* v. 7.) the Coeternal Son of God, during the time of his earthly Pilgrimage; or, as he words it, *in diebus carnis suæ*, in the days of his Flesh, offer'd up Prayers and Supplications with a loud Cry and Tears, *cum clamore valido & lacrimis*, to signify by this mysterious mixture of Prayers and Tears, the Excess of those imbittering Sorrows, which transpierce his holy Soul within, and are the Cause of all these Prayers and Tears without, *cum clamore valido & lacrimis*. Thus you have heard him Pray, thus you have seen him Weep.

III. BUT now prepare the sanctified Vessels of your Hearts to receive those cordial Streams of Blood, which flow from all the Parts of his sacred Body in such abundance, as not only pierce his *seamless Coat*, but run down trickling to the Ground in showers, *Factus est enim sudor ejus sicut guttæ sanguinis decurrentis in terram*, Luke xxii. 44. The devout St. *Bernard*, in a melting Contemplation upon this dolorous Mystery, tells us, the loving Saviour of the World, upon this little *Mount of Olives*, seem'd to weep in every part at once, *membris omnibus flevisse videtur*: Nature had given him only two Eyes to weep, but Love, *Love*, it seems, had given him a hundred thousand, so many Pores, so many Eyes to pour forth Tears of Blood *for the Sins of his People*; like Fire imprison'd in a Rock, which having made two or three little Breaches to get out, and finding them too strait, flies about like Lightning, flames out on every side, and breaks its stony Prison in a thousand places: *membris omnibus flevisse videtur*.

THE Sea has its Ebbings and Flowings, and they say, the divers Motions of these Waters are guided by the Hands of an Angel; but 'tis Love, 'tis *Love* guides these Ebbings and Flowings of Blood in the tender Heart of Jesus, till at last, heaving
and

and striving between Hopes and Fear, *Love* wins the Day, and gains a glorious Victory over all the natural Fears and Apprehensions of his afflicted Soul; *Verumtamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu*: Matth. xxvi. 39. O my eternal Father, though Death does now appear in all its frightful Shapes, though this bloody Engine of the *Cross* is an Object so terrifying to my inferior Nature, though the Sight of all these Nails, and Thorns, and Rôds, and Scourges, make the very Blood run trembling in my Veins, yet since you will have it so, it must and shall be so; *Verumtamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu*. Behold then, O my heavenly Father, behold these first Drops of Blood, which I here shed in your Presence with my own Hands; let this be a Witness of my Obedience to you, and my Love to Man: Yes, my divine Redeemer, my agonizing Saviour, this is a Witness indeed, not only of your Obedience to the Decrees of Heaven, and of your Love to me, but also of that secret Sorrow, which afflicts thy holy Soul. O the first Drops of my dearest Master's Blood, I adore you wheresoever I find you, I adore you cleaving to his Garments, I adore you besprinkling the Flowers of this Garden, I adore you trickling down to the Ground in Streams. Ha! 'Tis here, 'tis here, if ever

I may truly say, *thou art a Spouse of Blood to me, Exod. iv.* because here thou hast espoused me to thy self, and sign'd this happy Contract between us with those purple Streams of thy own most precious Blood, which flow from all the Parts and Pores of thy sacred Body, to wash away *the Sins of thy People*. Here then, *Christians*, give me leave, though a Sinner, to act the holy *Baptist*, and point you out the Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World; *Ecce, Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi.*

BUT here I am seized with Admiration, and lost in Wonder; *for*, to see my loving Saviour bleed upon the *Altar* of the *Temple*, in the Mystery of his *Circumcision*, was no great Wonder; for there stands a Priest with a sharp Knife in his Hand, ready to cut him and make him bleed: Nor was it any Wonder to see him bleed upon the *High Altar* of the *Cross*; for here I find whole Crouds of bloody Tormentors arm'd with Thorns and Nails, and Rods and Scourges, and Spears and Launces, ready to wound him from Head to Foot, and make him bleed all over: But to find him bleeding upon this *little Mount of Olives*, and bleeding all alone, that's the Wonder of Wonders: And yet this bleeding Body
of

of a Jesus does accuse some one or other to have given the fatal Blow: But who? Was it *Peter, James, or John?* Ha! No, no, for they were fast asleep; *invenit eos dormientes, erant enim oculi eorum gravati,* Matth. xxvi. 43. Besides, they loved their Master too well to wound him; and yet when all is done, I say, this Body could not bleed without Hands; ha! 'Tis true, *Christians, 'tis true,* and if you remember, I told you at the very Beginning of this Discourse, by what Hand he bleeds; 'tis by his own Hand, even the Hand of Love; Love's the Lance that opens all his Veins, and makes him bleed in Showers for the Sins of the People.

BUT why such haste, my Divine Redeemer? Why such haste? There's time enough to bleed at the *Pillar*, there's time enough to bleed at your *Coronation*, there's time enough to bleed upon the *Mount of Calvary*. Ha! No, no, I see his Love impatient, he cannot, he will not stay so long; if you will not believe me, hear him speak himself; *Baptismo autem habeo baptizari, & quomodo coarctor usquedum perficiatur;* Luke xii. 50. *I have a Baptism to be baptized withal, and how am I straitened (or even languish) till it be accomplished.* And if you desire to know the Motive or the

Reason of this pressing, this hasty Desire in the Heart of a Saviour, to bleed *for the Sins of his People*, and bleed by his own Hands; it was, says the mellifluous St. *Bernard*, because he foresaw the Effusion of his most precious Blood, upon the *Mount of Calvary*, would be attended with the greatest of all Sacrileges, whil'st he offer'd up the greatest of all Sacrifices, and therefore he resolves, upon this *Mount of Olives*, to have no other Hand but his own employ'd in this *sweet Sacrifice of Love*: *Solus in mortem tradit animam suam.*

*Bern. Ser.
Fer. 4.
Hebdom.
sanct.*

No question, but the incarnate Son of God had always the Cross in View, even from the first instant of his *Life*, he knew what he came for, he knew what he was to do, and what he was to suffer; *Ipsè enim sciebat quid esset factururus, atque passurus.* And yet 'tis *credible*, these Apprehensions of his Cross were not then so violent, or so afflicting, because his Death appear'd at a greater Distance; besides, he foresaw all those noble Employ's he was to undertake for the Glory of his heavenly Father, all those conspicuous Miracles he was to work in the World, to prove the Power of his Divinity; and perhaps, these illustrious Ideas of what he was to do might, in some measure, sweeten the bitter Reflections of what

what he was to suffer. But alas! alas! knowing this very Night to be the last of his Life, and that his dolorous Passion was to begin within two or three Hours, then, *O then*, his Love, redoubling all his natural Fears, took all other Objects from his Sight, and left him none but that of his approaching Death. O my suffering *Jesus*, I see, I see your Love is like to cost you dear! O how rigorous are those Laws, your Justice has enacted against your self? When a guilty Criminal is condemn'd to die, they usually hide from his Sight all those Instruments of Justice, which are to bereave him of his Life; 'tis enough he falls once a Victim to the Law, 'tis enough he dies once, without causing him to die over and over again by frequent Representations of his Pains: But these Laws of common Humanity, which favour the very worst of Men, were not made, it seems, for this holy Innocent. Ha! No, no, for the first, *if not the greatest* of all his Sufferings, is to see them all at Leisure; and if you ask me why? I answer, 'twas to content the boundless Love of his Heart, by suffering twice for us, *First, Really*, and *Secondly, by Reflection*: *Really*, on the Day of his *Passion*, upon the *Mount of Calvary*; and by *Reflection*, on the Night (as I may call it) of his Sorrow

upon

upon this *Mount of Olives*. In fine, many doubtless were the Motives, the Reasons, or the Causes of this thrice repeated Prayer, these Floods of Tears, this bloody Sweat, this inward Grief, this interior Agony of *Jesus*; as the Dolours of his blessed Mother, the Treachery of *Judas*, the Denial of *Peter*, the shameful Flight of his Disciples, and the like. But I wave all this, to insist upon the last and the greatest Cause of all, the everlasting Ruin and Destruction of so many thousand Souls, notwithstanding all these bitter things, he has done and suffer'd *for the Sins of the People*.

HERE then, *pious Auditors*, raise your mournful Attentions, and with the *Eyes of Faith* contemplate your agonizing *Jesus* upon this *Mount of Olives*, as it were, upon a high Stage, or an Amphitheatre, whence he discovers all the Nations of the Earth, and takes a general View of all the *Reprobate* at once. He sees, for Example, how many thousand Souls will be lost in such an Empire, how many in such a Kingdom, how many in such a Province, how many in such a Town, how many in this *great Metropolis of the Land*: And at the Sight of this, his tender Heart even sinks away within him; see, see how he falls down prostrate to the Ground upon his holy Face, under
this

this heavy Load of Sorrow; *procidit in faciem suam*, Matt. xxvi. 39. O what a weighty Burthen of Grief is here! which constrains Omnipotence it self to groan. O! Do but hear, how he makes this Garden ring with that doleful Complaint of the Prophet, *Ergo in vacuum laboravi, & vanè fortitudinem meam consumpsi*; Isaiah xlix. *Therefore in vain have I labour'd, in vain I consumed my strength*: In vain all these Prayers, in vain all these Tears, in vain all this Sweat, in vain all this Blood; *Ergo in vacuum laboravi, & vanè consumpsi fortitudinem meam*. I say not this, O my eternal Father, I say not this to blame the Rigours of your Justice: Ha! No, no, for you know I am ready to be crucified upon every Tree, and scourged in every Corner of this Garden, if you will have it so; if one Life is not enough, I am willing to lose a thousand; if these gushing Streams of Blood, which here I shed in your Presence with my own Hands, are not yet sufficient to quench the Flames of your Anger, pour, O pour whole Torrents of Blood into these Veins of mine, and I'll shed it here as freely as I part with this. But for whom must I Pray, and Weep, and Sweat, and Bleed, and Die? For *Infidels? Pagans? Idolaters?* And of these, how many will be saved? Not one,

one, *no not one*, for he that does not believe in the Only Begotten Son of God, is already condemn'd; *Quia non credit in nomine Unigeniti Filii Dei*, John iii. 18. Must I bleed for my chosen People, the *Jews*? Alas! of those, you have promised me but a slender Flock. In a Word, must I lose my Life for *Christians*? Ha! You have told me, that even of those too, many shall be called, and few chosen; *Multi sunt vocati, pauci verò electi*, Matth. xx. 16. Therefore in vain have I labour'd, in vain have I consumed my Strength; *Ergo in vacuum laboravi*, &c. O what poor Comfort for an agonizing God? But hold, has the heavenly Father then resolved to harden his Heart and stop his Ears against all these bitter Groans and piercing Cries of his only Son? Are the Heavens made of Steel against these loud and fervent Prayers of this holy Innocent? No, at last, an Angel is sent from Heaven to comfort him, in the midst of all his Sorrows; *Apparuit Angelus de Cælo confortans eum*. Dread Sovereign Lord (cries this illustrious Envoy from the high *Jerusalem*) let not your noble Heart sink under this heavy Load of Sorrow, for tho' your Sufferings will be fruitless to some, they'll prove most effectual to others; your Cross shall be this Day adored through all the

Parts

Parts and Corners of the Universe; this Day, the greatest Kings and Princes of the Earth shall lay down their *Imperial Crowns* at your sacred Feet, strip off their Royal Purple, and creep upon their very Knees to worship this *Throne* of your Empire, and kiss these bleeding Wounds, these precious Signs of their *Redemption*; these are the Joys which attend these Sorrows, these are the Fruits of all these Sufferings, these are the sweet Flowers that are to spring out of this Earth, which now you have water'd with the Showers of your own most precious Blood; *apparuit Angelus de Cælo confortans eum*, Luke xxii. 43.

BUT what need of Angels to comfort the Lord of Angels? Since 'tis in the Power of Men to perform this Duty better than all the Angels of God together; and the Case is clear, for the only Comfort he requires, is to see his Passion efficacious, and the Angels cannot make it so, because he died not for them, but for us: From us then, and from us alone he expects this Consolation, as the first Return of our grateful Hearts, for these first Drops of his Blood shed by the Hands of his Love. Ha! Dear *Christians*, there are Reprobates enough in the World, who trample the Blood of this Lamb under foot; there are Damn'd enough

in Hell to render his Passion fruitless; but we, for our parts, before we stir a foot out of this holy Ground, this Garden of Sorrow, let us resolve to render his Sufferings efficacious by a timely Repentance, and a speedy Conversion to our God: And since *Jesus* strikes his own tender Heart with the Hands of Love, till he opens all the Veins and Pores of his blessed Body to pour forth Tears of Blood for our Iniquities; ha! Let us strike these *more than stony Hearts* of ours with the Hands of a holy Indignation against our selves, and never leave striking, till we open every Vein within, and every Pore without, to weep whole Floods of repentant Tears, which being mixt with the *Tears*, and the *Sweat*, and the *Blood* of the Lamb, may serve as a *precious Laver* to cleanse our polluted *Souls* from all the fordid *Spots* and *Stains* of Sin. And thus having devoutly adored the first *Drops* of our dear Redeemer's Blood in his own Hands, the *Hands of Love*; now let us adore the second, though in the Hands of his *Enemies*, though in the Hands of Cruelty it self: Which is the second *Scene* of this bloody Tragedy, and the doleful Subject of my *Second Part*.

S E C O N D P A R T.

HERE again I find three sorts of Hands employ'd to strike this Holy One; Hands of *Traytors*, Hands of *Judges*, and Hands of *Tormentors*.

I. The Hands of *Traytors* strike at his Liberty;

II. The Hands of *Judges* strike at his Honour;

III. The Hands of *Tormentors* strike at his Blood. *And all for the Sins of the People; Propter scelus populi mei, percussi eum.*

BUT what Hand, think you, was the first that seized this Innocent, and made this bold attempt upon his Liberty? Was it not the Hand of a *Scythian*? An *Infidel*? An *Idolater*? Or rather, was it not the frightful Claws and Clutches of a *Lion*, a *Wolf*, a *Tyger*? For these sure had been the fittest Instruments for such a bloody Cruelty: Ha! No, no, *that I should live to say it*, it must be a consecrated Hand, the Hand of an *Apostle*, the Hand of a *Priest*, must take this *High-Priest*, and Sovereign Bishop of our Souls. Scarce were three Hours elapsed since his Master raised him to the Royal Dignity of *Priesthood*, and gave him Power over his own true and natural Body, *super*

corpus Christi verum, that is, Power to consecrate and offer up this Body in Sacrifice upon Holy Altars, and not to commit such an unparallel'd Sacrilege upon the same Body; Power to receive it himself, and distribute it amongst the Faithful, for the spiritual Food and Refection of their Souls, and not to deliver it up into the Hands of his blood-thirsting Enemies to be scourged and crucified: He was chosen to go and publish the Name of *Jesus* to the utmost Confines of the Earth, and not to betray his *Jesus* in this little Corner of the Earth, this private Garden of *Gethsemany*: The Relicks of that precious Cup, he had received at the *Last Supper*, were still warm in his Breast, and yet this desperate Wretch could find in his Heart to consult and deal with the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the *Seniors* of the People, and sell them the Son of God for thirty Pence; *Quid vultis miki dare, & ego vobis eum tradam?* O abominable Avarice! To set all the Treasures of Heaven and Earth to Sale at such a vile Rate as this is.

HE places himself like a Captain at the Head of this cursed Troop, and to seize him with more Security, gives them a Sign of his Treachery, a *treacherous Kiss*: Thus (cries the learned *Augustin*) thus abusing the Sign of Peace, to commence a cruel War
against

against his loving Master; *O signum sacrilegum, ubi ab osculo incipitur bellum, & per pacis indicium, pacis rumpitur sacramentum.* O thou perfidious Villain! O thou worst of Men, and Traytor to thy God! But why should I fling dirt in thy Face? Revile thee, or call thee *Foe*, since thy dear Master calls thee *Friend*, and gives thee the Kifs of Peace? Ha! No, no, thou art unhappy enough without our Imprecations; for having abandon'd the Life of thy Lord to the Cruelty of his bloody Persecutors, thou hast abandon'd thy own to Fury and Despair, and with the very same Hand, that betray'd him, thou hast *destroy'd thy self*; and truly, 'twas fit it should be so, because thou couldst not perish by a Hand more inhuman, more barbarous, or more sacrilegious than thy own. But if I spare thy Name, I blame the cursed Example, thou hast left behind thee; for thou hast taught the sinful Sons of Men to sell and betray their *Jesus* every Day. But who are those that sell their *Jesus*? Those that sell their precious Souls, which cost a God so dear, for a little Honour, a little Interest, a little Pleasure, for Toys, and Trifles, and empty Shadows. And who are those that betray their *Jesus*? Those that approach the sacred Altar, and receive the great Sacrament of Love, whilst at the same time, their

their wicked Hearts swell with Envy, burn with Revenge, and are still machinating ill Designs one against another; *sedens adversus fratrem tuum loquebaris, & adversus filium matris tuæ ponebas scandalum*: Psalm xlix. 20. *Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, thou slanderest thy own mother's son*: And all this, I say, coming fresh from the Table of Peace and Love. O *Judas! Judas!* Have I not reason then, to imprecate the scandalous Precedent thou hast left behind thee to Posterity?

I. BUT alas! Whilst I am speaking, the *Lamb* is taken and bound in Cords and Chains by this treacherous Crew: But come, dear *Christians*, let us adore these Bonds, and kiss these Chains, for they import great Comfort to us lost Creatures; because, if the Only Begotten Son of God does this Day lose his Liberty, 'tis, that we may all, one Day, enjoy the glorious Liberty of the Free-born Sons of God; *Qua libertate Christus nos donavit*, cries the great Apostle in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, iv. 33. The Royal Prophet tells us, *That sinners are bound in Chains*, Psalm cxviii. 61. Two sorts of Chains, *Chains of Time, Chains of Eternity*; the Chains of Sin are the Chains of their own unruly Passions, which keep them in a wretched Slavery to all the evil Propensions
of

of corrupted Nature: And the Chains of Eternity are Chains of Fire, Bonds of Flames, which bind the Dámnd in those dark Dungeons of Horror *there below*. But joyful News, happy Tidings! *Jesus*, to break these Chains of our Sins, and prevent these Chains of Hell, is this Day bound in Chains; *Jesus* is made a Prisoner to set us free; *Qua libertate Christus nos donavit*. O sacred Garden of Olives, Witness of his Captivity; O swift Torrent of Cedron, dy'd with the Streams of his most precious Blood, tell us, I beseech thee, tell us all that pass'd in this Mystery of Sorrow; express, if you can, the Impiety of these Traytors, and the Innocence of the *Lamb* that is taken: Ha! There is nothing in it but what is painful, rigorous, and ignominious.

AND now let us follow this illustrious Captive to the House of *Caiphas*, which I may truly call his Prison, for here I find him under a double Guard, and placed as it were, between Heaven and Hell, Men and Angels; the sacrilegious Hands of Men strike him on the Face, and cry in Derision, *Prophetiza nobis, Christe, quis te percussit*; *Prophecy unto us, O Christ, who 'twas that struck thee*: Whilst the Angels at the same time contemplate his divine Face thus swelled and disfigured with Blows, as the
 very

very Object of all their Joys, and the fruitful Source of all their Glories; *in quem desiderant Angeli prospicere*, 1 Peter i. 12. The impious Hands of Men tear the Hair off his Head; but the holy Hands of Angels gather up all this Hair together again, as so many precious Relicks; The wicked Sons of Men bend the Knee in scorn, and salute him with an, *Ave Rex Judæorum; Hail King of the Jews*; Mark xv. 18. But the Angels, those blessed Sons of God, fall down prostrate in his Presence, and adore him as their Sovereign Lord and Master: These bloody Traytors make the great *Prætorium* ring with clamorous Outcries against this Innocent, *Tolle, tolle, crucifige, crucifige eum; away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him*; whilst all the Angels above intone his Praises, and make the Heavens echo with a joyful *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth*. But hold, you sacrilegious Traytors, hold, 'tis a God you persecute under this Veil of Flesh. O you Angels of Peace, you that weep so bitterly to see your heavenly Sovereign in the midst of all these vile Indignities, why do you not break his Bonds and Chains asunder, and set him free? Why do not you draw the flaming Swords of your Anger, and destroy these insulting

Creatures,

Angeli pacis amarè flebunt,
Isai. 33.
 7.

Creatures, as you destroy'd the whole Army of *Sennacherib*? 4 Reg. xix. 35. Why do you not strike these desperate Miscreants with Blindness, as you struck those abominable *Sodomites*? Gen. xix. 11. Ha! No, no, you triumphant Legions of victorious Angels, this is not your *Hour*, but the Hour and the Power of Darknes; *hora & potestas tenebrarum*, Matth. xxvi. 53. This is your Hour, my divine Redeemer, to suffer with Patience; but when, *O when*, will it be our Hour to imitate thy Patience in all our Sufferings? Thus, *thus*, the Hands of Traytors strike at his Liberty. But now let us see how the Hands of Judges strike at his Honour, and all for the Sins of the People; *propter scelus populi mei*, &c.

II. THE Judges were the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and *High-Priests*, and *Princes*, and *Rulers* of the People, Wisemen, learned Men, Licentiates *in utroque jure*, expert both in the Divine and Human Laws: So here, sure, if ever, this guiltless Innocent will be clear'd, his Cause justified, and himself set at Liberty. But *alas! alas!* Their Injustice will frustrate our Expectations, and you would think they had received their Authority to no other end but to rob the Lord of Glory of his Honour. Those Injuries we receive from private Persons, though they

seem to cloud our Reputation, may be imputed to some secret Grudge or Enmity; and those rude Insolencies, which are offer'd to Persons of Honour, by a tumultuous Rabble, may be ascribed to some popular Heat of an unthinking Mobile, without any Prejudice to their Blood or their Character; but when a Man is arraign'd at the Bar, and there accused, presented and condemn'd according to all the Points and Forms of Law, when he receives his Sentence in open *Court*, where *Justice ought to be unbiass'd*, then we conclude, generally speaking, that he is guilty.

O what a shameful Confusion then! What a strange Humiliation for this Holy of Holies to stand before these wicked Judges, and present himself at their Tribunals! But Heavens! What have Men to do to judge a God? How comes his Cause to fall under their Examination? By what Law are they become his Judges? Besides, they are his sworn Enemies, corrupted by their own Passions, and blinded with panick Fears. *St. Chryostom* assures us, this *Court* was an Assembly of Thieves, who were resolved to rob the World's *Messias* of his Life and Honour both at once; *Annas* and *Caiphas* were impious, *Herod* a Tyrant, *Pilate* an Idolater, the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* meer

Hypocrites;

Hypocrites; and yet *Jesus*, the Only Begotten Son of the Living God, *Jesus* the Lamb without Spot, *Jesus* the Innocent; stands before these Judges bare-headed, a Rope about his Neck, his Hands bound behind him, and patiently expects, like an apparent Criminal, to receive the Sentence of his Death. O Sovereign Lord of all Heaven and Earth, O thou just Judge of the Living and the Dead, 'tis here, 'tis here, if ever, thou hast, not only humbled, but even annihilated thy Honour, and stript thy self of Glory; for lower thou canst not go, than to be judged by those, whose Judge thou art. *Obstupescite Cæli super hoc, & portæ ejus desolamini vehementer*: Be astonished O ye Heavens at this, and you, ye Gates of that glorious City, shake and tremble at it, cries the holy Prophet *Jeremiah*, ii. 12. the *High Court of Justice* there above, wonders to see such Injustice in our *Courts* here below. In Effect, what has he done? What's his Fault? what's his Crime? *Quid enim mali fecit?* Was it for having given *Sight* to the Blind, or *Hearing* to the Deaf? Was that a Fault? Was it to have *cleansed* the *Leper*, and *raised* the Dead? Was that a Crime? Or was it, infine, because he call'd himself a God? and the Son of the *Highest*? Ha! Was he not so? Yes, yes,

his unheard of Silence, his unparallel'd Patience in the midst of so many Injuries, so many Calumnies, so many clamorous Outcries, and false Depositions of perjured Witnesses, more than sufficiently declare his Divinity and his Innocency both at once :

*Tert. l. de
patien. c.
3.*

For, as the learned *Tertullian* observes excellently well, he must needs be a God, who being thus accused, and thus abused, had nothing in him of the Troubles, and Disquiets, or the Impatience of Man; *Nihil de impatientia hominis imitatus est. Pilate* himself admires his Silence, *Matth. xxvii. 14.* And is so charm'd with the Lustre of his Virtues, that he proclaims him Innocent, and of his Judge becomes his Advocate; *Nihil invenio causæ in hoc homine*; *Luke xxiii. 4.* Well then, *Pilate*, well, and shall a wicked piece of Policy, a base Compliance for human Respects, a servile Fear to lose the Amity of *Cæsar*, force thee at last to pronounce an unjust Sentence against this spotless Innocent? Yes, this was the Loss of *Pilate*, and this is the Loss of many, who to please the Princes and *Great Ones of the World*, break the just Laws of God, and spurn at the Commands of their heavenly Sovereign.

BUT alas! alas! Here again, whilst I am speaking, my *Jesus* is still dishonour'd
more

more and more, a *Thief* a *Murderer*, a *se-
ditious Man*, a *profligate Villain* is preferr'd
in Election before the *Lord of Glory*. Me-
thinks, in all reason, they ought rather to
have chosen one that gave Life to the Dead,
than one that took away the Lives of the
Living. But what Remedy? The *Scribes*
and the *Pharisees* will have it so, they in-
flame the Multitude, and stir up the People
to choose *Barabbas*, and refuse *Jesus*; *non
hunc, sed Barabbam*, John xviii. 40. O un-
happy Choice, and most injurious to the
Honour of *Jesus*, unless perhaps the Sinner
makes a worse, when he prefers his own
Will and Pleasure, before the Will and
Pleasure of his God; for he renounces *Jesus*,
not bound in Cords and Chains, not *Jesus*,
standing like a Criminal at the Bar, but
Jesus, in the Kingdom of his Glory, *Jesus*
standing at the right Hand of his eternal
Father: Ha! how often does the wicked
Man say in his Heart, *non hunc, sed Barb-
bam*; away with a God, the World is
my God, die *Jesus*, live Pleasure, take
who will the Creator, give me the Creature;
non hunc, sed Barabbam. But now let us
return to *Pilate*, and see at last how he
resolves to dispose of this holy Innocent;
for I see he would fain save his Life, and
yet would needs please the *Jews* too, if
possible;

possible; *volens populo satisfacere*; Mark xxv. 15. To this end, he takes his place in the Judgment Seat, and there condemns this spotless Lamb to lose a Part of his Blood to save the Whole.

SILENCE then, *Silence* in the Court, for the Judge is now ready to give Sentence, but a Sentence the most barbarous, the most inhuman, and the most unjust, that ever yet was heard of: Hear it then, *Christians*, and even tremble when you hear it; for the very first Clause of the Sentence imports that *Jesus* must be scourged. But hold, *Pilate*, hold, before this bloody Sentence pass any further, I appeal; and since my loving Saviour has no other Advocate but his own Innocency, and is resolved to smother his own Cause in silence, I'll plead in his behalf: *Pilate*, though you design by this means to set your Prisoner free, and save his Life, yet you shed his Blood unjustly; for, must an Innocent be scourged to satisfy the Rage of his cruel Enemies? Besides, you know this Penalty is inflicted by the Law upon *Thieves, Murderers, Traitors, Disturbers of the Publick Peace*, and such like Monsters of Nature; and which of all these Crimes does he stand guilty of? Of *Treason*? No, for he expressly ordain'd, all that Honour, Homage, and Tribute should be

he render'd to *Cæsar*, which is due to *Cæsar*; Matth. xxii. 21. *Reddite ergo quæ sunt Cæsar-
ris, Cæsari*. Of breaking the Peace? Ha! No, no, for he is the very God of Peace, *Deus Pacis*, he sent his Disciples about the World as Messengers of Peace, and commanded, that into what House soever they enter'd, they should not fail to cry, *Pax huic domui*, Peace be to this House. Of *Theft* or *Robbery*? No, no, for he came down from Heaven upon Earth, and left the high Throne of his Glory, to enrich us Mortals with his Poverty; *ut illius inopia nos divites effemus*; 2 Cor. viii. 9. Why then *Pilate*, O why dost thou pronounce such a barbarous Sentence against this Innocent? a Sentence so contrary to the Dictates of thy own Conscience? *Go go*, 'tis cruel, 'tis unjust, and therefore, since there is no hopes of Justice upon Earth, I appeal to Heaven: But why should I appeal, since he himself does not appeal, but submits to this Sentence of Man as to the Sentence of God pronounced against him for the Sins of his People; *propter scelus populi mei, percussi eum*. But this is not all, for not content to have lost his Liberty in the Hands of *Traytors*, and his Honour in the Hands of *Judges*, he is going now to lose his Blood in the Hands of *Bloody Tormentors*.

BUT

BUT whilst they are binding up the Rods, and preparing the Scourges, the loving Saviour of the World presents himself in Spirit before his heavenly Father, who is arm'd with the Rods and Scourges of his Justice against the Sins of the People; but he, like a tender Mother, who steps between her offended Husband and her guilty Son, choosing to receive the Blows herself, and save her Child; he, *I say*, steps between *his Father's Anger and our Soul's Danger*, and makes, as 'twere, a Shield of his own spotless Body, to receive all those heavy Strokes of Anger our Sins deserved, crying by the Mouth of the Prophet, *Ego in flagella paratus sum*, Psalm xxxvii. 18. O my eternal Father! There's not a part in this Body, which you have given me, but what is now prepared for Scourges; O turn then, turn away the Stripes of your Indignation from the sinful Sons of Men, and turn them all upon the Shoulders of your innocent Son; for I am ready to go, not only into this *Prætorium*, but to surround the whole World with a Cord about my Neck, and Crouds of Tormentors at my Heels, to be scourged in all those Places where you have been offended: *Ego in flagella paratus sum*. And truly this Mystery was so dolorous, and so ignominious to the Son of God

God

God, that you would think the holy Evangelists were even afraid to record it, for all, they say of it, is only this, *flagellatus est, he was scourged.*

'Tis here then, dear *Christians*, 'tis here, if ever, I beseech you to withdraw your Eyes from all other Objects, and fix them upon your suffering Redeemer in this bloody Posture, to which his own Love, and your Crimes have brought him: 'Tis here you may read, in Characters of Blood, the Excess of his Love to you, and the reciprocal Obligation of your Love to him; for every Wound he received at this Pillar, is a Tongue that cries, *Eccc quomodo amabat*, see, see how he loved: And therefore, not to love such a suffering Love as this, were altogether unsufferable. But why must they needs scourge him in a publick Hall? Why do not they rather lead him into some private Place, in some measure at least, to lessen this shameful Confusion? When a guilty Criminal is to be scourged, it suffices that two or three Witnesses be present; and must all the World be present at the scourging of a God? O why all this Pain? Why all this Shame? Why all this Rigour? Ha! Sinner, Sinner, 'tis to let thee see thy Crimes are too great to cost thy God but a little; 'tis to let thee know how execrable those sinful Pleasures

are, for which a God, a *God* must be scourged. Infine, they stript him, or (as others have it) they caused him to strip himself; and this I may say was, if not the most dolorous, at least, the most ignominious of all his Sufferings; for this indeed is the greatest Affront that can be offer'd to a Man of Honour. That golden Oracle of the Church St. *Chrysoftom*, speaking of the three Children in the fiery Furnace of *Babylon*, tells us, those scorching Flames, forgetful of their own all-devouring Nature, touched not the Garments of these holy Servants of God, out of a reverential regard to their Honour, and a deep respect to their Modesty; *Vestibus puerorum ob honestatem ignis pepercit.*

BUT alas, alas! this Virginal Body of the spotless Lamb, framed of the purest Virgin Blood, by the wonderful Operations, or mysterious Overshadowings of the Holy Ghost, *Luke i. 35.* must have no such Privilege; but stands there naked, in this shameful Posture expos'd to the publick View of Heaven and Earth, Men and Angels, Friends and Foes. And now, methinks, I see the Eyes of these cruel Tormentors, sparkling with Anger, their Mouths even foaming with Rage, their Hands loaded with Scourges, and their Arms lifted up, ready to begin the woful Tragedy: But hold your
Hands

Hands a while, let's see if there be no hopes of a *Reprieve*. O eternal Father, 'tis in your Power alone to hear my Prayer, and grant my just Request; he's your Only Son, he's the Object of your tender Love, he's Innocent. 'Tis true, replies the heavenly Father, he's my Son, but he's your Caution; he's the Object of my Love, but thy Sin is the Object of my Hatred; he's Innocent, but thou art a Criminal; strike him then, Tormentors, and strike him till he smarts *for the Sins of my People; propter scelus populi mei, percutite eum*. Ha! Scarce had they struck the second Blow, but out springs the *precious Gore* in great abundance; some sprinkles the Walls of the *Prætorium*, some spurts in the very Faces of the Spectators, and the rest runs trickling down to the Ground in Streams. O my God! my God! What? Angry still? Is not your Justice fully satisfied? O sure, *sure*, 'tis enough, once more then, *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy*. 'Tis true, replies the heavenly Father, here again, 'tis enough indeed, nay, and too much for him, but not too much for thee, not too much for thy Crimes, thy Rebel-lions, thy Ingratitudes; strike on again then, Tormentors, strike on again for the Sins of my People; *propter scelus populi mei percu-tite eum*. In Effect, they struck on with

such inhuman Cruelty, and such barbarous Severity, that at last his Wounds amounted to the number of above five thousand. Ha! *Christians, Christians*, remember this, above five thousand Wounds upon the bleeding Body of a *Jesus*, and not one of all these Wounds able to wound these flinty Souls of ours? O *Adamantine Hearts!* O Rocks, harder than those that flew to pieces at it. The Royal *Psalmist* seem'd, in his Prophe-tick Views, to eye this dolorous Mystery, when in the Name of our scourged *Messias*, he broke into this sad Complaint, *Supra dorsum meum arraverunt peccatores*; the wicked have not only scourged, but even plow'd up my Shoulders with their Crimes. And the learned *St. Cyprian* tells us here, that at this Pillar they seem'd to rack and torment, not so much the Parts, as the very Wounds of his Body; *torquebant in excessum, non membra, sed ipsa vulnera.*

O the bloody! O the dolorous! O the ignominious Martyrdom of a loving *Jesus!* His very Tormentors themselves are weary, and the whole Assembly, as hard hearted as they are, cry out aloud, *satis est*, 'tis enough; so at last they unbind the Cords, and loose the bleeding *Captive.*

AND here, methinks, I see him sink and fall, not so much under the Weight of these

these Rods and Scourges, as under the heavy Load of our Iniquities ; but having breath'd a while, and coming, as it were, a little to himself, he seems to wade through a Sea of Blood, to the rocky Shore of our Hearts, and there groans out this mournful Expostulation : O sinful Soul, for whose dear Sake I suffer, see all these bleeding Wounds, these Wounds upon my Head, these Wounds upon my Arms, these Wounds upon my Breast, these Wounds upon my Shoulders, view them all, and view them well, let not so much as one escape thy Sight ; these I received for thy Pride, those for thy Vanity, these for thy Intemperance, those for thy Sensuality, and all for thy Crimes ; then lay thy Hand upon thy Heart, and tell me truly, since I have suffer'd all these Wounds for thee, does not this deserve a mutual return of Love from thee ? But if thou hast found out any darling Creature more worthy of thy Love than thy *wounded Creator* ; if thou canst not love me, at least pity me ; *Miseremini mei, miseremini mei, saltem vos amici mei* ; Have Mercy on me, have Mercy on me, at least you my Friends, you my Priests, you that sacrifice this Body upon holy Altars ; at least, you *Catholicks*, you the faithful Children of my Church, you that so often eat the Flesh and drink the

Blood

Blood of the Lamb, do not you increase my Pains, renew my Wounds, and make me bleed afresh by your Ingratitude, your Insensibility: *Miseremini mei, miseremini mei, saltem vos amici mei*, Job xix. 21.

Ha! Sinner, 'tis thy God that speaks to the Ear of thy Heart, what Answer dost thou return to his Voice, to his Wounds, to his Blood? *Quid vobis videtur de Christo?* What do you think of this Christ, thus rent and torn, and struck for the Sins of his People? *Ecce homo*, behold the Man, cry'd *Pilate* to the *Jews*; and *behold the Man*, say I to you *Christians*; for he's expos'd, as this Day, every Year upon our Altars, to see how your Hearts stand affected towards him. Ha! Behold *then, behold* the Man with that bloody Crown of Thorns upon his Head, and do not you plant new Thorns, or make new Crowns to crown his Head again by these frequent Failings and daily Relapses into the same Disorder: Or again, *Ecce homo*, behold the Man with that ragged purple Garment upon his Shoulders; see, *see*, how he spurns at all earthly Greatness; let that lower all these tarring Thoughts of Vanity, and teach you true Humility: Or, yet again, *Ecce homo*, behold the Man with that empty Reed in his Hand, and be not you like Reeds, ' still wavering
and

and tottering in all your good Purposes and generous Resolves: Or, infine, *Ecce homo*, behold the Man that was struck with his own Hands, the Hands of *Love* in the *Garden of Olives*: Behold the Man that was struck with the Hands of *Cruelty*, the Hands of his Enemies in the great *Prætorium*. And to close up all, behold the Man that was struck by the Hands of *Justice*, the Hands of the heavenly Father upon the *Mount of Calvary*; which is the last Scene of this deep Tragedy, and the last Part of this Discourse.

The T H I R D P A R T.

THUS having follow'd the bleeding Lamb through all those Stations of Sorrow, where his own Love, and the Cruelty of his blood-thirsty Enemies struck him for our Iniquities, we are come, at last, to the last Stage, even the *Mount of Calvary*, that fatal Place design'd for the Execution of this Innocent; that very Place where the eternal Father is resolved, in his Anger, to strike his Only Son to Death for the Sins of his People; *propter scelus populi mei percussit eum*.

BUT O *Mount Calvary! Mount Calvary!* Thou Place of frightful Skulls and Skeletons, thou Place of Horror and Confusion, methinks, were it lawful, I could even curse thee

thee in the fullness of my Grief, as *David* cursed those ominous Mountains of *Gelboe*, Lib. 2. Reg. i. 21. *Montes Gelboe, nec ros nec pluvia veniant super vos, quia ibi abjectus est Clypeus Fortium, Clypeus Saul, quasi non esset unctus oleo*; O Mountains of *Gelboe*, let neither Dew nor Rain descend upon ye, where the strong Ones of *Israel* fell, said he; and O Mountain of *Calvary*, say I, let neither Dew nor Rain descend upon thee, where not a *Saul*, not a *Jonathan*, not the strong Ones of *Israel*, but the strong God of *Israel* fell; and fell, not under the Hands of the *Philistines*, or under the Hands of his Enemies, those cruel Tormentors, but under the heavy Hand of his heavenly Father, now become his angry Judge: O *Mons Calvariae, nec ros nec pluvia veniant super te, ubi cecidit Deus Fortis Israel, Christus Domini*.

BUT hold! I fear the deep and sorrowful Resentments of my Heart have made the sharp Invectives of my Tongue fly too high, and lash too far; for, if I am not out, this Mountain is innocent, nay, the very Holy of Holies, the *Sancta Sanctorum*; and therefore I am now resolved my self, and exhort you all to love, worship, and adore this holy Mountain, as the sacred Footstool of your expiring Sovereign,

reign, dy'd with those purple Streams of Blood he shed *for the Sins of the People.*

ST. *Peter Chysologus*, in a deep and pensive Contemplation upon this dolorous Mystery, tells us, the Son of God appear'd upon this *Mount of Calvary* as a publick Surety, Pledge, or Caution for all Mankind at once, where, says this learned Man, there seem'd to pass a secret Coloquy, or a mysterious Dialogue between the Justice of the Father, and the Obedience of the Son: My *Son*, cries the *Father in his Wrath*, since you undertook to pay the Debts, and answer for the Sins of Men, 'tis now high time to adjust our Accounts, the Day of Payment's come, agreed upon between us, sign'd and seal'd in the secret and *sacred Conclave* of the *Trinity*; so now my Anger must be appeas'd, and my Justice fully satisfic'd; this weighty *Cross*, fifteen Foot in length, which, like another *Isaac*, thou hast brought upon thy wounded Shoulders to this Mountain of *Myrrh*, this Mountain of *Bitterness*, is the *Altar*, and thou thy self art the *Viſtim*: the four Corners of this *Cross* represent the four Corners of the *World*, and signify, that you must bleed and die for the *Sins* of the whole *World*; their lies that painful Bed of Sorrow ready to receive thee; and now I expect thy

prompt Obedience, for I am now resolved to strike thee Dead for the Sins of my People; *propter scelus populi mei, percutiam te.*

WILLINGLY, replies the All-obedient Son, willingly, my eternal Father, I here willingly submit to all the rigorous Decrees of your Justice; but how are you resolved to strike me? My Son, I'll tell you how; Men, you know, sin, *First*, by their Hands; *Secondly*, by their Feet; *Thirdly*, by their Ears; *Fourthly*, by their Tongues; *Fifthly*, by their Eyes, and all the other criminal *Senses* of their Bodies. And therefore I must now strike all the innocent Parts and Senses of thy Body, and make thee smart for all these Sins of the People; *propter scelus populi mei, percutiam te.*

I. I'LL strike thy Hands with Nails for all these Rapes, these Thefts, these Murthers, these Sacrileges, these Impurities, these Adulteries, these Fornications, these unnatural Brutalities, &c.

II. I'LL strike thy Feet, and strike them fast to this Tree of the *Cross*, for these Wandrings, these Rovings, these Strayings of the Sons of Men through all the By-ways of Iniquity, and all the crooked Mazes of Sin, for all these unlawful Steps, to unlawful Places, upon unlawful Designs, &c.

III.

III. I'LL strike thy holy Ears with the clamorous Out-cries and horrid Blasphemies of the People, for all these Lies, Calumnies, Detractions, Perjuries, Oaths, Imprecations, and Profanations of my high and mighty Name, &c. *Paratum Cor meum, Deus, paratum Cor meum*; willingly, my God, willingly, my Heart's prepared to suffer all; but are you angry still? Is not all this enough to satisfy the Rigours of your Justice? No, no, my Son, Men sin by their Tongues, Tastes, Palates, as well as by their Hands, Feet, and Ears.

IV. *ADAM*, you know, was rebellious to my Laws, takes and eats the forbidden Fruit, and the greatest part of his Posterity ever since, forgetting the Dignity of their Nature, and whose Image they bear imprinted in their Souls, wallow in a thousand inordinate Excesses, Intemperances, Dissolutions; and therefore I am now resolved to make thee taste, at least, if not drink a bitter Dose of Vinegar and Gall, *Matth. xxvii. 34.*

V. BUT what rigorous Invention, think ye, has the Justice of my God found out to strike and torment the Eyes of this Innocent for all the wanton Glances and sinful Aspects of his People? Here's the Subject of my present Admirati^on; was it

perhaps to see that great, ungrateful City of *Jerusalem*, where he had wrought so many Wonders? Or, was it to spy some present there amongst the Crowd, to whom he had restored their Sight, who look'd upon him with miraculous Eyes? Or, was it, infine, to see these cruel Tormentors so busy still about his Cross, and playing at Dice with their bloody Hands for his *seamless Coat*? These, I must needs confess, were most afflicting Objects, stabbing Sights to see; but all this is nothing, *nothing* to what follows; there, *there* stands one just by the Cross; bath'd in Tears, absorb'd in Grief, *Mary, Mary*, the tender Mother of *Jesus*, was near at Hand; that's the Object strikes the Eyes, and wounds the Heart of *Jesus*; *Stabat Mater Jesu juxta Crucem*, John xix. 25.

THE divine *St. Denis*, that learned *Areopagite*, tells us, that Love is an eternal Circle, which coming out of the Heart of God, and passing through the whole croud of Creatures, gathers together all that's sweet, all that's rich, all that's choice and precious, and then returns them back again to the Heart of God, from whence all Graces flow; *Amor est circulus eternus*. But here, upon this Mountain of *Myrrh*, this *Mountain of Calvary*, I find a Circle of Dolours between the Eyes of *Jesus*, and the Eyes of *Mary*,
between

between the Heart of the Son, and the Heart of the Mother, between the Passion of the one, and the Compassion of the other; for Compassion is nothing else but *Passion at a rebound*: The Passion begins upon the Heart of *Jesus*, and passes by the Eyes into the Heart of *Mary*, where having left most deep and sensible Impressions of all his Sufferings, it rebounds from the Heart of *Mary* upon the Heart of *Jesus*, and circles back again into that bitter Source of Sorrow, from whence it came; every Tear of the Mother is a Dart that wounds the Eyes of the Son, *Stabat juxta Crucem Maria Mater Jesu*: In a Word, *Jesus* and *Mary* on this *Mount of Calvary*, *Jesus* upon the Cross, and *Mary* near the Cross, like two Fires, mutually augment each others Flames: O my Son, thy Cross torments me! O my Mother, thy Presence afflicts me! Thy Pains wound my Soul with a Sword of Sorrow, cries the afflicted Mother: Thy Grief has reach'd my Heart *before the Lance*, and given me a mortal Wound, cries the Son: O let me die with thee; O let me die without thee: Oh! What a Circle of Grief is here between these two loving Hearts? And truly, this is no more than what the good old *Simeon* foretold her in the Temple of *Jerusalem*; *Et tuam ipsius animam pertransibit gladius*; a Sword of sorrow.

sorrow shall transpierce thy Soul, Luke ii. 36. And no doubt, no doubt, but that very Sword of Sorrow, which transpierced the compassionate Soul of Mary, struck through her wounded Heart at the weeping Eyes of Jesus; Stabat juxta Crucem Maria Mater Jesu.

So now, sure, the Justice of my God is fully satisfied; sure, here's Blood enough to extinguish all these Flames of his Anger against the Sins of his People; for now, says the Prophet *Isaiab*, from the Sole of the Foot to the Crown of the Head, there is not one whole Part in him; *A planta pedis, usque ad verticem capitis, non est in eo sanitas*, *Isaiab* i. 6. Where then, or what can the heavenly Father strike at next? At his Head? That's crown'd with Thorns: At his Hands and Feet? They are gor'd and bor'd with Nails: At his Shoulders? They are rent and torn with Scourges: At his Ears? They ring with horrid Blaphemies: In a Word, he's so mangled all over, and every Part of his sacred Body so strangely disfigured, as they have even lost their Names; this Head is no more the Head of a Man, but the Head of Dolours; these Hands and Feet are no more the Hands and Feet of a Man, but the Hands and Feet of Dolours; nor is he himself any
more

more a Man, but a Man with that doleful Epithet the same Prophet gives him in Chapter liii. 3. *Vir dolorum, the Man of Sorrows.* But O the Anger! O the Justice of a God! Which stops not here, but having struck his spotless Body without, resolves now to strike his holy Soul within, and all for the Sins of his People; *propter scelus populi mei, percussi eum.*

I know, cries the eternal Father to his agonizing Son, I know thou didst begin to wound thy own Soul in the *Garden of Olives*, and thy insulting Persecutors gave it some Wounds with the sharp Razors of their Tongues, with their Calumnies and Blasphemies; but I'll strike it to the Quick, I'll finish the Work, I'll consummate the Holocaust, and close the Eyes of this dying Victim with my own Hands; *propter scelus populi mei, ego percutiam te.* But how think you, *Christians?* How did the angry Father strike his only Son? By a dreadful *Dereliction* upon the *Cross*, where a God seems, in some manner, to forsake a God, to satisfy by this bitter Separation for that fatal Separation, we, *we* ourselves, have too too often made between God and our own Souls by Sin: Whither, in all appearance, should my suffering *Saviour* fly for Help in this universal Calamity, this general Persecution? Whither,

I say, should he fly but into the Hands of his Father, crying with the Prophet, *In manibus tuis sortes meæ*; O my heavenly Father, my Lot is now in your Hands, 'tis in your Power alone to afford me some Relief in the midst of all my Sorrows; *Judas* has betray'd me, *Peter* has deny'd me, the rest of my Disciples have left me, and the very Sight of my dolorous Mother afflicts me; to whom then, but to thee, my God, must I cry for Succour? *In manibus tuis sortes meæ*. But alas! alas! These very Hands of God, which are secure Places of Refuge for Sinners, and sweet Retreats of Comfort for the Saints, become Places of new Grief and Sorrow for this Innocent: 'Tis here, my expiring Redeemer, 'tis here you find by Experience, and feel in your own sacred Person, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the Hands of the Living God, not only for sinful Men, but even for a God himself, when he covers his Sanctity under the Shape, the Form, and the Likeness of Sin; *Horrendum est, incidere in manus Dei viventis*, Heb. x. 31. 'Tis this makes him groan forth that sad Complaint, enough to set the very Pillars of the Earth a trembling, and shake the whole Machine of the World, E L O I E L O I L A M M A S A B A C - T H A N I; *quod est interpretatum, Deus meus,*

meus, ut quid dereliquisti me; that is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? You know, my eternal Father, I never complain'd of those Traytors that deprived me of my Liberty, those Judges that robb'd me of my Honour, or those Tormentors that shed my innocent Blood; I never so much as once open'd my Lips against my ungrateful People, nor do I now repine to see my self abandon'd by all; but to see you, my loving Father, to see you forsake me, that wounds my Heart and fills my Soul with Sorrow, that's hard indeed, and touches to the quick, *Deus meus! Deus meus!* &c. Or perhaps you leave me, because you know me not, being thus strangely disfigured from Head to Foot; but 'tis I, 'tis I, *Ego sum*; hear, O hear my Voice, for 'tis the Voice of thy *Jacob, vox Jacob*; see, my eternal Father, see if it is not the Coat of thy *Joseph*, though dy'd in Blood; *Vide an Tunica Filii tui sit*, Gen. xxxvii. 32. See if it is not the Flesh of thy only Son, though rent and torn to Pieces; though I now hang upon this infamous Gibbet, between two Thieves, 'tis I, 'tis I, that sat there above in a starry Throne between you, my Father, and the Holy Ghost; this Tongue, which is now imbitter'd with a most distastful Dose of

Vinegar and Gall, is the Tongue that praised your high and mighty Name, and proclaim'd your Glories to the World; these Hands, which are now fastened to this Tree of Sorrow, are the powerful Instruments that wrought so many Wonders; these Feet, now transfix'd with Nails, are the Feet that run so fast to catch that poor lost Sheep, call'd M A N, and bring him home with Joy to the glorious Fold of your heavenly Angels; Why then, O why have you thus forsaken me? *Deus meus! Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me*, Mark xv. 34.

BUT when I say, that *Jesus* was forsaken upon the *Cross*; you must not imagine the *Divinity* ever left the *Humanity* of *Christ*; or fancy any Separation between these two; No, no, for the Body and the Soul of *Jesus* were always hypostatically united to the Person of the *Word*, though Death made a Separation between the one and the other; nor must you think he was abandon'd of divine Grace, for he was always impeccable; or deprived of the beatifical Vision, for he was always glorious, he always saw the Face of his Father in Heaven. How then? How is this dolorous Separation to be understood? Two Ways; *first*, by a mysterious Suspension of all those favorable Influences from the *Divinity*, that
might

might, the least, temper the Sorrows, or lessen the Sufferings of his Humanity, and so leave him to feel the utmost Rigours of his Torments, *as if* he had been *totus Homo*, all Man, and no God. Or, *secondly*, in as much as the heavenly Father withdrew all those actual Assistances, and all those interior Consolations that might the least contribute to his Comfort: in a Word, if he was forsaken, 'twas because he himself would have it so; *Sicut oblatus est, sic derelictus est, quia ipse voluit.* Isaiah liii. 7.

AND thus, *thus* having offer'd up a sweet Sacrifice of Prayer for his Enemies; Father, forgive them, because they know not what they do; *Pater dimitte illis, nesciunt enim quid faciunt*; thus having consign'd his dearest Mother into the Hands and Care of his beloved Disciple; *Mulier, ecce Filius tuus*; thus, having recommended his holy Spirit into the Hands of his eternal Father; *Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum*; thus having promis'd his Paradise to the good Thief; *Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso*: Thus having express'd the ardent thirst of his Heart for the Salvation of all Mankind, *sitio*, he cries out with a loud Voice, *consummatum est*, it is finish'd, the great Work I came for is accomplish'd, *consummatum est*; by which he seems to summon all Heaven

and Earth, all Men and Angels to come and see a triple Consummation; a Consummation of *Love*, of *Cruelty*, of *Justice*; a Consummation of *Love* in his own Hands; a Consummation of *Cruelty* in the Hands of his Enemies; and a Consummation of *Justice* in the Hands of his Father; *consummatum est*, or, a full Consummation of all the Law and the Prophets.

Et cum hæc dixisset, and after he had said these things, his Face grew wan and pale, his Eyes began to sink, his Cheeks to fall, his Mouth to gasp, and the Blood ran slowly from all his Wounds; and then, *O then* this *Jesus*, who, as God, is from all Eternity; this *Jesus*, who, as Man, lived three and thirty Years, about the Noon-tide of the Day, and in the Noon-tide of his Age, in the Publick View of the whole World, to the Astonishment of Heaven, and the Amazement of the Earth; *he did* what these naked Altars tell us, *he did* what this mournful Sepulchre tells us, *he did* what these veil'd Images and cover'd Pictures tell us, *he did* what all these other doleful Ceremonies tell us; or rather *he did* what he himself can tell you best; *Inclinato capite, emisit spiritum*, John xxix. 30. He bowed down his all-obedient Head, and *DIED*, and Died for the Sins of his People; *propter scelus populi sui mortuus est*.



C O N C L U S I O N .

SUN, thou bright Lamp of Heaven, withdraw thy radiant Beams: Day, hide thy Light, as not daring to behold this bloody Deicide; tremble, O thou Earth and you, ye Heavens, put on the deepest Mourning to solemnize the bitter Obsequies of your great Creator; Rocks and Stones fly to pieces at it, Veil; of the Temple rend in sunder; open, O ye Graves, rise, rise you Dead, go and proclaim the Innocency of the Lamb that is slain, through all the Streets of the holy City; make it echo in the very Temple it self, let it be heard even in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, in the Holy of Holies, for the holy God himself is struck Dead upon a Cross *for the Sins of the People*. But is it he then, O my Soul? View him well, is this he that crowns the Heads of his Saints with Glory, whose Head is now crown'd with piercing Thorns? Are these those powerful Hands, that with three only Fingers support this mighty Machine of the World, which are now fastened with two great Nails to this fatal Tree of Sorrow? Yes, 'tis he. But, O my divine Redeemer, What's the meaning of those two deep Holes, those two bleeding

bleeding Wounds in the very midst of thy Hands? *Quid sunt plagæ istæ in medio manuum tuarum?* Ha! Soul, Soul, know, says he, I received these Wounds in thy House, at the Sign of the Serpent *Sin*; *His plagatus sum in domo eorum, qui diligebant me*, Zach. xiii. 6. Ha! Sinner, enquire then, enquire no more by what Hand these Wounds were made, for I must tell thee to thy Shame, as *Nathan* told the King, *Tu es ille vir*, thou art the Man; 'twas thy Pride crown'd his venerable Head with Thorns; 'twas thy Impurity rent and tore his tender Shoulders with Whips and Scourges; 'twas thy Avarice fasten'd his liberal Hands to the *Cross*; 'twas thy Sloth nail'd his holy Feet; 'twas thy Anger, thy Revenge transpierc'd his amorous Heart with Spears and Launces; 'twas thy Sensuality, thy Intemperance gave him this bitter Draught of Vinegar and Gall to drink; *tu es ille vir*, thou art the Man. O Loving Saviour of the World, I cannot choose but deplore the Loss of so much Blood, I say, the Loss of so much Blood, because all the Returns, you can expect from the greatest part of the World, is nothing but a strange Insensibility of all your bitter Sufferings, attended with such Ingratitude, as makes the very Heavens blush to see it, and made the great

Apostle

Apostle weep to think on't; *Nunc autem & flens dico, inimicos Crucis Christi; ad Philipp. iii. 13.* 'Tis not enough, it seems, for the Wicked to see their *Jesus* bleeding in his own Hands, the Hands of *Love*; bleeding in the Hands of his Enemies, the Hands of *Cruelty*; bleeding in the Hands of his Father, the Hands of *Justice*; but they must needs imbrue their sacrilegious Hands in his precious Gore: And, as the same Apostle tells us in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, vi. 6. crucify him over and over again by Sin; *Rursum crucifigentes Filium Dei in semet-ipsis.* Now they come indeed with an apparent shew of Sanctity, with Tears in their Eyes, and perhaps with Sorrow in their Hearts, to solemnize the doleful Obsequies of the World's *Messias*: But alas! alas! Scarce is the Son of God intomb'd, scarce is the *great Stone sealed up close*, but away they go, and leave their *Jesus* all alone; the ambitious Man returns to his Poms and Vanities; the avaricious Man to his Bags and his Coffers; the voluptuous Man to his Pleasures and his Pastimes, and all to their old Haunts, to their old Habits and vicious Practices; *rursum crucifigentes Filium Dei.*

BUT you, for your parts, most pious Auditors, and dear *Christians*, if the Beloved
of

of your Souls is so ill treated by the major part of ungrateful Mortals, let him find a kinder Entertainment at your Hands; if they trample the Blood of the *Lamb* under Foot, do you preserve it as a precious Relick in the holy Shrines of your Hearts; if they daily wound him anew, and make him bleed afresh by Sin, do you bathe these Wounds with the daily Tears of Repentance, and stop his Blood with the ardent Fires and Flames of a loving Heart: In a Word, if you love your wounded *Jesus*, as I hope you do, think of nothing but these Wounds; speak of nothing but these Wounds; if you read, let it be of these Wounds; if you write, let it be of these Wounds; if you eat, dip every Morsel in these Wounds; nay, if you sleep, dream of these Wounds; and when you awake, breathe the first Acts of your Hearts into these Wounds; in all your Afflictions and Tribulations, fly for Refuge to these Wounds; and to conclude, live, live and die in these Wounds of the crucified *Jesus*; where now I leave you, for in a better Place, I am sure I cannot leave you. *Amen.*

End of the First VOLUME.







