AN EXPOSITION
By way of Supplement,
ON THE
Fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and
ninth Chapters of the Prophecy
OF
AMOS.

Where you have the Text fully explained, other
Texts occasionally cleared, many Cases Stated, ma-
ny Practical Observations rais'd, and many Polemical
Points debated: Together

With a Con-
Dr. Hume,
futation of
Sir Henry Vane,

In the end of the Commentary.

By THO. HALL, B.D. and Pastor of Kings-norton.

O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men, that I might
leave my people, and go from them, for they be all Adulterers, an assembly of
treacherous men. Jer. 9. 2.

They bend their tongue like their bow for lies, but they are not valiant for the truth
upon the earth, for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith
the Lord. Verse 3.

LONDON, Printed for Henry Mortlock, at the Phoenix in St.
Pauls Church-yard near the Little North-door. 1661.

10 1 5 8 0.
Ornatissimo Viro, amico amiciissimo, Ecclesiae Pastorumque, fidelium Patrono notissimo, Orthodoxa fidei propugnatoris acerrimo,

Gervasio Pigot de Thrumpton in Comitatu
Nottingham. Armigero:

T

Am à Romanistarum fazce ac Scabie; quàm à Fanaticorum Spuma ac rabie, liberrimo:

Qui Natales eruditione, Eruditionem virtute, Virtutem moribus usque quàque nobilibus adornavit:

Cui medulla inest & Quintessentia Pietatis, Poësios Philosophiæ ac Theologiae:

Lucubrationes hasce quales, quales, Amoris & Honoris ergò. D.D.D.

THO. HALL.
June the 13th, 1731
Martha Harwood Departed this Life in the 55 year of Her Age.
TO THE

READER.

In my Exposition on Hosea, I had occasion to consult the Prophet Amos, who was Hosea's Contemporary; and finding that Dr. Benefield, Lady Margaret-Professor in Oxford, had commented on that Prophecy; upon perusal I found that he had expounded only the three first Chapters; whereupon, I finding the fourth to be very suitable to our times, I only set upon that, not intending to go any further; for the clouds thickened so fast over us, that I despaired of proceeding to another Chapter; but being encouraged by some to go on with so useful a work begun, I made a further Essay, and by a good hand of providence, have brought the work (totally beyond my own expectation) to a total perfection, having finished the Exposition of the whole Prophecy.

Many Posthumous works have had Supplementators surpassing their Predecessors, this cannot be expected here. All that I can promise thee is this, that I have not baulked any doubt or difficulty.
The Epistle to the Reader.

I have as fully and faithfully explained the Text as possibly I could; I have spared no cost or pains. I have spent both Purse and Person freely in the work. 'Tis for the Lord, and I have not offered to him of that which cost me nothing.

I have studied brevity, the times will not bear long discourses, besides I naturally affect brevity, and love to see much matter compact together in a little room.

Here thou hast Practical, Polemical, References, and what ever else might compleat the work.

Here we have a Glass wherein we may see the Misery of Security, the Downfall of Sensuality and Idolatry, the Sword, Plague and Famine pursuing an obstinate and incurable people to destruction. Here we have then sins that ruined Israel, viz., Oppression and Cruelty, Amos 2.8. and 8.6,7. Bribery, Amos 4.1. and 5.12. Notorious Lust, Amos 2.7. Odious Ingratitude, Amos 2,9,10,11,12,13. Wilful Ignorance, Amos 3.10. Hating of Reproof, Amos 5.10,13. Formality, and a Ceremonious Religion, Amos 5.21,22. Unrighteousness in dealing, Amos 8.5. And Weariness of God's worship, Amos 8.5. And if these be England's sins, these will be likewise England's ruine. Parity of sin will bring parity in suffering. All the Symptoms of Judgements approaching are upon
The Epistle to the Reader.

upon the Land. 1 Good men fall, Pla. 12, 1.
Hag. 57, 1. 2 Ill men rise, 2 Chron. 19, 2. Plal.
12, ult. 3 Gods Vine, the Church, is grown wilde
and luxuriant for want of pruning; Professors are
turned Blasphemers, and instead of the Grapes of
Obedience, they bring forth the wilde Grapes of
Apostacy, Idolatry, Security, Pride and Hypocrisy.
Wee grow weary of Manna, and long to be at our
Garlick and Leeks, and Onions in Egypt again.
It was the great sin of Israel, that when the Lord
had brought them out of Egyptian bondage into
Canaan, yet then they cried, Come let us make
us a Captain, that so wee may return into
Egypt again, Numb. 14, 4. Such horrid Apostacy
10, 38. Besides, the sad divisions and subdivisions
which are amongst us fore-tell some approaching
Judgement. Wee cannot gratifie Antichrist more
than to weaken our selves by our divisions. Eng-
land is like a great Animal (as the Duke of Ro-
han hath well observed) and cannot dye unless she
help to kill herself. Like a Diamond, she is not so
easily broken with hammers and swords, as she is cut
in peeces with her own dust. Twas our divisions
at first that brought in the Romans, Normans,
and Saxons into this Land; what they may do a-
again, a little time will shew.
The Epistle to the Reader.

Many amongst us have run round to Popery, and therefore 'tis just with God to make that the scourge, which so many have made their refuge, and after the Rod hath done its work, then he'll burn it; God is letting Antichrist loose once more, to hasten his fall; the more blood he sheds, the greater will the cry be against him. The measure of Babylons sins will be made up in blood before her final ruine, and when she shall have once more filled her self with the blood of the Saints, she shall have blood given her to drink, for she is worthy.

The good Lord awaken us, and humble us all for our own sins, and for the sins of the times we live in, and make us to mourn for the things we cannot mend, and unable us to receive the Truth in the love of it, and make us at last to serve him with gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things, that we may not provoke him to make us serve our enemies in want and misery. This is, and shall bee the prayer of

King'sn. July 25, 1661.

Thy Servant in the Lord,

THO. HALL.
Israels Obstinate.

A COMMENTARY ON
The fourth Chapter of Amos.

AMOS 4. 1.
Hear this word ye Kings of Bashan, that are in the mountains of Samaria; which oppress the poor, which crush [or destroy] the needy, which say to their Masters, bring and let us drink.

This Chapter contains the summe of the Third Sermon which the Prophet Amos made to Israel, wherein he exhorts them to Repentance; and because by nature we are very averse and backward to this duty,

1 He sets before them their hainous and hideous Sins, which for number and nature were very great and grievous.

2 He rehearseth the Judgements which they had already endured, and tells them of greater Judgements which would follow, unless by speedy repentance they did prevent them.

3 He sets before them the Goodness, and the Greatness of God, the better to draw and drive them home unto him.

4 He sets before them his Goodness, viz. he was their God in Covenant still, ready to receive them to mercy upon their returning to him.

5 His Greatness (vers. 13.) he forms the Mountains, and creates
Israel's Obstiancy. Amos 4.

creates the Winds, &c. and can with ease destroy such as rebel against him.

The Prophet had before reproved the Rulers, and people in general for their Idolatry, Carnal security, Ingratitude and Apostacy; now he comes to reprove the Counsellors and Rulers of the Kingdom of Israel in particular for their oppression and cruelty, for their Epicurism, and beastly kind of life, ver. 1. Hear this word, saith King of Bashan. This is the Prophets exordium and Preface, wherein he calls for attention, both in respect of the Persons he speaks to, and the matter he tears of, viz. the Sins of the Rulers and People.

2 We have the Judgments denounced against them for those Sins, set forth by 8 double Metaphors, ver. 2, 3.

3 Here is the confirmation of this threatening. 3. By the Oath of God, I have sworn by my Holiness, faith the Lord, that I will bring evil upon them; and secondly, their Sins have justly deserved it: for 1. They are a People given up to Idolatry, and hypocritical worshipping of me, ver. 4. 5. They were indurate, impudent, and incorrigible under a variety of former judgements, ver. 6. to 12. The Prophet names Six.

1 Famine, I gave them cleanness of teeth, &c. ver. 6.
2 Drought, I will hold the rain from them, ver. 7, 8.
3 Blasting, Mildew, and the Paltmer-worm, ver. 9.
4 The Pestilence, ver. 10.
5 The Sword, ver. 10.
6 Terrible Destruction, ver. 11.

4 Here is the unhappy success of all these dispensations of God towards them, which is annexed to every particular Judgement, as a Versus intercalaris, the burden of this mournful complaint, Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

5 Seeing their incorrigibleness, the Prophet goeth on to denounce a forer and sharper Judgement than any yet had befallen them, ver. 12. Therefore thus will I do to thee, O Israel. The Judgement was so dreadful that the Prophet seems unable to express it, and therefore he doth as twere draw a Vail over what he could not in words express: with a Thus will I doe unto thee; q. d. since nothing will move thee, I will bring upon thee some direful desolation, and utter destruction,
Vers. 1. *Israel's Obstinacy.*

destruction, for so it follows, Ch. 8. 14. They shall fall and never rise up again.

6. He concludes the Chapter with an Exhortation to Repentance, calling upon them to prepare to meet the Lord, by unfeigned Humiliation, and Reformation, that so they might prevent those Judgments which were yet coming upon them, ver. 12.

7. The better to awaken them he useth two Motives, the first is drawn from the dreadfulness of the impending Judgments, which since they were not able to resist, he exhorts them to prevent, considering also the advantage they had of a Covenant yet in being between God and them, ver. 12. The second is drawn from the Majesty and Power of God, who was marching in wrath against them.

In the first Verse the Prophet prosecutes the Charge which hee had begun (Chap. 3. 9, 10.) against the Rulers and Judges of Israel, for their cruelty in oppressing the poor and needy. These usually are ring-leaders in sin, their examples incourage others in wickedness, and therefore the Prophet begins his Charge against them; and after descends to the Priests and People, who were confederates with them in their wickedness. Here we have

1. The Summons, *Hear this word.*

2. Who must hear? The Rulers of Israel, whom for their effeminacy he calls, *King of Bashan.*

3. Where do they dwell? *In the mountain of Samaria.* This was the Metropolis and chief City of Israel, situate upon a Mourain; here was the Kings Palace where these Courtiers resided.

4. What do they do there?

1. Oppress the Poor.

2. Why they crush the Needy.

3. They call for drink.

Before he had described them darkly, and figuratively, calling them unruly Kine, but now he tells them plainly and punctually what they are; they are full fed Beasts, that goared their fellows, and trampled the poor under their feet.
Israels Obsinacy. Amos 4.

5 But what said the Lord to all this? Why he swears by his Holiness that they shall dearly pay for this their cruelty, vers. 2.

So much shall suffice for the Logical Analysis, and resolution of the words. I come now to the Grammatical explication of them.

Hear this word, viz. of the Lord, as it is explained, chap. 3. 1. q. d. I come not to you in mine own name, or in the name of men, but I come to you in Gods name, it is his Message that I bring to you, and therefore justly calls for their best attention and obedience, the Original implieth both. Hear this word, 'tis emphatical in the Original, for the Article is doubled, q. d. Hear this word which the most true and eternal God (all whose words are works) hath spoken against you, and hear what hee hath decreed to bring upon you.

Tee Kine of Bashan. Thus he calls these wicked, wealthy, wanton Rulers, who managed the affairs of the Kingdom for the King, and did abuse their power to the oppressing of the poor; those feasted and fattened themselves with the spoils of the poor whom they oppressed in judgement; and therefore the Prophet calls them not men, but Beasts, and fat Bawsons, whose hearts were fat as grease; and their eyes star’d out with fattenes; they were stupid, and therefore he useth sharp expressions, the better to awaken them; he speaks to them in the feminine Gender (not because they were Women, as some conceive, for the sins which he reproves are more proper to men, especially the Rulers of a People) but because of their effeminate, wanton condition, being given to their bellies, therefore he calls them in his Herds-mans Digest, *Coves; not Oxen or Horses which Plow and labour for us, but lazy lascivious Coves and Heifers which were put into rich Pastures to fatten and fat them the sooner for the slaughter. They were like fat, unruly, refractory Heifers which could endure no yoke.

'Tis usual in Scripture to call such idle, effeminate, loose persons, by the name of Females, Isa. 3. 12, Revel. 17. 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 18.
Israel's Obstinate.

7, 9, 18. Such wealthy wicked men are elsewhere called, fat Bulls, and Bulls of Bashan, for their fierceness and cruelty, Psal. 22. 12. Jer. 50. 11. Hos. 4. 16. & 10. 11.

He calls them Kine of Bashan, because of the plenty of fat Cowes, and rich Pastures in that Country; hence we read of the fatlings of Bashan, Ezek. 39. 18. and Rams of the brood of Bashan, Deut. 32. 14. now the Rulers of Samaria were like the Kine of Bashan, loaded with fatness, secure and drunken with worldly wealth and pleasures, insomuch as they slighted the Word of God, and contemned the Prophets which published it unto them, and so became like fat Beasts fitted for the slaughter.

Caution. The Lord doth not here simply condemn them for their Riches (which are blessings simply considered in themselves) but for the abuse of their riches and power.

1. In getting wealth by extortion and indirect practices.
2. For abusing them to the Oppression of the poor.

Q. Are we not forbidden to revile the Rulers of the People, and commanded to give no offence to any, and therefore Paul became all things to all men that he might win them, 2 Cor. 10. 32. 33.

Ans. 1. We are forbidden reviling of Rulers, (Exod. 22. 28. Eccles. 10. 20. Acts 13. 5.) but never reproving of them, neither is this an offence given, but unjustly taken by them. 2. We must distinguish between private reproaches, and Prophetical reproves; for a Minister in the name of the Lord to reprove men for their open enormities is no railing, not reviling, but a faithful discharge of that duty which God hath intrusted them with, and strictly under severe penalties enjoined them, Isa. 58. 2. Ezek. 3. 33. 1 Tim. 5. 20. and all the Prophets, with Christ and his Apostles, did practice it. Now Amos was a Prophet of God, and so by vertue of his Office might doe that which a private person who wants that Call, may not doe; besides, he being called extraordinarily, he had an extraordinary measure of the Spirit, he knew the projects and practices of these ungodly great ones, and so might the more boldly reprove them. Hence David calls wicked men Dogs, Lions, Bulls, Psal. 23. 12. 13. 21. 22. and Solomon his Son calls wicked Princes hungry Bears, Prov. 28. 15. and Paul calls Nero a Lion, and Christ calls Herod a

Fox, and Amos here calls them fatted Cows. This downright Prophet being not bred at Court, nor coming from the Hall, where men use silken words, and lofty titles of Honour; but coming from the Stable, according to his blunt and rustic language, he calls a Spade a Spade, and such as neglected their duties to pamper their Carcasses, he calls Beasts, not men; q. d. their flatterers look upon them as so many Heroes, and Gods on earth; but I that have seen their loathsome lufts, doe look upon them as so many fat Bulls, filthy Swine, and unruly Heifers, that will not bear the yoke of God.

3 To that of the Apostle, in becoming all things to all men; 1. It was in all lawful things, and such as tended to the edification, and not to the destruction of any, 2. It was only in such things as are left, indifferent by the Word of God, and in this sense only the Apostle became all things to all men, (1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, 21, 22.) amongst the Gentiles hee walks, as one that was not under the Ceremonial Law, that he might win them, Acts 15. 19, 20. and amongst the Jews he observed the Ceremonial Law, that hee might not offend them, Acts 16. 3, & 18, 18.

4 It is the favour of men which is gained by flattering and unlawful means, which the Scripture condemns, Gal. 1. 10. Do I seek to please men? then why should I was bee the Servant of Christ; the Interrogation is a strong Negation, q. d. when I was a Pharisee I pleased men, and followed their Traditions, but now I desire in singleness of heart to approve myself to God.

5 When the favour of men is sought in the first place, this cannot stand with sincerity, but when it is cast upon us after a faithful discharge of our duty, wee may thankfully and joyfully receive it. It is said of Christ that he grew in favour first with God, and then with men, Luke 2. 52. and it was Demetrius his Honour; that he had a good report of all men, yea and of the truth is self, 3 Joh. 12. It is possible for a Christian so to live that he may approve himself both to God and man; Christ walked so convincingly, that the Pharisees complained, that all the world went after him, (Joh. 12. 19.) and no wonder, since all the world was made by him; it is prudence therefore for a Minister so to live, and so to act, that
Israels Obstiny.

if it be possible (without detriment to the truth, and a good conscience) he may have peace with all men. A free, sincere, and prudent discharge of his duty is the only way to obtain this.

Who oppress the poor, and crush or bruise the needy; q. d. By * Gafoths, oppressi et
* force and fraud you oppress them, and by your might and
power you break and bruise those that have no helper. This is
their daily practice, and constant trade, as the Participle of Opprimentes
pauperes, accidentes egenos, Mon. 515.

Raphai, confingitis ac conquestatis in gentes vellus potestia, in fignem
denotat violentiam rapacitatem conjunctiam. Varn. ivius in locum. See
more in my Comment. on Psalm
82. 2 p. 105, 106, 108.

which say to their Masters, bring, and let us drink. Those cor-
trupt Rulers thought it not enough that themselves oppress the
poor, but they encouraged such as had authority over the
People to fleece and flay them, that they might make merry merito Domino
corum suis, quos concillis
exhortati, ut
sublimis popu-
num, ut ipse

bubenta suarum alimenta voluptatem: Hic reftit Homerus. An
capitis appellatus, i. e. Pa-
puli devoratores. Ribera in locum.

They say to their Masters, or Lords of the poor, that is, Adonians,
extra such as have the mastery over them, viz. their rich Cre-
ditors, and Usurers, who have and keep them under as their
Slaves and Vassals; these Rulers say unto them, Bring, that Domini paup-
ere may drink; that is, bring in Money and Presents, bring
bribes and rewards that we may make merry, drink wine, and
* feast with the prey and spoils of the poor. Thus they claw

erano obvatis. Curt. 515. * Skatch, bibes, convivaturus es, quia in convivio largium bibi so-
let. Summam immodiam non, quod non modo quavis menue potens oblatae recipiant;
verum etiam ille bibi esserit pecculent; & quidem non in aliquum sum quam us potandis & ve-
hospicio necessitatibus. Gueller in locum.
one another in their wickedness, saying, Bring but money and ye shall have what ye will, especially against the poor and needy, we will deliver them into your hands, do ye pick their bones, suck their blood, and use them as you please; only bring and bribe well and you may have anything at our hands against them. At feasts they were wont to drink freely, ad hilaritatem non ad ebrietatem, for cheerfulness, not excess, (Gen. 43. 34. Cant. 5. 1. Job. 2. 10.) and therefore by a Synecdoche, Drinking is put here for Feasting, where there is both eating and drinking, yet because drinking of Wine was much used in feasting, therefore in Scripture it is oft put for feasting; as Isa. 5. 11. Joel 1. 5. Amos 6. 6. hence the Greeks called their Feasts, Symposia, comperationes, not eatings, but drinkings.

1 God wants not Instruments to doe his work; if he will have a people taught, he can raise up Amos an Herdsman to reprove a brutish people; yea by an Afs he can reprove the madness of a Balaam, 2 Pet. 2. 16. Hee usually chufeth the things that are not, viz. of any esteem in the eyes of carnal men, to confound the things which are of high esteem amongst them, 1 Cor. 1. 27. 28. 29. 1 Sam. 2. 6. 7. 8. Psalm 8. 2. & 78. 70. 71. Matth. 4. 18.

Caution, not that this giveth liberty for every one that supplieth himself Gifted to Preach without any Call; for though Amos were an Herdsman, yet he was both gifted and called extraordinarily by God, as appears, Amos 7. 15. The Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said to me, Go, Prophet unto my people Israel. Here is his Call, and he shewed his extraordinary Call, by his extraordinary gifts; whereas those Enthusiasts amongst us, who pretend to an extraordinary Call, upon trial are found not to have ordinary gifts; they can hardly write one line of true English.

2 Obs. It is lawful sometime to use a Preface, the better to quicken attention. We are by nature dull and slow to believe, or practice the truths of God, and therefore we had need of all good means to quicken us. But of this * elsewhere.

3 Obs. Ministers must Preach the Word of God to the people. They must not preach their own Fancies, or mens Inventions, but they must publish Gods Counsels, teaching men to observe whatsoever he commands them, Matth. 28. 20. 1 Cor
Vers. 1. Israels Obstinacy.

1 Cor. 11. 23. De Deo ille fine Deo, we must doe nothing in Gods Worship without the warrant of his Word; all must be done according to Gods pattern, without adding or detracting, Deut. 12. alt. Prov. 30. 6. Hence it is that all the Prophets (as Amos doth here) came with a Dixit Dominus. Thus saith the Lord, and Hear the Word of the Lord, Ezek. 1. 3. Hose. 1. 1. Jonah 1. 1. Micah 1. 1. Zechar. 1. 2. Mal 1. 1. Hee that preacheth to God; people must publish his Oracles to them, 1 Pet. 4. 11. such a man may preach with power and authority. It is this Word of God which Gods people & p. 167 must read, Deut. 6. 6, 7. this they must search into, Joh. 5. 39. this they must meditate on, Psal. 1. 2. and this they must practice, Joh. 13. 17. and therefore great reason that this, and this Word only they should hear.

1 Away then with those Atheistical Seattaries who contemn Gods Word, and prefer their own brain-sick Revelations. Raptures, New Lights, and Saranical delusions before the pure and perfect Word of God. These are not of God, because they reject his Word, 1 Joh. 4. 6. these follow lying Vanities, and so forsake their own Messies; they reject the Law, which shewes they have no light in them, Isa. 8. 20.

Those Ministers then are to be blamed: that instead of saying with Amos, Hear the Word of the Lord, they cry, Hear what Aristotle, Tully, Plato, Plutarch, Pindarus, Seneca, say; how oft do they cry, Thus saith Auffin, and thus saith Ambrose, when it may be they never once saw; much less perused those Authors, only they name them to get a name for Learned men, when indeed it is a very poor piece of learning to get a few fragments, and scraps of Latine in that kind together. Wee are Gods Embassadors, and must keep close to our Commission; and though we may occasionally (as the See my Apostle did) and sparingly cite Heathens to convince them Schools our of their own Writers, or else to shame Christians that come short of them; yet we may in no wise make it our constant practice.

4 Obs: Gods Ministers who are sent by him, must plainly tell even great men of their sins; so doth Amos here, he sleighs the sinful greatness of men, and emboldens himself upon his authority and calling. Though they were fat and full, high and haughty, yet he tells them to their faces, that they acted
rather like Beasts, than men, and should dearly pay for their cruelty. It is true, poor men must be reproved when they sin, but rich men especially, because the sins of great men are great sins, and by their example they doe much hurt to others.

Hence Samuel reproves Saul, and the man of God reproves Jeroboam for usurping and intermeddling with the Priests Office, which belonged not unto him, 1 King. 13. 1, 2, &c. Their falls are not only Personal, but Epidemical, and reach general disobedience, as they complained of Queen Vashti, that her disloyalty would make others disloyal, Est. 1. 16, 17. It is in the body Politick, as in the body Natural, if the Vitals be perverted, the inferior parts cannot be free; each Vein, and Nerve, and Artery, like the flowing streams of some polluted Springs, are receptacles of their infection, as well as nature. Let Jeroboam but set up Calves, and all Israel is presently upon their knees to them. How many silly people by following their Rulers have run themselves into destruction; like the Prince of Frisland, who asking what became of his Progenitors and Friends that were dead in their ignorance and error? Answer was made, That they were in Hell; hee desperately replied, that then hee would goe thither after them. Subjects are ambitious to follow their Princes. Tenants their Landlords, and Servants their Masters, though they forsake God to doe it. It was none of the worst counsel which the good Judge in Lucian gave to Sostratus when he released him; Bee good (faith hee) and see thou teach not thy offence to others; for there are some who doe at once, in the very same act, both commit and reach sin, and so to the numberles number of their own transgressions, add the sins of thousands.

See King of Bashan.

5 Obs. Wicked men are brutish men. Their prosperity and pomp before them, Jer. 5. 5, 21. it fills them with insolence and blasphemy (Psal. 73. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.) and debases them beneath the beasts that perish, Psal. 49. 20. because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God; because they are not emptied from vessel to vessel, but they live secure and at ease, therefore their scent abides within them, Jer. 48. 11.

Hence it is that they are so oft compared in Scripture to Bulls, Bears, Doggs, Swine, &c. as I have else where shew'd at large.
Ver. 1. *Israel's Obstancy.*

That dwell in the Mountain of Samaria.


yea not only our integral parts, but even the hairs of our head are numbered by him, Matt. 10. 30. He sees us as though we see not him, John 1. 47. and knows us by our names before we have a being; Jobiah was called by his name three hundred years before he was born, 1 Kings. 23. 2.

God hath a particular and distinct knowledge of every man and woman in the world: he perfectly knowes all things past, present, and to come, (Acts 15. 18.) and that not successively and by discourses, by debating and searching out the causes of things, but in a moment, by one eternal act of understanding he knoweth all things, with their causes and conditions, in himself, and of himself, without any reasoning or help from others, what was done, or is to be done a thousand years hence, is as present with him as a thing that is past, Ps. 90. 4. He calls the things that are not as if they were, Rom. 14. 17. and knew Jeremiah before he was formed in the Womb, and ordained him to be a Prophet, Jer. 1. 5.

God's knowledge is infinite, and eternal, like himself; our knowledge is dark, imperfect, uncertain, confused; but God's knowledge of us, and ours, is an absolute, perfect, clear, certain, distinct knowledge; we know the outside and superficies of things, but God searcheth the heart, and knoweth not only our faces, but our spirits (1 Sam. 16. 7. Jer. 17. 9, 10.) all things are naked and ananotomized before him, Job 34. 21, 22. Heb. 4. 13.

How careful then should we be, to walk in the midst of our houses with perfect hearts, (Psal. 101. 2.) since God's eyes are upon our habitations, and he sees our walking there. This should make us dedicate our houses to the service of God, (Psal. 30. the title of the Psalm, 2 Sam. 6. 20.) that so they may be Babylons, houses of God, and not Babylons, houses of vanity and iniquity. We should put away sin farre from our Tents and Tabernacles, that the eyes of God's jealouse may see nothing amongst us to displease him, Job 22. 23.
see the benefit, v. 24. to 30. Let the name of our dwellings be, Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there. Ezek. 24. 16. let not idleness, riot, and prophaneness dwell there, but let the glory of the Lord, and his fear dwell there; let it be said of your houses, as Hagar said of her well (Gen. 16. 14.) Beer-la-hai-roi, the well of him that lives and sees me. So say thou, Beth-la-hai-roi, The house and dwelling of him that lives and sees me. Wee shall never be sincere till wee can walk as in Gods eye continually, as Enoch and Abraham did, Gen. 5. 24. & 17. 1. & 24. 40.

7 Obs. Great men many times are great Oppressors. It is these fat Covets of Bashan that goar their fellows. Riches accidentally make men cruel and insolent; it were rich men that opprest the poor, and drew them by violence before Judgement Seats, Jam. 2. 6.

8 Obs. Luxury breeds oppression. As covetousness is never satisfied, so neither is intemperance; when great men are wedded to their lusts, then to maintain them they fall to oppression, crying, Give, give, that we may drink. Men devoted to their lusts are insatiable, though they have enough, yet like fat beasts they must drink more; they make their bellies their gods, and therefore it is no wonder to see them active in promoting its interest to the utmost, Isa. 22. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 32. this ruines Persons and Nations. The Curii, and Fabrii, by their contention and temperance advanced the Roman Empire, when their Successors by Covetousness and Luxury destroyed it.

9 Obs. Wicked Rulers usually are great Bribers. They are all for gifts and rewards, crying, Hab, Hab, Give, give, Bring, bring, Hos. 4. 18. they stirre up Lawyers, Attornies, and other Inferiour Officers, to bring in Grief to their Mills, that they may divide the Spoyle, and make a prey of their poor Clients. Great men want not instruments to assist them in their wickednesse; be it never so vile; let Jezabel but contrive the Tragedy of Naboths death, and she will finde Elders that will act it for her. If Ammon be sick of Lust, there is a Jonadab ready to addds fuel to the flame. Did not the Lord bind Kings in Chaine, and great ones in fetters of iron, setting them their bounds which they cannot pass, there would be no living for good men in the world.
Ver. 2. Israels Obstinate.

10. Obs. It is the property of wicked men to encourage one another in their wickedness. They cry, Come, let us drink, and be merry with the spoils of the poor. Thus Persecutors say, Come let us lay our heads together, and work wisely, that we may destroy God's people, Exod. 1. 10. Prov. 1. 11. The unclean Person also hath his Come, let us take our fill of lust, Prov. 7. 18. The Idolator hath his, Come, let us joyn together to make our Idols, Isa. 42. 7. The Drunkard's faith, Come, let us fetch Wine, and fill our selves with strong drink, to morrow shall be as to day, and much more abundant, Isa. 56. 12. 9. d. though we drink till we be drunk, and stark mad, yet we fear no punishment, we shall fare no worse to morrow than we have done to day; God regards not such things as these; and if the wicked have their Comes, Gen. 11. 3. why should not God's people have their Comes? wee should encourage each other in goodness, and call one another to the publick Assemblies, saying, Come, let us go to the house of the Lord, Isa. 2. 3, 5. Zech. 8. 21. wee should call men to Christ as the Prophet doth, saying, Come, come, come, Isa. 55. 1. 3. Philip calls Nathaniel to come to Christ, and the Woman of Samaria calls her Neighbours, Job. 1. 46. & 4. 29. this duty of stirring one another up to the best things is oft commanded, as a special preservative against sin, 1 Thes. 5. 11. Heb. 3. 12, 13. & 10. 24. it is not sufficient that wee practise the Truth ourselves, but wee must encourage those about us also to do so, Gen. 18. 19. wee are dull and backward to the best things, and have need of quickening, Prov. 27. 17.

Verse 2.
The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness, that loe the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away with books, and your posterity with fish-books.

In the precedent Verse we had the Sin of the Rulers of Samaria, now comes their Punishment. The Prophet here tells them, that the time is even now at hand when the Lord will visit for all their Idolatry, Oppression, &c. and to procure the more credit and authority to what he spake, he brings in the
Israels Obstinacy.

Lord himself swearing their destruction; God's bare Word had been sufficient, but the better to awaken these secure Sinners, and assure them of some approaching Judgement, he tells them, that the Lord had sworn by his Holiness; that is, by himself, for Holiness is so essential to God, that he may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be Holy, and Good.

Man when he swears must swear by a greater than himself, but since there is none greater than God, therefore the Lord swears by himself, 

Heb. 6. 13. it is himself that is meant when he swears by his great name, Jer. 44. 36. By his Soul, Jer. 51. 14. Amos 8. 8. and by his Holiness, as here; for whatsoever is in God, is God himself.

In this Verse we have two parts.


2. A Confirmation of this Commination with an Oath; the Judgement threatened is in these words, Lo, the days shall come upon you, (i.e.) direful, dismal days, full of misery, and calamity shall certainly and suddenly surprize you, when you shall be carried away captive by the Assyrian (Amos 9. 18, 19, 20.) Asmen have their days of sinning, so God hath his appointed times when he will visit for Sin, Jerom. 46. 21.

Obj. We are rich and mighty, and cannot easily be carried away?

Ans. Riches away! not in the day of God's Wrath; the Assyrian shall as easily carry you away as the Fisher doth his little Fish, which he catcheth with his hook or thorn, and puts into his bag; they shall not need Carts to carry you away, Fish-hooks shall doe it: It is a Metaphor frequent in Scripture, as 2 King. 19. 28. Job 41. 1, 2. Ezek. 19. 4. & 29. 9. & 38. 4.

2. Here is the aggravation of their misery, they shall not only perish themselves: but their posterity shall suffer with them; You shall be taken away with Hooks like * Thorns, and your posterity with Fish-hooks, q.d. you shall be like Fishes which are industriously caught, easily pulled up, and suddenly carried away on a Thorn, or Fish-hook, yea shall be no
Israels Obstiniety.

Ver. 2.

more like fat Kine which abide in their Pasture, but I will root up you and yours, you shall be carried into Captivity. As the Fisher davaeth the Fish out of his holds, and then catcheth and killeth it; so shall the Assyrians violently pull you out of your holds and habitations for the Slaughter.

Observations.


2 Obs. God is Holiness is self. It is essential to him, and therefore it is here put for himself. The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness; that is, by himself. Holiness is Angels and Creatures still; but Holiness is so con-natural to God, that he may as soon cease to bee God, as to be holy. But of this Beauty of Holiness, chap. 1 elsewhere.

3 Obs. It is a very hard thing to convince secure Sinners of an approaching Judgement. God is constrained to swear here, to allure them of the certainty and infallibility of his Threatenings. As in times of Adversity and Temptation men are hardly brought to beleewe the Promises, (Psal. 116. 11.) so in times of Prosperity: it is hard to convince men of the truth of Gods Threatenings; I speak to thee in thy prosperity, and thou wilt not hear, Jer. 32. 21. See more in Greenhill on Ezek. 12. 22. Obi. 1. p. 493 and Mr. Trap.

4 Obs. Sin and Punishment are inseparable. In the first Verse we had their Sin, and in this second, their Punishment; as men have their daises of sinning, so God hath his days of punishing for sin, Deut. 28. 16, 17, &c. Psal. 37. 13. Jer. 46. 25. &c. 50. 27. 31. Joel 1. 13. Luke 19. 43. Rev. 18. 8.

No sooner had Ahab killed Naboth, and taken posession of his Vineyard, but presently the Lord sends Elijah with a whole volley of Judgements against him, 1 King. 21. 16. to 25.

5 Such as oppress others, shall at last bee oppressed themselves. Look what measure men mete to others, God will raise up some that shall mete the like to them again. These
far Beasts did goar the poor, and get their estate from them; now the Lord raiseth up the Assyrian against them, who with their Hooks should pull them out of their estates and habita-
tions, as Fishes out of the water. God loves to pay Sinners in
their own coyn, and to retaliate the wrongs which they have
done to others. Thus Adonibezer confesseth, that as he had done
to others, so God had required him, Judg. 1. 7. Such as shew
no mercy to others, shall have none themselves, Jam. 3. 13.
Babylon, that had tortured and abused the Saints, must have
double given her, Rev. 18. 6. the Sodomites that burnt with
lust, were burnt with fire from heaven. Gen. 19. 5. 19. Jo-
sephs Brethren that fold him into distress, were at last distressed
themselves, and acknowledge Gods Justice in it, Gen. 42.
21. Davids Sin in numbering the people, was punished with di-
minishing of the people. Hereby God doth more sensibly con-
vince men of their Sin, when they may read it in the punish-
ment.

Thus those who are disobedient to their Parents, God rais-
eth up of their Children that shall rebel against them. Those
that abuse their first Wives, are oft-times punished by the sec-
ond; and those Servants that were false to their Masters,
shall be punished with Servants that will be pernicious to them.
Let us therefore by the punishment labour to finde out the
Sin that brought it, and judge our selves for it, and we shall
not be judged of the Lord; 1 Cor. 11. 32.

6 Obs. When a People are ripe for ruins they shall suddenly
and easily be destroyed. God faieth but till the sins of a People
be full, and then he suddenly brings them down, Gen. 15. 16.
took how easily the Fisher puts up his little Fishe with his
Hook, and carries it away; so easily did the Assyrian carry
away this Idolatrous people into Captivity, now that their
day was come. There is no power or policy against God, hee
can destroy the stoutest enemy with the greatest facility, Isa.
25. 11. if he be angry with a People, he wants not Fisheers,
Hooks, Hunters, to pursue them, and carry them away, Jer.
16. 16. Hab. 1. 14, 15, 16.

7 Obs. Children many times fare the worse for their wicked
Parents. The Parents are taken away with hooks, and the
Pottery with Fishe-hooks; root and branch must be stok'd up.
It is just with God to cut off the wicked with their seed,
Vers. 3. Israels Obstinacy.

as we kill the Wolf with her Litter, and the Fox with her Cubs, Deut. 28. 41. Hos. 13. 16. But of this at large elsewhere.

Ver. 3.

And ye shall goe out at the breaches, every Cow at that which is before her: and ye shall cast them into the Palace, saith the Lord.

The Prophet continues his Threatning, as appears by the Copulative, And, ye shall goe out of the Breaches. Hee amplifieth their calamity by that fear and consternation which should surprize them; the walls of Samaria being broken down, those Grandees which before went in great state and order, should now confusedly, like so many frighted Beasts, flee out at every breach to save themselves; so that in this Verse we have, as in the former, 1. A Commimation, or Judgement threatened, Ye shall goe out at the breaches. 2. A confirmation of this Commimation, saith the Lord. The better to awaken them he adds this again, that they had not to doe with man, but with the Almighty, who will not be mocked, nor dallied withall.

The Prophet goes on in directing his speech to the Nobles, Judges, and Counsellours of the Land, though he spare not the inferior sort, yet because the Rulers were the ring-leaders in sin, therefore he bends his speech principally against them.

1. Here is the Title which he gives them, viz. Cowses, a blunt term, but a fit one; this is implied in the feminine Gender, tua vacca; scil. vacca, as verse the first, q.d. you look upon your selves as great men, but in my eye you are as so many fat Beasts, and not one of you shall escape Gods revenging hand, 2 King. 17. 20.

2. Here is the misery that attends these wanton luxurious Beasts, they shall be so full of fear, that they shall run out at the breaches of the walls, leaving all their riches behind them.

The words admit of some difficulty, and therefore I shall open them distinctly.

Ye shall goe out of the breaches, viz. Which the enemy hath made
made in your walls. Samaria had been long besieged, and
the Assyrian had made many breaches in the walls of the City,
at which they attempted to run out and save themselves by
flight, even as Beasts when they are frightened run out at a
gap.

Every Cow at the breach which is before her, that is to say,
any way, for they had neither Gates nor Walls whole.
Valiant men keep their ranks and files in despit of all op-
position, Joel 2. 7, 8. but faint-hearted, fearful smiers shif
for themselves, and take the next gap to run out at. As beasts
when chased, run on heaps disorderly, so these fly from their
enemies tumultuously, and confused, without any respect
to their companions; seeking only to save themselves, Amos
3. 14, 15, 16.

And ye shall cast them into the Palace; q. d. that ye may
fly away the swifter, ye shall cast away your pleasant and
precious things, and shall fly naked from your enemy. The
Learned conceive there may bee an Eclipsis in the words,
which may be thus supplied; ye shall cast away those things
[which ye have brought] into the Palace, as Birthes, Treas-
ures, Jewels, and precious things which you brought into
the Palace, for security and safety in that strong place; ye
shall now in your fear cast them all away. This is concei-
ved to bee the most genuine sense, yet the learned are di-

1. Some render the word thus, Yee shall bee cast as Cap-
tives into Armenia, or into Mount Armon, but these mista-
tke the Original word, Habarmonah: where Hampton is not a
proper name, but a common name, and signifies a Palace,
High-house, or Tower, from Ram, ram, excelsus.

2. Others thus, Ye shall cast your selves into the Palace,
wh. to hide yourselves there, from the fury of the Assyrian,
but in vain, for he shall batter those Towers, and take you
there.

3 Calvin thus, You shall cast your selves, a Palatio, out
of the Palace, that is, yee shall fly for your lives, and
leave all your pleasant things behind you in your forlorn
Palaces.

4 The Dutch Annotations thus, Yee shall throw away
that which was brought into the Palace, (i.e.) that which
you
you gathered into your Palaces by violence and robbery, you Yee shall cast shall now throw it away, alluding to that of Amos 3.10. Yee away the store up violence and robbery in your Palaces; but, when the Sword comes Yee shall throw all away, and think it well if you can save your lives; so that in these two Verstes we have Bible.
a three-fold punishment threatened against Israel, 1. Banish-
ment, and transplantation out of their own Land, Verst. 2.
2. Flying before their enemies. 3. Loss of goods, ver. 3.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Fear and amazement is the proper portion of wicked men. Those that fear not God, have cause to fear every thing. All are enemies when God is an enemy, Deut. 28.65. Prov. 24.1; Joel 2.6. these men here run, some this way, and some another way; one runs out of the City, and another runs into the Palace, but all in vain, for there is no escaping when God pursues, Amos 9.1, 2, 3, 4. though wicked men may be full of courage and confidence in times of peace, yet when Judgement shall arrest them, none is amm, and amazed, as they, Levit. 26.36. Isa. 33.14. Dan. 3.6. But this is at large elsewhere.

2 Obs. Wicked men are the Pestis of the places where they dwell. By their sins they bring down the walls of Cities, and make breaches in them for their enemies to enter and destroy them, the very stones and timber cry for judgement against them, Zechar. 5.4.

3 Observe, Partners in sin will leave men in their sorrow. Those that were united before, yet when judgement comes, they look for the nearest Breach to run out at, not staying for others. When Judas was troubled in conscience for betraying his Lord and Master, his companions in sin leave him to shift for himself, with a Look sheep to that; Matt. 27.4.

4 Obs. Treasure-comforts cannot feed us in a day of wrath, Prov. 11.4. Silver and Gold will not then avail, Ezek. 7.19. all Jewels and Treasures say, us in time of distress, only the See my Com. jewel of a good Conscience, like a faithful friend, will never on Hos. 13.16. leave us, nor forsake us.
VERSE 4. 5.
Come to Bethel and transgress, at Gilgal multiply transgression, and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years.
And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the Free-offerings, for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord.

The Prophet goes on with his Charge against Israel, and that the justness of God's Judgments, which he threatened to bring upon this people might bee made apparent to the world, he comes to set forth their gross Idolatry, together with their obstinacy and induration therein, Insomuch as no Punishments could work upon them; this makes the Lord begin with a most biting and bitter Sarcasm, saying, Go to Bethel and transgress.

The Prophet had before charged them with cruelty, now he upbraids them for their Idolatry, and false-worship, set up by Jeroboam their first King, augmented by many of the succeeding Kings, and endured so long as the Kingdom endured; till at last it brought them into Captivity, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

The Prophet hereby a Prolepsis, prevents an Objection, whereas they might think to escapeGod's Judgements by their Sacrifices, and Idolatrous services; the Prophet tells them, that this is to farre from pacifying God's wrath, that it increaseth him the more against them, and therefore to express his great indignation against them, hee sarcastically bids them, Go to Bethel and transgress, &c.

In the words we have, 1. An ironical concession, or Sarcastical exhortation, Go to Bethel and transgress. This seems to be a Precept, but is indeed a strong Prohibition, as appears,

Hos. 4. 15. Amos 5. 5. 21, 22. Seek not Bethel, enter not into Gilgal, and therefore the Chaldee Paraphrase sets it down positively by way of attention. Ye have come to Bethel and transgress, ye have multiplied sins in Gilgal. There they worshipped the golden Calves out of a good intention, conceiving that they worshipped God, when indeed they sacrificed unto
Ver. 4. Israels Obstinacy.

unto Devils (2 Chron. 11. 15.) and therefore the Lord here in an holy indignation Ironically upbraids them with their Idolatry, q. d. Since by no means you will be reclaimed, but are desperately set on your own ways, since there is no remedy, go on, take your own hearts lusts, and fill up the measure of your iniquity. Hee gives them the reins in wrath, and since they will be filthy, he bids them be filthy still. As angry Parents are wont to say to their desperate Children, I see you will have your own ways, why since there is no remedy, go on and perish. The like Sarcastical, taunting speeches, testifying Gods indignation against sin, we have in other places; as Jer. 7. 21. Ezek. 20. 39. Go and serve every one his Idols; q. d. follow your Idols if you please, I had rather yee did so, than dissemble as you doe, to my dishonour.

2 What must they doe, or rather what must they not doe at Bethel? why, 1. They must transgress, viz. the Law of God concerning his Worship. 2. Multiply transgressions.
3. Bring their Sacrifices every morning. 4. Their Tithes at three years end. 5. Yet more, offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving; and 6. Proclaim the Free-will-offerings.

3 Here is the ground of all their Idolatry, superstition, and Will-worship, for this pleaseth you, O ye children of Israel; q. d. it is not I that command you so to doe, but it is your own rebellious wills that set you on work, you love and desire to have it so.

Come to Bethel; Dan, Bethel, Gilgal, were the three chief places in which the Israelites did worship their Idols;

1 Dan was defiled with the Idolatry of the golden Calves, (1 King. 12. 29, 30: Amos 8. 14.)

2 Bethel signifies the House of God, it was the place where God appeared to Jacob, and after appointed it for the place of his Worship, Gen. 28. 17. & 35. 1. Hos. 12. 4. but Jeroboam setting up the golden Calves here, turned Bethel, the Houfe of God, into Beth-aven, the houfe of Vanitie and iniquity, of confusion and misery, Hos. 4. 15. & 5. 8. & 10. 5. The people had a good conceit of the Holines of Bethel, where God appeared to Jacob, this made Jeroboam to set up a Caft there: This place formerly was called Luz, but upon Gods extraordinary appearing to Jacob there, when hee fled from his brother Esau, he changed the name, and called it Bethel, the house of God.

D 3 Gilgal
Israels Obstinate.

3 Gilgal was the key of Canaan, situated between Jordan and Jericho, this place was famous for Sunday services there performed to God; there was the Tabernacle, and there Sacrifices were offered unto God. But now it became degenerate and infamous, so much that the Lord complains, 

Hos. 9. 15. All their wickedness is in Gilgal, that was the common sink and sewer where all their Idolatry met, and therefore the Lord forbids his People to go to Gilgal, that they might not be tainted with the Idolatry of the place. Those Idolatrous Israelites, thought it not sufficient to worship the Golden Calves at Dan and Bethel, but they would worship Baal, and other Idols, at Gilgal too; so dangerous is to give way to superstition and false-worship, there is no end nor measure with such persons; they add Sin to Sin, and Idolatry to Idolatry, till they come to ruine.

Multa * transgressiones, rebelliones, prevarications, by your frequent Sacrifices, q. d. Go on still and persever in your perverse, malicious practices, adding Sin to Sin, and to provoke another that the whole world may see your hardness, and the justness of God's Judgements on you.

* Peshawg, transgressio, prevarication, defecatio, rebellion, non simplex & qualiscumque sed multiformis Musculus. Propriè signifiacat deficere ali ejus mundanis sub controversiis.

Bring your Sacrifices every morning; for to the *Law enjoyned them to offer a Lambe without blemish in Sacrifice every morning, and another at evening, Exod. 29. 39. Numb. 28. 3, 4. under the Morning Sacrifice is included also the Evening Sacrifice, but the Prophet expresseth only the Morning Sacrifice to note their diligence, and great pains which they took in observing these external Rites, they were at it as duly as the morning came.

And your Tithes after three years; or, in the third year. In the letter of the text it is after three days; it is an usual Hebrew to put days for years, as Gen. 24. 1. Numb. 9. 22. Levit. 25. 29. 1 Sam. 27. 7. Some understand it of their three Solenn feasts appointed to be observed every year by the Law, viz. the Passover, Pentecost, and feast of Tabernacles, in
in which none might appear empty-handed, but certain kind of Tithes were then to be spent, Exod. 23. 14, 15, 16, 17. Levit. 23. Deut. 16. but the most genuine sense is that which alludes to the Law, Deut. 14. 28, 29. & 26. 5. 2. for the right understanding of this Law, we must know that there was a threefold Tithe paid by the Jews, the first were the yearly Tithes given to the Levites; a second Tithe was set apart by the Owners for their journeis, sacrifices, and feastings at Jerusalem thrice in the year, and yet there was a third Tithe laid up in store, which was distributed among the Levites, the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; and this is the third Mr. Art. for years Tythe here mentioned. Now these Idolatrous Israelites for's Annoy, the better to colour their Hypocrifie, like Apes did seem to imitate this Law, that so they might not be wanting in any external duty of piety or charity.

Q. But since these Israelites did what God commanded in the Law, wherein did they fail?

Ans. 1. They sayled in sacrificing to Idols, and not to God. 2. In bestowing those Tithes on false Prophets, which were ordained for the maintenance of the true. 3. Though some of them did offer such Sacrifices as were commanded, and that to the true God, yet they sayled in the place, for they should have offered their Sacrifices at Jerusalem, where God had set his Temple (Deut. 12. 5, 6.) and they goe to Bethel and Gilgal, where Idols were set up.

The sum of all is this, Thus saith the Lord in great indignation against you, O house of Israel, for your provocations, since ye obstinately refuse to hearken to me, and my Prophets, Go to, proceed in your Idolatry, and since you are so besetted by Satan, and his Agents, as to worship Coves instead of me, go on, and take your fill, glut your souls with sin, and fill up the measure of your iniquity, that wrath may come upon you to the uttermost, and since you refuse to goe to Jerusalem and worship mee, goe to Beth-aoven and worship Devils. Goe on also in your Hypocrifie; and the Worship which I have appointed to my People, that doe you imitate, bring your morning Sacrifices which are due to me, and offer them to your Idols; and that which the Law required of you, for the maintenance of my Levites and the Poor, viz. to lay aside the Tithes of every third year for pious and charitable uses;
Israels Obstinacy.

As you give that also to your Idols. Coe on also and Hypocrisically imitate my people in Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, and Free-offerings, for in these external Ceremonies, yee delight, more than in internal obedience.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Ironical and Sarcastical, taming biting speeches may lawfully be used as occasion requires against wicked men. Those Stoical flock the Quakers are against all laughter, and against all ingenious Ironies and Sarcastical speeches, as if they savoured of the flesh, when it is clear from many places of Scripture that they may lawfully be used; for, 1. We finde that God himself used them, Gen. 3. 22. The man is become like one of us; i.e. see how unlike to us he is become. So Judg.

10. 14. Go cry to the gods which you have chosen; i.e. let your Idols help you if they can in your distress. So Is. 4. 8, 9, 10. & 47. 12. Ezek. 28. 3, 4, 5. 2. Christ used them, Matt. 23. 32. 8, 26. 45. 3. The Prophets used them. Thus Elijah derided the worshippers of Baal, 2 King. 18, 27. and Micajah to Akab, 1 King. 12. 19. and Job 12. 2. & 26. 2. 3. and Solomon to the young man, Eccles. 11. 9. and the Church to her enemies, Lam. 4. 21. Rejoice O Edom and be merry; but know that thy feastings shall be turned into fasting, and thy mirth into mourning. So Jer. 22. 20. & 46. 9, 11. 51. 8.

11. Zech. 11. 13. Paul used them, 2 Cor. 4. 8, 10. & 2 Cor. 11. 19. & 2. 12, 13. yea the Scripture affords many Sarcarms, which are biting taunts, they are somewhat like an Irony, but that they are somewhat more bitter; as Gen. 37. 19. Exod. 14. 11. Nahum. 3. 14.

2 Obs. We must shun those places where Idolatry is set up. Israel must not once goe to Bethel, and Gilgal, where Idols are, Hos. 4. 15. Amos 5. 5. what Solomon layes of the Corporal Harlot, may fitly be applied to the Spiritual one, Prov. 5. 8. Remove thy weary from her, come not nigh the door of her house. As we shun Peft-houses, so should we shun those infectious places. Such as partake with the wicked in their sins, shall share with them in their plagues, Revel. 18. 4. not only Canah, Dathan, and Abiram, but their followers also perish with them, Numb. 16. It is dangerous for men to hear Quakers and Seducers, for by your example you doe not only in-
Israel's Obstinacy.

Encourage others to do evil, but you make your selves necessary to their sin and punishment; what Solomon saith of all the wicked in general, holds true in this particular (Prov. 4. 14, 15.) we should take heed of going in the way of evil men, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. See how the Holy Ghost useth variety of expressions to the same purpose and all to make the matter sink deeper into our hearts.

3 Obst. Idolatry and Sin debase places. Bethel and Gilgal formerly famous for the worship of God, yet now become infamous for Idolatry, God's people must not once come there. As sin debaseth persons, and makes them that they can never excel (Gen. 49. 4.) so it debaseth places too, and turns Bethel, the House of God, into Beth-aven, the house of vanity and iniquity, Hos. 4. 15. what Michael said of David falsely, Thou hast made thy self vile, (2 Sam. 6. 20.) that is most true of all Sinners, they make themselves, and the places where they live, vile and contemptible.

4 Obst. There is no inherent holiness in places; if there had, Bethel had not been Beth-aven, nor Rome become an Harley. Places are not holy per se & simpliciter, but only propter sum, by reason of the praying, preaching, and dispensing of the holy Sacraments there. The place doth not commend the Prayers, but the sincere affection of him that prayeth; neither doth the place sanctifie the Prayers, but the Prayers the place; Churches are made of Wood and Stone, and so are incapable of Holiness; Christ came to redeem and sanctifie Souls, not seats. The Legal, Ceremonial, Typical Holiness of places is by the coming of Christ abolished, now, the substance is come, and the shadows are gone; in Gospel times there is no difference of places in respect of Holiness. God will now be VVorshipped in every place, Mal. 1. 11. 

1 Tim. 3. 8. the Field and the House are now as holy as the Church, yea Paul and Silas pray in Prison and are heard; Acts 16. 25. so that Churches in themselves are no more holy than other places; but it is the Ordinances of God, and the Assembly of God's People met there, to celebrate those Ordinances, which for that present make it more holy, and more to be esteemed by us than all other places, or pieces of ground whatsoever, Psal. 84. 10. and therefore they should be kept sweet and decent, though not pompous and gaudy.

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 5. p. 138, &c.
The Heathen Poet could say, It is vanity to have gold in Temples. Here then is the difference between us and the Papists, they make Churches to be holy per se, in respect of the ground and building, but we in respect of the end and holy use for which they serve, viz. for the Service of God, and the Assemblies of his People; but the exercises of Religion being ended, and the Congregation dissolved, there is no more inherene Holiness remaining in it, more than in another place.

5 Obs. It is a great provocation to set up Idols there, where we have received signal mercies. God had done great things for his people at Bethel, it was the place where he appeared to his people; and Gilgal was very famous for many Mercies, at Gilgal they were Circumcised, there God rolled away the reproach of Egypt from them, there they had the Passover, and there was Sacrificing, &c. now to multiply transgressions at Gilgal; and to have all their villany acted there (Hof. 9. 15.) must needs be a great aggravation of their sin, and hasten wrath. To sin against signal Mercies doth double the sin. It is said of the Israelites, that they provoked him at the Sea, even at the Red Sea (Psal. 106. 7.) where God shewed them a remarkable Mercy, in leading them safely thorow the Sea, and drowning their cruel enemies, yet there they provoked him, at the Sea, even at the Red Sea; it is spoken Emphatically, even at that Sea which God had carried them safely thorow. Thus they made a Calfe in Horob (Psal. 106. 19.) where the Lord appeared unto them, gave them his Law, and Made a Covenant with them, yet here they provoked him to wrath to their own destruction, Dem. 9. 8. It greatly aggravates sin when it is committed in a Canaan, and in a Land of Righteousness to deal unjustly, Isa. 26. 10. Wee of this Land have received many signal Mercies, if wee goe on to abuse them, as wee have done of late years, what can we expect but signal judgements.

6 Obs. Wicked men grow worse and worse; They fall away more and more, they doe not only sin, but they multiply sin; they think it not sufficient to worship the golden Calves at Dan and Bethel, but they must to Gilgal also, and there Worship Baal which was the vilest and highest Idolatry, for those that worshiped the Calves, worshiped God, but in a false way,
way, but those utterly forsook the true God to worship Baal, whom they made their God, as appears by that of Elijah, If Baal be a god, implying that they esteemed him so. When wicked men begin so fall they know not where they shall rest, they have no foundation, but run from error to error, till at last they end in Atheism. (But of this at large elsewhere.)

Evil men and deceivers grow worse and worse, though they be wearied in their wicked ways yet they will go on, Jerem. 9. 3. 5. they are in this like the lewd VVoman, Lassata, non sa-tiata; they never come to their Maximum quid sit, in sinful ways, Prov. 23. ult. Sin and Error is endless, it knowes not when, nor where to stop, Hos. 10. 1. & 13. 2. Ahaz that at first burnt Incense to Idols, at last burnt his Children to them, 2 Chron. 28. 3. Error minimum in principio, fit maximum in fine.

The cloud that at first shewes but like a mans hand, may suddenly over-spread the whole Heavens.

7. Obs. Good intentions are no warrant for evil actions; Jeroboam pretended well when he set up the golden Calves at Dan and Bethel, saying, Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt (1 King. 12. 28.) his meaning was not to cast off the true God, but to set him forth by some visible resemblance, thinking that this might be as good a way of Religion, as the Ark and Cherubims at Jerusalem; but the Lord tells them, that since they had set up a worship of their own inventing, be abhorred both them and their services, (Amos 5. 21. 22.) and calls it a worshipping of Devils, 2 Chron. 11. 15. Thus Aaron and the Israelites pretended well when they set up the golden Calf, Exod. 32. 4. 5. Micah and his Mother had a good meaning when they erected the Ephod, and Teraphim for the service of the true God, Judg. 17. 3. 13. Paul had a good meaning when he persecuted the Saints, Acts 26. 9. yea and many that kill them think they doe God good service, Heb. 16. 9, 10. Uzziah it is conceived was a good man; and out of a good intent would have kept the Ark from falling, yet for meddling with that which belonged to the Priests, God smote him dead,

2 Sam. 6. 6. 7.

Those gifted men amongst us that presume to Preach without a Call, no doubt but many of them have good intentions, and think they doe God good service, but because they have
no command nor commision from God doe, it is an abo-
mination to him; and he will one day ask them, Who required
this at your hands? Saul' out of a good intent, viz. that he
might sacrifice, spared the fat Calliel; and Gideon made an
Ephod for Gods Worship, which God had not commanded,
but this ruined both them and their Families, Judg. 8. 27.
1 Sam. 15. 21. Nadab and Abihu had no evil intent in offer-
ing strange Fire, yet were smitten dead for their pains, Levit.
10. 2, 3. So the Papsis, and the worst of men have their good
meanings, which at last brings them to evill ends. It cannot
excuse their evil dealing with God and his people. What Sins
so vile that is not covered with the vail of a good meaning?
How many ways are there which seeme good in mens owne
eyes, yet the issues thereof are the ways of death, Prov. 14.
x2. we may not therefore doe every man what seemeth good
in his own eyes, but what is good in Gods eye, Dent. 12. 8.

Those things which in themselves are evil, may not for any
good ends, or plausible intentions be practis'd. None may
doe evil that good may come thereof, Rom. 3. 8. wee must
have a command from God for what we doe, else our owne
good minds and meanings will doe us no good; yea this
would open a gap to all manner of villanies; the Murdérer,
the Drunkard, the Traytor, &c. * they all pretend they have
good meanings in what they doe; but such vain conceits and
crooked Rules of multitudes, custom, good meaning, &c. hath
brought thousands to destruction; we must to the Law, and to
the Testimony, and walk according to that rule if ever wee
expect peace, Gal. 6. 16.

8 Obs. In the Worship of God we must keep close to the Rule,
for matter, manner, time, and place; Israel failed here in
these particulars, and therefore God rooted them up. 1 They
changed the place of Gods Worship, 1 King. 12. 29.
2. The time, vers. 32. 3. The manner, vers. 28. 4. The
Priests, vers. 31, 33. and this ruined them, 1 King. 13. 33,
34. it is not the Traditions of men, or Customs of Fore-
fathers, Antiquity, or Succession that is our rule; the Isra-
elites here might have pleaded Prescription for their Idolatry
for above two hundred years, all their twenty Kings suc-
cessively were Idolatrous from first to last, and the people
generally followed them, yet this did not make their practice
good;
Vest 4. Israel's Obsinacy.

good; all will-worship is vain worship, Matt. 15:9. It is a Sin equalized to Murder, Levit. 17:3, 4. It is called here transgressing, and multiplying transgressions in Gilgal. In God's Worship we must do nothing without the warrant of his Word, Numb. 15:39. Deut. 12:8, 11, 13, 14. alt. Ezek. 20:19. Matt. 28:20. Col. 2:16. His VVorship must be simple and pure, acceptable to his own will, not ours. The Head of the Sacrifice was to be cast away, implying, that in matters Divine and heavenly, we must cast away our own fancies and devices, keeping close to God's Word, as Moses did, Exod. 39:2. 5. 7. 21. 26. 29. 32. 42, 43.

9 Obs. Religious duties must be our daily task. We must not bring our Sacrifices once a month, or once a year, but as the Lord renewes his Mercies every morning, so must we renew our sacrifices of Prayer and Praises (Exod. 29:38, 39. Numb. 28:3, 40) our daily wants, our daily dangers, our daily temptations, call upon us for daily Prayer; such constant Customers shall be sooner and better served, than such as are strangers to those duties. David was a constant Trader in Prayer Morning and Evening, and see what follows? Thou shalt hear me, Psalm 55:17. As the Priest was every morning to renew the Fire on the Altar, and to lay thereon the Morning Sacrifice, so should we when we awake be still with God. Psal. 139:18. all things are blest unto us by Prayer; As the Ark when it came to the house of Obed-Edom it brought a blessing with it; so when duties are set up in their power, there God comes and blesseth his people, we should therefore dedicate our houses to God by Prayer as David did, Psal. 30. title, and 2 Sam. 6. 20. It was an high commendation of Aurelian the Emperours Family, that it was referatabonis. See at large. Esclasia Dei, it was full of good people, and was a little Aterfoll on Church. So were the houses of the faithful in the Primitive Times, hence we read so oft, To the Church in thy house, Rom. 16:5. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4:15. Philemon 2. the words dite, p. 87. will bear a double construction. 1. It implies, that the people...
Israels Obstinary.

Amos 4.

people of God met in those houses to hear his Word preached, to celebrate the Sacraments, and Prays; for publick places were not then allowed them. 2. Or else it notes unto us that their private Families were now so piously ordered, and religiously instructed, that they seemed to be little Churches rather than ordinary houses, because of the Praying, Reading of Gods Word, singing of Psalms, and other religious Exercises that were practised there. So John resolved, that he and his house would serve the Lord, Josh. 14. 15. Religion makes the best Families, it breeds the best Children, and makes the most obedient Subjects, and Servants, as wee see in Abrahams Family. Sad is the condition then of those Christians that take no care of their Families, but let Luxury, Riot, and disorder debauch them; such houses may better be called Taverns, or Tap-houses, rather than Churches of God.

That daily duties ought to be performed in Families, see Mr. Rob. Boultens Direct. for Walking, p. 244. 249. Fenners Catechism, p. 76. Cobses on Prayer, p. 88. Mr. Fer. Dyke his Epistle Dedicatory to Philemon. Ambrose his Medica. p. 199, &c. Mr. Philip Goodwin his Family Duties.

10 Obs. It is not sufficient that we be religious towards God, but we must also be righteous and merciful towards men. It is not enough that we bring our Sacrifices to him every morning, but we must also bring our Tithes to maintain his Messengers, and to succour the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. Many will seem religious towards God, yet are unrighteous towards men; and others there are that will seem righteous towards men, and yet are irreligious towards God; both these miscarry and come short of Heaven, the one for his religious unrighteousness, and the other for his righteous-irreligiousness, the one for his Hypocrisie, the other for his meer Morality and civility. God hates Holiness when it is not joyned with righteousness. He hath redeemed us, that we might serve him in holiness and righteousness; not in holiness or righteousness, the Holy Ghost hath joined them, and we may not separate them, Luke 1. 75.

2 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Ps. 1. 5-2, Tit. 2. 12. We must practice equity as well as piety, remembering that * unrighteousness is an abomination as well as ungodlines. Ministers have a right to their maintenance both in foro poli, & in foro soli, both by Gods Law, and mans Law (as I have elsewhere proved at large) and he that robs them, robs not men, but God.
Vers 4.

Israel's Obstinacy.

For Mercy to the Poor, there is scarce any Duty more pressed upon us in the Scripture, with precepts and presidents, (Dan. 15. 7. 10. Luke 6. 36.) What promises and rewards are made to the merciful? and what heaviest curses are denounced against the unmerciful and cruel man? Hee shall have judgement without mercy that shewes no mercy, Jam. 2. 13, as he stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry, and shall not be heard, Prov. 21. 13. Divine that shewed no mercy to Laza Ovidii: sse

He that wanteth mercy of mercy shall miss,
But he shall have mercy that merciful is:
A Spiciem oculis superi mortalia justis,
En exst auxilio qui non sult.
Ovid, Meta. Lib. 13.

Are those that oppress them, and grind their faces? the Lord hath a quarrel and controversy with such as shew no mercy, Hos. 4. 1. Amos 2. 6. 7. such penuriousness is the way to Poverty, Prov. 11. 24. There is that shaves more than is meet, and it tends to poverty. The way to increase Corn is not to keep it in the Bag, but to sow it. The curse of the Poor lights upon the cruel, (Prov. 28. 27.) and brings a curse upon their Children, (Psal. 109. 12. 16.) Let none pity his fatherless children, why so? because he remembered not to show mercy to the poor.

Let Sodomites be cruel and merciless (Ezek. 16. 49.) and Heathens that know not God (Romans 1. 30.) but let us that are Christians resemble Christ our Head, and be merciful as he is merciful, who went up and down doing good, to bid on Ezek. 16 the souls and bodies of men, and whose usual saying was, Is 49. P. 197. 198 is a more blessed thing to give than to receive, Acts 20. 35. Hea was even compounded of love and compassion, and became poor, that wee thow his poverty might bee made rich, a Cor. 8. 9.

To encourage you to a merciful frame of spirit, in a time when mercy is almost fled out of the world, take these following Considerations.

By this we shall evidence our Election and Sanitation, Col. 3. 12. Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies; Doe not only give an Almes, but give it with a compassionate heart, and tender affection; this will make us like the elect children of God, who are all in their generation liberal, bountiful men, according to their several abili-
abilities, they are such as devise liberal things, Isai. 32. 8. Job was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, Job 39. he never did care his morituri alone, Job 31. 20. David describing the godly man, makes this one Character of him that he is gracious, full of compassion, disperseth to the poor, shews favour, and lends, Psal. 12. 4, 5, 9. Paul how oft doth he command, and commend such as did administer to the necessities of the poor Saints? Dorcas cloathed the poor with those garments which she made of her own cost in her life time; Zachaeus when he was converted, gave the one half of his goods to the poor, Luke 19. 8. it is not I will give at my decease, when I can keep them no longer, but it is in present, I do give. 2. Not of another mans goods, but of mine own. 3. Not to the rich, but to the poor. 4. Not a penny, but the one half of my goods, do I give to the poor. See how grace enlargeth the heart, and looleneth it from earthly things; yea I have read of the Turks, that once a year the Bashauns and great men have their whole estates cast up by their Stewards, and they give the tenth part yearly to charitable uses; if this be true, how will these Inidels rise in Judgement against most Christians.

Consider that it is a service and sacrifice well pleasing unto God, Phil. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 16. Hence it is that the Lord so oft calls for it, and in some cases, prefers Mercy before Sacrifice, Hos. 6. 6. Learning and Valour may make a man admired, but it is humility and bounty that makes us best beloved.

This will make us like unto God, then are we men after his own heart, when we are merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful, and good as he is good; not by way of Equality, but by way of Analogy and similitude, according to our degree and measure, Mat. 5. 45. now the more like unto God we are, the more he loves us, for similitude is the ground of love.

4 Hereby wee bring must glory to God, Job. 35. 8. As hee that oppresseth the poor, despiseth him that made him; so hee that pityeth the poor, honours him that made him, for
for God takes the kindness done to them as done to himself, He that gives to the poor, lends to the Lord.

5 It is one chief end why the Lord gives us riches, viz. that we might be his Almoners to succour the poor; he could feed them and cloath them without our help, but he hath ordained that there shall be poor always with us, to try our bounty, love, and pity, and to manifest it unto the world, Joh. 12. 8. it is God's Corn and Wine that we enjoy, it is his blessing and free bounty that hath made us rich, when others are poor; all that we have comes from him: and it is of his own that we give unto him, 1 Chron. 29. 14. 16. if he have given us pounds, we may well give pence by way of thankfulness to his poor afflicted ones; else, he that hath raised us can as easily ruine us, and strip us naked as in the day that we were born. Let us put our selves in the poor man's case, if we our selves were poor and in distress, we would think it the rich man's duty to succour us. As you would have others should doe to you, so doe you to them; for with what measure you meete to others, it shall be meted to you again.

6 All Professions, Duties, Gifts, and Graces, without this are but counterfeit. Hence St. James placeth all religion as it were in this duty of Mercy, Jam. 1. 1. not that this is the life or form of other Graces (as Papists vainly) but it is a sign and evidence of the truth of other graces, even as breathing and acting is a sign of living. He that hath he all Gifts, and yet hath not Love, is but as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal, a mere noysie and nothing else, 1 Cor. 13. 1. hence Christ commands us rather to sell what we have and give to the poor, than be wanting to our selves or others in this duty, Luk. 12. 33. so did Barnabas, that Son of consolation, when the Church wanted, he sold his Land to succour it (Acts 4. 36. 37.) not that we are bound always to sell our Land for pious uses, but if the Church of God should come to that distress, that either we must succour it, or else it will sink, then is a time to part with all. As Lot would have parted with his Daughters to save his Guests; so should wee part with our estate to save God's people from perishing; and if Drunkards to satisfy their lust, will sell their Lands in the Devils service, much more should we to glorifie God, part with our Land and estate to glorifie God the giver of them.

Verse 4.

Israel's Obstinate.

Sure will run over as long as you pour; there is no flux, no bounds to that gift, which shall be given running over. A Vessel will run over continually, pour as long as you will.

5. Yet more, all this shall be given you into your bosom; that is, you shall be made sensible of the sweetness, and experimentally find the goodness and greatness of your reward. This work is wages, and like Samson's Lion, it carries Horny in the belly of it; it is no spending, but lending; no laying out, but a laying up of treasure in Heaven, above the reach of Thieves and Pirates, Mat. 6. 19. Men are all for gain, why this is the best gain: by parting with Temporals, to get Eternals, Luke 16. 9. Hence the Apostle calls the Macedonians Alms by the name of Fruit, Rom. 15. 28. Phil. 4. 17.

I desire not a gift, but I desire fruit that may further your account. Wee pleasure not the poor so much by our giving, as we profit ourselves by their receiving. Hence in Italy their ordinary form of Begging is, Face ben pro voi. Doe good for your own sake. Christ that fed five thousand, could also have to their own fed himself and his followers without any help, but hee would be relieved by others, that so their faith and love might be made more apparent and replentent to the world, Luke 8.

2, 3. Job. 4. 7.

2 Thou shalt be blest in thy Body with health, or if sickness doe surprize thee (as all things come alike to all) yet God will make thy bed in thy sickness, and comfort thee upon thy bed of languishing, Psal. 42. 1, 2.

3 In thy Name, Hezekiah and his kindnesses are commended to posterity, 2 Chron. 32. 32. Phoebe and Onesiphorus are commended on this account; such are an ornament to their Profession, and amiable in the eyes of all, Rom. 5. 7. for a righteous man one would scarcely dye, but for a good man one would potion.

Even dare to die. A Man of a severe innocency is hated, rather than loved, but a good and bountiful man wins so upon the hearts of men, that they would even dye for him; scarcely will a man dye for a righteous man, who is only fair and just in his dealings, but for a good man, that hath been mercifull and pitifull to others; and hath done much good.

Non memini me legisse malad morte mortu- un, qui: libenter opera charitatis executa; habes en m multos intercessores. Hieron. ad Ne-righteous man one would scarcely dye, but for a good man one would potion.
good in his life, some may venture their lives for him.

4 In thy posterity, such as have showed mercy to others, God will raise up some that shall be merciful to theirs. Hence Cyprian was wont to say, *The more children the more charity should be used; for as wells by drawing, spring more freely, so our substance increaseth by bounty, and is blest to our posterity.*

5 Blest in soul, we shall have light in darkness, peace in trouble, audience in prayer, &c. *Isa. 8. 7, 8, 10, 11.* if thou deal thy bread to the hungry, &c. *then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer thee;* and though we be sick and silent, yet works of mercy cry aloud in God’s ears for us, they have a vital and vital, though not a vocal call; *Job 31. 20.* The very loins of the poor shall bless us, even when we are sleeping in our beds, yet then are they pleading for us. Hereby wee evidence our election, and lay up a good foundation for the time to come; though Christ alone be the foundation fundamental, yet good works may be a foundation evidential, *1 Tim. 6. 19.* *Job. 3. 14.* Obadiah proved that hee truly feared God, because he hid the persecuted Prophets of God, and fed them in a time of danger.

6 Thou shalt be eternally blessed, *Psal. 41. 8.* *Prov. 14. 25.* *Mat. 5. 7 & 25. 34, 35.* it is the way to the Kingdom, though not the meritorious cause of reigning there. This will help to loosen our affections from the earth, we must shortly part with all these things below, now our parting with them before hand to pious uses, will make our last parting with them more easy to us, as the Apostle said, *I dye daily;* his daily trials were as many petty deaths unto him, so our daily giving will make us daily see the vanity of these things, and make our affections dye to them. The way to Heaven, it is an high, hard, long way, it is up-hill, and wee had need to unburden our selves of this thick clay. When one asked a good man why he gave away his money so freely, his answer was, *Ut levius ascenderem scalum Jacobi.*

Thus we see there is no loss in works of mercy, as the unmerciful, unbelieving world imagineth; for one penny we give we shall have that as will be equivalent to many. Hence bounty to the poor is called *sowing of seed,* *2 Cor. 9. 10.* the Husband-man for one seed that he sowes hath twenty, thirty, forty, &c. or more, again.

2 Though
Verse 4: 

**Israels Obstiny.**

2. Though the Seed be hidden with Clods for the present, and seem to dye, yet at last it ariseth again with great increase to the Sower, (Eccles. 11. 1, 2.)

3. As men sow so shall they reap, if they sow sparingly they shall reap sparingly, if liberally they shall reap liberally.

4. The Husband-man doth not sow all his Seed in one place, but some here, some there; so we must disperse our charity, and give a portion to seven, and also unto eight.

5. The only way to preserve our Corn is to sow it, for if it be kept in our Barns, and Garners, it rots and perisheth; but if it be cast into a fit ground it multiplies. Riches are lost by keeping, and kept by spending on the poor; and if Idiots will lavish gold out of the Bagge, and spend their choicest treasures on Idols and Images, and if the Israelites could part with their Gold and Ear-rings, to an Idol that could not help them, nor thank them (Exod. 32. 3.) then surely we should spend freely on the living Images of Christ, especially since they can help us by their Prayers, and glorifie God in the use of that we give them; Let us therefore abound in this work of the Lord, for as much as we know our labour is not in vain in the Lord. How abundantly was the Shunamites kindness to the Prophet Elisea recompens'd? 1. By the gift of a Son after long barrenness. 2. By restoring her Son to life again (2 King. 4. 16.) 3. By forewarning her of a famine approaching (2 King. 8. 1. 4.) 4. By directing her to the King, in such a season that she recovered her Land; so good it is to have an interest in the Prayers, and affections of Gods Messengers.

This Duty though excellent, yet meets with much opposition; though it be well-pleasing to God, yet it is unpleasing to most men; which hath made them invent so many shifts and excuses to save their purses. As,

1. Obi. I have a Family, a Wife, Children, Servants, and Kindred to provide for, &c.

Answ. 1. Wicked men are called absurd, unreasonable men (2 Thes. 3. 2.) and not without reason, for see what illogical Logick they here produce; because men have Families to provide for, therefore they cannot, or rather, they will not do good to any other. We read of many that had great Families, and yet were very merciful men, as Abraham, Job, David, &c.
The Macedonians had Families to provide for, yet they relieved others beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8:3.) though they had but little themselves, yet out of that little they were willing to give somewhat.

I have read of one Mistris Owen of Islington that had two and twenty Children, yet in her life-time shee built an Hospital, and gave fifty pound per annum to it; she built a Free-School, and gave a good stipend to it, and gave two thousand and five hundred pounds to other pious uses. The Lord Harrington had but one thousand pound per annum (which was but a mean estate to maintain a Lord and his followers) yet out of that she spared one hundred pound per annum for pious uses.

2 By discreet giving, you provide Gods blessing for your Children, which is the best portion, Psal. 112:2,3,5,6, as you have succourred others, so God will raise up some to succour yours; David speaking of his own experience, tells us, that he never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging their bread, Psal. 37:25. Such giving is no hindrance to us or ours, but brings a blessing on what we have. Hence the Lord commands his people, to leave some gleanings for the fatherless and the widow; Why so? That God may bless thee in the work of thy hands, Deut. 24:19, 20. All thy caring and caring is but empty, if God give not his blessing; many have scraped abundance of pelf together for a prodigal Heir, that hath in a trice consumed all. Men know not who shall be their Heirs, the riches of the wicked are laid up for the just, yet many times a mans enemies have been his heirs.

3 Many are single, and have no Families to provide for, and yet are as hide-bound to any pious uses as any others; and therefore this is but a meer pretence and fig-leaf to hide their miserable mindes withall.

2 Obj. I have nothing to give but what I get by my labour?

Answ. The Apostle expressly commands such to give, Ephes. 4:28. Hast but a farthing? give that; the poor Widow that had but two mites, which make a farthing, is commended by him, who looks not so much at the gift, as at the good will of the giver, Mark 12:41, 42, 43. If we have but a handful of Meal, and a little Oyl, yet Gods Elijahs must be relieved.
Ver. 4.  Israel’s Obstinate.

Isaiah 1:17. 12. All that do not receive should give, the Servant, the Day-labourer, the Artificer, &c. should spare somewhat for the poor, the Servant, that hath none to maintain but himself, may better spare somewhat for the poor than many House-keepers.

2 If God have not given thee ability to doe good, yet if thou hast means wouldst thou bee liberal? Why then know, that if there be in thee a willing mind, God will accept of the will for the deed, and of the Affliction, where there is no a-\text{facultatem}.bility for present 	ext{Action}; and if thou hast nothing else, yet \text{Du lachrymalum, give a tear.}

3 Obje. The Poor have many faults, they are lewd, and base, unworthy, and unthankful, and can scarce afford us a good word for all that we doe for them?

Ans. And haft thou none? Poor folks faults are easily seen, but men may see greater (if they will) in their Accusers, as Pride, Prodigality, Malice, Cruelty, Hard-heartedness, &c. It is the Poor, and not the sins of the Poor that they hate, for they can love Rich men that have worse sins in them than the poor have. Now, true hatred is against the whole kind, he that truly hates sin as sin, hates it where-ever he sees it, be it in the rich as well as in the poor, so that this is but a pretence to save their money.

2 Grant that they be unthankful, disobedient, &c. yet are not we so unto God? Now if God feed us, though we walk dis-ingeniously towards him, why should we harden our hearts against our poor brother?

3 We give, \text{Non homini sed humanitati, non pecatori sed pauperi}. We give not to the wicked man, to uphold him in his wickedness, but to supply his present wants.

4 Though their tongues should curse thee, yet their loins will bless thee, \text{Job} 31:20.

5 It is for Pharisees to look for the praise and thankes of men here, Gods people must look for their reward in heaven. This is our Seed-time, and though our Seed bee now buried, yet then it will arise; and though men thank us not now, yet then we shall have thanks before Men and Angels, our secret love and obedience shall have open acknowledgement and recompence, Christ himself will bee our Encomiast then,

\text{Mat.} 25:34, 35, 36.
8 Their unthankfulness hurts themselves, not us; it is their sin, not thine. Were must not fail in our duty because they do in theirs: Another man's sin will not excuse mine. We may not be uncharitable because they be unthankful.

7 It is a good sign that our charity is sincere, when we can give to those that revile us, and behave themselves unthankfully towards us. To give to those that give to us, Heavens will doe so; but to bless such as curse us, and feed such as hate us, and so overcome evil with good, this is truly Christian, Rom. 12. 21.

8 Suppose they be wicked, yet giving may better them, and thy kindness may melt them, and heap coats of fire upon their heads. The way to break a Flint is to lay it upon a soft pillow, Rom. 12. 20.

9 Though some poor people be wicked and unthankful, yet all are not so, we may not therefore punish all for the fault of some.

4 Obj. I see many rich men give little or nothing, and therefore why should I give?

Ans. 1. Few rich men are saved. Not many mighty, not many noble; some, but not many great men, are good men. We must therefore live by Rule, not by Example, especially of rich cormudgesons, who had as leave part with their blood as part with a penny to a pious use. Now the rule is, that all who are of ability should give, and shew compassion to their brethren, Zech. 7. 9. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Let every one lay aside somewhat for the poor, as God shall prosper him, the command is universal, without exception or restriction. Rich men indeed, who abound with worldly goods, and have not only for necessity, but variety and superfluity, those have a strict and severe charge given them, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate (1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.) now some rich men are rich in good works, as Abraham, Job, Zacharias, Cornelius, &c., and if you will needs follow rich men, follow the best, and honour the Lord with thy riches, and do good with thy goods, remembering how uncertain they bee, (1 Tim. 6. 17.) they have wings, not of a Sparrow, but of an Eagle to fly aloft from us, Prov. 23. 5. improve them therefore to spiritual advantages whilst you have them, for as the ungodly poor are the most miserable, because they are doubly
doubly poor, both in soul and body; so merciful rich men are most happy, because they are doubly rich, viz. in wealth and good works. Besides, God hath given the poor a kind of interest in the rich man's store, *Non jus proprietas, sed charitas.* He hath a share in them though he may not be his own carver, *Prov. 3: 27, 28.* With-hold not good from him to whom it is due; that is, from thy poor Brother. When thou feelest any in greater necessity than thy self, thou must to thy power succour them. The *Macedonians* themselves were but poor, yet when the Church was in distress, they gave beyond their ability. Many have been poor in goods, yet rich in good works; Christ himself in respect of Temporal riches was poor, he had not a house of his own to dwell in (Matt. 8: 20.) no Lands nor Livings, yet was he mindful of the poor, and gave bountifully to them, for he had a bag to succour the poor withall, *Job. 13: 29.* The poor Widow gave all her substance, and is highly commended for it, for God looks not so much at the gift as the sincerity of the giver; hence she is said to have given the greatest gift, because she gave it out of an enlarged, liberal heart, others gave out of their superfluity, but she out of her penury gave all that she had, and so rested solely and singly upon the Promise; *John Baptist* commandeth him that hath two Coats, not only he that hath four or five, to part with one to the poor, *Luke 3: 11.* Yet our Saviour calls sometimes for a cup of cold water, which puts us to no cost of heating (Matt. 5: 41.) which takes off all excuses whereby men would exempt themselves from giving.

5 Ob. I pay my Assessments to the Poor, and what would you have me doe more?

Ans. The vilest of men pay what the Law compells them to give, but Gods people must do more than others. There are many modest poor House-keepers which have more need than many which the Law provides for; we must not therefore confine ourselves to the Law, but as occasion requires, we must lend freely, help to redeem Captives, to raise poor men that have losses by fire, shipwreck, or that have a great charge of children; we must help to train up poor ingenious Children in Learning, and honest poor Couples that marry in the Lord, &c.
Israel's Obstinate.

6th. I must provide against old age, sickness, &c.

Ans. True, in a moderate way you must do so, as Joseph in
the years of plenty did lay up against times of scarcity. But to
provide excessively by usury, cruelty, and unseemliness to
the poor, this is to provide a Curse for thy self, and not a
blessing. By this means thou deprivest thy self of God's provi-
sion; for as when we revenge our selves, God will not plead
our Cause, so when weARK and care, and think by our own
excessive, dissident, providing to help our selves, we undoe
our selves, for God will leave us to our selves.

7th. We pity the Poor, and love them; we never look any
thing from them?

Ans. Dives who is now in Hell did not rob Lazarus, but
because he did not relieve him he was damned; so those re-
probates, Mat. 25 42, 43.

2. Many doe hate the Poor, and tyrannize over them, and
if there be so much love in their hearts, how comes it so little
to appear in their lives. He that hath a loving heart will have
a bountiful hand, for love is bountiful, 1 Cor. 13, 4. it is in
vain to boast of love unless we shew it in our works, 1 Tim. 3.
16. 1 Tim. 3, 17, 18.

Now did men but consider who it is that asks, and what
an honour it is to be his Almoners, and what profit comes by
so doing, they would never excuse themselves as they doe,
from this eminent duty.

We therefore that are the Ministers of Christ, observing
the backwardness of our people to this necessary duty, should
get the words of the wise, which are as Goads to rouse men
out of their secularity; neither is it sufficient that wee only
preach and press the duty, but we must (in our spheres and
places) see that those precepts be put in practice according to
the mind of Christ; the Deacons and Collectors must gather
it, yet the Minister by counsel and advice should see to the
right distributing of it. Hence the Apostles call upon Paul to
remember the poor, which thing (faith he) I was diligent
to doe, Gal. 2, 10. neither is it sufficient that wee direct our
people, but by our Practice also we must lead them the way;
so did Paul, himselfe did minister to the Saints at Jerusalem,
( Rom. 15, 25, 38.) he doth not put off the duty to others,
but himself leads them the way. People look more what wee
do,
Verse 4: **Israel's Obstinacy.**

Do's than what we say. Then we may preach and profess with more zeal and confidence on others, when we our selves doe goe before them in the duty, else they will quickly upbraid us, with a Thou that teachest another to be merciful, art thou unmerryful? Hence the best of men only have been the greatest preachers and promoters of this duty. How oft doth Solomon, the wisest of men, by precepts and promises quicken us to this duty, Prov. 11. 24. & 19. 17. & 22. 9. & 28. 27. Eccles. 11. 1. 2. and Christ himself, a greater than Solomon, did both by precepts, promises, and practice, incite his disciples to this duty, Matt. 5. 7. 42. & 19. 25. & 25. 34. 35. Luke 14. 41. & 12. 33. Acts 20. 35. How oft did Paul press this duty upon the people in all his epistles, 1 Cor. 16. 1. 2. & 2. 8. 7. & 9. 5. Heb. 6. 10. & 13. 16. and gives a strict charge to Timothy (1 Tim. 6. 17. 18.) that he charge those that are rich, to be rich in good works. And the ancient fathers the better to excite their people to works of mercy, have written whole books in the praise of it.

But since God looks more at the manner than matter of our duties, and loves adverbs (as Austin hath it) better than adjectives, hee looks not so much quam bene, how good the thing is, quam bone, how well we doe it. I shall therefore give some directions for the right performance of it; for, Modus rei cadit sub precepto, God hath prescribed the manner, as well as the matter of our duties, according to that old saying,

Est modus in rebus, quidem, sed qui modo, quam modo, quam.

Now he that will give Rightly must

1. Beleevingly.
2. Cheerfully.
3. Righteously.
4. Sincerely.

Give 5. Speedily.
7. Largely.
8. Discreetly.

We must give believingly, for without faith it is impossible to please God; our persons must please before our performances.
Israels Obstiny.

formances can be acceptable, God had first respect to Abel, and then to his Offering. A wicked man may give an Almes; and doe an act which is materially good, but as it comes from him who is in rebellion against God, it is odious to him; for the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord. To make an action Morally good, three circumstances must concur. 1. The man must be Righteous, he must have both an imputed and imparted Righteousness. 2. He must doe righteous things. 3. He must doe them righteously. Hee must be a Beleever, that will be a right Almes-giver, for it is not the Almes of every one, but of a *believing Abraham, Job, Zachaeus, Barnabas, &c. that is pleasing unto God. 4. Get faith to beleve the Promises. God hath made many precious Promises to the merciful, it is meer unbelief that makes men question the truth of them, and this distrustful of God is the very root of all that unmercifulness that is in the world; if men did but beleve that for one corn which they sow they should have an hundred, and that if they give rightly to the poor they should never lack, men would not sow so sparingly as they doe; get faith in the Promises, and this will loosen your hearts from these low enjoyments. Hee is rich who hath interest in the Promises, though hee hath nothing else in the world, for they are virtually every thing, they are better than money in our Purses, or bread in our Cupboards. Shalt the Husband-man Plow, and Sow, in hope of a doubtfull Crop, and the Merchant venture thorow many dangers at Sea, for uncertain Riches; and shalt not wee venture to give, who are promised a sure reward.

2 Give cheerfully; God loves a cheerful giver, hee prefers the willingness of the mind, before the worthines of the gift,

2 Cor. 8. 11, 12. we must be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, Rom. 12. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Free-will-offerings are most pleasing to God. that is the best Honey which flowes from the Comb without crushing, and the best Wine which comes from the Grape with least pressing. We should rejoice when God calls us to works of Mercy, and honours us so farre as to be his Almoners upon earth; when men give grudgingly, and unwillingly, and give Panem Lapidosum, a bit and a knock, they loose their almes. Unwilling obedience is no obedience, it must not be forced from us by Law, but flow
Ver. 4. *Israel's Obligatory.

from love, we must not only doe mercy, but love mercy, Micah 6. 8. Love is a bountiful affection, it thinks it can never doe enough for the party beloved; it is the weight which sets all the wheels of the Soul on going. When David had set his affection on God, then he thinks all the thousands that he gives to be as nothing, 1 Chron. 29. 3. Many give, but it is with much calling upon, andimportunity, it should come like water from a Spring, freely and fluently, and it comes like fire from a flint, with much knocking; it comes from them as if you pluck a Rib, a Leg, or an Arm from them. They should speak comfortably to the poor, and they give them hard words, and ugly looks, and so marre all.

3. Give Rightously; as we must love Mercy, so wee must doe justly, Mic. 6. 8. we must give of our own goods justly gotten, not by oppression, theft, usury, &c. it must bee Thy bread (Eccles. 11. 1.) and not stolen from others by any indirect course, God hates *robery for burnt-offerings, IIa. *See Diie on 61. 8. wee may not rob Peter to cloath Paul, but if thou wilt honour the Lord, let it be with thy own riches, Prov. 3. 9. & Mr. James &c. Do so did Zachem, the one half of my goods, nor of another mans doe I give to the poor, Luke 19. 8. Job warmes the Ser. on Mat. 5. 7 poor with the fleece of his owne flock. Job 31. 20. Goods ill p. 33. & Aqui-gotten call for Restitucion, not for distibution. Our Almes must be not only Works of Mercy, but also of *Righteousness. Hence works of mercy are frequently called Righteousness, (Psal. 118. 9. Prov. 11. 18. Dan. 4. 29.) not only because it is just and righteous that we should part with some of our wealth to the poor, but also because it must be given of goods rightly gotten, and therefore those cruel men that rack Tenants, and inclose Commons to themselves, that oppress the Poor, and then when they dye build them an Almes house; that steal the Goofe; and then stick down a Feather; both they and their gifts are an abomination to the Lord.

4. Sincerely; not for any by or base ends, of Pride, Vain-glory, Merit, or to be seen of men, but singly and sincerely that God may be glorified, Math. 5. 16. & 6. 1. and 5. it is...
An act that is materially good, yet may be formally evil, if not rightly circumstantiated.

the end that makes or mars an action, it is this that doth denominate; let the work be never so good, yet if the end be Self, all is lost. The Pharisees did much, yet because they fought themselves, and not God's glory, they lost the true reward. Give secretly, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth; the more we conceal our alms here, the more apparent will they be made at that great Day. Let us take no notice where we have given, how much, how oft, or to whom; let us first consider, that though we forget our good works, yet God doth not, but our Father who sees in secret, he will reward us openly. Let us therefore give in simplicity of spirit, (Rom. 12. 8.) without any thoughts of merit, for what we give is God's, not ours; it is of his own that we give unto him.

1 Chron. 29. 14, 16. Heaven is Christ's Purchase, and not ours, Rom. 6. ult. it is a gift, and what more free than gift?


Gratia ab officio quod morta tarda est.

Speedily. A little given in time may do more good than much given afterwards; delay is a kind of denial, and therefore we are commanded to be ready to distribute, and if we can relieve our Brother now, we may not stay to him, God, and come again to morrow, Prov. 3. 28. we know not what a day may bring forth, many things fall out between the cup and the lip; the man may be dead, or we may be disabled for giving. Cesear to day, may bee Israel to morrow; or the man may be put upon some desperate course of stealing, &c. when by seasonable giving we might have prevented his ruine. We should prevent mens sutes with our readiness, and not cause the eyes of the Widow to say with waiting, Job 31. 16. as the Sun communicates its Light freely, and God prevents us with his blessings, often giving us before we ask (Psal. 21. 13.) so should we deal with our poor brother.

It is irksome to an ingenuous nature to stand craving and begging, and the Gift looseth a great part of its grace when we put off the Suppliant with delays, such deferring, tortures the soul, and makes it sick, Prov. 13. 12.

They also that put off giving till they dye, are much to be blamed, those are men of good wills, but bad deeds; when they can keep their riches no longer, then they will give somewhat, not out of love to God, but for fear of Hell; as the Merchant doth cast his Goods into the Sea in a storm, for fear of drowning.

2 How
2 How dost thou know whether thou shalt have a heart to
give, many that have wanted a hand in their life-time, want
hearts when they come to dye, as we see in churlish, hard-
hearted Nabat, 1 Sam. 25. 37, 38.

It will be our wisdom therefore in our health, and wealth,
whilst we have time and opportunity to do good to all, Prov.
3. 27, 28. Gal. 6. 10, it is good to make our own hands our
own Executors, and our own eyes our own Over-seers; and
not leave our substance to be disposed of by those who may sell
it, misplace it, and abuse it.

2 Every thing is beautiful in its season, but our life-time
is the fittest season for giving, whilst we are full, and have
somewhat to give, and whilst our brother wants. Alms is com-
pared to sowing (Psal. 112. 9.) now the Husband man is very
careful to observe the fittest season for the Seeding of
his ground. He that puts off his works of charity till death, is
like the man that puts off his sowing till Harvest-time, when
he should reap.

3 It is more pleasing to God, and a more infallible evid-
ence of a strong faith and affiance in him. God loves those
best that trust in him most; now when a man can in his life-
time part with his Goods to glorifie God, it is a good sign
that he rests only upon Gods Promises and Providence, and
not upon Creature-comforts. Let us then imitate the righe-
ous man, who is ever merciful, and lendeth (Psal. 37. 26.)
a wicked man may be sometimes merciful, or doe an act of
mercy, but he is not constant in the duty, but usually puts it
off till death; now as late repentance is seldom true, so
Ecclesiastica sequest rarioque. To quicken men to doe good in
their life-time, I shall set down a notable precedent in our
owne times, of one Mr. Jones a Citizen of London, who in
his life-time gave above seven thousand pound amongst his
poor Kindred, and fifty pound per annum to a Preacher at
Monmouth, where he was born, and caused a house to bee
built there with all convenient necessaries fit for a godly Mi-
nister. He erected a Free-school there in his life-time, and
also built a fair house for the School-master, giving fifty
pound yearly to the head School-master, and thirty pound per
annum to the usher for ever.

Hee also built an Hospital in the same Town (1610) for twenty
twenty poor people, allowing every one a Gown yearly, and two shillings six pence weekly, and gave about two thousand pound more to finish the work.

By his last Will and Testament he gave five thousand pound, to be disbursed for the maintenance of a Preacher at Newland in Gloucester-shire, and certain poor in that Parish.

He gave to the Company of Haberdashers in London, one thousand four hundred pound for the support of the Poor of that company. He left six hundred pound, and a fair house in the City of London, to bee distributed amongst the poor Preachers in England. He gave to the Hospital in England five hundred pound. To the poor in Stow, two hundred pound.

To the poor in Hanborough one hundred pound.

To the Company of Haberdashers by way of thankfulness for their care taken, and to be taken, in the right managing of these acts of charity, he gave a considerable sum.

I have mentioned this at large, to shame the rich men of this age for their coldness, and averseness to works of Piety.

Where, oh where shall we find such Jones es as this! He gave pounds, we give not pence; he gave thousands, we give not hundreds; he erected Schools, and Hospitals, he promoted Preachers, and Piety; when we are ready to pull down all.

The zeal and piety of this good man will rise in Judgement against the Luke-warmness, and impiety of the men of this Generation.

6 Sensibly and compassionately, with a tender, pitiful-sympathizing-heart. We must not only pour out our riches, but our souls to the poor, Isa. 58. 10. we must have a fight and fence of their miseries within ourselves, considering that they are flesh of our flesh, we are all of one and the same blood, Isa. 8. 7, Acts 17. 26. as good hands made them as made thee, and as great a price was paid for their Redemption; and though thou mayest be his superior in Temporals, yet he may excel thee in Spirituals, in faith, obedience, humility. Great reason therefore that we should put on bowels of mercy, i.e. all sorts of mercy, to soul, body, estate; give, lend, visit, cloath, counsel, comfort, and doe all that in us lies for them, Col. 3. 12. The good Samaritan when he saw the misery of the
Israel's Obstinance.

the man that fell amongst Thieves, hee took compassion on him, Luke 10. 33. Job wept for those that were in trouble, and his soul was in heaviness for the poor, Job 30. 25. Let a man give never so much, if he doe it with an upbraiding, insulting, and not with a compassionate spirit, it is abominable. It is a greater mercy to have a compassionate heart, than it is to give an Almes. A wicked man may give some of his Goods, but a compassionate man gives some of himself. To move compassion in us, 1. Let us put our selves into their cases, and make them our own. 2. Make use of thine Eye, that is one great means to work upon the heart; observe their poor fare, their tattered cloathing, their cold lodging, and seeble bodies. The Samaritan saw the Wounded man, and then hee had compassion on him; Christ saw the People as Sheep without a Shepherd, and had compassion on them. By this means we shall the better know the necessities of the poor, and how to suit our Almes to their wants. This will make us thankful when we see how others lye on Straw, drink Water, want Cloathes to their backs, and bread for their Bellies, &c.

7 Largely, and liberally. As Araunah gave to the King like a King, so should we give bountifully to works of mercy. A mean man must be frugally liberal, a man of an ordinary estate must be moderately liberal, but a rich man must be magnificently liberal, especially in great and extraordinary cases. A Christian must be a man of a more excellent spirit, (Numb. 14. 24.) not of a fordid, low, ignoble spirit. Almes is compared to Sowing, which usually is done with a full hand; to encourage us, the Apostle adds a gracious Promise, that if we sow liberally we shall reap liberally, 2 Cor. 9. 6. we should therefore abound in this work of the Lord, and bee mercifull, not as Abraham, or Job were mercifull, but as our heavenly father is mercifull. Now the Lord abounds in mercy to us, and to should we in our degree to others. We should not confine our Almes to an Easter-day, or a Christmas-Eve, or a Communion-day, but be ready on all occasions for the duty; we should not give a penny, but a portion to the poor.
for thy poor Brothers support, cast it frankly and freely without grudging or repining at him; but then it must bee Thy bread, got by thy lawful labour, cast it on the Waters, that is, upon the Poor, and though it may seem to be lost, as that which is thrown down the River, yet after many days we shall find it. Sometimes in this life we shall have an hundred fold. The Shunamite that entertained the Prophet had a Son. The Widow of Sarepta by succouring the Prophet had an increase of her Oyl. 2. Sometimes to the Posterity, when the fathers dead, then the Child hath favour shewed him, Psalm 112. 3. Sometimes not till the Resurrection, Luke 14. 13. we should therefore give a portion to seven, and also unto eight; that is, unto many, for Bonum quo communi, co melius, the more communicative our goodness is, the better.

Obj. But we know not what evils may come upon us, and therefore we will save?

Sol. Nay therefore give (saith Solomon) whilst thou hast any thing to give, before all be gone, for thou knowest not what evils shall be upon the earth. Sad times may come, and then those that have been bountiful to others, shall finde bounty from others; and as they have merited to others, so God will raise up some to mete unto them again. We see the Wheel turns round, and those that have been on the top, as Bajazet and Belisarius, have been brought to the bottom; we should therefore improve our Talent while we have it, to our Masters praise. God hath much dishonour done him by miserable, unmerciful men; we should help to take off those dishonours by our pious, merciful, and munificent walking; they instead of giving bountifully, give basely to the poor, mouldy-bread, stinking meat, that one would scarce give to Doggs; yea their horses many times have more and better Corn than poor wanting Christians. If base offerings were abhorred of Davids soul, how much more are such fordid gifts abhorred of Gods soul.

8 Discreetly, according to our estate and abilities, and proportionable to our neighbours necessitities. Rich men must give like rich men, and poor men must doe as they can. Thus...
to others. Though few offend on this hand, yet it is better and safer offending in the excess and giving too much, than too little. The Macedonians are commended for giving beyond their ability, 2 Cor. 8. 3. The poor Widow had rather want herself, than be wanting to others; and in the Primitive times they sold all that they had to supply the Churches necessities, Acts 2. 45. & 4. 34. But ordinarily the measure of our alms must be regulated according to our estates; this is to order our affairs with discretion, Psal. 112. 5. according to the ability wherewith God hath blest us, we must lay aside somewhat for the poor. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Divines conclude, that the tenth part of our comings in ought to be set apart, by way of thankfulness for pious uses; upon this account Jacob vowed the tenth to God, Gen. 28. ult. Hence we read not only of the Levites Tenth, but of Tenth for the Poor, (Deut. 14. 28, 29.) and to these Tenth the text alludes; and if the Jews who had so many Sacrifices to offer, and Tenths to pay, yet must give another Tenth to the Poor; shall not we, that are freed from those Ceremonial burdens, be much more bountiful?

3. We must be discreet, in respect of the persons to whom beneficium est omnium, et omnium tamen debita loss & temroris circumstantias. Aquinas secundus secundae, q. 31. art. 20.

We must give; though we are bound to give to all that are in extreme necessity, Luke 6. 30. Give to every one that asketh, viz. if he be truly in need, and thou art able to relieve him. But especially we must succour the godly poor, and communicate to the Saints necessities, Gal. 6. 10. we must give unto them Majore affectu et affectum, with greater love, and greater bounty; Joseph shewed kindness to all his Brethren, but Benjamin whom he loved had a five-fold mess. Those are near and dear to God, and so they should be to us. They oft meet with hard usage from the world, and therefore we are commanded to supply (what in us lies) their necessities, Rom. 12. 13. Next to those our poor Kindred, and the poor of our own Town must be relieved, Dem. 15. 7. and then Strangers, though they be farre distant, Gal. 2. 10. yea enemies, if they be in want must be fed by us, 2 King. 6. 21, 22. Mat. 5. 44. Rom. 13. 20.

Only such as are lusty, wandering Beggars, that are able to work, but are lazie and will not, we must take heed of relieving such, unless they bee in extreme necessity, and...
that with admonition. There are two sorts of Poor in the world,

1. Impotent Poor, of God's making.
2. Impudent Poor, of the Devil's making.

1. Impotent poor, when God by Sickness, Fire, Shipwreck, Persecution, great charge of Children, Old age, &c. such poor whose work is done, must bee succoured by us, Lev. 25. 35.

2. But Impudent poor, who are talkative, brazen-faced, idle, dissolute, and disordered; correction is the best almes for such as can work and will not. A rod is fittest for the back of such fools.

1. God hath expressly said, He that will not labour shall not eat; it is not, he that is sick and cannot, but he that is able and will not labour shall rot and perish, 2 Thess. 3. 10.

2. Such as maintain them in this idleness sin against the good Lawes of the Land.

3. Against the Law of Nature, which teacheth every man by his industry to provide for his own.

4. They are Thieves, and eate up that which should maintain the true poor.

5. By a constant relieving of them, you maintain them in their idle trade, harden them in their sin, and so become accessory to all their abominations.

6. The Godly that have been very tender to other kind of poor, yet have been very terrible to these. Job that was eyes to the blinde, yet made them to run and hide themselves, Job 30. 3, 4, 5. Paul condemns them for their disorderly walking, and commands us to with-draw from such, 2 Thess. 3. 6, 10, 14. They are the Levists Nursery, and Seminary, out of which hee chuseth some for Theft, some for Beggars, some for Murderers, and all manner of villany. Hence Plato (one of the wisest Heathens) allowed not any Beggars in his conceived Common-wealth, as being a great blemish and dishonour to it.

3. We must be discreet in shunning the causes of Poverty, which disable us from works of Mercy.

The first is Idleness, this wastes and consumes the estate, so that in a short time a man cannot help himself, much less others.
Israels Obstiniacy.

I. Idleness and uncharitableness were Sodom's Sins, Ezek. 16. 49. the virtuous Woman is commended for her liberality to the poor, but what enabled her for it, why she seeks for Wool, and Flax, and worketh willingly with her hands, Prov. 31. 13, 14, 20.

2. Intemperance, in eating, drinking, pleasures, and partie times; &c. when men shall give five pound for a Dogge, ten pound for a Hawk, twenty pound for a Horse, and forty pound spent on a Whore, and hundreds in Drink and Tobacco, when men shall thus make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it, no wonder if such cannot help others, when they have beggared themselves, Prov. 21. 17. & 23. 21.

3. Familiarity with lewd Women, the Harlot will bring a man to a morsel of bread, and will quickly root out all a man's increase, Job 31. 12.

4. Pride; when ordinary building will not serve, sumptuous building breeds sorry-house-keeping; So pride in Apparel eates up charity; when men have such large Items for Silk, for Satin, for Laces, for Ribbands, &c. when men shall carry Woods and Lordships on their backs, no wonder if they have nothing for the poore bellies. As B. Jewel complained sometimes, that he had no Benefices to bestow on good men, for Caper his Predecessor had devoured them all; so these have nothing for the Poor, for Dr. Pride hath devoured all.

5. Rush Swerti-ship hath disabled many, and therefore Solomon so oft cautions us against it, Prov. 6. 1, 2, 3. & 71. 15.

6. Give constantly. In the morning let us sow our Seed, and in the evening let us not hold our hand. Let us never bee weary of well-doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not; so long as there are poor to be releaved, and we have goods to releave them withall, we should be distributing amongst them; now the poor we shall have alwaies with us, so long as the world endures, so long the poor shall endure, and therefore we must still be sowing. As God is alwaies succouring us, so should we alwaies be succouring our Brethren. As he renewes his mercy to us every morning, so should we renew our bounty; we must ever be following that which
Israels Obstinacy. 

which is good, 1 Thess. 5. 15. Job was addicted to it from his youth, and in his old age he practised it, Job 31. 18. As the Husband-man thinks it not sufficient that he hath sown his ground in former years, but he continues his sowing to the end of his days; so must we in this Spiritual sowing, our last days must be our best days, and our works more at the last than at the first, Rev. 2. 19. Constancy is one ingredient that helps to make an action Morally good: It must bee done Scienter, Volenter, Constanter; first we must know our duty, and then perform it cheerfully and constantly; and this serves to distinguish between the charity of the Hypocrite and the godly, the one gives by flatters and frets, when the wind of praise, and the weight of profit moves them; but the righteous doth righteously at all times, and that from a Principle of life, and habit of grace within.


Verse 5.

And offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free-Offerings, for this liketh you, O ye Children of Israel, saith the Lord.

In this Verse the Prophet continues his Sarcasm, and bids the Israelites go on in their superstitious practices, imitating Gods people in their choyest Sacrifices, viz. in their Eucharistical, Votive, Free-will-offerings; but with all he loves them know, though this please thee, yet it displeaseth God, as appears by those several Judgements which he hath already
Ver. 5. Israels Obstinity.

already laid upon them, and yet further threatens against them.

Offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with leaven; q. d. imitate Gods people, who in their Sacrifices of praise did offer leavened bread according to the Law (Lev. 7. 13.) so doe yee in the Worship of your Idols, what Gods people did holy at Jerusalem to the true God, that doe yee hypocritically at Bethel and Gilgal, to your false gods.

Q. But here a doubt ariseth, whether this people did sin in offering leaven with their Sacrifices of Thanksgiving?

A. Some learned men conceive they did sin, and that their Sacrificing here with leaven was contrary to the Law, Lev. 2. 11. But as learned men on the other side say, they did not sin in so doing; for though the Lord did forbid leaven in other Sacrifices (Lev. 2. 11.) yet in Eucharistical and Thank-offerings, as here, they might bring leavened bread, Lev. 7. 13. The Lord therefore doth not blame them here for offering with leaven, for himself had so appointed it, and in these external circumstances they were very diligent; but the Lord blames them because they offered those Sacrifices of praise which were due to him, to their Idols, and that in the Temple of Idols.

Q. But why did the Lord forbid leaven in other Sacrifices, and yet command it in Eucharistical ones?

A. Sundry Reasons might be given.

1. The Lord might enjoin it, to intimate unto us the due preparation of our hearts before we praise him; for so wee finde Leaven to be used, sometimes in Scripture in good part, for the secret working, preparing, and fitting of the Dough for baking, making it rise and heave, which else would bee sad and heavie (Matt. 13. 33.) so doth God's Spirit prepare and raise our spirits in love and thankfulness to God for his mercies, Psal. 108. 1. to 6.

2. To teach us to temper our joys with sorrow, and in all our approaches to God in this duty, to rejoice with trembling, Psal. 2. 11. Hence the Passover was to be eaten with lower herbs.

3. Or else to signify to us his gracious acceptation of our praises, though mixt with the leaven of many infirmities.

4. To mind them (say some) of their deliverance from those
those things which are set forth by leaven, viz. false Doctrine, Hypocrisy, Prophaneness, and the like.

Proclaim and publish the Free-offerings, q. d. though you bring your Sacrifices to me every morning and evening, according to my Commandement, and though yee offer other Sacrifices on your Feastival-dayes, yea and though yee add to them all Voluntary-oblations, solemnized with great pomp and Majesty; yet all this is but adding sin to sin, it is a burden, and an abomination to me, because not done in that place, and by those Priests which I have ordained for that work. Those Voluntary-free-will-offerings we read of, Levit. 7. 16. & 22. 18. Numb. 15. 3. Deut. 12. 17. these were commanded by Law, and thee the Israelites did imitate. These they did publish and proclaime by publick authority, with great pomp and solemnity, being very curious in Ceremonies, but careless in Substantials; yet for the better clearing of this Point, wee must know, that those Free-will-offerings were a kind of Peace-offerings for some Blessings received; of which we finde three sorts:

§ 1 Eucharistical.
Some were

§ 2 Votive.

§ 3 Voluntary.

1 Some were Sacrifices of Thanksgiving and praise, for some Blessings already received, as recovery from Sickness, victory over Enemies, success in a Journey; for blessings of the Field, of the Wombe, &c. they were to come to the Holy place, and bring a Bullock, or the like, and offer it as a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to God, for those mercies received, Levit. 7. 11, 12, 13.

2 There were Votive Sacrifices, which were joined with Prayer for a blessing upon their undertakings; or as others say, for the performance of some Vow made upon the obtaining of some special blessing from God, Lev. 7. 16.

3 The Free-will-offering was of meer Devotion, when a man was not tied either by general or special obligation, (Levit. 7. 16,) either of Mercies received, or of the want of any blessing; but of Devotion in general, by way of acknowledging Gods goodness to them in the general, and testifying their desire of the continuance of his love and favour to them.
Vers. 5. Israels Obstinity.

them; For this pleaseth you, or, this ye love, O yee Children of Ahab, from
laxitis, di-
Israel, saith the Lord. What the Prophet had spoken before I-
ronically, now he speaks plainly without a Figure, and shews
that he did not exhort them to doe such things, but shews
what things they delighted to doe, and therefore hee bids
them goe on, and take what they get; you love to have it so,
but you consider not what will be the end thereof; Jer. 5. ult.
q.d. This kind of sacrifice may please you, who have made your
own wills your rule, delighting yourselves in outward shewes and
Ceremonies; but it is displeasing unto me, though you love to
have it so, yet I hate your doings, and require no such things at
your hands. My Sacrifices I expect at Jerusalem, yet you think
any prophane place will serve as well; you should have consulted my
Law, and my Messengers, and observed what pleased me; but
you have despised my Law, and despised my Messengers, and follow-
ed your own intentions to your own confusion; go on therefore in these
your rebellious practices, and perish.

Observations.

1. Hypocrisies are very strict in observing outward Ceremonies
and Circumstances, but very negligent in fundamentals and sub-
stantials. They strain at a Gnat, yet swallow a Camel; they
have a form of godliness, but they have not the power of it;
they may have their morning and evening Sacrifices, they
may pay Tithes, bring Eucharistical and Free-will-offerings,
and goe as farre in outward performances as (if not further
then) the people of God, and yet for want of sincerity bee
nothing, Ignorance and impudence, gain, and applause of
men, will carry men a great way. Most mens religion now a-
daies lies in cenfuring of others, in holding some seemingly
strict Opinions, and high-flown Notions beyond the rule; in
disputing and questioning every thing, but believing nothing.
The Scribes and Pharisees, what adoe did they make about
Tithing of Mint, and Cummin, and Anifie; but the weighthy
matters of the Law lay unregarded; these forget that obedience
is better than sacrifice. Thus our perfeft Pharisees the
Quakers, how precise seeme they in their words, even beyond
the rule; What adoe doe they make about Pulpits, Hour-
glasses,
58

Israels Obstiny.  Amos 4.

... Churches, Steeples, Bells, Gommes, Cloaks, Laces, Fringes, Husbands, making of Leggs, Churchies, Tales of Honour, &c. and yet these Arteistical Libertines, whose Religion is meer Irreligion, make no bones of Blasphemy, Heresie, Lying, Equivocating, Rayling, Witch-craft, &c. God will smite such grofs Hipocrizes.

2 Obs. *Sacrifices of praise are due only to God.* The Lord was here greatly displeased with Israel, for offering their Sacrifices of praise to their Idols, which were due to him. As it was their sin that they spent the silver and the gold which God had given them, in the service of Baal (Hos. 2. 8.) to give the calves of their lips (as Praisers are called, Hos. 14. 2.) as well as the calves of their fells to Idols, must needs be a God-provoking sin. As all our Blessings come from him, so it is great reason that all our Praisers should be given to him. This hath ever been the Practice of the Saints, Psal. 56. 12. & 91. 30. 33. & 107. 22. Jonah 2. 9. and is oft commanded, Psal. 50. 14. 15. Ephes. 5. 20.

3 Obs. *God delighteth in Free-will offerings.* The Prayers and Praisers that we offer unto God must be voluntary, ingenious, free, Exod. 25. 2. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Esa. 1. 19. 2 Cor. 8. 12. Christ saved us willingly (Isa. 40. 6, 7.) and therefore we should serve him willingly; yea the Angels which are more noble Creatures than we, yet serve God willingly, Psal. 103. 20. we must resemble them, yea the unreasonable creatures delight to serve God, Psal. 19. 5.

Compulsive obedience is no obedience; the service wee perform to God must have three ingredients in it, it must bee done *Sicien*, *Volenter & Constante*.

1 Our service must be reasonable service, for blind obedience is no obedience, Rom. 12. 1.

2 It must be performed *cheerfully and willingly,* for as God loves a cheerful Giver, so he loves a cheerful Hearer, a cheerful Prayer, and a cheerful observer of his Sabbaths, Isa. 58. 13. It was Prophesied, that in Gospel times Gods people should be *willingnesse* in the abstract and Plural Number, that is, they should bee a prompt People, that are even composed as it were of willingnes, so ready should they bee to worship him, Psal. 110. 3.
Vers. 6.

Israels Obstinaey.

3 It must be *constant,* we must not only doe righteousness at sometimes, but at all times, Psal. 106. 3.

91. P. 542. See ten Qualifications of Obedience in Mr. William Shepheard's Treat. of Sincerity, p. 198. &c.

4 Obs. Idolatry is marvellous pleasing to our corrupt natures. Men love to have it so, Jer. 5. 11. Corrupt Principles suit well with our corrupt hearts. Hence it is that men are said to be wedded to their Idols, Hos. 4. 17. those they love and serve. V. seems to and seek to worship, Jer. 8. 2. this makes multitudes goe after the second the Whore with her bewitching, alluring golden Cup, Revel. Com. chap. 7. 13. 3. on this side Hell there is not a forer Judgement, than thus to be given up to our own corrupt affections.

VERSE 6.

And I also have givern you cleanness of teeth in all your Cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

V V Hen God would convert a People, he useth Blessings and Curses, Mercies and Judgements, one or both of which usually work upon all ingenuous natures, Levit. 26. Deut. 28. & 30. 1, 2. God had tried all conclusions upon this people, he had tried to reclaim them by Mercies, (Ames 2. 9, 10, 11. & 3. 2.) but these being ineffectual, he now trieth what Judgements will doe; and therefore sends his three Arrowes of Famine, Pestilence, and Sword amongst them to convert them (if it might be) and not to destroy them, as appears by that Emphtatical Epistrophe annexed to every punishment; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Not only his Mercies, but his Menaces; not only his favours, but his frownes and rods were all ineffectual upon the hearts of this impenitent people. As a tender father will use all means to reclaim his rebellious Son, so God had used all means to reclaim this People from their Idolatry, and Apostacy, but all in vain, for they were so wedded to their lusts, that they had rather lose their Land and Lives than pass with them; so that this is the third Sin which the Lord...
Israel's Obstinate.

by his Prophet chargeth them with all, viz. Obstinate and incorrigibility: no cords of love could draw them, nor judgements drive them. The Lord had wasted all his rods on them in vain, five or six he mentions here, viz.

1. Famine.
2. Drought.
5. Plague.
6. Sword.

But they were so farre from returning, that they grew worse and worse, and therefore the Lord resolves to make a final end with them. In this Verse we have,

1 A Judgement executed, and that is Famine, which is paraphrastically set forth by cleanliness of teeth, and is exegetically explained in the next Clause, by want of Bread, and provision, I have given you cleanliness of teeth, what is that? why want of bread in all places? when men have nothing to eat, their teeth are clean, nothing adheres to them to foul them. In the precedent Verse the Lord tells us what pleased Israel, viz. Sin, and now hee tells us what pleased him, viz. to punish them for their sin; as they had abused their food like fat Beasts, to luxury and riot, so now they should fast for it; and I also have given you, or therefore have I given you cleanliness of teeth; it is a suitable Judgement, that unclean hearts and lives should be punished with, cleanliness of teeth. This Judgement was in part fulfilled in Elijahs and Elisha's days, when in Ahab's reign there was a three years famine, 1 King. 17 & 18. & 2 King. 6. 25. & 8. 1. and in the days of King Joram, for the Idolatry that then reigned, 2 King. 4. 38. yet some conceive that the Prophet here speaks of some latter famine which was then fresh in their memories.

2 Here is the Extent, or Universality of this Judgement, the famine was not in one or two, but in all their Cities, and in all places.

3 Here is the effect which this Judgement had upon them, viz. It was ineffectual; yet have ye not returned to me, saith Lord: Their hearts were so hardned, and they so indurare in sin, that they were become incorrigible, and incurable; they were
Verl. 6. Isr.els Obstinacy.
were Judgement-proof, no chastening could work upon them.
Yet have ye not, &c. This yet shewes that there was great
reason why God should expect their return, and that hee had
done that which in all probability might have caused them to
return, when he sent these Judgements on them; therefore
God inculcates, and oft repeats this sentence, Yet have ye
not returned unto me, saith the Lord; as being greatly troubled
that his corrections had no better operations on them; when
even Phrygians and Barbarians are bettered by blows, yea
the dull Ass is quickned by the Rod, and the heavie Oxe by
the Goad.

Observations:

1 Famine is one Judgement which God sends upon impenitent
Sinners; Yet when God is greatly incensed against a People,
then he sends the Famine, which he calls one of his four fore
Judgements, Ezek. 14. 21. it is an Arrow which he shoots a-
gainst a People of his wrath, Ezek. 5. 16. The Lord can no
sooner call for a Famine, but like a faithful Servant it pre-
cently obeys, a King. 8. 1. hee called for a Famine, and it
came upon the Land seven years, Psal. 105. 16. when it
comes in extremity it is very sad; hence it is called the terri-
ble Famine, Lam. 5. 10. This will appear in seven partic-
culars.

1 It makes men unnatural, and cruel, even to their near
est Relations, as Wife and Children. Nature bindes a man
to tender and pitty these, yet in time of Famine, we read of
Mothers eating their own Children, a King. 6. 28, 29. Jer.
14. 9. Lam. 4. 10. this Curse the Lord threatens against
disobedient ones, Den. 28. 53. 56. 57.

2 It is a lingering, languishing death; other Judgements cut
men off suddenly, but this consumes a man as it were pace-
meal, Lam. 4. 9. they that are slain with the Sword are better
than they that are slain with hunger; Why so? for these pine a-
way for lack of sustenance.

3 It makes men faint and feeble, and so unfit men for
the Service of God in their calling, Gen. 47. 13. they faint by
reason of the famine. Hence Bread is called the staffe, &c,
13. 15.)
Israels Obstinate.

1. 2. 3.  Ezek. 4. 16.) take a Staffe from a weak man
and he falls to the ground.

4. It makes men howl and lament (Hos. 7. 14. Joel 2. 11.)
yea rage and be mad, Isa. 8. 21.

5. Hunger burns like a fire, which is a most terrible ele-
ment, it waits the radical moisture, Deut. 32. 24. Foremen
describing the Famine in Jerusalem, tells us, that their face was
black like a Coal, and their skin was black like an Oven, be-
cause of the terrible Famine (Lam. 4. 8. & 5. 10.) when
the Calor naturae hath nothing to feed upon, it consumes the
Humidum radicale, and so the man dyes.

6. It brings Poverty with it, now extreme Poverty is a fore
Judgement, and puts men upon desperate attempts, as, rob-
bing, killing, &c. Prov. 6. 30. & 30. 8. 9. it makes rich
men poor, and forceth them to sell their Land, Cartel
Goods, Cloath, &c. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath
will be given for his life. The Egyptians sold all that they had
to Joseph for bread, and when all was gone they sold them-
selves, Gen. 47. 18.

7. It is usually attended with other Judgements, as Sword
and Plague, such great Judgements seldom goe alone, Jer.

Let us then fly from sin, which turns that God, who is
mercy and pity is self, into fire and fury, and provokes him
to send such terrible Judgements on his people. Especially
take heed of four sins.

1. Intemperance, Drunkenness and Gluttony bring the fa-
mine on a Land. Abuse of plenty lusts plenty, when men
rise early to follow strong drink, then their honourable men
are famished, Isa. 5. 11. 12. 13. Joel 1.

2. Covenant-breaking; when there was a three years Fa-
mine in the days of David, hee inquired of the Lord what
was the ground of it; the answer was, that it was for
Saul, and for his bloody house; because he slew the Gibonites,
contrary to Covenant confirmed by an oath, Josh. 9. 7. 15.
18. 2 Sam. 21. 1. Jer. 34. 17. 18.

3. When men spend the strength which they receive from the
Creature, in the service of the Devil, consuming them upon their
lusts, or in sacrificing to Idols, as the Israelites did here, they
served Baal with the Corn and Wine which God had given
them, therefore God took it from them.
Israels Obstinate.

4 Contemnot the Word, the wayes and Worship of God. God ofte punisht our abuse of Spiritual food with the want of Corporal, They that hate his Messengers shall dye by the Famine. Jer. 11. 21, 22. So when men preferre their own interests before Gods, and can dwell themselves in seiled houses, but the House of the Lord must lye waste, this brings a Curse upon their Crops and Labours, Hag. 1. 6. 9. 10. & 2. 17. 18. 19.

2 Since it is the Lord that sends cleanness and want of bread amongst us, let us be patient under it, let us be dumbe and silent because the Lord hath done it. There is no evil in the City of this kind especially, but the Lord is the Author and orderer of it, it comes not by Accident, but by Divine appointment, it is the Lord that sends Famines to Cities and Kingdoms; and the rather we should bee patient, when we consider that our Famines are nothing to what our sins deserve. 3 Nothing comparatively, when we consider the seven years Famine in Egypt, when for five years together there was neither Earine nor Harvest, Gen. 41. 40. & 45. 6. In the three years Siege of Samaria, the people within did eat their own Children, and fed upon Dung. (2 King. 6. 25. 26. 29.) an Asses head was sold for eighty pieces of Silver, which is ten pound in our coyn, and the fourth part of a Kab of Doves dung for five pieces of Silver, now a Kab contained four pound and five ounces, and the fourth part was thirteen ounces, and for this they gave ten shillings and upward. But no famine was like Jerusalem. Famine, as was may see in the Lamentations of Jeremy, when the Children cried for bread and there was none to give them, those that were cloathed in Scarlet embraced the Dung-hill, their beautiful Nazarites were blacker than Coals, and the pittifull Mothers became Butchers of their own Children. As the Lord said to his people, Go to Shilo, to say I. Go to Germany, and to Rochel, and consider what God hath done to them for their Sins, there you shall see Dogs, Cats, and Rats sold in the Markers, and men and women fighting for them. There you shall see Women eating their own Children, the living feeding upon the dead, and digging up dead Corps out of their Graves that they might feed upon them. Beggers coming to doors have been killed and eaten, yea the skins of Horses Sheep,
Sheep, and Oxen, have been their food; let us take heed left Germanies Herefies, Blasphemies, Apollacies, Drunkenness, &c. be found in England, lest Germanies Plagues come likewise also. O let us be an obedient people, let us not fight against God with his own blessings, nor abuse his plenty to his dishonour, but serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things; for it is Piety that breeds plenty, Psal. 81. 12, 13. Isai. 1. 19. If there be but a sincere will and desire to obey, we shall eat the good of the Land, and in time of famine we shall be fed, Psal. 33. 19 & 34. 10. & 37. 19. Job 5. 20. Prov. 10. 3. Isai. 33. 18, 16.

2. Live by faith, and then in an holy security at destruction and famine you may laugh, Job 5. 22. Faith answereth all distrustful cares and fears, as Abraham did in another case, God will provide.

Obj. But thou mayest dye by the Famine?

A. True faith faith, and that is best of all for me, for that will free me from sin, and from all the miseries that attend it. He cannot dye ill that lives well, let him dye by Famine, Sword, Pettience, or whatever Disease, yet if he dye in the Lord, in his fear and favour, he is blessed, Rev. 14. 13. Though the Fig-tree should not blossom, yet a believer can rejoice in the Lord in the want of all (Hab. 3. 17.) he knowes that the Lord can bless a little, and make the Widows meal to increase by spending, 1 King. 17. 17, he knowes that God can put vertue and nourishment into the Creature, and make us walke in the strength of one meal for many dayes together; as he did Elijah, who went forty dayes together in the strength of one dinner; or if he take away our meat (as the Martyr said) he will take away our appetite also; Man lives not by bread only, but by every word of God, Mat. 4. 4.

2. Obi. God pays Sinners many times in their own coin. As men deal with others, so God deals with them. These Idolatrous Israelites kept God's faithful Ministers hungry, and spent all on Idols, and false Prophets, and now God keeps them hungry; they like fat Beasts were luxurious, and abused their food; and now they shall be kept short, and want food; they abused their Wine, and now they shall want Water; and though Great men many times escape in times of famine,
Israel’s Obstinate Famine, yet God can smite them with such Diseases, that they shall neither eat nor drink, *In quo quis piscat, in eo puniatur*. Absalom that was proud of his hair, at last it became an Halter that helped to hang him; David that abused another’s bed, hath his own bed defiled by Absalom, who lay with his Concubines; when he proudly numbered the people, he lost them by the Pestilence; so Hezekiah that was lifted up with his Treasures, lost them, Isa. 39. 5. Such is our corruption that we seldom know the worth of Mercies till we want them, Carindo positum quam fruendo, when we want food, health, wealth, peace, and the Gospel of Peace, then we begin to know the price of these mercies.

3 Obl. The principal end that God aims at in our corrections, is our conversion. He corrects us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his Holiness, Heb. 12. 10. he sent the Famine on this People, that so they might return unto him, This is his special end, Job 33. 19. to 28. & 36. 8, 9. Psal. 34. 12. & 119. 71. Luke 15. 14. to 30. we should not therefore lose the benefit of our Afflictions, nor frustrate God’s end in correcting us, but say with the Martyr, Lord doe show thy face; and I will obey. As the Apostle saith of Patience (Jam. 1. 4.) Let patience have its perfect work; that is, let it be sincere, and endure to the end; so say I of Repentance, let it not be a half turn, or make you howl as the Famine did those Israelites (Hos. 7. 14.) but let his rods bring us home fully to himself, that we may return to him with all our hearts, and then we shall be happy.

4 Obl. Such a turn truly, must turn to God. This is implied here in that the Lord complains, Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Many turn from sin to sin, they turn from Drunkenmess to Covetousness, from Idolatry to Libertinism, &c. This is a changing of one sin for another, but true conversion is a turning from all sin to God, it is a turning from sin which is the greatest evil, unto God who is the chiefest good, Derr. 4. 30. Jer. 3. 1. 21. Lam. 3. 40. Hos. 14. 1. God 2. 12.

5 Obl. Hardened Sinners are incorrigible and incurable. When men have got a custom of sinning, and have long rejected the Word of God, then it is not all that Mount Sion, or Mount Zion can afford, nor all the dreadful Curties of the K

63
Israels obstinacy.

one, nor all the gracious Promises of the other, that can work upon them; as we see in Cain, Pharaoh, Saul, and others; let the Lord send his arrows upon them, yet they return not unto him that smites them, Isa. 9. 13. but the more they are smitten, the more they are, Isa. 1. 5. like the Smiths, the more it is stricken the harder it is; let God smite them, yet they refuse to receive correction, (Jer. 2. 30.) The Bellows are burnt (the Prophets lungs are consumed) and the Founder melts in vain, for the wicked are not turned from their wickedness, therefore reprobate Silver shall men call them (Jer. 6. 29, 30.) because their scum still abides in them, Ezek. 24. 6. 12. 13. How impregnable are the consciences of wicked men, who are no more moved with the threatenings of Gods Ministers than the people which live under the fall of Niles are at the sound thereof; their continual familiarity with that noyle, either quite deads them, or else makes them dis-regard it. They are as senseless of what is spoken as the Pillars which they lean to, or the Seats which they sit upon; so that many men come short of the very faith of Devils; for they believe there is a God, and that all which he hath spoken in his Word is true; they believe the Power, Justice, and Wrath of God so far as to tremble at it, and herein they goe beyond most wicked men, who never goe so farre as to quake and tremble at Gods threatenings, yea the Devil taught them a lesson which he cannot learn himself, viz. to mock at Gods threatenings, saying in their hearts they shall never come upon us. The Devil quakes and fears, whilst these are senseless and incorrigible. How many are corrected, but not amended; beaten, but not bettered; this doubles mens sins and makes them out of measure sinful, when heither the Word nor the Sword, neither Mercies nor Menaces, neither Promises nor Threatenings can work upon men; when sin is grown too strong for that means which God hath ordained to suppress it, they are nigh to utter destruction. This plainly appears by this people of Israel, after their defection and Apostacy from the Worship of God, they never Prospered but had one Judgment after another till they were quite destroyed. We are apt to wonder at Israels induration, and yet this is Englands Sin. God hath done as much to reclaim us as ever he did for Israel, and yet we have not returned to him.

The
Israels Obstinate.

1. The Lord hath punished our neighbour Nations to make us fear, we have seen what he hath done to Germany, Ireland, Savoy, &c. he expected that their desolation should have been our Instruction (Zeph. 3. 6, 7.) but yet we have not returned to the Lord.

2. He hath sent amongst us many Elias and Eliahs, to wooe us, and to warn us, and yet we have not returned to the Lord.

3. He hath drawn us with the cords of love, and given us Mercy upon Mercy, Deliverance upon Deliverance, Victory upon Victory, and yet yee have not returned to me faith the Lord.

4. We have had Sword, Plague, and Famine amongst us, and yet yee have not returned unto me faith the Lord.

5. And now the Lord seems to threaten greater Judgments, and to deal more severely with us for our obstinacy, and impenitency, and yet we are as stupid and stubborn as ever, and never once think of returning to him that sitteth us.

O that the Lord would awaken every soul of us out of this deep and deadly sleep! oh that every one would now go into his Closet, and there seriously ask his soul, What have I done? Against what light and love, against what wooings and warnings, against what Mercies and Judgements have I rebelled! None so beloved of his God as I, and none that hath abused his love as I have done. Oh that we could now take shame to our selves for our stubborn standing out so long against so good and gracious a God! oh that we could judge our selves for our rebellion, and loathe our selves for our great provocations, then would the Lord repent of the evil he intended against us, and we might hope to see better days than yet we have seen.

6 Obs. Hipocrical turning is no turning in Gods esteem.
This People did sometimes howl in their misery, and fast and pray (Hos. 7. 14.) but it was but counterfeit, and therefore the Lord chargeth them still with this, Yet have yee not returned to me, faith the Lord. False things in Scripture are counted as no things. A wicked man is accounted as no man, Jer. 5. 1. the streets of Jerusalem were full of men, but because they were not good men, God calls them no men. Thus the wicked
Israels Obstinate. 

Verse 7, 8.

And I also have withheld the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not, withered.

So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

The Prophet descends to the enumeration of new judgments, two of which were the Causes of the Famine. The first was Drought, and want of Rain, ver. 7, 8. The second was Blasting, Mildew, and the Palmer-worm, ver. 9.

This People were like Clouds without water, and yielded no obedience to God, but followed Idols; and now his clouds have no water for them. When God is against us all are against us; so that here we have a second Scourge, whereewith the Lord chastised this people that he might bring them home to himself; viz. Drought and Barrenness; he had before punished them with Famine, and want of Bread, now he punisheth them with Thirst, and want of Water. Thus the Lord tried all conclusions to better them, but in vain, as will appear by the sequel.

In this Verse we have 1. The efficient cause of this Judgement, viz. the Lord, I have withheld the rain from you, viz. the latter rain, which that hot Country had most need of, I have forbidden it to fall upon you, saith God.

2. Here is the continuance of the Judgement, it was not for a week or two, but for three months, even till the fruits of the earth withered and were destroyed, and this the Lord did, the more deeply to affect them with their sins. One month's want of rain, in that hot Country especially, should have starved them, two months should have astonished them, but three
three months should have fully awakened them, yet such was their gross senility, and stupidity, that they laid it not to heart. And therefore the Lord the better to set forth his patience, and this people's impenitency, sets forth his dealings particularly with them, and tells us how he brought the Famine, the Drought, the Palmer-worm, and the Pestilence, etc. upon them. He came not suddenly upon them, but gave them space to repent, and time to consider their ways, and the tokens of his displeasure against them. But such was their obstinacy and malice, that nothing could work upon them, their disease was too strong for the Physick, and their Maladies for God's remedies, his labour was lost upon them.

3 Here is the juncture of time when this rain was withheld from them, viz. three months before Harvest, which was about March, for about the latter end of May in that hot Country was their Harvest; this was called the latter rain, and was very needful to fit, fill, and ripen the Corn for Harvest. For the better understanding of this, we must know that the Land of Canaan was not like the Land of Egypt, for in Egypt they seldom or never had any rain (Zeck. 14. 18.) for the River Nile did once a year overflow the greatest part of their Country, and so did mellow and soften the earth for all the year after. But Canaan was a mountainous place, and could not be so watered, and therefore the Lord took more special care of it, and watered it with rain from Heaven; (Deut. 11. 10, 11.) In this Land there were two more especial seasons for rain, viz. the former rain about September, when the Seed was sown, that it might take the better rooting; and the latter rain in the Spring time, when the Corn was grown up and earing, to fit it for the Harvest; and this was called the latter rain, which is said to fall in the first month, that is, in March, which with them was the beginning of the year, Joel 2. 23. Hence are those frequent expressions in Scripture of the former and the latter rain, Deut. 11. 14. Jer. 5. 24. Hos. 6. 3. Zeck 10. 2. Fam. 5. 7. for in Harvest it seldom or never rained in those hot Countries; and therefore when Samuel by Prayer had obtained rain in Harvest, they looked upon it as a prodigious thing. 1 Sam. 12. 16, 17, 18. 19. Now the want of either of these rains was sad, but specially the latter, when a man shall see his Corn sown, growen,
up, and then when he expecteth a Harvest after all his pains, for want of rain to have it wither and dye before his eyes, this must needs be grievous to him.

4. Here is the accurateness of God's Judgments, he distinguisheth between City and City, Field and Field, I cast it to rain upon one City, and not upon another. As he commanded the Sun to shine on Goshen, and not on Egypt, so he commands the rain to fall on some, and not on others. These things came not by chance, but by providence; it is I (saith the Lord) that commanded it to rain upon one parcel of ground, and not upon another.

5. Here is the effect of this Judgement, it makes them run from City to City for water (ver. 8.) but in vain, for they could not get enough to satisfie their necessities. They were sensible of bodily wants, but insensible of Spiritual wants, and therefore.

6. The Lord concludes with the usual Epitome, Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Though they were thus hardly afflicted, yet were they not humbled, but remained incurable under all corrections.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Want of reasonable rain is a punishment for sin. When God is angry with a People, then hee with-holds the former and the latter rain from them. God hath rain enough in store, but it is our sins which keep it from falling upon us; his hand is not shortened that it cannot save, but it is our iniquity that turns away good things from us; these shut the Heavens, and make them hard as Iron, so that they cannot hear the earth, when (in its kind) it gapes and cries for rain, Deut. 28. 23, 24. Hag. 1. 9, 10. It is obedience that brings rain. These Cities that were rained upon in the text, some conceive to have been godly Cities which hated Idolatry, and worshipped the true God, though the text will not bear such a gloss, for God makes his Rain, which is but a common Blessing, to fall in the Wilderness (Job 38. 26, 27.) and upon the unjust as well as upon the just; yet it is most certain that Fiery hath the promise even of Temporal blessings, and such as are faithful with God in Spirituals, shall have
Israelis Obstinate.

have Temporalis given in to the bargain, Levit. 26. 3, 4. Hof. 2. 21, 22. Hag. 2. 18, 19. Zech. 8. 12. Math. 6. 33. beware then of Disobedience, Apostasy, and abusing the Creature to intemperance, or the service of Idols, which provoke the Lord to strip us of our mercies, Jerem. 14. 4, 5, 6. wee finde the people mourning for want of rain, but ver. 7, 8. you may see the procuring cause of that Judgement, for our backslidings are many, and we have sinned against thee, and have loved to wander after Idols, and this was Israel's Sin here, which more especially brought this Judgement on them.

3 Obs. Rain falls by appointment and not by accident; by providence, and not by chance. It is not the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, or any other natural cause, much less any Idols that can procure rain; but it is the Lords Predestinate, (Job 37. 11, 12, 13.) hence they are called His Clouds, (Job. 26. 8.) 1. In respect of Efficiency, he causeth the Sun to draw up mists, vapours, and then turn them into rain-water, preparing the Clouds to hold it. Hence God is called the Father of the rain, Job 38. 28, 36. 27. 26. 37. 6. 2. They are his Clouds in respect of Subserviency, they are no sooner produced but they are presently acting in their sphere, and region for their Lord and Master, one while raining on this Country, and anon on that; These are Gods Waterpots with which hee waters the World, the Bottles of Heaven, (Job 38. 37.) out of which God sends rain to refresh the earth and make it fruitful; he crowns the year with his goodness, when he makes his Clouds to drop down fames on us, Psa. 65. 12. The earth is as it were Gods Garden, the Sea, his Cistern, and the Clouds his Bottles to refresh the earth, and mollifie it, and make it fit for our service. This is a great mercy, let not the commonness of it take away the sense of it; but let us fear to offend him who gives us rain; God takes it ill when we slight his Providence in this particular, Jerem. 5. 24. neither say they, let us fear the Lord, who giveth the former and the latter rain, q. d. what a strange thing is this, that the sweet showers of rain have not softened.
Israels Obstancy.

Amos 4.

your hard hearts, and made you fear to offend him; we
should fear him who hath not only Fire, but Seas of wa-
ter to pour on such as displease him. Give not thou Gods
glory to another; many ascribe rain, as the Philistins did their
destruction, to chance; (1 Sam. 6. 9.) so say many, this wind
hath brought us rain, or this Moon, or this Planes, or this
Idol-god; the Prophet confutes all these in the text, It is I
that caused it to rain, saith the Lord. Hence the rain is called
which is given sometimes in mercy, Psal. 68. 9. Acts 14. 17.
28. 3. Ezek. 38. 12. no Men nor Creatures, no Idol-gods,
no not the Heavens themselves can give a shower of rain
without a word of command from God (Jer. 14. 22.) and
therefore the Lord commands us in the want of rain to ask it
of him, Zech 10. 1. so did Elijah, Jam. 5. 18. and hee
promiseth to hear our Prayers in this particular, 1 King. 8.
35. 36. 2 Chron. 7. 13. 14.

Away then with those vain Prognosticators, that take upon
them to fore-tell rain, and snow, and the times and seasons
which God hath concealed from the sons of men. Rain is a
future contingent thing; and therefore none can positively
say it shall rain on such a day, but not on such a day; be-
sides, the text tells us, that it may rain on one City, and yet
not rain at the same time on another. The folly of such per-
fons is sufficiently known to every observant eye, Nulla dies
fine errato, let a man write fair weather when they write foul,
and he may hit as true as they.

Especially take heed of Judicial Astrology, when men
take upon them to calculate mens Nativities, to fore-tell
Warres, Plagues, Famines, and changes in States and King-
domes, and all this by the Stars; this is a Sathanical cheat, it
is great folly and madness; if you will believe St. August.

They bring people into miserable slaverie, who take upon them to fore-tell
by the Starres, the manners of men, together with the acts and events of
things. This judiciary Astrology is the
very Key that openeth the door to Witch-craft and Idolatry.
Hence we find South-fayers, Astrologers, and Idolators, many
times
Vers. 7. **Israels Obstinciacy.**

times yoked together, as Dan. 2. 2. 11. Amos 5. 16. The Devil delights to have men study this Art.

1. Because it robs God of his glory, and ascribes the fore-telling of things contingent to the Stars, which is proper only unto God, Isa. 41. 23.

2. It is injurious to men, and keeps them in perpetual fear and slavery, telling them, that if they be born under such or such a Planet, then they must be burnt, drowned, or hanged, &c. When people believe not God's Word, then hee gives them up to these delusions, Isa. 66. 4. have nothing therefore to doe with those Pandors of the Devil, and Brokers for Hell; buy not their Lying, Jugling, ambiguous Books, but burn them, Acts 19. 19. If such Books as derogate from great men must be burnt, how much more such as draw mens hearts from trusting in the living God? The Astrologer (saith the learned Bischius) sins against God, against men, and against himself: because this Art is full of Pestilent curiosity, of tormenting fear, and deadly slavery. The learned and laborious Sir Hen. Savil in Orat. sec. ram Regina. Elizab. 1593. Inter subtiles ignora; eiam malis Roma pulsa. Ars, quod in arti turpissimum saturos habuerit, nullis texta principii, nulla subjux demonstratione, nullis merassem, uti rudibus effecerudiores.Luther


Vers. 8.

So two or three Cities wandred unto one City to drink water; but they were not satisfied; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

Ain in the Land of Canaan where Israel dwelt, it being a very hot Eastern Country, was very necessary, not only but...
for the fruits of the earth, but also for the quenching of thirst both of Man and Beast, especially if it be true which some learned men affirm, viz. That there were but few Springs here, and no considerable rivers but only Jordan; this made them glad to keep Rain-water in Cisterns for all uses, being most afflicted with Thirst and Drought if it rained not.

This made them run from one City to another to seek water; for as hunger, so thirst breaks throw all difficulties. Those Cities, that had no water, did run to those Cities that had either Spring-Water, or Rain-water, but they were not sufficed, faith the text, so great was the Drought, and so many that wanted, that they could not get water enough to relieve their necessities, no not in those places where they had heard that it had rained. This shews the great straights that they were in, no digging nor delving for Water at home could help them, no new nor old Springs could supply them, but they were forced to leave their houses, and to goe from City to City to seek water, and yet they could not be satisfied; for the Wells, or Water which might supply one City, yet could not supply so many. This one would think shoul have awakened them, and brought them to Repentance, no doubt but it did affright them, and made them sad, but yet they were not bettered by their sadness, for they went on still in their sins and superstitions dangerously, and desperately, without any returning, and therefore the Lord upbraids them once more with a yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Sin, and specially the sin of Idolatry brings a People into great straights. The Earth here languisheth, the Corn withereth, and men run up and down for water to quench their thirst, and yet cannot get it, and why is all this? why for the sin and Apostasy of this people, 1 King. 8. 35. & c. 17: 1.

2 Obs. God hath variety of Judgments in Store, whereunto to punish a rebellious people. If want of Bread will not mend them, he will try what want of Water will doe, and if neither of these will work, yet he hath the Pestilence and Sword
Ver. 8. Israels Obstinacy.

to follow. Great Judgements are like great men, they seldom goe alone, they have many attendants. Hence when the Lord had threatened many sore Judgements against his People, hee tells them that if they will not be reformed by these things, he will yet plague them seven times more, according to their sins, yea and seven to that, and seven to that (Levi. 26. 18. 21. V, Babington on Exod. 11. 1, p. 221. folio, 24. 28.) seven times, that is, many times, and more extremly than formerly; if one Judgement will not work upon Pharaoh he hath nine more that shall, and if lesser will not stir and mend him, he hath greater that shall end him, Exod. 10. 6 & 12. God hath not only written Judgements, but also many un written ones to send upon a rebellious people, Deut. 28. 61.

3 Obs. True repentance is a very difficult thing. It is not so easily wrought as many imagine. This people here had Line upon Line, Sermon upon Sermon, Prophet upon Prophet, and Plague upon Plague, and yet you see the charge lies against them still, that they had not yet returned to the Lord. The change of nature is no easie thing, it is an act of Omnipotency; now true repentance is no less than the changing of the nature, it is not only a change of the words, or of the works, but of the heart and inward man; it is the changing of a Lion into a Lamb, of a Vvolf into a Sheep, of Fire into VWater, and of Darkness into Light, Isa. 11. 8. Ephes. 5. 8. See Mr. Caff.

None can change Nature, but the God of Nature, no rods or his Morning afflictions of themselves can doe it; they rather stupidie men, Lecture, quarto or else make them fret, and so drive them further from God, till he by his grace doe sanctifie them, and set them home upon our hearts, they will never better us; how many are corrected, but are never caught; but when the Lord * teacheth Mortification, Sanctification, Humiliation, and obedience by our sufferings, then happy are we, Psal. 94. 12.

* See an excellent little Tract of Mr. Caff, on Psal. 94. 12. and Mr. Hater's Can dial for doubting afflicted, and Trapp's Love Tokens.
Verse 9.
I have smitten you with Blasting and Mildew, when your Gardens, and your Vineyards, and your Fig-trees, and your Olive-trees increased; the Palmer-worm devoured them, yet have ye not returned unto me; saith the Lord.

We are now come to the third Scourge which God used for the amendment of this People, and that is the smiting of their fruit which grew in their Fields, Gardens, and Vine-yards. They had abused them to Luxury and Idolatry, and now they lost them. God had given them Corn to supply their necessity, and Vines, and Figs, and Olives for delight; but their sins deprived them both of the one and the other. In the words we have,

1. The Person smiting, and that is the Lord; it is I, your Creator, Deliverer, that hath blest you so long, that now doth blast you. It is I that have smitten you.

2. Here is the Rod with which he smites them, consisting of three Lashes.

1. Blasting.
2. Mildew.
3. The Palmer-worm.

Blasting and Mildew, that may have relation to the Corn, and be one cause of the Famine before mentioned, Ver. 6. and the Palmer-worm may have relation to the fruit. God used variety of Judgements that they might the better see his hand in all, and not attribute things to Fate, or Fortune, to Stars, or second causes.

Blasting is a Curse threatened against a disobedient People; (Deut. 28. 21.) it usually comes from an East-wind, which is a scorching drying Wind, withering the Corn, and making it look yellow, Gen. 41. 6.

Mildew is the spoiling of the Corn by excessive moisture.
Ver. 9. Israels Obstinate.

making it look pale; so that it never comes to maturity, for the natural greenness is gone before it bee ripe, and the colour is faded.

The Palmer-worm is a noysome, devouring Worm, it is one of Gods great Armies which he sends against a rebellious People, to destroy their Vine-yards and Fig-trees, that is, the fruities of their Vines, Fig-trees, and Olives, by a Meronimy of the subject. These are worse than Locusts, for that feeds only on the tops of the ears of Corn, as he flies; but the Palmer-worm sticks close to the Fruites and Flowers they light on, and will not off till they have consumed them. It makes clean work, leaving nothing behind it. These Israelsites that neglected their Souls, yet used great care and pains about their Vines, Olives, Gardens, and Orchards, but all your cost and care shall the Lord shall be lost, and become a prey to the Palmer-worm.

3 Here is the time when the Lord smote them, and that was in the very flower and prime, when Gardens, and Vineyards, &c. were increased, and loaded with fruit, when they were multiplying, then he blasted them; or the multitude of your Gardens and Vineyards did the Palmer-worm devour, so the Margin of our Bible.

4 Here are the Persons whose fruities were smitten, viz. the rebellious Israelsites, included in the Pronoun Possessive, yours, yours, yours; your Gardens, your Vine-yards, your Fig-trees, your Olive-trees, it is for your sins, and your fakes that these are smitten.

5 Here is the unsuccessfulness of these rods upon them, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. One Judgement should have wrought upon them, or a second at least, but when a third and fourth shall come, and yet a people shall not be wrought upon, it argues the height of obstinacy and malice, and that such Persons are exceedingly blinded, and beforred by the Devil to their own destruction; it is a God-provoking Sin, thus still to sin against the remedy of their recovery; and therefore the Lord still lays his finger on this sore, and oft complains of it, as here, so elsewhere. [a. 9.13]
OBSERVATIONS.

1. God wants not Hosts and Armies of Creatures to subdue a stubborn and rebellious people. He hath the Host of Heaven, and the Hosts of the Earth at his beck, and if he but his, or stamp, or give the least intimation to them, they are presently up in armies against us, Isa. 5. 26. & 7. 18. Frost and Snow, Hayl and Tempests, are all his servants, ready prent to doe his will (Exod. 9. 23. Psal. 147. 16, 17, 18. Hag. 2. 17) with these hee can destroy our Fruites in the bud; or in the blade, or when they are come to maturity, yea when they are in the Barn he can send Lightning and consume them. If hee be angry with us, he can call for an Army of Insects, and contemptible Animals, and by these he can destroy us. When Pharaoh rebelled against him, the Lord sent an Army of Frogs, Flies, and Lice against him, and by these hee vexed him (Exod. 8. 1. 16, 21.) the Lord hath Hosts of Men and Angels according, but hee chuffeth rather to confound his enemies by these contemptible Creatures, that he may exalt his own power, and abase proud man; hee hath the Canker-worm, the Palmer-worm, the Locust, and the Caterpillar; these are called his great army, which he sends against a disobedient people, Joel 2. 18. 25.

Obj. We are not troubled with an Army of Locusts, Palmerworns, &c., these were proper to these Eastern Countries?

Ans. It is true, literally, our cold Southern Climate is not subject to the annoyance of these; yet if the Lord be angry with us, he can send evne these upon us for South and East are alike to him. Mystically and metaphorically, hee hath troubled us with an Army of Locusts, Caterpillars, Canker-worms, &c., yea in kind, he sent a strange Grub which devoured only the Barley (which is most abused by Drunkenness) in many parts of the Land, in the yeer one thousand six hundred forty-nine, yea and he can and will. &c., England, etc.
Ver. 9. Israels Obstinity.

to sin after the rate, that it hath done of late years) bring in an Army of Foreigners, fierce and savage men, whose Language we understand not, who shall shew no mercy to the Old, nor pity to the Young; what is said of the Natural, is most true of these Metaphorical Palmer-worms, they are the last and the worst of evils; they sweep all away before them, and make clean work where they goe, Joel 2. 3. and this is that Judgement which the Lord seems at this day to bee preparing for England, and yet we are not affected with it. The Churches enemies are strongly united, and have made a kind of Universal peace amongst themselves, Gebal and Ammon, and Amalek, the Moabites, the Ishmaelites, the Hagarens, &c. France, Spain, Italy, Curland, Holland, Denmark, &c. are all confederate and unified; and the Churches of Christ who should joyn to their Dove-like simplicity, Serpentine widsome, when in this juncture of time they should be most strongly united, they are most sadly divided, both within and without, the King of Denmark, with the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, joyn with Papists against the Protestant interest, and so doth the Hollander. What sad Massacres have been in Savoy and Poland is well known to the world; and Plots are preparing for the destruction of the Protestants both in France and Switzerland; and England that was alwais wont to preserver the Protestant interest, and affit it in all Nations, yet is so sadly divided, and crumbled into so many Parties, and Fractions, into so many Divisions, and Subdivisions, that without a Miracle of Mercy, we are like to bee made a prey to the Common adversary, who labours with all his might to divide us, that so he may destroy us. Let us then serve the Lord with one shoulder, and with one content; let us not provoke this great God, who hath so many Armies in store ready to execute his Judgements on us, Jer. 15. 3. Hee is the best friend, and the saddest foe; if he be for us, all is for us, but if he be against us, all creatures are against us. We should therefore make peace with this great Lord-General of all Armies, and then they will all be at peace with us; when our ways please the Lord, he will make even our enemies to be at peace with us, Prov. 16. 7. the men of Tyre and Sidon desired to be at peace with Herod, because their Land was nourished by the Kings Land, Acts 12. 20. all we have, we
Israels Obstinate.

have it from God, we are Tenants at will to him, and therefore should be careful to preserve his favour. Many when Blasting and Mildews are abroad, go not to God, but to a Bush for aid; They will May their Corn, and pick up a Bush, thinking by this means to keep it from Blasting; a Heathenish custom, to be abhorred of all such as acknowledge the Providence of God. Such Atheistical practices may justly provoke the Lord to blast thy Corn indeed. Little better is that of the Popish Processions about the Fields, with Flags, and Banners, and Bables. The best and only remedy in this case, is humble penitential Prayer, 1 King. 8. 37, 38, 39. to such the Promise runs, If Blasting, Mildew, Locust, or Caterpillars be in the Land, if Gods people shall pray, and know every man the plague of his own heart, that is, his Sin, which is the cause of all other Plagues, then will the Lord hear in heaven, and forgive, and heal the Land, 2 Chron. 6. 18, 29, 30. & 2. 7. 13, 14.

2 Obs. Lads of Fruit is a punishment for sin, and a sign of Gods displeasure against a people. Fruit, Corn, Cattel, Trees, all fare the worse for sinful man. God turns a fruitful Land into a Wilderness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, Psal. 107. 34. and therefore when the Lord is angry with a People, we read how he brake their trees with hayl, and destroyed their Vines and Fig-trees, Exod. 9. 25. & 10. 5. Deut. 28. 16, 17, 18. 39, 40. Psal. 78. 48. & 105. 32. we should therefore over-look second causes, and see Gods hand affliction in these losses. Many impure that to Winds, Frosts, Blasts, &c. which are indeed the finger of God, pointing to our abuse of the Creatures, which provokes him to take them from us. It will be our wisdome therefore when ever the Lord gives us plenty, to take notice of Gods hand, and praise him; and when we want them, to be humbled before him, and to beg the restoring of them at his hand, who gives to all that ask in faith, liberally, and upbraideth no man.

See more in M. Anstine his Treatise of Fruit-trees, p. 16, 17. the best on that subject for Natural and Theolog. Observations that I have seen.
Verse 10.

I have sent among you the Pestilence after the manner of Egypt, your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your Camps to come up into your nostrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

IN this Verse we have a Fourth and Fifth Rod, where-with the Lord chastised this stubborn people, viz. the Pestilence, and the Sword. Before they were smitten with the Famine, which rich men many times feel not; now follows the Plague and Sword, as usual Concomitants on the former; hence all these three are so oft joyned together in Scripture. These meet with the rich, as well as the poor; yea the Sword aymns principally at rich men; Souldiers do not use to enquire, where dwells the poor man, but where dwells the Villager, the rich Oppressor, &c. the poor scape best many times in such combultions, Jer. 39. 20.

Q. What Pestilence this was, and when it fell upon Israel?

A. 1. It is conceived that the Pestilence of Egypt here meant, was not any one particular Plague, but a complication of Plagues; and specially the Fifth and Tenth Plague of Egypt, which brought Murain on the Cattle, and Mortality on men. First, there was so great and so grievous a destruction of Cattle, that all the Horses, Asses, Camels, and all the Cattle of Egypt dyed (Exod. 9. 6, 9.) 2 All their first-born dyed, there was not a house in which there was not one dead, Exod. 12. 29. Psal. 78. 50, 51. so it was amongst this people, there was a sore slaughter both of men and horses. The Prophet seems to allude to the dayes of King Je-hoshaphat, King of Israel; when the King of Syria made so great a slaughter amongst them, that of the whole Army of Israel on Hos. 13. 16. there were left but fifty Horse-men, ten Chariots, and ten thousand Foot, all the rest were destroyed, and made like the dust by threshing (2 Kings. 13. 7.) Hereupon the Air was corrupted, and the loathsome stench of so many dead Bodies, helpt to bring the Pestilence amongst them.
In this Verse wee have these parts considerable.

1. The Judgements inflicted, which are two.

1. The Pestilence.
2. The Sword.

2. Here is the nature of this Pestilence, it is not an ordinary one, but it is a most noysome, grievous, deadly Pestilence; such a one as God inflicted upon his profess'd enemies, the Egyptians, when Man and Beast suddenly dyed. Jeroboam when he was in Egypt learnt the Worship of the golden calves, this he taught to Israel; and having made them like the Egyptians in Idolatry and Sin, the Lord now makes them alike in Judgement, I have sent among you the Pestilence, after the manner of Egypt. The words in the fountain are, I have smitten you with Pestilence in the way of Egypt, it is an Hebrewism used in other places, as Isa. 10. 24, 26, Ezek. 20. 30, and is as much as after the manner of Egypt as our Translation renders it well; q. d. As I sent sore Plagues upon the Egyptians, in like severity wilt I deal with you, who have walked in their obstinacy and Idolatry.

3. Here is the special Object, or the Persons slain by the Sword, and these are their young and strong men. Your young men have I slain with the sword. Young men are far more fit for service than old men, by reason of their strength, spirit, boldness, and activity; Old men are for counsel, and young men for action. Young men in the height of their blood sin, with more heat and violence, and so their sins are more displeasing unto God; and therefore he oft cuts them off in the height of their sin.

4. Here are two Adjuncts and Concomitants which usually attend upon Warre; the first is the loss of Horses, I have taken away your horses, and carried them into captivity, with your haughty young men who trusted in them. These are the Strength of the battall; but the Riders being taken, the Horses must needs be taken with them.

2. Loathsome stench, and noysome smells, I have made the stench of your Camps to come up into your nostrils, partly by such as dyed of the Plague, and partly by the multitude of men and horses that were slain, and lay unburied, and so infected the air.

5. Here
Ved. 10. Israel's Obduracy.

3 Here is the old complaint continued till, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Though ye have been thus sadly smitten with all my great Rods, yet all my labour is but lost upon you, for you still concern the remedy of your recovery, and have not yet returned unto me saith the Lord.

Observations.

1. When lesser Rods will not mend a people, God usually comes with greater. Blasting, Mildew, Palmer-worms did not work upon this People, and now comes Pestilence and Sword, Gods great Rods to destroy them utterly.

2. Obs. Judgements, especially great ones, seldom go alone, Sword, Plague, Famine, often go together. As men multiply Sins, so God multiplies Plagues; and as they have variety of Sins, so he hath variety of punishments, as I have shewed before on Ver. 8. Obs. 3.

3. Obs. Parity of Sin, brings parity of Judgement. The Egyptians were obstinate Idolaters, no Plagues could work upon them, therefore God destroyed them. And this was Israel's case, they were obstinate Idolaters like the Egyptians, and now God follows them with Plague upon Plague as hee did them, I have sent upon you Pestilence after the manner of Egypt. They were incurable and incorrigible like the Egyptians, and now God smites them with Egyptian Plagues, according to that threatening, Deut. 28, 61. I will cause the diseases of Egypt to cleave unto thee. Sin hardens Gods heart against his people, and makes him deal with them, as he used to doe with his enemies. It turns him who is our best friend, into the saddest foe. That power which he used in destroying his peoples enemies, if his people forfake him, and rebel against him, hee will exert that power in destroying them. Thus the Lord used here the same weapons of his wrath against his people, as before hee used in destroying the Egyptians.

And may not England now fear, lest that power, which the Lord hath shewed in the saving of us from the hands of unreasonable men, should now bee turned against us for our Blasphemies, and Apostasies; and as we have partaken with German's sins, and Poland's sins, and Ireland's sins; so we should
Israels Obstination.

should be made like them for plagues. Wee have given the Lord just cause by our provocations to turn his hand against us, and to consume us after he hath done us good. (Joel. 24. 20.) And as hee hath made us the head, so now hee might make us the tail; and as he hath made us the terror of the Nations, so now he may justly make them a terror to us for our ungrateful, disingenuous walking towards him.

4 Obs. The Pestilence comes more immediately from God; it is his Messenger, it is commanded and commissioned by God, to goe to such and such Families, Towns, and Persons, that so if any one ask, How came the Pestilence here, why I sent it said God; it is a servant of his sending, 2 Sam. 24. 15. and an Arrow of his shooting, Psal. 91. 5. with this hee wounds, kills, and consumes his enemies, Ezek. 5. 16, 17. The Plague is not Causal; but Providential, there is a Divine hand of Immediate Providence in this Judgement; as there is no evil of affliction in the City, so much less this signal evil, but it comes from God, Amos 3. 6. It is he that decrees it, he increaseth it, and he removes it, how and when he pleaseth. Hence it is called his Sword. 1 Chron. 21. ut: it is not the sword of a weak man, but of an Almighty God, which none can resist or fly from; it is his Hand out of which none can deliver us, 2 Sam. 24. 14. Moses tells Pharaoh, that if he refuse to let Israel goe, behold the hand of the Lord, i.e. the Plague shall light on thy Cattle, Exod. 9. 3. this hand of his will finde out all his enemies, Psal. 21. 8. this is a sign of Gods great Wrath. God brings not out this great Rod, till men have greatly provoked him by their great sins, Numb. 11. 33. & 16. 46. 47. Levit. 26. 25. Dew. 32. 22. 23.

As 1. Idolatry. This is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying Sin, and brings the Plague upon a Land, Psal. 106. 29. Ezek. 5. 11, 12. Rev. 16. 2, 11.

2 Contempt of Gods Word and wayes, Dew. 28. 21.
Jer. 29. 18, 19.

3 Fornication and uncleanness. For this Sin God cut off twenty four thousand of the Israelites with the Pestilence, Numb. 25. 9. men will not judge and punish such, but God will, Heb. 13. 4.

4 Murmuring and unbelief; when men repine at Gods dispensations, and will teach him how to rule the World,
this brings the Plague, Numb. 14. 2. 3. 11. 12. 36. 37. 
&. 16. 46.

5 Persecuting Gods Ministers and people, Pharaoh, that 
persecuted Israel, had variety of Plagues laid on him. God 
shoos this Arrow especially at such, Psal. 7. 13. Jer. 29. 18. 
&. 38. 2. The Heathen Emperours which persecuted the 
Christians, were punished with great Plagues.

6 Prophanation of holy things. This brought the Pestilence.
(as it is conceived.) upon the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 11. 30. he 
will be sanctified of all that draw nigh unto him; in mercy, if 
they come prepared: in judgment, if they come irreverently.

We should therefore be careful by unfeigned Repentance 
and Humiliation to remove Sin which is the cause, and then 
the Plague which is but the effect will soon cease: but without 
this, all Physick, flying, washings, burning, &c. are but 
vain. Till God be appeased, the Plague will never be 
appealed; till we humble our selves before him, he will not heal 
us, 2 Chron. 7. 13, 14. till by faith we fly unto him, he will 
not hide us from the Pestilence, Psal. 91. 1. to 8.

8 This speaks Terror to the wicked and impenitent: they 
have not to doe with men in his Judgement, but with God, 
who is a consuming fire; and from whom there is no flying. 
Amos 9. 1. to 5. when men oppose men, they may make some 
resistance; but when Omnipotency comes against Impotency, and 
the Creator against the Creature, whose heart can be strong, 
or whose bands endure? Exek. 22. 14. The Plague, when it 
seizeth upon a man in wrath, it is a Terrible Judgement, and 
that in many respects.

14 In respect of pain, it torments men with terrible burning, 
in so much that many run mad, and make away themselves; 
yea and the stronger men are, usually the sooner they are cut 
off by the Pestilence. It is a noysome, loathsome Disease, 
hence called, The noysome Pestilence, Psal. 94. 3. and if any 
doe recover, yea are they feldome well; somelose their Hear- 
ing, some their Sight, some their Memory, most carry the 
prints of it with them to their Graves. It is a woeful Judg- 
ment, and brings with it woful fears, woeful sorrows, wo- 
ful desolation; and woeful terrors, even the terrors of 
death.
Israels Obstinity.  

2. It is a Judgement that seldom goes alone, but is attended with famine, poverty, depopulation, ruine, Jer. 22. 6, 9. & 18. 8. Ezek. 14. 11.

3. It deprives us of many choise Blessings, which in other distresses men doe enjoy.

4. It deprives us of the liberty of Gods House and Ordinances. A sad affliction, much lamented by David, Psalm 42. & 84.

5. It deprives us of our Callings, so that we cannot serve God in them, which is one great end why a good man desires to live.

6. Of the comfort of Friends, which in other Diseases they enjoy. Two are better than one, and woe to him that is alone.

7. The suddenness of it adds much to its terror; it slayes thousands suddenly; we read of seventy thousand slaine in three days, 1 Sam. 24. 15. It is an Arrow that flies speedily, Psal. 91. 5. In Sancharibes host in one night there dyed of the Plague (as some conceive) one hundred fourscore and five thousand men, 2 King. 19. 35.

8. It may comfort the Godly, that they have not to doe with unreasonable men, whose tender mercies are cruelties; but with a gracious God, who in the midst of his Judgments remembers mercy. It is the Cup which their Father gives them, it is his Hand, his Arrow, his Messenger; he sends, he orders, he moderates, and mitigates it; He bids it goe, and it goes; stay, and it staies. 1 Sam. 24. 15. 16. It is a mercy when the Lord corrects us himself, and doth not fell us into the hand of Slaves who have no mercy. This made David chuse the Plague rather than the Sword, 2 Sam. 24. 14. God keeps his people safe in the very midst of the Pestilence, when thousands and ten thousands fall round about them, Psal. 91. 7. many a wicked man flies, and the Plague overtakes him; many a good man staies, and God preserves him.

Q. The Question then will be, Whether it be unlawful to fly in Time of Pestilence?

A. 1. Some hold it utterly unlawful, because our days are numbered, and as wee cannot prolong our days, so wee must shorten them, Jer. 7. 1. & 14. 15. This reason will not
not hold, for it is no trusting, but a tempting of God, it is rashness and presumption to run into danger because our days are numbered. A man may not go into the Fire, nor cast himself into the Water, or goe meet a Lion or a Bear, because God hath determined how long we shall live. Christ would not tempt God, by casting himself down from the Pinnacle, as the Devil would have had him, Matthew 4. 6, 7. As God hath ordained the end, so he hath ordained the means to bring us to that end; as God hath determined our days, so he hath determined that we shall fly dangers, and hurtful things which may shorten our dayes. When Saul threw a Javelin at David he fled from him, 1 Samuel 19. 10. we see men fly unto, fed eis Sword and Famine, and why not from the Pestilence when God gives us an opportunity?

Nature teacheth every Creature to preserve itself from danger, and if the Lord should reveal it to us, that we should be safe from the Plague, yet we must use the means. Noah knew he should not be drowned in the Flood, and yet he builds an Ark; Paul knew that God would save him, and his Partners in the Ship, yet they must use the means, and row to the shore, Acts 27. 34, 38, 39, 40.

2 Obi. Charity commands us to visit the Sick, and to help our Neighbours in their distress.

Ans. Charity begins at home, I may not to help my Neighbour kill my self, and my family, by rash and presumptuous running into infected places without a call. Hee that commands that I should not kill another, commands also that I should not kill my self. The Plagues of God are terrible, and not to be played withal. In the time of the Law we see how careful the Lord was of the safety of his people, Leviticus 15. 45. he commanded that the Lepers should bee separated from others; hee sets down signs how they should know it, hee must wear a different garment, and must cry, I am unclean, unclean, now if in the Leprous which was a less infectious disease, and not deadly, such care was to be used, how much more in the Pestilence.

We may visit them by others, and send our charity by such as are appointed to rend them; and though in body wee are absent from them, yet we may and must sympathize with them, and by writing, praying, directing, providing of food and...
and Physick for them, we may and must according to our places and abilities help them.

3. Obj. We must shun unbelief, but this flying argueth weakness of faith, as if we could not be safe unless we fly.
   Ans. A pious use of the means, which God hath ordained for our safety, doth not destroy but establish faith. I believe that God will preserve my life, yet I eat and drink, and must use means notwithstanding else I should not trust, but tempt God.

2. We must distinguish.
   1. There is a Flight of Diffidence, and contempt of God's Judgements, as if we would fly from his hand and presence, that it should not over-take us, and this is Atheistical.
   2. There is a Prudential, providential, religious flight, when God gives us a way to escape, and to provide for our selves and our families, and this must thankfully be embraced; for David had strong faith, and yet he was afraid of the Pestilence, as Chron. 21. ult.

4. Obj. Yet David did not fly from it.
   Ans. 1. He was a Magistrate, and so bound by his place to abide amongst his people. 2. It continued but a short time, but three days. 3. It was his fault more especially that procured it. 4. Hee could not fly out of his Kingdom, unless he would fly into his enemies hands.

2. We must therefore distinguish of Persons.
   1. Some are set by God in place of Publick trust, as Magistrates, Ministers, Over-seers of the Poor, &c. These must not fly, but must keep their places, that they may suppress disorders, and by their Government, Counsel, and Prayers, they must lye in the breach, as Moses and Aaron did, Numb. xvi. 46, 47. now when a man hath this Call, hee may keep his Station with comfort and courage; for the Lord hath promised to keep us whilst we keep our wayes, as appears in that precious ninety first Psalm, the most comfortable of all the Psalms in times of Pestilence; God can destroy the Egyptians by it, and yet preserve his people. How many Midwives, Physitians, and renderers of infected persons, some of which have laine in the same bed with infected persons, yet being called by God to the service, have been preserved from infection. Or, if a good man should dye of the Pestilence, yet being
being found in God's way, he is blessed, Rev. 14. 13. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, whether they dye of the Plague, or by the Sword, or Famine, it matters not; so they dye in the fear and favour of God.

Caution. Not that a Magistrate or Minister is bound in person to goe visit infected Persons, for then he makes himself uncapable of Publick imployments, and the Ministers Auditors will be afraid to come hear him; so that in this case the Publick good must be preferred before a private, and a greater good before a less. That good man Bullinger going to visit one infected with the Plague, brought it home to his family, so that his Wife and two Daughters dyed of it. The Church of God, and our own Families, are to be preferred before any private person; Publick persons are set over a Society, and not over one or two. Hence when David would have gone out with his Soldiers to battle, the people answer, Thou shalt not goe, for thou art worth ten thousand of us. 2 Sam. 18. 3. But private persons who are free, and have no publick eye by duty or charity to stay, they are free, and may for a time absent themselves if they please.

5 Obj. I am a godly man, and God hath promised that such shall not dye of the Plague, Psal. 91. 10.

Ans. God hath no where promised an absolute freedome to his people from the Pestilence, but only conditionally, viz. so farre as it shall be good for them; indeed he always preserves his people from the evil of it, so that it shall never be a Plague, or a Curse, but a fatherly correction to them; and so the Promise is fulfilled. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall the Plague come nigh thy dwelling, viz. as an evil or curse, Psal. 91. 10. The evil is always taken away from the godly, and the sting pulled out, and God makes it up to them in some better kind. By it he takes them away from greater evils, and makes the Pestilence like Elijah's fiery Chariot, to convey them more speedily to heaven. In respect of outward afflications, all things come alike to all. Eccles. 9. 2. the same Sythe cutts down good corn and weeds, but for a different end and purpose. We may not therefore censure them all as wicked men that are visited with the Plague, for God may try his dearest Servants in this kind. David, Job, Hezekiah, and the Corinthians are conceived to have been visited all in this kind.
kind. Bullinger had it, Beros had it three times, Jooins and his pious Wife dyed of it, and a thousand holy men and woe manned of it in Cyprians time. What is for our profit, we patiently bear, this is sent for good to good men, and all other things, so this shall turn to their everlasting good, Rom. 8. 28.


This may inform us that Warre is lawful.

1. It is that which God commanded, Deut. 20. 1 Sam. 23. 2.

2. It is commended in the Saints. Abraham fought against four Kings, and conquered them; Moses warred against the Amalcites, and prevailed against them; Joshua fought against the Canaanites, and subdued them; Gideon fought against the Midianites; Jephthah against the Ammonites; Sampson and David fought against the Philistines, and God prospered them all, and they returned the praise of these Victories unto God, who teacheth his peoples hands to warre, Psal. 144. 1. and directs them in the battle, Josh. 6. 3, 4. hee is their Captain, Josh. 5. 14. he gives them success, Psal. 144. 10. Heb. 11. 33, 34. Rev. 17. 14. so that the Anabaptists who condemn Warre as sinful, doe charge God with Sin, and so are guilty of indirect blasphemy at least.

Obj. Warre might be lawful in the Old Testament, but it is unlawful in the New Testament.

Ans. This is Gratia dictum, it is said, but is not proved, yea, the contrary appears by Christ himself, who commends the Centurions faith (Matt. 8. 20.) without any bidding him leave his Military employment, which doubtless he would have done had it been sinful; by this we see, that warring and believing may well subsist together in the same man.
Israel's Obstinate.

John Baptist teacheth the Souldiers how they should behave themselves in their stations, which he would not have done had the calling it self been unlawful, Luke 3. 13, 14. neither did Peter dissuade Cornelius from his Military kind of life, but Baptized him without any injunction of forsaking his Military station, which had it been unlawful bee would have done, Acts 10. 1, 2, 4. Besides in the New Testament, the Magistrate must not bear the sword in vain, but must be a terror to those that doe evil; and this he could not be, if he did not raise Armies sometimes against the Sons of Belial that rise against him. Yea the Anabaptists themselves in Germany, when they had once got power into their hands, they defended themselves by Armes, and made foul spoyle where they came.

Obj. God would not suffer David to build him an house, because he was a Warrior, and had shed much blood, 1 Chron. 22. 8. but Solomon a Prince of peace must doe it.

Ans. The Temple was to be a Type of the Church the proper subject of peace, and therefore Solomon a Prince of peace must build it, who was also a Type of Christ the Prince of peace, and in this respect David could not be a Type of Christ, because he had shed much blood. Not that God doth here condemn David for fighting his Battles, for he had Gods command, assistance, and approbation for what he did, but because the Temple was to be a Type and Figure of the Church, whereof Christ is head, therefore Solomon a man of Peace must build it.

Obj. Woe are commanded not to resist evil.

Ans. Such places speak against private revenge, and not against the Magistrates Power, who is appointed by God to be a terror and punisher of such as doe evil; as I have at large shewed elsewhere.

Obj. In the Primitive times the Church suffered Persecution, without any defending of themselves by any other armes than prayers and tears.

Ans. Those times and our times differ; for in those Primitive times the Magistrate that should have defended the Church, was an utter enemy to it, and they might not take the Sword out of his hand, but must patiently suffer. But wee live under a Christian Magistrate, who calls for our assistance against the enemies of the Church, which calle.
Israels Obstinacy.  Amos 4.

(when rightly circumstanciated) we are bound to obey.


2. This must deeply humble us when even the Sword lies on us, since we have not only to doe with men, but with the great God in it; it is he that raiseth Warre against us, and layeth this for Judgement on us, and is therefore called the hurstous Sword, Psa. 144. 10. the powerful Sword, Job 5. 20. the oppressive Sword, Jer. 46. 16. the devouring Sword, which destroyeth from one end of a Land unto another, Jer. 12. 12. Warre is the faddest of Judgements, as having usually all other Judgements attending on it, with confusion, Robbing, Rapes, Plundering, Firing of Townes, devastation of Countries, Imprisonment of mens Persons, doeful Out-cryes, and confused Noyses, with Garments rolled in bloud; (Hagg. 2.) when there is measuring of Cloth by the long ell, i.e. the Pike, and no Lawes can be heard for Drums. This turns a Garden of Eden into a desolate Wilderness (Joel 2. 3.;) as we see in Germany, Savoy, Poland; &c.

Let us therefore beware of provoking the Lord by our sins, to bring this direful Judgement on us. Let us judge ourselves, and prevent this Judgement, Judg. 10. 18. and put our mouths in the dust if there may be hope, Lam. 3. 26. Let us by our Prayers and Tears first conquer God, and then we shall quickly conquer all, Psa. 81. 13. 14. It is he only that raiseth our Warres, that can make them cease; it is hee that gives the Sword its commission; and till hee take away its commission, it will not cease. It is hee that maketh Warres to cease not only at home, but also abroad, even to the ends of the earth, Psa. 46. 9. It is not men that put an end to War, for if some might have their way we should never have peace; like Salamanders they love to live in the fire of warre and contention, these are Monsters, not Men; Davids Prayer shall be mine, Scatter the people that delight in warre. It is the Lord that subdues our enemies, and creates peace for his people.

Hence
Ver. 10.

Israels Obstiny.

Hence Moses in that excellent Song ascribes all to God, (Exod. 15. 1. to 14.) The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, He hath thrown the Horse and his Rider into the Sea, He is our Strength, He is our Salvation, Thou Lord hast overthrown them, Thou hast destroyed them, Thou hast delivered thy people, &c. when ever therefore we want Peace, let us goe to this God of peace, and by Prayer and patience wait on him, who can with a word of his mouth speak us into peace, and make all wares to cease amongst us.


6 Obf. Obstinate sinning provokes the Lord to cut off young men. Your young men have slaine with the sword. Their Sins are acted with more impetuous violence, and so are more displeasing unto God. As God is much delighted with the obedience of young men, when they can break through many difficulties to serve him (Jer. 2. 2.) so he is greatly displeased with the heady, haughty, outrageous courses of young men, whom no counsel will reclaim, nor warning amend. That age which is most prone to sin, is nearest to Judgement; and when God shall awake Conscience, and set the sins of thy youth in order before thee, then thy mirth will be turned into mourning, and thy joy into heaviness, Eccles. 11. 9. When young men dishonour God, and preferre the Devil his profet enemy before him, giving the wine and flower of their dayes to the Devil, and the dreggs to God; hee will give such up to spiritual Judgements, and take no pleasure in them, Isa. 9. 17. I will not joy in your young men; implying, that when young men walk in Gods way, they are Gods joy and delight, but when they are proud, prophane, idle, unclean, &c. then comes the Feaver, the Plague, the Sword, and cuts them off; such rude rebellious persons shall not live out half their dayes. When Israel fell to Idolatry, then a fire consumed their young men, Psalm 78. 63; and when they
grew obstinate and incorrigible, as in the text, then the Sword destroyes them.

Oh that Young men then would be persuaded to fly from the latts of youth, deny themselves become, and make the Lord the God of their youth, and then see will bee the God of their old age, hee will never leave them, nor forsake them.

7 Obs. Sin robs us of our Creature-comforts. Before they left their Young men, and now they lose the Horses, and the Riders too; for your Horses are become into captivity, and are taken from you. A Horse in itself is a useful creature, it Fights for us, Draws for us, and Carries us up and down; but sin robs us of them, and makes them unsuccessful and vain, Psal. 33. 17. These Israelites had trusted in their Horses, (Hos. 14. 3.) and now God makes them sensible of their folly, in trusting to creatures that cannot profit them, nor save them in a time of trouble. God had left them, and now Peace leaves them, Horses leave them, Plenty leaves them, and their Young men which were the strength of their Battle, leave them; so sad it is with people when God departs from them, Hos. 7. 13.

8 Obs. No sense stanches are a punishment for sin, Isa. 34. 3: Joel 2. 20. As we have abused all our Senses, so God may justly punish us in them all.

Blest the Lord then for the Winds, those Fans of the world, which are a means to keep the Air pure from infection, which other wise with Damps and ill scents would poison us every moment.

Verse XI.

I have overthrown some of you [or some amongst you] as God over threw Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning, yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord.

We are now come to the Sixth and last Rod which God wasted on this stubborn People in vain, and that is the subversion of their Cities. I have overthrown some
Israels Obstinacy.

of you, &c. Where we have, first, the Judgement executed, viz. the subversion of some of their Cities. Some read the words Prophetically, as if they were a Prophecy of some Judgement to come, q. d. I will raise up Salmanasar the King of Assyria, who shall besiege Samaria, and take it, and shall subdue the Kingdom of Israel. But this is clear against the text and context, for the word is in the Present Tense, and not in the Future; it is not I will, but I have overthrown your Cities; and yet yee have not returned unto me; which clearly shews that he speaks of Judgements past, and such as had been ineffectual upon them, and therefore he goes on to threaten more grievous things against them. But now, thus will I doe unto thee, &c.

2. Here is the Author of this subversion, viz. the Lord, I have overthrown some of you as God overthrew Sodom, q. d. As I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, so have I overthrown your Cities, God speaks of himself according to the Hebrew Dialect in the third Person, setting forth thereby his Honour, and his power in this signal Judgement. The like expression we have, Gen. 19. 24. The Lord rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom from the Lord; that is, from himself. It is an Hebraism, when a Noun is put for a Pronoun, the more emphatically to express that it was not by Accident, or any ordinary course of Nature, but by the immediate and almighty Power of God, that such showers of Fire came upon them.

3. Here is the dreadfulness of this subversion, it was like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. As God made them examples of terrour to all the wicked in succeeding Generations, by confounding them with fire from Heaven (2 Pet. 2. 6. Jude 7.) so the Lord brought those Israelites to the very brink of utter ruine and destruction.

Q. Wee read of no Cities in all the Scriptures, that ever the Lord destroyed with fire and brimstone immediately from Heaven, but only Sodom and Gomorrah, upon whom he brought the saddest and most stupendious destruction that ever we read of; how then are these Cities said to be destroyed like them?

Ans. It is an Hyperbolical speech, frequently used in Scripture, to set forth the most terrible desolation, and dreadfulest devastation that can befall a People, and therefore
fore when the Holy Ghost would set forth the signal Wrath of God against a place, he tells us it was like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus it sets forth the destruction of Babylon, Isa. 13. 19. & Jer. 50. 40. and so of Moab and Ammon, Zeph. 2. 9. so that it is a Figurative speech, and must not be taken Literally, but Allusively; Sodom's destruction is put for dreadful and extream desolation, and doth denote rather the measure of God's displeasure, than the manner of the punishment, so Isa. 1. 9. Jer. 49. 18. Hos. 11. 8. Israel here was brought so low, and to such extremity by their enemies, that their destruction seemed like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, and those that escaped out of those great trials were so few, that they seemed like a brand pulled out of the fire. This seems to relate to that time when God raised up Hazael, and the Syrians, who smote Israel in all their Coasts, burnt their Cities, laid waste Gilead and Bashan, killed their young men, slew their Children, ript up their VWomen with Child, opprest them in their Estates and Persons, so that they became like the dust by threshing, that is, very weak and contemptible, their strong Halls were loft, and they had no Humane helper; they had but fifty Horse-men left, and ten Chariots, and ten thousand Foot, a poor Guard for a Kingdom. To so low an ebb were they brought, as appears 2 King. 10. 32, 33. & 2 King. 13. 3, 7, 20, 22. & 14. 26.

4. Here is God's mercy to Israel, set forth by a kind of correction or mitigation; yee were indeed like Sodom, yet not altogether like Sodom, for all their Cities were burnt and none escaped; but the Lord hath spared your Metropolis, and chief City Samaria, and pulled some of you as a brand out of the fire, q. d. when you were in a very low and low condition, being like a pece of Timber half burnt, yet then had I pitty on you, and remembred my Covenant, and rescued you out of your present misery by the hand of Jeroboam the Second, the Son of Joash, even as a brand out of the flame, and saved a remnant of you from the sword (2 King. 14. 25.) To pull one as a brand out of the fire is a Proverbial speech, and signifies the great danger which a man is in. Thus Joshua the High Priest, whom the Lord delivered out of the Babylonian fiery Furnace, is called, A brand plucked out of the fire, Zach. 3. 2.
Israels Obstinance.

5 Here is their horrid obstinacy still under this hideous and stupendous Judgement, Ye have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. This is the usual burden of God's complaint, though he had sent amongst them, Egyptian Plagues, and Sodomitical destructions, yet so obdurate were they, that neither the one nor the other could work upon them.

The sum of all is this, That I might leave no means unassay-ed (saith the Lord) to reclaim you, I have added this to all the rest of my Judgements, that I have overthrown some of your Cities, and brought you so low, that you were almost like Sodome and Gomorrah, and you of Samaria were left out of the common destruction, as a brand taken out of the fire, yet all this hath not moved you to return unto me, saith the Lord.

Observations.

1. If the Word of God work not upon mens hearts, neither will Judgements work upon them. These people had Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Joel, Micah, Hosea, Amos, to preach to them, but their Ministry was ineffectual, and now we see that no Judgement can work upon them. Those that are Sermon-proof, and will not beleive the Word of God, will quickly be Judgement-proof, and confesse Gods Sword. Those that have Moses and the Prophets, and yet will not beleive them, neither will they beleive though one should arise from the dead, Luke 16. ult. If a man should come roaring from Hell, it would affright men, but it is easier to fright men out of their wits, than out of their sins. Lazarus rose from the dead, yet the Pharisees were so farre from being bettered thereby, that they grew madder against Christ. So at the Resurrection of Christ, many arose, and appeared to many, and no doubt but they told them, how it was with them that were dead, and yet it could not work upon them. He that cavils at the Word, will also cavil at Miracles, as the Pharisees did at the Miracles of Christ. He that will not beleive the Spirit of God speaking in the Prophets, will not beleive a man pretending that he came from the Dead, and telling what the Damned suffer there. How should he beleive a Creature, that will not beleive the infallible testimony of his Creator?

The Scriptures are a surer ground for us to build upon, than an Angels voyce (2 Pet. 1. 19.) No revelations are to be compared to them, God will never set in with woes of
mens invention, when they despire the waies of his own Ordination. The blind world which is weary of true Doctrine, is apt to think, that if an Angel from Heaven, or a Ghost from Hell would come and teach them, then they should bee converted. These are like Saul, who commend the counsel of Samuel living, yet desired to speak with him when he was dead. But, 1. why doe you not beleive Christ who dyed, and is risen from the dead, and speaks daily to you by his Ministers? 2. Why doe you not beleive the Prophets, who being dead yet speak to you, and have left us a more sure word of Prophesie? 3. Suppose one should come from Hell all in flames, and tell you what the Damned suffer there, yet how is it probable that this should doe you good, when God tells you the same thing in his Word, and yet you will not beleive him? It is most certain, that those who despire Gods Ordinance, will never beleive a report from a doubtful and erring authority. Difiire not therefore Miracles, or Revelations and Enthusiasms, this is a temtling of God; but to God to teach thee in his own way, by his Word and Sacraments; so did * Luther, and this is the desire of all the Saints, that God would guide them with his counsel here, that is, with his VVord and Spirit, and so bring them to glory, Psal. 73. 24. The conversion of a Sinner is not so much from the excellency of the means, or the abilities of the Speaker, as from the power of Gods Grace, which teacheth us to profit, and maketh the means effectual to us. Great then is the folly of those, who take upon them to teach God, how he should teach the VVorld, they would have Miracles and Angels to doe it, when God saies they shall have Ministers, and Preaching by men to doe it. It is a Satanical delusion for men to think of being converted, or comforted by any other way, than that which God himself hath prescribed. If God hath planted thee under a godly and a faithful Ministry, and that cannot convert thee, then assure thy self if an Angel from Heaven, or a Ghost from Hell should come and preach every Sabbath to thee thou wouldst not

* Si in manu mea res esset, non vellem Deum mibi taqui de calo, aut apparere mibi; hoc autem vellem & quotidie precor, ut in honore digno habeam verbum & Sacramenta. Luther.

Non est necessitatem infernalem defendam, & quidem quomodo illic saliat Divina iustitia; sufficit mihi ut eam in hoc mundo contemper. Granatensis.
not be converted. Sad is the condition then of many amongst us, who villifie and contemne, who mock and scorne at the Preaching of the Word, accounting the publishers of it the Peets of a place, and the troublers of Israel (1 King 18. 17.) grudging at their maintenance, and slaying their persons, this is a sign of remedlesse ruine to a Nation, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. Levit. 26. 14, 15, 16. Jer. 25. 4, 7, 8, 9. Prov. 13. 13.

2 Obs. There is a Divine hand of Providence, that governs the world. This brings plenty and poverty, rain on one City, and not on another; one City is fired, and another is rescued, as a brand out of the fire. These things come not by chance, or fortune, but there is a signal providence of God in them all. Hee feeds the Sparrows, clothes the Lillies, numbers our Hairs, and takes special care of his people. Hee hath a directing, protecting, compassionate, vindicating care over all his, he tenders them as the apple of his eye, and writes them upon the palmes of his hands, they are ever in his sight, Isa. 49. 15. & 63. 9. Ezek. 16. 8. Zach. 2. 8. Mal. 3. 17. Acts 9. 4.

This Providence of God is Watchful. Distinct. Strong. Wise in working.

We should therefore comfort our selves in this special Providence of God, and cast all our burdens of cares & fears on him. Hee that provides for the meanest creatures, will not suffer his noblest Creatures to want. Hee that provides for Sparrows, (said good Mr. Herm when he was dying, to his sad wife) will not suffer Hers to want. Yea hee that provides to liberally for his enemies, what will he not doe for his friends? Away then with all carking, distrustful care, only commit thy way unto the Lord, and hee shall direct thy paths. Bee patient under all his Holy Limes, wrongs and injuries, remembering that Gods eye takes special notice of all the wrongs that are done to his people, to avenge them, Exod. 3. 9. 2 Chron. 16. 8, 9. Let our moderation be made known to all, since the Lord is at hand, Phil. 4. 5.

[See more of the Providence of God in Mr. Perkins on the Creed, Artic. 1. p. 154. folio. Vol. 1. Peter Martyr on O 2 Sam.]
Israels Obstinency.


3 Obs. God is the destroyer of sinful Cities. If you would know, who it is that overthroweth your Cities, It is I, saith the Lord, that in justice for your provocations have made your Cities a defoliation. I fired Sodom, destroyed Nineveh, Samaria, Babylon, Jerusalem. As the Lord raieth Cities, and defends the good. (2 King. 19. 34. & 20. 6.) so he ruines and layes waste the bad. Hos. 13. 16. Luke 19. 44. keep sin then out of your Cities, if you desire to keep them from fire, plunder, ruine. Take heed of offending God, who is a consuming Fire, and can in a cree consume us, and turn our dwellings into ashes.

4 Obs. In the midst of Judgements God remembers mercy. Hee doth not stirre up all his wrath, nor suffer his whole displeasure to arise, but lets fall only some drops upon us, when he might pour a whole Sea of wrath upon our heads, Psalm 78. 38. God might justly have destroyed all these Israelites for their Idolatry and Apostacie, yet he remembered his Covenant, though they had fouly forgot it, and transfirret it (Hos. 6. 7.) and saves a remnant, he destroyed but some, not all their Cities. So oft elsewhere we read of a remnant that were saven, 2 King. 19. 31. & Isai. 1. 9. & 10. 22. Rom. 9. 17.

5 Obs. Neither Judgements nor Mercies can work upon hardened Sinners. Some of these Israelites were destroyed like Sodom, and others in mercy were pulled like a Brand out of the fire; yet nothing works upon them, but they are Israel still, as Idolatrous and obstinate as ever: When the heart is once hardened by a long custom of sinning, it is not all that Mount Ebal, or Mount Gerizim, Mount Sinai, or Mount Sion can afford; nor all the dreadful Curses of the one, nor all the gracious Promises of the other, that can work upon mens hearts, Prov. 23. 19, 34, 35. Ezek. 20. 5, 6, 7, 8, 18, 21.
neither John's austerity, nor Christ's tenity could work upon hard-hearted Jews. If God by his Spirit set not in with the means, nothing works kindly upon us; yea we shall bee the worse for beating, as these Israelites, all these six Rods doe but stupefie them, and make them fitter for a greater judgement. One rod being sanctified may bring a man home to God, as the Prison did Manasseh, want the Prodigal, and the Earth-quake the Jaylor; they had Gods Spirit, that taught them to profite by afflictions, and so were blessed, Psal. 94. 12. but a thousand stripes on a Pharaoh, Saul, &c. doe but make them the more senseless and indurate; and is not this England's Sin? may not we behold our own faces in this Glass? may not the Lord justly complaine of us, as he doth here of Israel? I have smitten England with Sword, Plague, and Famine; some of their Towns and Cities I have fired, and the rest were as a brand pulled out of the fire. Many a time have I broken and blasted the Power and Policy of many great Archishops, and delivered them from many eminent imminent dangers; and yet such is their incorrigibleness, and incurablebleness, that they have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. If any thing destroy this Nation, it is our obstinacy and impenitency, under all those various Dispensations of Mercies, and means which we have so long enjoyed. God like a good Physician, hath long studied our Disease, and given us many Purgative draughts to drink; he hath visited us with variety of Judgements, and hath let us bleed several times, the better to obtain our Cure, and yet he may complaine of us as he doth of Israel here, that we have not for all this returned to him.

Verse 12.
Therefore thus will I doe unto thee, O Israel, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

We have heard before of Israel's Sin, and Israel's Punishment for their sin. We are now come to the third and last part of this third Sermon of the Prophet, which contains an Exhortation, or Invitation to Repentance; where we have,
The Illative Particle, or the note of Inference, Therefore; The Lord draws a conclusion against them from the former Premises, q. d. since none of my former Judgements will reprove you, I am now resolved, that you shall reap the fruit of your disobedience; you shall no longer be my People, but I will cast you out of Covenant, and send you into an impure Land; so that you shall not only lose your Land, but your Religion too; not only your Soul but your Souls to boot; not only your goods but your God. I have sent out my Footmen (faith God) and you have contemned them, and contended with them; I will now see, what you will do with Horse-men (Jer. 12. 5.) I my self will now arise in armes against you, as against a pack of rebels.

Here is the Lords Commination of some greater Judgement, implied and couched in general terms, Thus will I do unto thee. The Lord seeing their incorrigible nes, goes on to denounce a fonder and fadder Judgement against them, than any yet had befallen them. He doth not tell them how, or in what kind he will punish them, but leaves them to imagine the worst, thereby intimating that he would bring upon them fadder evils than they could imagine. Thus terribly, thus severely, in a more furious manner than formerly, will I deal with thee. The Judgement was so dreadful, that the Prophet seems either loath, or at least unable to express it; and therefore he doth as it were draw a Vail over what hee could not in words set forth, with a Thus will I do unto thee; q. d. I will bring upon thee some direful desolation, and utter destruction, for so it follows, Amos 8. 14. They shall fall and never rise again. Since they be impenitent, I will speedily execute upon them what I formerly threatened (ver. 2, 3.) I will give Samaria your Metropolis into the Affrani hand, and you shall be carried Captive into a strange Land. There seems to be in the words a kind of Pathetical Apothesis, when a man for anger and indignation cannot speak out his words, but cuts off some word, or part of a sentence, which is to bee understood; and such kind of speech is
very frequent both in sacred and prophane Writers: Thus, Psal. 95. 11. To whom I swear in my wrath, if they enter into my rest, q. d. they shall never enter into my rest; if they come there, let me not be God, or let me not be true. Thus the Hebrews in their execution Gathes were wont to speak. Thus and thus let God do to me (1 Sam. 25. 32.) without expressing the imprecation, as fearing to name those dreadful evils.

3. Hee allays this sharp Communion with a gentle and sweet exhoration, full of clemency and consolation, telling them that he is yet their God in Covenant, ready to receive them, if they will but truly repent, and come in unto him; and therefore he counsels them speedily to prepare (for where no time is excepted there, as the Debt, say Lawyers, to the Duty, say Divines, is presently to bee performed) to meet him, Isa. 2. 11. return and come, but when? why presently, that is implied. So here, prepare to meet thy God; but when? why presently, before the decree bring forth, and it be too late, Zeph. 21. 2. The Lord having told them what he would doe to them, now (such is his goodness) that he doth make them what they should doe, to prevent his Judgments, viz. prepare to meet him. Since he was ready to cast them off, he adviseth them to cast themselves down, and to implore his mercy, and make peace with him.

Q. But what is meant by preparing to meet God?

Ans. To meet one hath various meanings in Scripture: 1. Sometimes we goe to meet Persons, that we may honour them, thus Abraham and Lot went to meet the Angels, Gen. 18. 2 & 19. 1. 2 Sometimes we goe to meet Persons, that we may scoff and jeer at them, as Michal the Daughter of Saul did David, 2 Sam. 6. 20. 3 Sometimes we goe to meet Persons to fight with them, as David did with Goliath, 1 Sam. 17. 48, And thus some take the words in the Text for an ironical raunting speech, as if the Lord had said, Since I am coming against thee, prepare your selves to meet me, and see if yee bee able to encounter me, and keep me back, who am coming against you as an enemy; come on, and meet mee with your hardned hearts, muster up your Armies, recollect your Forces, call in to your ayde all your Creature-confidenc-
Isaiah Obstinacy.

Amos 4.

ces, and see if they can deliver you from my hand, and save you from my wrath, which is even ready to seize upon you. But this sentence is very harsh, and contrary to the scope of the place; for all along the Lord calls upon them, not to stand out against him, but to submit unto him, and therefore he oft complaines, even five times, Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Besides, there is no meeting of God with Arms and Armies, or any warlike Forces; what can all the hosts in the world do against the Lord of Hosts, or who ever hardened himself against him and prospered? Job 9. 4. Let the Poshards strive with the Poshards of the earth, but woe be to him that striveth with his Maker.

4 Sometimes we goe out to meet Persons to humble our selves before them, and to submit to them, as Shimei did to David, 2 Sam. 19. 16. and thus it is in the text, Prepare to meet thy God, viz. by Prayers and tears, by humble supplication, and real humiliation for sin, by forsaking your Idols, and cleaving to Gods true Worship, and by amendment of your lives run to meet him, that you may prevent the execution of his wrath upon you, &c. This is the most proper meeting of God which is here called for, this is the genuine and true scope of the place; for the words are not a challenge, Come out and meet me; but a precious direction, shewing us what we must doe to appease and pacifie God, viz. not meet him in a way of Opposition and rebellion, for this were to see Briers and Thorns in battle against a consuming fire (Isa. 27. 4.) but meet him in a way of submission, as Abigail met David, when he was coming to destroy Nabal and his house, 1 Sam. 25. 32. So here, since the Lord hath taken up this determination to punish thee, O Israel, and is resolved to bring some greater Judgement on thee, therefore prepare thy self (saith the Prophet) by unsheigned humiliation and repentance, that so thou maist prevent the execution of the sentence. Put on thy mourning weeds, take up a lamentation, make ready thy Petition, goe forth upon thy knee, and beseech him to spare thee, that so thou maist prevent thy utter destruction which is now at hand.

Q. But why doth the Lord call upon his people to prepare themselves, when their hearts were hardened, and he tells us that the way of man is not in himself, and that the preparation of
Ver. 12. Israels Obstinacy.
the heart is his work, and not ours. (Psal. 10. 17.) Besides, he had decreed here to carry them into captivity, and hee tells them as much, and therefore all their repentance was but vain.

Ans. 1. The Lord had some elect and hidden ones both called, and to be called amongst them, and to these he principally speaks; for all Gods commands are effectual in believers: they are not an empty sound, as they are in the ears of unbelievers, but there goes forth a power from God enabling them to obey; if he command them to believe, hee enables them so to doe. If he command them to prepare to meet him by repentance, there goes forth a power from him which enables them so to doe. As when our Saviour commanded Lazarus to arise, there went forth a power from him that raised him. Most movemus, aestigamus, when the will is regenerate and made pliable, then it readily obeyes all Gods commands, be they never so hard or harsh to flesh and blood; yet they can doe all things Evangelically through Christ that strengthens them. God gives them his preventing, assisting, co-operating, persevering grace, Job 11.

13. 14. Such commands as these shew as our duty, not our ability, and must make us in the sense of our own inability, prepare ourselves to sue unto him for preparation.

Such commands make the wicked more inexcusable, who had power in Adam to obey all Gods commands, but they in him have offended, and by their daily obstinacy, and falling away from God, and his ways, they have justified the grand Apostasie of our first Parents.

The threatenings of God are not always absolute and irrevocable, but for the most part they are conditional, and to Mr. Caryl on be understood with this exception, viz. except they repent and amends, and this condition is sometimes expressed, as Jer. 436.

Job 23. 13. P. 18. 7. 8. Job 3. 13, 14, and sometimes suppressed and concealed, as Jonah 3. 9. Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed; that is, if they repented not. So here, though Israels case seemed desperate; yet the Lord bids them turn, and he would be propitious to them.

Admit the judgement be irrevocable, and Gods people must notwithstanding their repentance, bee Captives to the
As for the Assyrians, yet their repentance had not been fruitless, for they should have escaped eternal misery.

2 In this Life, the punishment of such Penitents is oft mitigated, though not totally removed. Hence we usually see, that in times of publick Calamity it goes best with the best men; to them these are but fatherly Chastisements, when to the wicked they are for-runners of greater wrath. A Jeremy, Ezekiel, Daniel may go into Captivity, but it is for good, as the Lord said sometimes of his People, I will send them into the Land of Caldea for good, Jer. 24. 5. such mourners shall be marked for Mercy when Judgement comes, Ezek. 9. 4.

4. Here are the Persons, to whom this Exhortation is applied and directed, and that is, to the ten Tribes, who are often called by the name of Israel, as being his off-spring, 1 King. 12. 18. & 2 King. 13. 33. & 16. 33. he names them twice, and ingenerates the title, the better to awaken them, and quicken their attention, as also to shew his great affection to them, as David named Absalon twice, whom he loved. So our Saviour speaking to Jerusalem, doubles the title, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Mat. 23. 37. to awaken them, to shew his tender love and compassion to them; and to shew his anger against their sins, he Pathetically cries out, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, &c. &c. Thou that hast been the place which God hath honoured with his special presence, and chosen above all the places of the earth for his habitation, to fix his name there, art thou become a den of Devils and Murderers? So the Lord here, the better to rouze these Israelites out of their security and impenitency, by an Epanodos, doubles their name, saying, Thou wilt I doe so the, O Israel, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

5. Since we are backward and averse to this duty of Retuming, he backes his Exhortation with a double Move.

1 The first is a drawing Motive, taken from the consideration of God's readiness to pardon Penitents. Hee is thy God, prepare to meet thy God; hee is thine by Profession, though thou hadst walked unanswerably to it. And 2. He is Thy God in Covenant with thee, and to ready to receive thee, if thou wilt but truly turn to him.
Ver. 12. Israels Obstinacy.

The second is a driving Motive, and is drawn from the consideration of God's Almighty Power (ver. 13.) who was now marching against them. This power (the better to awaken them) he sets forth by six Royalties.

1. He formeth the Mountains.
2. Creates the Winds.
3. Knows mens Thoughts.
4. Maketh the Morning-darkness.
5. Treads upon the high places of the Earth.
6. He is the Lord of Hosts.

Observations.

1. When lesser Judgments will not mend a People, God usually comes with greater. When Blasting, Mildew, Famine, Pestilence and Sword can do no good, then look for a I doe unto thee; that is, I will utterly destroy thee, for remedies are in vain, when the sore is so desperate. So Isa. i. 5. Why should ye be smitten any more? q. d. your case is desperate and incurable. and therefore I will trouble myself no more with you, but will now utterly destroy you. And this is that which highly aggravates England's Sin, we have been long incorrigible under lesser Judgments, and therefore what can we now expect, but that the Lord should come with a That will I doe unto thee, O England, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O England.

2. Obs. God will not stick to punish his own people, and that severely, when they sin against him. Where he bestowes the greatest Privileges, there he inflicts the greatest Judgments. He is sharper with them than with Heathens, because they are nearer to him, and so their sins doe more dishonour him. The sins of a David doe more dishonour God, than the sins of many uncircumcised Philistims. God will be sanctified of all his high ones, (Levit. xot. 2.) He dwells amongst his people, and cannot endure their provocations. We can endure dung in our fields, but not in our houses; we can bear with briers and thorns in the Wilderness, which we cannot endure in our inclosed Gardens. Such sin against great light, and great love, and therefore will he surely and sharply punish for their iniquity (Amos 3. 2.) as we see in Eze., Da., p. 3. 2.
Israels Obstancy.

3. Obs. Ministers must apply the Word unto their people. Thus will I doe to thee, O Israel. This is the only way to convince and convert men; what is spoken in general to all, few will apply to themselves. It is this Soul-searching Preaching that is the best teaching. But of this elsewhere.

4. Obs. God usually warnes before he smites. In mercy here he warres his people of approaching Judgements, and bids them prepare to meet him. He lightens before he Thundereth, and shoots off his Warning-peecees, before he shoots off his Murdering-peecees. He might have come suddenly upon them, and swept them away like dung from the face of the earth for their obstinacy; but see his transcendent clemency and pity, he warnes them before he destroyes them, and counsels them before he condemns them.

5. Obs. God usually mingles Mercies with his Judgements; and Consolations with his Comminations. Hee tells Israel here of Judgements, but withall he tells them of mercy upon repentance; with the one he draws us as with cords of love, and with the other he drives us home to himself. The best have need of both; we have all need to hear of Judgements, to keep us from presumption; and of Mercy, when humbled, to keep us from despair. Hence God so oft joyns both together, as Levit. 26. Deut. 28. and the Prophers doe usually allay the terrours of the Law, with the comforts of the Gospel, Joel 2. 14.

6. Obs. God owns his people, even when they are guilty of great sins. He is God, and not like Man, that calls off men for every light offence. Hee tells them here, I am thy God still by profession, though thou haft not walked up to that privilege. I am thine by Covenant, and thou art mine Israel still; therefore prepare to meet me, and stand no longer out against me.

7. Obs. When the Lord is coming against a people in Judgement, he then expects that they should presently prepare to meet him by humble supplication, and real repentance.

1. We must meet God with a Petition in our hands; thus Subjects usually address themselves to their Sovereign, especially
ally when they come under the notion of Offenders, or Malefactors to beg a pardon. We should dispatch these our Ambassadors, our Prayers and tears, to meet him in the way, (Luke 14. 33.) while he is yet afar off, that we may prevent the Wrath that is coming upon us. Thus did Moses, when he perceived that God's Wrath was kindled against Israel, he fought by humble and servent Prayer to stop it, Exod. 32. 11, 12, 13. So when the Plague was new broke forth, he commands Aaron presently to mediate and intercede for them, and stay the Plague, Num. 16. 46, 47, 48. Yea God takes it ill, when in publick calamities there is no intercessor to meet him thus, and mediate for a Nation, Psa. 59. 16. 27. 30. These Ambassadors in all ages have prevailed See my Comm. wonderfully with God. A Prayer rightly qualified, and circum- stantiated for man, matter, manner, what cannot it doe with God?

1. It hath an Universal power in removing Judgements, or procuring Mercies. The most signal providential changes that ever were made in the world, have been made by the Prayers of God's people. Prayer is as it were the Midwife to bring great Blessings into the world, and remove great Judgements from us; and therefore when the Lord would destroy a people, he commands his Jeremiah to forbear praying for them, they must not meet him in this kind to mediate or intercede for them, (Jer. 7. 16. & 14. 11.) thereby implying, that he cannot deny the Prayers of his people.

2. These Ambassadors have an awakening power. God seems to sleep and take no notice of the miseries of his people many times, but then by their Prayers they must awaken him, Job 8. 6, 7. There are two things which doe more especially awaken God: 1. The Rage of wicked men (Psal. 12. 6, & 78. 65, 66.) and 2. The Prayers of God's people, Psa. 82. 17. & 141. 1. Isa. 51. 9.

3. They have a binding and a loosening power. Moses by his Prayers binds God's hands, that he cannot strike, till he ask leave, as it were of Moses, and bid him let go that he may smite them, Exod. 32. 10. Num. 14. 17, 18, 19, 20. And Prayer hath a loosening power, sin ties God's
Israels Obstinate.

4. They have a commanding power, such is God's great condescension, that though he be the Commander of all, yet he suffers himself to be commanded by the Prayers of his people, Isa. 45. II. Gods people have often experienced the power of Prayer, and therefore in all their distresses they fly to their Prayers, and have ventured their lives, resolving rather to lose them, than their praying opportunities. Dan. 6. 10. yea and this hath made them so earnestly beg the Prayers of Gods people, Romans 15. 30. they will not part with their interest in them for a Kingdome. Yea, such is the power of the Prayers of the godly, that even wicked men, when they are in distress, have begged for them. Thus Pharaoh beseeches Moses to pray for him, and Saul calls for the Prayers of a Samuel. The time would sayl me, to tell of the great exploits, which the Prayer of faith hath done; no Conqueror can shew such famous Trophies and Triumphs as it can doe. Prayer acquated, and inflivened by faith, hath subdued Kingdoms, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the Sword, &c. Heb. 11. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and hath done the Churches enemies more mischief, than all the Armies in the world (Psalm 36. 9.) how lightly for ever wicked men esteeme of them. This is Gods Ordinance, and hee ever loves to be found in his own way.

2. The Prayers of Gods people suit best with Gods interest and ends; they seek the advancement of Gods glory, the good of his Church, the increase of his graces in their souls; all which are very taking with God.

3. Their Prayers must needs be powerful, if you consider the Persons praying, they are Gods Sons and Daughters, his peculiar people, the Spouse of Christ. Now Relations can doe much; and if we, who are evil, will give good things to our Children, when they cry to us, much more will God supply the wants of his, when they call upon him, Matthew 7. 7. 8. They are put up

* Nihil reliquum est Britanicum domare Caesaris, nisi te ipsum posses Gregis. V.


up in Christ's name; and inured by his Spirit, and God cannot deny Christ that makes intercession for us, and his Spirit, that makes intercession in us, with sighs and groans.

2. We must meet the Lord humbly and submissively. As Benhadad's servants met the King of Israel, with ropes about their necks, because that they had heard, that the Kings of Israel were merciful Kings. So let us put ropes about our necks, as signs of our acknowledgement, that we are worthy of death; and the rather, because the God of Heaven is a merciful God, (1 Kings 20, 31.) Rising and raging at Gods Chastisements like a wild Bull in a net, when men are full of the fury of the Lord (Esa. 51, 20.) this is the way to provoke God, to goe on in wrath against us, and to double his strokes upon us, Levit. 26, 34. If a Potent Prince should raise a great Army against us, and we had no strength to oppose his strength, the only way is to meet him with humble, submissive Supplications, and to make peace with him. So, when ever we find, that the great God is angry with us for our sins, let us lay down the weapons of our rebellion, submit unto him; judge our selves, and then he will not judge us; accuse our selves, and he will acquit us; be sharp, and severe with our selves, and he will be merciful to us; let us accept of the punishment of our iniquity, and justifie him, in all that he hath done unto us, and then we have his promise for pardon, Levit. 26, 40, 41, 42. wee know, it is not for Gods honour to trample upon worms. The Lion will not seize on a yielding Prey, the Ma=en will not fall on the little Dogge, that lieth on its back, turns up all four, and cries quarter. The bending Reed is preserved, when the Rubborn Oke is pluck't up by the roots. It is the proud and haughty, whom God refuseth; he sets himself in Battle array against them, and delighteth to manifest his power in their subversion, Esa. 3, 12. to 18. But the humble are his habitation and delight. Let us therefore meet him submissively, considering we are not a match for him. Sinful Nations are too weak for God, how much more are single Persons, Esa. 40, 13, 1 Cor. 10, 22. It is God, that over-turns Kings and Kingdoms at his pleasure, hee hath overthrown Kingdoms that stood like stone Rocks. Of all things here below, we count Metals the strangest, as Gold, Silver, Brass, Iron, of which Nebuchadnezzar's Image was compos-
Israels Obstincacy.

3 We must meet God with grace in our hearts. If we go to meet God, our business is to make our peace with God, which we cannot do without grace, for to the wicked there is no peace. Now grace though it hath many other, yet it is chiefly woven up, and composed of these two golden threads,

1. Love to God. 2. Hatred of Sin.

1 Love to God. We must love him apprehensive & intensive, with highest intention of affection. Love is our best affection, and therefore most fit for God who is our best friend.

2 Hatred of Sin. There are two Affections especially which set themselves against sin, which are, Hatred and Grief. Hatred respects the nature of sin; and Grief respects the nearness of sin. If we had no sin we should hate it, but if it were not near us, we should not grieve for it. There are many, that hate sin but never grieve for it, but we must meet God with both these affections in us; wee must hate sin as we have been by nature, and grieve for it as it is our own sin, and as we offend God thereby; and this is to meet God with grace in our hearts.

4 We must meet God with Christ in our arms. There is no seeing his face, unless we bring this our elder brother with us. God is holy, and we are unholy, so that he will not treat with us without Christ, nor can we think of God out of Christ, but with extreme horror; besides, God will have satisfaction for sin past, before he treat for the time to come; now Christ is our Atonement, and our Mediator, and wee can expect no good from God without him, therefore let us meet him with Christ in our arms.

5 We must meet God with true Repentance. Sorrows befits a Sinner, as a garment doth the body. The garment of Repentance was made for Sinners. Had we never sinned, we had never sorrowed. Repentance is Gods delight, it is his favourite, which he comes down from Heaven to take and embrace. Efs 57: 15; Luke 15: 20. Sin amuses God against his but repentance disamuses it; he cannot with-hold Mediation from
from the penitent, his promise hath given repentance power
to prevail with him, it is the way of his owne prescribing,
when he would have his people to find mercy in his eyes, hee
hath them take this course, Isa. 1. 16, 17. & 55. 7. Cant. 6.
13. Zeph. 2. 1, 2, 3. Acts 17. 30. Jam. 4. 8, 9, 10. This is a
never failing remedy, it alwaies obtaines either the blessing
ought for, or some better thing; as we see in Manasses, the
Ninioites, Mary Magdalen, the Brodigal, Paul, the Israelits;
Judg. 10. 15, 16.

Yet, the very shadow of repentance can doe something for
the removal of a temporal Judgement; as we see in Ahab's
hypocritical humiliation, and Rehoams, 2 Chron. 12. 6, 7.
The Israelits that cried unto the Lord only in their trouble,
yet were delivered out of their distreß; and if the shadow
can doe so much, what will not the substance doe? Repen-
tance qualifies the soul, and fits it for Mercies Temporal,
and Spiritual. It makes the heart soft, tender, flexible, and
ready to receive any impression from God, Acts 9. 6. This is
that Panacea, that Catholicon, that Universal remedy against
all maladies, 2 Chron. 7. 14. Jer. 18. 7, 8. These tears and
waters of repentance are very medicinal, and can prevail
with God, when no others can, to extinguish the fire of his
wrath, which is now gone forth against us. England is now up-
on her Sick-bed, and we have great cause to fear, that shee
is upon her Death-bed, and will scarceley recover; wee shall
shortly see whether she will live or dye, her critical hour is
now at hand, and we may justly suspect her death; and that
because God hath cast his dealings with us into so many
moulds and forms, and tried us every way, and yet we do not
prepare to meet him. God hath been pleading with England,
this hundred years by his Word, for his Worship, for his Day,
for his Discipline, and for the power of godliness, and yet we
have not prepared to meet him.

God hath of late years been pleading with Fire and Sword,
and though these bloody Arguments have spread abroad, and
there is scarceley a Town where blood hath not been shed;
yet have we not prepared to meet the Lord. The Rod hath a
voice, but we have not heard it, Micah 6. 9. It is a sad
Symptom of destruction, when we shall see the Rod, but not
heard.
Israel's Obstinate.

Hear it, it is a sign that we are either deaf, or dead. God hath spoken to us with anger in his countenance, and thunder in his voice, will ye still profane my holy things? persist in your formality? and goe on in your rebellion against me? and yet we turn the deaf ear to him, hating to be reformed. And now when we thought all Gods Judgments were buried, and the memory of them was almost obliterated, yet they seeme to revive, and to be raised out of their Graves again. We are now dying and know it not, gray hairs are here and there upon us, and we take no notice of it. (Hos. 7. 9.) God cries to us by his Judgments, To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; while it is called to day make your peace with mee, before the night of warre, death, and death surprize you. God hath set forth a Third Edition of Warre, he hath printed his Wrath in Capital letters, his Spurs stick deep in our sides, and our lathes are heard over all parts of Christendome; and yet how little are we affected therewith, and how careless are we to prepare to meet the Lord. With what a horrid Stupidity are wee benumbed? the Plague of Lots Wife hath fallen upon us, and we are turned into Stones and Pillars; so that as our Saviour wept over Jerusalem, so should we weep over England for its induration, and not knowing the day of her Visitation. There is a dark and dismal cloud of wrath hangs over our heads; there is but one way left to prevent its falling on us, and that is, 1. Personal Repentance, every one to amend ones. 2. Domestic Repentance, every Family apart must humble themselves for their family sins, Zach. 12. 12. 3. National Repentance, when the Magistrate shall command the whole Nation to humble themselves, for the crying sins, and great provocations, which have been daily committed in the midst of us. Till be done, I shall never expect that truth or peace should abide long amongst us. Let us then every one fall heartily to this work, which must of necessity be done, or else we are undone, Luke 13. 3. Job. 3. 5. let us humble our selves, and then God will raise us up, Job 22. 29. 34. 4. 10. Let us weep now, and we shall have joy when troubles come, Job 7. 22. Hab. 3. 16. Our sins are the Achans which have troubled our Israel; our sins are the Jonahs which have raised these storms and tempests amongst us; our sins are the
the Sheba's, that have raised rebellion in the Land: it is our
criminal sins, which have raised up against us malignant ene-
emies; let us then stone these Achan's, and our troubles will
cease; drown these Tamar's, and our storms will over; cut off
the heads of these Sheba's, and our troubles will end; let us
destroy our malignant sins, and God will soon destroy our ma-
lignant enemies. If men would but judge themselves, they
should not be judged of God. 1 Cor. xii. 31. Let us then set
upon this soul-inriching work of Self-examination, and Self-
judging. Let us arraign our selves, and set our selves as in
God's presence, before his bar. Let us examine, and take a
view of our selves, in the Glass of God's Law, and when we
have found our corrupts, let us with shame and sorrow of Self-judging
confess them, and spread them before the Lord, to move him
to shew pity to us. Let us judge our selves worthy to be de-
stroyed for them, humbly imploring pardon, in the name
and mediation of Jesus Christ. Doe but this soundly, and sin-
cerely, and it will qualify thee, for mercies Temporal, Spi-
ritual, and Eternal; and give thee title and interest in many
gracious Promises; as Levit. 26. 40, 41, 42. Prov. 28. 13,
1 Job. 1. 9. The Lord is now upon his march against us, it is
time therefore for us to meet him with our Prayers, and mollify
him with our Tears, considering our own inability to
grapple with him; Can dust and ashes contend with the God
of Heaven and Earth? Can we with ten thousand Lufis, meet
the Lord with twenty thousand of Angels? Can impurity
vise with Omnipotency? No.
2 Consider, we cannot run from God (Psal. 139. 7. A-
mos 9. 3. 3.) we can doe no where from God, but we must
fall into his hands. Let us therefore run from him, to him, Ab
irato ad placitum, from him as an angry God, to him as a re-
conciled Father. Blood-letting is the cure of healing, and
to close with an enemy is the way to avoyd the blow.
3 Consider, if we goe not to meet God, he will fetch us. He
will either fill our souls with terrous, or else send outward
afflictions to arrest us. When Joab would not come to Absol-
lon, he commands his field of Corn to bee fired, and then
Joab arose and came, 2 Sam. 14. 30, 31. Physicians some-
times to cure the Lethargy, doe cast into a Fever; so doth
God, oft cure us of one evil by another. If the Word cannot,
Israel's Obituary.

Amos 4.

the Sword shall fetch us in, or else doe that which is worse; send us to Hell. Let us then learn to prevent blows; hearken to counsel and you may be safe, else rods are prepared for the backs of fools, Prov. 26. 3. If we come not in of our selves, let us expect some sad Messenger to fetch us; therefore while the sea is calm, and the weather fair, let us set out to meet our God. What the Lord said of Hezekiah, is too true of England, that he rendred not according to what he had received; so we are much behind hand with God, we receive much, but we return little; the Christian World is turned Bankrupt, and God is now issuing forth Process to seize upon Body, Goods, and Life. Hee cannot have what he would have, he will therefore have what he should have. He is now setting us as low, as we have hitherto set his love. Long-suffering is now at an end; God will have all paid now, or else Justice will set abroach our blood. O England, then repent, and prepare to meet thy God; and to encourage us, know, that if we will goe to meet God, he will come to meet us; he will meet our sorrow with his sense of it; our prayers with his presence, and propitious answers; and our tears with his handkerchief. Nay, he will meet us with embraces, as the father of the Prodigal did his returning Son, Luke 15. 20. Let us then goe to him, with humble acknowledgements in our mouthes, and say to him, Father, we have sinned against Heaven, and before thee; we have abused thy Mercies, despised thy Judgements, despised thy Spirit, and have not returned unto thee. Let us thus in humility fall down at God's feet, and he will fall on our necks, and embrace us in the armes of his love. Seeing therefore God will doe thus unto us, let us prepare our selves to meet our God.

Verse 13.

For he that formeth the Mountains, and createth the Winds, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; the Lord, the God of Hosts is his name.

In the precedent Verse, the Lord seeks to draw his People to himself by Mercies, he ministrereth of his Covenant, and tells them they were his Israel still, and therefore they ought not to stand it out against him, but speedily submit themselves, and meet their God with intreaties of peace, who was still ready to receive them. But leaft this should not work upon such indurate Sinners, the Prophet comes in this Verse to proclaine Gods Majesty, Omnipotence, Omniscience, &c. The better to affect, and awaken these drowsie ones, and to make them fear; We have here a multiplicity and heap of excellent Titles given to God; for the bare naming of God is little regarded by most men; but when the Transcendent Excellencies of God, shall in variety of words, bee set forth to the life unto us, this strikes an awe and reverence in our hearts. In the words we have,


2. Here is the note of Attention. Lo, or behold, q. d. doe not lightly pass over this, but deeply ponder, and diligently consider, the Power, and Majesty of this great God, with whom thou haft to doe.

3. Here is the reason of this glorious description of God, included in the Particle For, for he that formeth the Mountains, and createth the Winds, &c. It is he that is marching in fury against the e, who is a consuming Fire, whose Power
and Majesty thou art not able to resist; and therefore beware of provoking him to wrath against thee; by thy impenitency, for Quotio tali tunc, et tamen, all these Titles, and Elogies, are as to many mouths to call upon us, to fear the Lord, and to turn unto him. As first, It is he that formeeth the mighty and the maffie Mountains; therefore fear him, and turn unto him. 2. It is he that by his Almighty power creates the fierce and terrible Winds, therefore fear him, and turn unto him. 3. It is he that searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, therefore dissemble not with him, but truly and totally turn unto him. 4. He can turn the light into darkness, and thy joy into sorrow, therefore fear to offend him, and prepare to meet him. 5. He is the most High, having the Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his footstool; therefore beware of provoking him, and return unto him. 6. He is the Lord of Hobs, and can aume all the Diseases in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell against thee, therefore resist him not, but speedily prepare to meet him, with treaties of peace, before his wrath surprize thee, and it be too late.

This Verse is a Mine full of rich Treasures, I shall therefore dig for them.

1. He formeath the Mountains. They were not call up by Nomiis Frould (as some weakly have imagined) but are here expressly said to be formed, and framed by the most wise God, for the benefit and ornament of the Universe. God made them, out of the side Mafs, and confused Chaos of earth, when he gathered the Waters into one place, and the dry land appeared. Gen. 1. 9. and it is apparent, that the Mountains were in being, before Noah's Flood, for it is said, that all the high Mountains were covered with waters (Gen. 7. 19.) they were then in being, before they are said to be settled by God (Ps. 8. 24.) and framed in measure by him, Isa. 40. 12. He hath made strong and stable, high and unmoveable, for (Ps. 148. 5, 9.) and the good of Mankind. (Ps. 63. 5.) the mountains are broken, and Mainscripts. By the Mountains the violence of the Winds are kept from hurting us, and so they are for the good of the Universe, and adorned, and made more wonderful, and so they are for Ornament. By them the valleys are watered.
Israel's Obsequy.

with Springs, and showers that run down from them (Job 24.8. Psal. 104.10.) To these men run for shelter and defence in times of trouble, Psal. 81.3. Job. 2.16. Psal. 24.16. Heb. 1.1. 38. By them Cities are defended under God, against their enemies, Psal. 125.8. upon them growes Grafs for the sheep, and beasts of the field, and here they feed, Job 39.8. Psal. 50.11. & 148.9. Isa. 18.6. Here many Treasures of Metals and Minerals, of Lead, Iron, Brass, Stone, Silver, Gold, &c. are hid, Deut. 8.9.

Thus should make us 1. Love the Lord, who hath so curiously formed, and framed the Universe for the good of man.

2. It should make us fear to offend him, who by his Almighty Power hath created these mighty, massive Mountains, and before whom they tremble, and melt like Wax. These obey God, and praise him in their kind (Isa. 44.23.) and if the Lord of these Mountains be against us, no Mountaine can fence or shelter us, Jer. 3.23. Ezek. 38.20. A due apprehension of Gods Majesty, will make us perform all our Duties with fear and reverence, Psal. 2.11. Heb. 12.29. We should take shame to ourselves, for our hardness of heart, and great insensiblems, when we consider, how the Mountains, and inanimate Creatures tremble at his presence; how much more when he is angry; and if these be overthrown by God in his anger, Job. 9.5. & 28.9. much more shall wicked men, those metaphorical Mountains, which exalt themselves against God, and his ways, be overthrown by him, Isa. 64.1. Zach. 4.7.

3. He createst the Wind. This is the second Prerogative Royal of the great God. By creating the Mountains and the Winds, two mighty things (under which Synecdochically are comprehended the other Works of God) the prophet fers forth Gods Omnipotency, for it would have been too much to have enumerated all the rest of Gods glorious Works, and therefore he pitched on some chief ones, and leaves us to conclude of the rest. Before he had spoken of the creating of the Mountains, how he comes to speak of the Winds, which are (as some conceive) out of those Mountains. These two are different; for the one is gross and immovable, but the substance of an airy, thin Substance, which cannot be seen; and
Israel's Obstinacy.

And yet such is their power that they toss the Sea, overthrow the strongest Trees, cast down Houses, yea and overturne Moiscaiers, when these VVinds are shut up in their bowels.

The wordRuach is Homonymow, and hath varius significations, which hath bred various Lections, and various interpretations.

Some read it thus, he createth the Soul or Spirit. Calvin conceiveth that the Prophet speaks of the spirit of man, though he excludes not the VVind, and his reason is because of that which followes, viz. The heaving to mean his thoughts. But if this way of reasoning were valid, we may better say (Salva somper reverentia tanto viro dignissima) that he speaks of the Natural VVinds, because immediately before he spake of the Mountains, from whence Philosophers conceive that these VVinds proceed, and the word Ruach is oft put for the Natural VVinds: as Exod. 10. 13, 19. & 15. 10. * Job 28. 25.

The Socinians and their followets take this word for a Spirit, and that Spirit to be the Holy Ghost; this they doe to destroy the Deity of the Holy Ghost. See here what windy, idle, addle conceits Hereticks have, and what feeble, sandy foundations they build upon; they catch at any chrootick which may please their humours: For it is plaine here that the Prophet speaks of the created VVind, or if they will needs read it Spirit, yet it is a created Spirit, Hee createth Ruach the Wind, or the Spirit. But the Holy Ghost is not made or Created, but proceeded from the Father, and the Son, and is God blessed for ever; as is * abundantly proved by o- thers.

As for the Natural causes of the VVind, Philosophers differ; Some conceive that the Sun drawing up Vapours and Exhalations, and they falling down againe by violence, become Winds by the coldness of the middle region.

Others conceive, that the aire being pent up in the Vaults and Caves of the earth, having a vent doe break forth, and
and so spread into Winds, and for this they bring Psal. 135. 7. Jer. 10. 13 & 51. 16. He causes the Vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, he maketh Lightning for the rain, and bringeth the Wind out of his treasuries; that is, say they, out of his Vaults and Concealments, wherein it is kept as in a Treasury. But God himself, who hath made the Wind, tells us plainly, that we know not whence it comes, nor whither it goes. Job 3. 7. We may therefore well be ignorant of that, which God, in his wondrous wise, hath hidden from us. An humble ignorance in deep Mysteries, whether Natural, or Supernatural; whether in the works, or the Word of God, is better and safer than proud curiosity.

VVe have many Reasons to bless God for the Wind. It is indeed a common Blessing, but yet we could not live without it.

1. If the Air be thick, dark, and unwholesome, the Wind clears the air for the health of our Bodies, and for the preservation of the Creatures. They dispel noisome Vapours, and therefore are called Scopamundi; the world's Beekeepers, with which God sweeps his great House, the world.

2. If we want Rain, the Winds carry the Clouds, and bring us rain; at the Prayers of Elias, after three years drought, the Heavens were darkened with Clouds and Wind, when came a great rain, 1 Kings, 18. 45.

3. They cool the Air in the heat of Summer, and help to refresh us.

4. They help our Ships to sail, and bring Commodities from all Nations to us; and help our Mills to grind our Corn.

5. They serve for the Miraculous help of God's Church and People. When the Lord had brought Israel by a strong hand out of Egypt, he caused the Sea to go back by a strong East-wind, and made the Sea dry land for his people to pass thorough Exod. 14. 21.

6. They help to execute God's Judgements on the wicked. With an East-wind the Lord brought Locusts and Grasshoppers on Egypt to devour their fruit (Exod. 10. 13) and by a West-wind he drove them away again. Theodorus praying against his enemies, the winds brought back
back the enemies Arrows on their owne heads, which made
Claudius cry,

Omnium dilecte Deo, cui militat aether.
Et conjurati venient ad sesea venti:

Ascribe not their great Winds to Conjurers, Witches, De-
vils, &c. The Winds are Gods servants, and doe readily o-
 bey his commands (Psal. 148.8. Math. 8.26.) and not
the Devils. Satan without Gods leave cannot raise so much
wind as will rots a feather. He could doe nothing in this kind
against Job, till he had a Commission from God, Job r.
16. 19.

3 This is not all, for the Prophet descends to man, and
tells us, that since God made him, he also can tell him
his thoughts, meditations, and purposes. He can tell what
Language men have in their hearts, and what they talk with-
in themselves, as the rich fool did, Luke 12.17. Our words are
not so intelligible to men, as our thoughts are to God. Christ
knew what was in man, hee knew their thoughts (John 2.
3. et.) and therefore he answered his enemies many times, not
according to their words, but according to their thoughts,
Math. 8.20. yea God knows our thoughts before we think
them, and our conceits before we conceive them, hee under-
stands them afarre off, Psal 139. 3. he being intimo nostro
intimior, nearer to us than our flesh is to our bones; hee
knowes our thoughts in Poste from all eternity; so great is his
Omniscience! As a man that knoweth what Roots he hath in
his Garden, though there be no flower appearing, yet he can
say, when the Spring comes, this and this will come up. So it
is here, God knowes our frames; our Principles, our Projects,
and what the issue will be, nothing is hid from his All-seeing
eye. The words are diversely read.

1 Some refer the Affix to God, thus, Hee declareth to
man his owne mind and meditation, and tells him what hee
intends to doe, (Esa. 41. 26. Amos 3.7.) thus he revealed
his mind to Abraham, before hee would destroy Sodome;
and Christ reveals his secrets to his Disciples, John
15. 15.

2 The Septuagint mistaking the Original, read it thus,
He-
He declared unto man his Christ, Messiah, Christus, vel
visitum suum; but the word is * Masecho, what is his
thought. But the proper scope of
the Text, is to convince the Is-
raelites, that they had not to doe
with men, but with the Omnipre-
cient God, who searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins,
and knoweth the hidden things of man, even the most secret
turnings and windings, ploddings and purposes of the Soul,
so as he cannot be deceived, neither will he be mocked. A
man may know much by himself; but God knowes more; our
Consciences may accuse us of some things, but God is greater
than our Consciences, and knoweth all things.

Q. But how doth God declare unto man his Thoughts?

A. Divers ways. 1. Sometimes he discovers and dis-
appoints the most secret aymes, and intentions of men, and so
makes their thoughts visible to the world.

2. By his Ministers, they opening the Word of God, which
is a Soul-searching Word, do discover to men the thoughts,
and intents of their hearts, Heb. 4: 12.

3. Sometimes without the Word, God by his Spirit checks
men, and convinces the Conscience of the vanity, and sinful
imaginations which are in them.

He maketh the morning darkness.

The Prophet goes on still to shew the Almighty Power of
God, who can turn the brightest morning into dreadful dark-
ness, and the most glorious day into a dismal night. If he be
angry: he can make the morning not only dark, but darkness
itself in the Abstract; that is, exceeding dark.

* Others read the words thus, He maketh the morning and
the darkness, that is, he maketh both Day and Night. God know
his Power, not only in creating the World, but also in govern-
ing the whole course of Nature continually, exactly order-
ing the Vicissitude and change of Day and Night. It is he that
makes the Light and the Darkness: in the morning he makes
the light to arise out of darkness; and in the evening he makes
the darkness to follow the light. This sense is good. But the
first I look upon as most genuine from the text.

* How steadeth upon the high places of the earth. This is true,
both in a Literal, and in a Metaphorical sense.
1. Take the words Literally for the highest Hills, and the lofty things of the world, even these are subject unto God, and lye at his feet; he treads upon all worldly glory and excellency. As Heaven is his Throne, so the Earth, even the highest places of the earth are his foot-stool. He treads upon high Mountains, high Buildings, high Fortifications and walled Cities, all which are comprehended under the name of High places (Dent. 32. 13.) these he turns upside down, when ever pleaseth him. This is the most proper sense. But take it Metaphorically, either for the high places of the earth, where * Altars were erected to Idols (as Numb. 33. 52. 2 Chron. 11. 15. & 33. 3. Jer. 32. 35. Ezek. 16. 16.) even these will God tread upon and destroy, Levi. 26. 30.

2. If you take it for the high and lofty of the earth, even these Gods hand doth reach, yet and his feet tread upon. He makes the proud of the earth his foot-stool, Psal. 110. 1. though they be high, yet he will make them know, that there is an higher than they, Eccles. 5. 8. though they bee mighty, yet they shall know, that there is one who is Almighty, who pulls down the mighty from their seats, and is terrible even to the Kings of the earth, Psal. 76. 12. Ezek. 2. 10. Luke 1. 51. Now though the literal sense bee here principally intended, yet the Mystical and Metaphorical sense would not be excluded.

Q. But who is it that doth these great and glorious things?

A. The Prophet tells you, it is Jehovah the God of Hosts, that is his name, a name full of Power, Majesty, and Excellence, and therefore to be reverenced of all his people.

OBSERVATIONS

1. God is Omnipotent. Creation is a work of Omnipotency, but that is here ascribed to God; it is he that formed the Mountains, and created the Winds, and turns Light into darkness, and hath all Creatures at his command, and therefore
VER. 13.  **Israel's Obstancy.**

Before he must needs be Almighty. Man can make something out of something: but to create the Universe out of nothing, and that by the word of his mouth; this speaks his wonderful Omnipotence. *Psal. 33. 6, 9.* He is able to do whatsoever he will, *Psal. 115. 3.* Yea his Power is beyond his Will, for of stones he could raise up Children unto Abraham, but he will not, *Matt. 3. 9.* There is nothing too hard for him, no difficulties can hinder him in his working; *Job 4. 9.* *Matt. 19. 26.* *Luke 1. 37.* Those impossibilities in nature which are the reproach of Physicians, yet are they God's Cure. The power that is in the Creature is but derivative, and by participation; but all Power is in God perfectly, eminently, infinitely, and originally.

Fear then to offend him, chuse rather to displease all the See Mr. Cave world than to displease him: (*Jer. 5. 21, 22.*) they can but kill the body, but he can kill both body and soul, *Matt. 10. 28.* A Tenant, especially if he be a Tenant at will, is afraid of displeasing his Landlord, who can when ever he pleaseth cast him out of all. The men of Tyre and Sidon made peace with Herod, because their Land was nourished by the Kings Land, and he might doe them a displeasure, *Matt. 12. 20.* Believe and fear his Power now, else you are like ere long to feel it, for though he be slow to anger, yet is he great in power, and will by no means acquit the wicked. *Nahum 1. 3.*

1. Serve him with fear, and doe all that wee doe to him with the greatest reverence. So did *Job,* ch. 40. & 42. & *Esa. 6. 5,* let us readily doe his commands. If he doe but call to any of the Creatures, they stand up together, as ready to execute whatever their great Lord and Master commands them; *Esa. 48. 13.* yea so pious are they to doe his will, that they contradict their owne natures to serve him. Fire descends from Heaven at his command, and the fluent Waters stand as a wall to defend his people, and destroy their enemies; which may shame us out of our rebellion, and disloyalty, when we see how the inferior Creatures serve him with one consent.

2. It likewise serves for singular comfort, and that many ways.

3. It may be thou haft great enemies coming against thee, yet remember still, that there is a greater than they. Suppose
Israels Obstinacy.

126

Nations, all Nations should come against thee; yet compared to God, they are but as the drop of a bucket: nothing, less than nothing. Esay 40. 12, 13, & 51. 12, 13. Rom. 8. 38. There are more with us than are with them; with them is but an arm of flesh, but with us is the Almighty, not as a base spectator, but as an Assister, and fighter for us, 2. Chron. 32. 7, 8.

2. It may be thou art troubled with strong corruptions, why goe unto this strong God, there is nothing too hard for him. Though thy sins have been habitual, customary, con-natural sins, yet he is the God of Nature, and can change Nature. Though we cannot make a Black-more white, yet he can, Jer. 13. 23, though thy sins have been of a Crimson dye, yet he is able to make them white as Snow, Esay 1. 18.

3. Art thou troubled with great vexations, and sad afflictions, yet remember God is Almighty, and can make medicines of these Poisons; and will in the conclusion turn all to thy good, Rom. 8. 28, and therefore be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might, Ephes. 6. 10.

4. It may comfort us against Apoplexy. Thou hast seen, that thou shalt never be able to hold out; walk humbly with thy God, and then thou needst not fear what Man, or Devil can doe unto thee; for stronger is he that is in us, than he that is in the world, I John 4. 4. Did we stand by our own strength, we were undone, for in his own strength shall no man bee strong; but we are kept by the mighty Power of God, through faith unto salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Though we be weak, yet our Redeemer is strong, Jer. 50. 33, 34, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against us. Let the world rage, the Devil roar, and corruption fret, yet God is greater than all; and none shall be able to pull them out of his hand, Job. 10. 13, 14, 15.

5. It may comfort us against the fear of death; what though thy Body lie resting in the Grave, and Worms consume thy flesh, yet God is Almighty, and can raise these nose bodies, and make them like to Chais glorious Body, 2 Pet. 3. 11. Though for a time we may lie in the dust, yet the time is at hand, when we shall awake and sing, Esay 26. 19. Not that made all things out of nothing, he can make us out of some thing.
Ver. 13.  

Israel: Obstinacy.  

thing. Thy ashes are precious in his sight, and all thy bones are kept by him, yea the very hairs of thy head are numbered.

6 It may comfort and assure us, that the Jews in God's due time shall be called. Though now they be a scattered, cursed, contemptible people, for their rejecting Christ, yet the Apostle argues from God's Power, and comforts us with this, that God is able to raise them up again, Rom. 11. 23.

2 Obs. The serious consideration of God's Omnipresence, should move us to meet him by repentance. No wise man will stand it out against a potent enemy, that is far too strong for him. We are all by nature Traytors, and Rebels against God, hee is marching against us in wrath, and wee have no way to help ourselves, but to meet him, and humble our selves before him (1 Pet. 5. 6.) imploring his pity, and his pardon. Hence it is, that the Lord so often in Scripture, doth set forth to the life his glorious Majesty, and transcendent Soveraigny, (Job 9. & 36. 24. 33. & 35a. 37. & 38. & 39. & 40. E- say 40. 12. to 37. Jer. 10. 6. 7. Amos 9. 8. & 9. 6.) We should not only tremble at God's Word (Esay 66. 2.) but also at the consideration of his glorious Majesty, appearing both in his Works of Creation, and Providence.

3 Obs. It is God's Prerogative Royal to be the heart-searching God. None can exactly and thoroughly know the heart but he alone, he is only that observatorius, Dens cordis, the Heart-seeing, and the Heart-searching-God. 1 Chron. 28. 9. Prov. 17. 3. Jer. 17. 9. 10. Acts 1. 24. & 18. 8. Rev. 2. 23. Hee knowes all the secret places and projects, all the turnings and windings of our deceitful souls. Hee knows not only what is in our hearts at present, but also what hath been, and what will be there, Psal. 139. 1. 2 Esay 46. 10. The Lord trieth the heart, as the furnace trieth the gold; when Metals come to bee put into the Furnace, there is a great deal of dross in them, so that the Metals sometimes can hardly be discerned by the Artificer, till the Furnace hath separated the dross from the metal; so the All-seeing eye of God, which is compared to a Flaming fire (Rev. 1. 14.) searcheth and separateth good from evil. For,

1 God hath made all hearts, and therefore he must needs know what is in them. They are hearts, and brutish, that
will not acknowledge this, Psal. 94. 8, 9, 10, 11. Every Artificer knowes best the thing that he hath made; a man that makes a Watch, knowes every wheel of the Watch, and every Pin, which another cannot discern. Known to God are all his Works, Acts 15. 18. but the chief of Gods Works is Man, and therefore mans heart must needs be known to him: and if the spirit of man knowes what is in man (Prov. 20. 27. 1 Cor. 2. 11.) then God who hath made that spirit must much more know what is in man, Job 1. 24. 25. & Job. 3. 20.

2 He takes the wife in their owne Plots, which hee could not doe if he did not know their hearts, Job 5. 13. 1 Cor. 3. 19. Of all men God delights to be fool the grand Polititian of the World; he takes them in their owne traps, and blows them up, as it were with their own Gun-powder. As a man that will goe beyond a man in discourse, hee must know the Arguments which he will bring, that so hee may bring other Arguments beyond them; so God out-schoors the Achitophels of the World in their owne bow. Haman was a subtile man, and thought he had made all sure, but we know how the Lord turned his Plot upon his owne pate. In the thing wherein he dealt subtilly, and proudly, the Lord was above him, Exod. 18. 11. Pharaoh was a subtile Persecutor, yet see how God takes him in his owne Ner, Exod. 1. 10. hee would work wisely, and will kill all the Male-Children of the Hebrews, yet see how God blasts his Project, for amongst them he saved Moses, yea Pharaohs Daughter shall bring him up at Court, who shall be Pharaohs destruction. Many Polititians walk in the Clouds, as if the Lord should not see them, Psal. 94. 7. but they must know, that the Lord is a God of knowledge, and all their actions are weighed by him, 1 Sam. 2. 3.

3 God is the Judge of all the World; and this hee could not be, if he did not know the hearts, as well as the acts of men. How should he distribute Rewards and Punishments according to mens deliherst, if he knew not the intents and thoughts of their hearts? If God did not search the heart, how many secret sins would goe unpunished, and many secret wrongs done to the godly and innocent man goe unreavenged? The Lord therefore searcheth the heart, that hee may give
give to every one according to his works, Jer. 17:9, 10.

Obj. Prov. 25. 3. The heart of the King is unspeakable, how then can God search the heart?

A. He speaks in respect of men; God useth many times to endue his Vice-gerents with such depth of wisdom, that it surpasseth the ordinary judgement of Subjects to find them out; but it doth not surpass God's knowledge. God could not turn Kings' hearts if he knew them not, Prov. 31. 1. When we are to deal with a man whose disposition we are not acquainted withall, we know not what Motives will persuade him; whereas if we have to deal with one that we know, then we know what Motives will persuade him; so the Lord that made the hearts of Kings, he knows how to persuade them, and win upon them.

2 This searching must not be taken properly, but figuratively; as for man he must search, and by discourse and going from one thing to another, labour to find out a matter; but it is not so with God, who is perfectly wise, and knoweth every thing in itself without discoursing. God is all eye. Suppose a man's whole body were an eye, he need not then turn himself to see things, for he would see on every side; but he that hath but one eye must turn himself about to see things. But God, who is all eye, and seeth into the nature of things, needs no turning about to discourse, and so to search out things as we do; and therefore one said well, Things that are spoken after the manner of men, must be understood according to the Majesty of God.

3 This Metaphor of searching, is taken, 1. Either from Students, who when they come to a hard point, they are put to a great deal of pains to search out the matter before they can know the depth of it. Or, 2. From Refiners, the Lord tries the heart (Prov. 17:3.) not only as a Load-stone, but like a Furnace to separate the gold from the dross; when God comes to search the heart of his Elect, he hath a power beyond all other refiners, for look what is good, he makes it better, and what is nought he takes away, and makes it good. He turns the vilest earth into the purest Gold, and the vilest Metal, a proud heart, he turns into an humble heart. He casts a Christ-despising-soul into the Furnace, and it comes out a high-prizing soul of Christ.
Israels Obstinacy.

Obj. How is it said, that God only knoweth the hearts of men (1 King. 8. 39.) whereas it is said, that a man knoweth his own heart (1 Cor. 2. 11.) yea, Samuel could not tell us what was in his heart, 1 Sam. 9. 10, and if the evil Angels know our hearts, John 13. 2, then good Angels much more.

Ans. There is so great a difference between Creatures knowing of the hearts, and the Creators knowledge of them, that ours is nothing in comparison of his.

1 They differ in respect of their Original; God knoweth the heart of himself, and needs not that any man should tell him, John 2. 23. But Angels and Men know by revelation from God, or revelation from others. Thus God revealed to Samuel, which was Saul, that should be King of Israel, 1 Sam. 9. 15, 17. Thus Elisha knew the covetousness of Gehazi, and Peter the Hypocri ASE of Ananias and Sapphira. Thus the good Angels know what is in us by Revelation, and the evil ones by the working of our fancies, they know what will take with us, 1 King. 22. 22.

2 In respect of Certainty, we know things but conjectural ly, darkly, and by halves; but God knoweth all things exactly, and perfectly; he knoweth us better than wee know ourselves. Christ knew Peter's heart, when hee knew it not himselfe, and God knew Hazael's heart, when highlest could not believe the wickedness which was there. Thus hee knowes our thoughts afarre off (Psal. 139. 2.) men may see the thoughts of others near hand, when they begin to break out, and bewray themselves in the face and countenance, in gestures, words, and looks; by these we sometimes pump our what is in men, Prov. 20. 5. But this is but conjectural, and we are oft deceived, as we see in David, he thought Abijams purpose had been sincere, in going to slaine his Vow at Hebron, and that Achitophel had been a faithful Counsellor. Thus the Disciples took Judas to be like themselves, and therefore when Christ said, One of you shall betray mee, every one asked, Master, is it I? But God did most certainly know Abijams Hypocrisie, Achitophels Policy, and Judas his Treachery. In our thoughts there is the object which we think on, and the impress of it, as it lieth in our fancy; and this the Angels being Spirits may know, and see what is in the fancy. But now to make up a full thought, there must be an act that per
Ver. 13. **Israel's Obstinacy.**

Yet on this object, that carrieth with it an Affirmative, or Negative, for an hundred men may think on one and the same object, and yet they may act diversely; now because the mind of man may work several ways on one and the same object, the Angels cannot certainly know the hearts of men, which made the Devils Oracles to speak so ambiguously, because they knew not certainly what should come to pass. But God hath a clear and exact knowledge of all things, and perfectly knoweth all the rummings and windings, all the imaginations and thoughts of our hearts, whether good or bad, sudden or deliberate, past, present, or to come, Gen. 6. 7. Job 42. 2. Psal. 44. 21. He knoweth our thoughts before we think them, Dem. 31. 21. though men have fair words, yet he knoweth they have many wicked souls hearts, Dem. 5. 48. 29. God takes notice of every wanton thought which is in our hearts, which made Job (ch. 31. 1.) to make a covenant with his eyes, that he might not so much as think on a Maid, lest he should sin against God, and displeasure him, who takes notice of all the motions of our hearts. God took notice of Saul's murderous thoughts towards David, when he was playing before him, he thought to have murdered him; and of Felix his covetous thoughts, when he sent for Paul, thinking that money should have been given him. But God, in goodness to us, hath locked up the hearts of men from the knowledge of them, for the preservation of Humane society, for man is a Fickle Creature; now if there were a window made in the soul of every man, to know what is in him, there would bee no living one by another, so vile and fierce we are by nature, (Titus 3. 3.) every one hath several ends, and if we could see whose heart oppress us in the pursuit of them, we should hate them. Besides, every man hath secret sins, which if all the world should know, we should be ashamed to look one another in the face, and afraid one of another.

1 Woe then to Quakers, who assume to themselves God's prerogative Royal, of knowing the heart. How oft have they told us, that they know mens hearts (when it may bee they know not their names) so soon as ever they see their faces, they know who are Hypocrites, or proflane, at first sight. But it is no wonder, that those who have printed that they are equal to God, as holy as God, as just as God, as good as God;
God: if they also say, they are as knowing as God. These high-born Atheistical ones assume more to themselves, than the very glorified Saints or Angels dare doe. Such prodigious Pride, and Blasphemy, will be punished with some signall fall.

2. This must humble us in all our approaches before this Omniscient, Heart-searching God. We have not to doe with men, but with the All-seeing God, who cannot, and will not be mocked. We are apt to think highly of our selves, but God knowes that by us which we know not by our selves. Wee know but in part, but he knowes us thorowly; and if our Conscience doe accuse us of something, yet he is greater than our Conscience, and knoweth all things. Men may secretly and subtilly hide their sins from men, but nothing is hid from God, he sees our secret sins in the light of his countenance. It is dangerous to plot any thing either against him; or any thing which relates unto him; for as he sees mens sins, so hee hath power to punish them. Woe then to such as oppose Gods Truth, these oppose God, and rob his people of the choicest purchase. 2. Such as oppose his Embassadors doe oppose him, he accounts the indignities done to them as done to himself. 3. Such as abuse his people, and despise them for their purity, despise God who made them so.

3. It must make us serious and sincere in all that we doe: since we have to doe with a God that searcheth the heart, and pondereth the spirits of men; and if they be but a graine too light, his beam will sooon discover it, Prov. 16. 2. Did we but see the Lord alwayes before us, it would keep us from falling, either on the right hand, or on the left, Psal. 16. 8. David kept all Gods Precepts; because he knew that all his wayes were before him, Psal. 119. 168. So Job 34. 21, 22. There is much in the eye of men to keep us from sin; and quicken us to duty, how much more in Gods All-seeing eye, Job 24. 17. He looks upon Sinners with a Vindictive eye. It is said of Hercules, and some others, that they had such sparkling eyes that they terrified men, so that they durst not look upon them. This is most true of God in a Spiritual sense; if he but look on Pharaoh, and his Host, it puts them all into terror, Exod. 14. 24. yea if he but look upon the earth, which never sinned, it trembles before him, Psal. 97. 4. Men may dissemble with
Ver. 13. **Israel's Obstinate.**

with men, but there is none can deceive God. No Sinner is more hated of God than the Hypocrite, because no sin is so directly opposite to his Nature. Jobe his zeal was, to settle himself in Abel's Throne, but God sees through such Tiffanys, designs, and fays to such, as the Prophet said to the Wife of Jeroboam, *Come in thou Wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thyself to be another than thou art?* God will one day smite such painted walls, Esau a cunning Hunter, may get the Venison of this World, but it is plain, sincere, single-hearted Jacob that gets the blessing. Let us therefore always walk as in the presence of God, as Enoch (Gen. 5. 24.) Abraham, (Gen. 17. 1.) and Hezekiah did. Esai 38. 3.

4 This should make us to keep a strict watch over our Thoughts. God is a Spirit, and he more especially sees the bent of our spirits. It is not so much our words and works, as our hearts which the Lord ponders. So that what the Apostle faith of our words, is most true of our Thoughts; he that offendeth not in thought, the same is a perfect man. He is right indeed, who is right within. When the Lord comes to search men, he ransacks the heart, and observes what imaginations and thoughts lodge there, and judgeth of men accordingly, Gen. 6. 5.

5 It may inform us, that the holy Scriptures are the Word of God, because of that lively, powerful, heart-searching excellency that is in them, Hos. 4. 12, 13. Mens words are dead, but here is living water; sharp and quick, discovering the very thoughts and intents of the heart; we should not then quarrel with the Word, when it nakedly discovers our selves unto ourselves, but fall on our faces and worship God, confessing that he is in his Ministers of a truth (1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.) We must bless, and not blaspheme, as some that say, The Devil is in the Minister, he hath some Familiars; else how could he know my thoughts? when it is not we that know your thoughts, but it is God who searcheth your hearts, and by his Word doth discover the secrets of your hearts, though wee know not your faces. It is the Lord who directs the Word to the hearts of his people. Austin reports of himself, that when he had been Preaching to his owne people, he fell from the subject he intended, to confute the Manichees. When he came home, he said to those at dinner with him, Did you not observe S 3
observe how I went from the subject intended? they answered yes. Then said he, Surely the Lord did this for the good of some soul that was present. Not long after came one Israel, a merchant to him, with tears in his eyes, blessing God, that had brought him to confute the Manichees, whereby he was converted. God is a free Agent, and works when he will, on whom he will, and by whom he will.

6. It serves for consolation many waies.

1. It may comfort us against the reproaches and slanders of the wicked. This comforted Job, when his friends accused him falsely, that the Lord knew the way which he took. Job 3. 10. q. d. Though my friends accuse me for an Hypocrite, yet knowest thou not only an act or two of mine, but thou knowest the very way that I take. He knows the best of our Souls, and will reward us accordingly. This upheld Jeremy under this very temptation, Jer. 13. 10, 15. and Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4, 5. The godly have hidden Mammon, which comforts them against the calumnies of the world; and a white Stone, which armes them against the black Stones which are thrown at them by the world; and a new Name, to comfort them against the nick-names of the world.

2. It may comfort us in all our troubles, that the Lord sees them, Exod. 3. 9. Acts 7. 34. Our groanings are not hid from him, Psal. 38. 9. Though wheels goe crost, yet God hath a wheel in those wheels; Though we know not how, yet he knows how, and when it is best to deliver his, 2. Pet. 2. 9.

3. It may comfort us in point of weakness. It may be thou canst not express thy mind in words, I but the Lord knows our thoughts, and desires, afarre off, even before we think them, and our words before we speak them. Before we call he answers; and if we have but sincere desires, he hath promised to hear them, Psal. 10. 17. It may bee that thou art under a Temptation, and canst see no faith, nor love in thy heart; yea but God can. Grace is Gods hand-writing in our hearts, (Eph. 1. 13.) which he can read, when we cannot; so that he said, I know no evil by my self, yet am I not thereby justified; so mayest thou say, I know no good by my self, yet yet am not condemned.

4. It may encourage us, to be much in secret with God, in secret
Verse 4. Israel, Obstinate.

Secret Prayer, Meditation, and Communion, Thy Father which seest in secrecy, be still toward thee openly: Thy secret obedience shall have open recompence. Jeremiah kept in secrecy, both his life given him, when the king had his eyes put out, and many Nobles were slaine.

4. Obs. The Lord can turn our light into darkness; He can turn the morning, (which usually brings light with it,) into the darkest night. Thus he deals with Egypt; he brought a dismal darkness on them for three days, even such darkness as might be felt. Exod. 10.21, 22. So when Christ was Crucified, there came a great darkness on the land, Matt. 27.45.

If we provoke the Lord to anger, he can quickly turn our day into night. (Amos 5.8.) and our mirth into mourning. He is the God of Nature, and can when he pleases him, reverse the order of Nature, and give us with gloom darkness. The Light is a pleasant thing, but the light of the Gospel, that Supernatural Light, oh how pleasant and precious is that! We may better want the Sun in the Firmament, (for that is but a common blessing,) than the glorious light of the Gospel, which shewes us the way to eternal life. Wee should therefore bee thankful to God for all manner of Light, and take heed of offending him, who can at once deprive us both of Natural and Supernatural Light. He can make our Sun to set at Noon, and darkness to surprise us, in the brightest day, and make us run from Sea and Sea to hear a Sermon, and it shall not be granted to us. Amos 8.9, 10; Zech. 11.12. Let us then walk in the Light whilst we have the light, lest our unthankfulness deprive us of it. John 1.1, 3, 4. Rom. 13.12, 13.

5 Obs. If we take the words in the second sense, then observe. First, God is the Maker both of Day and Night: He creates Light, and he creates Darkness; he makes the Morning, and the Evening; the rising, and the setting Sun: give praises unto him (Gen. 1.3.) and we are bound to him for both. 2. That he hath given us the Day wherein to serve him, and secondly, that he hath given us the Night, wherein to rest, that we might be sittent for his service.

6 Obs. God is the most High. This appears in that all high places are subject to him, whether you take them Literally, or Metaphorically, he treads upon all the high places of the earth, all Mountains, all Idols, all high conceits of men, and.
whosoever exalts himself against his Kingdom, he will bring it down. If he touch any of these Mountains they presently vanish into smoke, Ezy 64. 1. Fam 4. 6. 1. Pet. 5. 7.

7 Obs. God is Jehovah. This is the most proper Name of God, and therefore is to frequently given to him in the Old Testament. S. Jerome observes, that there are ten Names given to God in Scripture, of which Jehovah is the chief and most proper, and is never given to any but only unto God. It sets forth his eternal, infinite, incomprehensible Self-being, and serves to distinguish him from Idols, which have no life or being in them. Hence it is called, God's glorious and fearful Name, Deut. 28. 58. To let pass those Jewish and Rabbinical niceties, and quiddities about this Name, we have the sum and substance of it in Exod. 3. 14. & 34. 6. Revol. 1. 4. 8. He is Alpha, and Omega, who is, who was, and who is to come.

1 God's Self existency.
2 Eternity.
3 Sovereignty.
4 Immutability.
5 Fidelity.

* D. Arrow-

1. 3. P. 48. 59

2 He is an Eternal Self-being, without beginning or ending, from everlasting to everlasting, he is God, Heb. 13. 8. of all Gods Names this doth most fully set forth God's eternal Essence. This must comfort us in all our distresses, when all other beings fail, yet God is an eternal being. When the Cisterns are broken, yet this Fountain abides; when Fathers and Mothers dye, yet he lives for ever, Psal. 18. 46. & 102. 27. 28. Our Fathers where are they? and the Prophets do not live for ever; but the God of the Prophets lives for ever, Zach. 1. 5.

3 He hath supreme, absolute, and unlimited Sovereignty over
over all. He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. All have their dependance on him, but he depends on none.

4. Immortality, he is I Am, still the same, there is not in him so much as a shadow of changing, Mal. 3. 6. James 1. 17.

5. Fidelity, he is most true both in his Threatenings and Promises. They are all True, and Amen, and shall certainly be fulfilled first or last. To God's people.


Concerning God's other Attributes, see Doct. Preston on the Attributes, Slock, Larkham, Church his Miscell. Zanchini, & Lessius de Attributis. Mr. Leigh's Body of Divinity, lib. 2. cap. 2. M. Randal his Treat. of God, and Christ, p. 19, &c. Mr. Norton his Orthodox Evangel. p. 4. 10.

Obs. 8. God is the Lord of Hosts.

This Title is oft given to God, as 1 Sam. 1. 3. & 4. 4. & 2 Sam. 2. 4. Psal. 24. 10. God is the sovereign Lord of all Creatures, whether visible or invisible, reasonable or unreasonable, living or livetless, they are all his, not only because he created them, one of Gods and preserves them, but because he governs them, that they, Titus in the and continually ready preffor his service, when ever he shall titles, in the con-command them, Psal. 103. 21. Is. 45. 12. God hath all Armies in Heaven, Earth, and Hell at his command.

Elohim, this is one of the most frequent Names of God in Scripture and denotes unto us that God is the Creator, Governor, and Judge of the World. On this Title see my Com. on Psal. 81. 1. & Bincium Mel. Theol. T. 1. p. 30.

Isaiah's Obstinacy.

Chap. 4.

2 He hath Terrestrial Armies at his command; as 1 All men whether good or bad, he can make them execute his will even against their own. 2 The Beasts of the field, Levit. 26. 22. 2 King. 2. 24 & 17. 25. 3 He hath Armies of Insects and inferior Animals to vex his enemies withal, as Frogs, Flies, Lice, Caterpillars, Locusts, &c. Exod. 8. Deut. 28. Joel 1. 4. & 2. 25. Amos 7. 1. and if these will not do; he hath the Sea to drown men, Gen. 7. 11. Exod. 14. 28. and the fire to burn them, Gen. 19. and the earth to swallow them up alive, Exod. 15. 12. Numb. 16. 30 & 26. 10.

3 All the Devils in Hell are Gods Serjeants to arrest the wicked, and his Jailors to keep them fast till the Judgement of the great Day. But of this see more at large before on Vers. 10. Obf. 5.
AN EXPOSITION WITH
Practical OBSERVATIONS UPON
The Fifth Chapter of Amos.

VERSE I.
Hear ye this word which I take up against you, even a
lamentation, O house of Israel.

ON this Chapter wee have the summe and substance of the fourth Sermon of the Prophet Amos, which contains a Lamentation for the Captivity, and utter desolation, which was coming upon the Kingdom of Israel for their
abstainancy and Idolatry.

Where wee have 1 A short Exordium to quicken attention, verse 1. Hear this word which I take up against you.
2 Here is a Commination and denouncing of Gods Judgments against them. 1 More briefly, vers. 2, 3. 2 More ampley and Rhetorically, vers. 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 27.
3 Here is a Catalogue of those enormities and dying sins which brought these Judgements upon them: As
1 Unrighteousness, vers. 7.
2 Obstainancy and hating of Reproof, vers. 10.
3 Cruelty and Oppressing of the poor, vers. 11.
An Exposition

Chap. 5.


5. Presumption and vain confidence, in their vocal and instrumental singing, in their sacrifices and hypocritical services, promising themselves safety and deliverance, though they lived in all manner of wickedness, ver. 18, 21, 22, 23.

The summe of the Prophets Argument is this. That people which is unrighteous, obstinate, cruel, hypocritical and idolatrous, shall perish; But such are you, O ye house of Israel: Therefore ye shall perish.

4. Here is an exhortation to Repentance, repeated again and again, to make the deeper impression upon their hearts, that so they might prevent the Judgements approaching, and this is done partly for the Elects sake that they might not perish with the wicked, and partly for the wickeds sake that they might bee left without excuse.

Here we have the two parts of Repentance. 1. The terminus a quo, from what they must turn, viz. from Idols: which cannot help in a day of wrath, ver. 5. and from the evil of sin, which brings with it the evil of punishment, ver. 7, 15.

2. The terminus ad quem, to whom they must return, viz. to God, which is oft repeated to shew the great necessity of it, ver. 4, 6, 8, 14, 15, 24. Seek yee the Lord, seek goodnes, seek righteousness.

2. Here are Motives to enforce the duty. The first is a drawing Motive taken from the benefit which attends Repentance, viz. life and salvation, ver. 4. Seek yee me, and yee shall live, and with all the gracious favour and presence of God, ver. 14, 15.

The second is a driving Motive, drawn from the evil which will necessarily follow the neglect of it, God will bee to them a consuming fire, ver. 6. Seek yee the Lord, lest hee break forth like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it.

A third Motive is drawn from Gods power, which is seen in the works of Creation. Hee maketh the seven Stars and Orion, ver. 8. 2. In his works of Providence, Hee strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong.
VERSE 1.

Hear the word which I take up against you, even a Lamentation, O house of Israel.

In this Chapter the Lord goes on with his charge against Israel, and the Prophet as his Attorney-general doth manage the charge against them. He opens the case, shews them their sins, and God's Judgements coming on them for those sins; yet with all puts them in a way to prevent them, by perswading them to reform the things amiss amongst them.

In this first Verse the Prophet makes as it were an O ye, calling for silence and attention. Hear ye this word which I take up against you. Hee had called for audience twice before Amos 3.1. & 4.1. but this people had stopt their ears, and hardened their hearts, they were become Sermon-proof, and Judgement-proof, nothing could work upon them, yet the Prophet calls a third time, if by any means hee might work upon them.

This Verse is as it were the Preface to the Sermon, and is set in the front to quicken attention; where we have, 1 The matter to be attended, and that is the word of the Lord published by the Prophet Amos. Hear this word which I take up against you; or as it is in the Original, which I lift up against you, that is, which I utter against you by God's command, more clearly, and more fully, with more spirit and life than formerly, so Job 21.2.

2 Here are the persons against whom this Sermon is intended, and that is the ten Tribes, here called, The house of Israel, q.d. I speak not against strangers, but against you, O house of Israel, and therefore it concerns you to attend.

3 Here is the nature of the Sermon, it is a Lamentation, or lamentable Prophesie of the utter destruction of Israel, q.d. Babyl and Hosea, and other Prophets, have for a long time warned you of approaching judgments, but since you slight our threatenings, and give your selves to mirth and merriment, I will now take up a Lamentation for you, and will mourn for you that will not mourn for your selves.

So that this Lamentation implies first; the deep sense and
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

apprehension which the Prophet had of that misery which was coming upon Israel for their Idolatry, Incredulity, Security, and Impenitency. This was to him matter of bitter and great lamentation, as the word imports, Ezek. 2:10. and 19:1. ult., and such lamentation the Lord expects from his people, Ezek. 26:17. and 28:12. and 32:2. Thus David lamented for Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. 1:17.


q.d. You laugh at my Threatenings now, but you will find them an heavy burden shortly, and that will bring great lamentation with it.

Quest. But why doth the Prophet lament for these impenitent sinners, that would not lament for themselves? he should rather have rejoiced in God's just judgments on them, according to that, Psal. 58:10. The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance.

Ans. We must distinguish of sinners.

1 Some are within the pale of the Church, and are God's people by profession, being in Covenant with him, having a remnant of elect ones mingled amongst them. Now God's judgments either imminent or present on these, have been in all ages lamented by the Saints; they have always been deeply affected with the misery of Zion, though their sins have brought it justly upon them; yea and the Lord's own bowels do yearn over them, even when in justice he cannot but punish them, Hos. 6:4. and 11:8. Besides we must lament the sins of these, even when wee adore God's just judgments on them, and must denounce his threatenings against them with tears & lamentation.

2 Others are without the Church, and many within, that are malicious, implacable, incorrigible, and incurable enemies to God, his ways, his worship, and his people; now in the destruction of such we may, and must rejoice, we are commanded (so do), Psal. 58:10. Prov. 13:10. Rev. 18:10. and 19:12.

Cant. Not that we may rejoice in their destruction simply
of the Prophecy of Amos

simply as they bee our enemies, or as they be creatures, but as they are wicked, rebellious creatures, and implacable enemies to God and his ways, so we may, yea and God himself doth rejoice in their destruction, Deut. 28:63. Prov. 1:26.

OBSERVATIONS.


2. Obs. Ministers must not preach their own inventions, but what God commands them. Hear the word which God commanded me to deliver to you. But of this at large before on Amos 4:1.

3. Ministers must preach Judgement as well as Mercy. Law as well as Gospel, and Lamentation as well as Consolation. See Amos 6:1.

4. This our duty to be affected with the miseries of God's people, whether they be eminent or prefer, we must weep with them: that weep; and as fellow members of the same mystical body, we should have compassion one of another, Rom. 12:15.

5. Pet. 3.8. Especially this concerns God's Ministers to commit the sad condition of God's people, and to intercede for them at the Throne of Grace, Jer. 9:1. and 18:20. Joel 2. 6.6.

6. So did Moses for Israel, Exod. 32:31, 33, and Samuel for Saul, 1 Sam. 15:24, Jer. 38:16. Hence the Lord so oft commands the Prophets to take up a Lamentation for the Princes of Israel, Ezek. 19:1. yea for Tyre, Ezek. 27:2, and for Egypt. Ezek. 32:2, 16. and threatens such as neglected this duty, Ezek. 13:5. and 22:30, 31. How great then is the sin of those wicked men who mock at such as mourn for them, who hate those which help to keep off judgements from them, who seek the destruction of those which seek their salvation, and desire their death, who use all means to bring them to life; such horrid ingratitude shall not pass without some signal vengeance.

7. Obs. Such as concern God's Judgements, shall at last lament their folly.

These obdurate manners scoff at the Prophets Threatnings, and
and asked, when will the day of the Lord come? why it shall come upon you in a day that you look not for it, and shall bee a lamentation and a burden that shall binke you: patience abused turns into fury, though God bear long, yet bee will not always bear.

VERSE 2.

The Virgin of Israel is fallen, shee shall no more rise, shee is forsoaken upon her Land, there is none to raise her up.

In the precedent Verse the Prophet tells us of a Lamentation given him by God to publish against Israel. In this Verse he comes to tell us exegetically what it is, viz. the fatal and final overthrow of the whole Kingdom of Israel, set forth in emphatical terms, and variety of words to assure this unbelieving people of the certainty of those judgements which they should shortly feel. In the words we have the summe of this Funeral Lamentation, or Samaria’s Epitaph; The Virgin of Israel is fallen. Where wee have,

1 A Judgement threaten'd, and that is a fall. Israel is fallen, viz. into the hands of the Assyrians.

2 Here are the persons upon whom this judgement shall fall, and that is upon the Virgin of Israel, or the ten Tribes.

3 Here is the certainty of it, It fallen, that is, they shall as surely come down, as if they were this day in the dust.

Quest. How is Israel called a Virgin, whereas shee had plaid the Harlot with Idols, and is therefore called an Harlot? 1.2.

Answ. Kingdomes and Cities are called Virgins in Scripture on several accounts: As 1. when they flourish in riches and renoun, and remain unconquered, and unaccustomed to any yoke of servitude; now such in Scripture, though they bee Heathenish and Idolatrous, yet are called Virgins: As Tyre, 1.2. Babylon, 1.47.1. and Egypt, Jer. 46.11.

2 In respect of their Eseminacy, Delicacy, and Wantonnes, priding themselves in their Beauty and Bravery, and
and tricking themselves up like Virgins; and thus Israel was
effeminate, living daintily and deliciously, giving themselves
up to feasting, mirth, and music, Amos 6. 4, 5, 6. priding
themselves in their wealth, and ornaments, and in this respect
they might be called Virgins.

3 In respect of their weakness, and unbleness to help
themselves; so Israel shall fall, and be like a poor, helpless,
forlorn Virgin, that sits alone in distress; without any helper;
the shall now be deflowered, and wafted by the Assyrian.

4 Israel is here called a Virgin after her Apostasy, but
this is in relation to former times, before they were Idolat-
gerous, as in Davids time (before the division of the ten
Tribes) when they served God in purity, without the tinture of humane inventions; and likewise in relation to their
duty, shewing what they should have been, and not what now
they were; and in this sense Judah is also called a Virgin af-
fter their Apostasie, Jer. 18. 13. & 31. 21. they had both the
name of Virgins, but were indeed Idolaters, and by con-
sequence Adulteresses, that broke the Covenant of their
God.

5 The City of Samaria was a maiden City, it was never
subdued or conquered by any Nation, before the Assyrian
King Salmaneser brought it under the yoke of Servitude; and
carried the ten Tribes captive into Assyria and Media; and in
this respect it might be called a Virgin.

3 Here is the certainty of this Judgement set forth in the
Present Tense, The Virgin of Israel is fallen; that is, she
shall as surely fall as if it were already done; and this is usu-
all with the Prophets, to signify the certainty of a thing, by
majorum rei
putting it in the Present, or præterit Tense. Thus the Scrip-
ture speaks of Babylon in the Present
Tense, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; that is, it shall suddenly, sure
& 18. 2. So Jude 14. The Lord cometh, that is, he will as flumet quo
suredly come, as if he were now coming to Judgement. This was
about forty years before the final overthrow of Samaria, that
the Prophet fore-told this; yet since God had decreed their
fall, he tells them, it shall as surely be effect as if it were
done this day; and it is usual with all the Prophets to speak
thus affectionally, not only because of the certainty of what the

V

denoun-
An Exposition

Chap. 7.

denounced, but because from the first denunciation the plague begins, though not discerned, nor sometimes accomplished till many years after.

4. Here is the aggravation of her fall;
   1. She shall fall so that she shall never rise again.
   2. She shall be forsaken in her own land.
   3. There shall be none to raise her up.

Many fall but they rise again, but when a Kingdom shall fall from its former splendor and dignity, and never be restored again, that is very sad; yet this was Israel's case, they were carried Captive into Assyria, and the body of the Kingdom, and generality of the People never returned again; nor had they ever the face of a Kingdom more, 2 Kings. 17. Hos. 4. 5. & 5. 5. When the remainders of Judah returned out of the Babylonish Captivity to Jerusalem, some few of Israel joined themselves with them, and are reckoned with Judah, the rest of the ten Tribes being scattered, and dispersed up and down the world, degenerated into Gentiles, and some of those dispersed were converted in the Apostolical times, as appears by the inscriptions of the Epistles of James and Peter.

Obj. But we read in our Saviour's time of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Mat. 10. 6. & 15. 24. and that Nicodemus was a Master in Israel, Job. 3. 10. and therefore some conclude, that the Kingdom of Israel was not totally ruined.

Ans. The word Israel hath many significations in Scripture, but that in Matthew hath relation to the Kingdom of Judah, for in Christ's time there was no other Kingdom of Israel extant but that, and that also was very low when Christ came, as I have shewed on Amos 9. 11. and by a Master in Israel is meant no more but a Teacher in the Church of God, for the Church is oft called Israel, Ps. 115. 12. Gal. 6. 16.

Obj. It was fore-told, that the ten Tribes should be made one with Judah, and should return with them, Ezek. 37. 16, 17; 19. 22.

A. This is spoken of Gospel times, and implies a Spiritual, not a Corporal returning of a remnant of those despised and dispersed ones in the days of the Messiah, who should be united to Judah, and by the preaching of the Gospel be brought into the unity of the Church.
Verse 8 of the Prophecy of Amos.

She is forsaken upon her Land.

Shee had forsaken God, and now all desert and forsake her; she had laid Piety and Justice in the dust, and now God resolves to lay her in the dust, she shall be smitten to the earth, and daunghter against it by the Assyrian with such force, that like an earthen pot it shall never be sodred together again.

And which greatly aggravates their misery, all this should happen to them in their own Land, they should want men to help them in their owne Land, as appears in the next verse. They should be afflicted and brought low, not in an enemies Country, but even in their owne; they should be slaughtered and enslaved in the sight of their owne Country, which had been like a Mother and Nurse unto them, and was dearly beloved of them. It aggravates a Virgins misery, to be slain in the sight of her owne Mother.

There is none to raise her up.

God will not, and then Creatures cannot. Shee shall fall without any help or hope of restauration, no neighbour Nation shall once reach out an helping hand to raise her out of the dust, but there let her lye, like one that is fell to the ground, and not able to rise of himself, and forsaken of all others must needs remaine as he fell; so Israel should never recover his pristine splendor, and flourishing condition, though some remnants should remaine, or as it follows in the next verse.

Observations.

1. Six layers famous and flourishing Kingdoms in the dust.

Those Maiden-Cities and Kingdoms which were never touched, nor taken, yet if sin reign in them (as it did in Samaria) it will ruine them. Where are the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian Monarchies, which were sometimes famous and flourishing, and the terrour of the world? They are long since laid in the dust.

2. Impeccent sinners shall certainly perish.

Though they may flourish for a time, yet when their sin is ripe, they shall come down; and therefore the Prophet speaks in the Present Tense, Israel is fallen; that is, he shall as certainly fall as if he were down already. So Babylon that lives.
An Exposition

in Luxury and security, shall at last be burnt, Revelat. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10.

3 When God is against us, all forsake us.

Israel is forsaken in his owne Land, and so sadly forsaken, that there is not one to raise him up. The Land did formerly abound with men; yet, now they have none to help them in their misery; so the dust they must, and there they lye. As God will not cast away the righteous man, but will assist him in his troubles; so he will not take a wicked man by the hand, Job 8. 20, but as he brings them into trouble, so he leaves them there, Ezek. 22. 20. & 29. 5. his owne he will not leave, and if men will not succour them, yet he will, Job 5. 19. Jer. 30. 17. he will give his not only the grace, but also the blessing of peace, Psal. 29. 11. Levit. 26. 6. when our ways please him, then all are at peace with us, Prov. 26. 7. 2 Chron. 30. 9.

4 God oft visitates sinners, and pays them in their owne coin.

Israel that forsook God, is now forsaken of all, and those that overthrew Justice, and oppressed the poor, are now overthrown themselves, and oppressed by others. But of this see Amos 6. ult. Obs. 8.

Verse 3.

For thus saith the Lord God, the City that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred, shall leave ten to the house of Israel.

What the Prophet had spoken before in general, now becomes to express more plainly and particularly, viz. That the Kingdom of Israel should perish; yet not so totally, but that a remnant should be spared; though the body of the people should be cut off, yet a decimation should live to praise God.

So that in this verse we have the reason of the Prophets lamentation and doleful ditty, and that is the great havoc which God would make amongst this people, he would cut off nine parts, and leave but a tenth. When the Roman Armies did mutiny, the Commanders did use to decimate them, purging
of the Prophecy of Amos.

nishing every tenth man. But the Lord goes further here, being incensed against Israel, hee tells them, that by the Sword, by Captivity, by the Pestilence and Famine, hee would make such a slaughter amongst them, that the City which went out by a thousand, should bee brought to an hundred, and an hundred to ten; that is, of a great multitude very few should return. Such a woful decimation there should bee amongst them, that very few should escape. The like Threatning wee have set forth under another Metaphor, Amos 3,12. As the Shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the Lion, two legs, or the piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel bee taken out of Samaria, &c. q.d. as a Shepherd when a Lion hath been devouring his flock, finds some mangled remains of a leg, or an ear; so shall it bee with Israel, some one or two shall escape the general slaughter and Captivity.

The City which went out by a thousand; that is, The City which had a thousand Inhabitants passing to and fro through the gates thereof; or more genuinely, The City which sent forth a thousand able men to the Wars, or that could furnish, and let out a thousand men fit to bear Arms, shall have but an hundred left. The Prophet seems to allude to that of Moses, Deut.1,15. where the people are divided under Captains over thousands, and Captains over hundreds.

This Threatning was partly fulfilled in the three years siege of Samaria, 2 King. 19, 10. and partly after, when there was a great devastation of men amongst them.

Lastly, To assure them of the reality and truth of all that hee had spoken; hee brings in the Lord afferring it, Thus saith the Lord God, q.d. You have not to do with impotent men, but with an Omnipotent God, who both can and will execute his judgements upon the heads of the wicked.

The summe of all is this, So few shall bee left alive after the long and hard sieges of the Assyrians, that in these Cities of Israel, out of which a thousand able men had went to go forth to War, how there should be left but an hundred, and an hundred shall be brought to ten, saith the Lord who doth this.

OBSERVATIONS:

Sins the grand depopulator of a Kingdom. It makes Cities

V3.
that go out by thousands to return by hundreds, and reduceth their hundreds to tens. Wee use to complain of such as unpeople Towns and Villages; sin is the Arch-depopulation of Towns and Cities, it brings the Sword, Plague and Famine upon Nations, which sweep men away by thousands. As obedience multiplies a people, and makes them like the land of the Sea for multitude, 1 King.4.20. So disobedience makes men few in number, which were before as the Stars of Heaven for multitude, Deut.28.62. We should therefore unanimously rise in arms against this Curt-heading; if an enemy should come to Town that had killed our fathers, mothers, wives and children, and robbed us of all our pleasant things, with what indignation and fury would men, women and children joyfully rise to ruine such an enemy? Sin is this adversary, it robs Sovereigns of their subjects, Pastors of their people, and robs us of our dearest relations. We should therefore do by it as the Jews did by Paul (whom they lookd upon as their adversary, Acts.22.27,28.) when they saw him they stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, saying, Men of Israel help, This is he that is against this people, and against the Law, and against this place. So should we encourage each other against sin, and suppress it, saying, Magistrates, Ministers, men and brethren help, this is that which destroyes our people, wastes our Cities, unpeoples our Towns, opposeth the Laws, and brings confusion every where.

2 Obs. In the midst of judgement, God remembers mercy. All had deferved death here, yet such is his clemency that hee spares a Tenth, and leaves a remnant, Isa.1.9 and 8.11,12,13. Tis the Lords singular mercy that any remain alive, and it is his overflowing goodness that wee are not all utterly consumed, and buried out of the world at once, Lam.3.22. In the midst of these devastations, here is a gleaming left to praise him.

3 Obs. The threatenings of Gods Ministers are Gods threatenings. Thus saith the Lord, the City that went out by a thousand, shall leave an hundred. Tis not I (saith Amos) but the Lord by mee his weak instrument, that tells you this, Wee are Ambassadors for Christ, 2 Cor.5.20. Now the words of an Ambassador are esteemed as the words of him that sent him. This made Cornelius (though a Soldier and a Commander) yet to fet himself as in Gods presence, and so to hear as if God himself spake to him, Acts.10.33. and so did the Thessalonians.

1 Thess.
Vers. 4. of the Prophecy of Amos.

1 Thess. 2:13. When our preaching agrees with the word of God, it is to be esteemed as the word of God himself. If this were truly believed, it would make us come with other affections to hear the word than most now do.

Vers. 4.

For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek me, and ye shall live.

The Prophet having shewed this people their misery, and affrighted them with the Threatnings, hee comes now unto the Remedy, and shews them how they may prevent all that misery which like a flood was rushing in upon them, especially for their Idolatry, and that is by Repentance, by forsaking their Idols, and turning to the Lord. Where, there is no ground of hope, people grow desperate and run from God, and therefore the Prophet gives them some glimpse of mercy, inviting them once and again to seek the Lord, that so they might prevent his fury.

In the words we have 1 A preface, Thus saith the Lord. This is oft used before by this our Prophet, in the first, second, third, and fourth Chapters: and this hee doth, 1 To quicken attention; 2 To make them attend with the greater reverence and fear, since it is the word of God, and not of man; 3 To assure them of the certainty and truth of what hee spake, and that it should bee certainly and suddenly effected, for hee that is Almighty hath said it.

2 Here are the persons to whom hee speaks, viz. To the house of Israel, i.e. to the ten Tribes. The invitation is general, to take off all excuse, that none might say, They were not exhorted to the duty.

3 Here is a Precept, Seek me, thee.

Where wee have 1 The Act, Seek.
2 The Object, Me.

4 A Promise, And ye shall live.

The Precept is short, but very comprehensive. It is indeed a brief of the whole body of Religion, or a summary of the whole duty of man. The Scripture doth in many places epitomize our duties, reducing them sometimes to eleven heads,
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

as Psal. 15. Sometimes to six, as Isa. 33. 15., and Hos. 6. 1-2.
Sometimes to three, viz., Justice, Mercy, and humble walking
with God. Micah 6. 8. Our Saviour hath epitomized them,
and reduced them all unto two; viz., Thou shalt love the Lord
thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy self. But our
Prophet here comes and summes them all up in one, saying,
Seek the Lord.

The word Seek is emphatical, and signifies not a bare will-
ing or willing, or some cold velleities, but an earnest, ac-
curate, exquisite inquiring after God, and his ways; and
therefore the Septuagint render it by a compound word which
signifies to seek out with earnestness and diligence till wee
 finde the Lord. The Apostle useth the same word, Heb. 11. 6.
The Lord is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

The word implies labour, industry, and constancy, wee
must never rest till wee have found the Lord, as the woman
that had lost her groat, continued seeking till shee had found

3 Here is the causative particle, For, which may bee ren-
dred, therefore, and then the sense will bee more current, thus,
q.d. Since the Lord hath threatened to make such havock amongst
you, therefore seek him sincerely that ye may live, for bee desires
not your ruine, but your returning.

Yet some make the particle redundant here, and look-up-
on it onely as an explicative particle, oft so used by the He-
brews. The sense is here entire without it.

4 Here is the object of our seeking, and that is God. Seek.

see mee. Excellent things are the object of our desires; now
there is none like God, and therefore none to bee desired like
him. Hee is our Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, ours in all
Sweet Relations, our Father, Husband, Lord, King, &c. and
therefore to bee sought and served by us in an especial manner.
One of these obligations call for observance and duty, but
when all shall concenct, and meet in one, how great should
our observance bee.

2 This seeking of God, implies a sincere turning to him, a
loving him with all our heart, a seeking him simply for him-
self, it notes a trusting in him, a fear to offend him, a forfaking
of all Idols and false wayes (as it follows in the next verse),
de lying only in his pure word and worship, 1 Chron. 16. 10.

and
and praying to him, Psal. 34. 4. Matt. 7. 7. It implies also an obeying his Commands, 2 Chron. 14. 4. and seeking his face and favour at all times, Psal. 27. 10. Is. 55. 6. These are those things above, which we are commanded to seek, Colos. 3. 1.

Thus we see, what a Magazine of matter is comprehended in this little Precept, Seek see me. V. Gerhard.

Obj. This command to seek God (say Papists and Arminians) implies, that we have Free-will of our selves to seek him, and turn to him, else why doth the Lord command us so to doe, if we had no power to doe it?

Ans. It doth not follow, that because the Lord commands us to seek him, therefore we have power of our selves to doe it. For,

1. These commands shew us our duty, but not our ability; they shew what we ought to be, but not what we are.

2. Yet these Exhortations are not in vain, for the Lord makes them effectual in the hearts of his people; what he bids them doe, he enables them in some measure to doe.

3. The Lord had a remnant of his Elect mingled amongst this heap of chaff, and their wills being changed, and made conformable to Gods will, are willing and ready to seek and serve him.

4. Hereby the wicked are made more inexcusable, and their malice and obstinacy made more apparent to the world, since they stand out against so many invitations to come in.


5. Here is a promise to incourage them to seek the Lord, drawn ab. willi. from the benefit they should reap thereby, To be better live, or live yee; the Imperative Mood is put for the Future.
An Exposition

Chapter 7.

You shall have a Natural Life.

If you seek the Lord, and return to him, you shall have your Natural life prolonged; whereas you are in danger of dying by the hand of the Assyrian, yet doe but return to me unfeignedly, and you shall experimentally find that your lives shall be given you for a prey; at least yee shall not be utterly destroyed, but instead of Warre, you shall have peace and prosperity in your borders. This seems to be the most genuine sense of this place, (though we may not exclude the other, for it is a known Rule, that it is safe taking the words in the largest sense, if neither matter, phrase, nor scope hinder,) for in the foregoing verse, the Lord tells them what slaughter he would make amongst them, therefore he bids them here, return and live.

Yet we may not solely confine it to a Natural life, because it is a Legal promise, and they usually doe comprehend Spiritual mercies in them. The Hebrews frequently under the name of Life, doe comprehend all manner of prosperity and felicity, both Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal, Deut. 4. 1. & 5. ult. Psal. 34. 12. & 133. 8. Prov. 4. 4. Ezek. 18. 9. The like expression we use at this day, at the Inauguration of Kings, when we cry, Vivat Rex, let the King live; that is, all health, prosperity, and happiness attend him.

2 You shall live a Spiritual life of Grace here, your souls shall enjoy communion with God, they shall live to him here, and at last shall live with him for ever; for Grace is the suburbs of glory.

3 You shall live eternally, Ezek. 18. 17. ult. Obj. But had not the Lord decreed the destruction of this people, how then doth he bid them return and live?

A. Such threatenings of Temporal judgements are not always absolute, but conditional, viz. if they repent not, I will destroy them; and though this condition be not always express, yet it is understood, as appears by that notable place,
of the Prophecy of Amos.

I. Such as seek God rightly, shall live assuredly.

I say, such as seek God rightly, which cuts off many pretenders to religion, who seem to seek and serve the Lord, but it is feignedly, and hypocritically; they halt between God and Baal, between Christ and Belial; like Agrippa, they are almost, but not altogether Christians; they have a name to live, but they are dead indeed.

2. Others seek for the living amongst the dead. They seek the Lord amongst the traditions and customs of men. Such mens religion is vain, Mat. 15. 9. Amos 5. 5.

3. Others seek, but it is too late; like Esau, that never cries till he had lost the Blessing. So those, Luke 13. 24, 25.

4. Others instead of seeking the Lord, sit all the day idle, they forget the Lord days without number, he is not in any of their thoughts, Jer. 2. 32. It is not the somnolent, but the violent that get heaven, Mat. 21. 12. where then will those Idle, Against these Atheistical Seekers of our time appear, who are meer Sceptics in religion, that question every thing, but beleive and practice nothing? some of them have been Professors this forty years, yet now they are to seek their religion. These men have laid good foundations the while, that are going out of the world, before they know how to live in the world; when the Lord hath so clearly shewed us what he requires of us, Micah 6. 8. what madness is it to be still running after New Lights, which are no Lights for directions?

5. Others instead of seeking God, they persecute those that doe sincerely seek him, like the Scribes and Pharisees, that would neither follow Christ themselves, nor suffer others to doe. Stripes are prepared for scorners, and such mockers shall have their bonds made strong, Isa. 28. 22.

6. Others seek, but it is amiss; for they seek riches, honour, pleasures, instead of God, and things above. Those three are the Worlds Trinity, they are the grand Intyre of our times.

David.
An Exposition

David tells us, there be many of this stamp. Psal. 4. 6. Many say, who will bear me goods? Paul goes further, and tells us, All men seek their owne ease, wealth, ends, and respects; that is, All comparatively, they are but few that seek the things of Christ, Phil. 3. 21.

Q. Since there are so many Seekers, and so few good ones, how must I seek aright?

A. That you may seek the Lord and find him, you must seek him,

1. Early.
2. Sincerely.
4. Sensibly.
5. Constantly.
6. Regularly.

1. Those that will find the Lord when they seek him, must seek him early, in the morning of their youth, whilst the day of their Visitation lasts. To such the Promise runs, Prov. 8. 17.

They that seek me early shall find me. It was Joseph’s commendation, that when he was young, and but sixteen years old, he began to seek and serve the Lord, 2 Chron. 34. 1, 3. and Tit. 3. 15.

We must also seek him orderly, seek his Kingdom in the first place, both before, and above all other things, Matt. 6. 33.

2. Sincerely and cordially, not hollowly and complementally. We must seek him with all our might, to such the Promise runs, that they shall find him, Deut. 4. 29. 2 Chron. 15. 15.

Jer. 29. 13. Then shall ye seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Thus David sought him, and found him, Psal. 119. 10. never any mist that ever sought him in truth, Psal. 145. 18. If we be the genuine Seed of Israel, sincere Jacob, we shall never seek his face in vain, Isa. 45. 19. before they call, he will answer such, and will run to meet them, as he did the Prodigal, Luke 15. 18, 19, 20.

Ye see, a wicked Ahab shall not altogether seek to God in vain; and if the shadow can doe so much, what will the substance and real seeking of God doe?
3. We must seek him zealously, and earnestly; such great things must be sought with fervent affections. Precious things are not easily attained. Even the world's wealth comes not with a wish, much less heavenly treasures. They that will have them must ask, and if that will not do they must seek; if seeking will not do they must be more importunate, and knock; it is not a bare Repetition, but a Gradation, Mat. 7:7. We must seek as men do for silver, and gold, with utmost diligence, Prov. 2:4. Let not the children of this world be wiser, and more industrious for their trash, than we for true treasure. Remember, that none shall be rewarded fully, but such as seek him diligently, Heb. 11:6.

4. Sensefully. See how we are undone without him, though we were Lords of all the world, yet without the favour of God, who is Lord of all, we are nothing. Sense of our wants will sharpen our desires after him, and make us resolve with David, to give no rest to our eyes, nor slumber to our eye-lids, till we have found him, Psal. 132:4.

5. Constantly. 1 Chron. 16:11. We must never rest till we have found him, persevere in the use of all good means, as Prayer, Meditation, &c. resolve to take no denial, importunity will do much. Comfort will come in the end, and will abundantly reconcile all our waiting. Though hope deferred may make the heart faint, yet when it comes it will be as a tree of life, Prov. 13:12.

6. Regularly. We must inquire for the good old way of Purity and Peace and walk therein, Jer. 6:16. We must not walk according to the superstitious Customs and Canons of men, but according to the Canon of God's Word. Galat. 6:16.

Q. But what benefit shall I have by seeking God?
A. Thou shalt have Life, and that is a very powerful motive; life is so sweet and desirable a thing, that the Devil could say, 'Skin for skin,' and all that a man hath will be given for his life, Job 2:4.

Now Piety hath the promise. 1. Of Life Temporal, so faire See my Beauty as shall be good for the righteous, Psal. 34:12. & 37:3, Prov. of Holiness, ch. 7. obj. 4.
2. You shall have Spiritual life, Isa. 55:3. Ezek. 16:6. X 3 which
which is indeed the onely excellent, sweet, and durable life. Natural life is common, every wicked man lives it; and it is imbittered with many crosses, and it is not, it is a vapour that suddenly vanishes; but this spiritual life is a special, comfortable, endless life, death it self cannot extinguish it.

3 If this be not enough, you shall have Eternal life, John 3.16. and 6.51. and 17.3.

Verse 5.

But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beer-sheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into Captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought.

True Repentance consists of two parts, 1 There is terminus a quo, from what wee must turn: 2 Terminus ad quem, to whom wee must turn. In the foregoing verse, the Prophet sets down positively and affirmatively whom wee must seek, and to whom wee must turn, and that is to the Lord. Hee comes now to shew us negatively, what wee must not do, and what wee must not seek, and that is Idols. Seek the Lord, but seek not Idols. God puts a But and Block in their way to keep them from them. But seek not Bethel. God can do all things, but Idols can do nothing; great reason then wee should forsake them, and cleave onely to God, who would have us first Table-men to worship him according to his own will revealed in his word; and then second Table-men, in righteousness towards our neighbour, vers. 15.

In the words wee have 1 A Dehortation from Idolatry, to this end they must

Bethel, Gilgal, and Beer-sheba.

That Bethel and Gilgal were such, I have shewed before at large on Amos 4.4. Bethel was the place where Jeroboam set up a golden Calf.

Gilgal was a City full of Idols, Hosea 4.15, and 12.11.

Beer-sheba was a City in Canaan where Abraham had formerly dwelt, Gen. 31.31, 32, 33, here God appeared to Isaac, Gen.
of the Prophet of Amos.

Gen. 26:24. and here Jacob sacrificed, Gen. 46:1. This made these superstitious people think that there was more holiness in this place than in others, and therefore richer they came, when God had ordained them to go to Jerusalem.

This City was afterwards allowed to the Tribe of Judah, Josh. 15:28. and 1 King. 19:4. yet it was inhabited by the Tribe of Simeon, Josh. 19:2. It was situate on the utmost See more on South-border of the Land of Canaan, as Dan was on the North. Amos 8:11. It was a City given to Idolatry, as Bethel and Gilgal were, and therefore the Lord gave a strict injunction here, that they should not go to any of them.

But seek not Bethel, &c.

q.d. If you will be my people, you must cast away your Idols, you must not go to worship the golden Calf at Bethel, nor to the High-places and Idolatrous Altars at Gilgal and Beerseba, for these places shall perish with the Idols that are in them.

Pass not to Beerseba.

The Kingdom of Israel was divided from the Kingdom of Judah, yet so mad were this people on Idols, that they will post over the Country of Judah after them, when they had too many at home already.

1. To strengthen the Dehortation, here is a reason added, drawn from the danger which would follow if they followed Idols, both they and their Idols should perish. For Gilgal shall surely go into Captivity; that is, the Inhabitants of Gilgal (Mai. supra) going they shall go, i.e. they shall suddenly and certainly go into Captivity by the hand of the Assyrian. There is an elegant Paronomasy in the words. Gilgal signifies rolling, Gilgal shall roll to ruine; or rolling bee shall speedily roll into Captivity. They trusted in this place for safety, but both they and it should perish.

And Bethel shall come to nought.

Bethel signifies the house of God, but by reason of its Idolatry, is called Beth-aven, Hos. 4:15. a house of vanity and iniquity, Hos. 5:8. and 10. 5.

Aven signifies an Idol; vanity, inanity, and nought; and therefore the ruine of Bethel is set forth by this Title. Bethelsum vanitas, shall be Aven, or bee brought to nought; that is, it shall bee minuitas, totally ruined, and nothing shall remain of it, but the prints of Gods indignation against it.
An Exposition

So that it is great folly for any to run to such Idolatrous places for shelter, which can neither defend themselves from ruin, nor their Idols from spoyl. Hos. 10.5,6.

Observations.

1. Idolatrous places must be shunned. As they might not go to Bethel, Gilgal, or Beer-sheba, so wee may not go to Spain, Italy, France, &c., with the least hankering after their Idols, if you do Satan will quickly make a prey of you; for sin, especially the sin of Idolatry, is like Bird-time, if a man go on to touch it, hee will bee so intangled in it, that hee cannot easily be shut ofit. Hence it is that the Lord so oft commands us to shun wicked Society for fear of infection, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

How great then is the sin of those, that do spontaneously travel into Idolatrous Countries needlessly? such oft-times return infected both in body and soul. Jeroboam that travelled into Egypt brought home the Idolatry of Egypt with him, with which hee infected all Israel.

2. Obs. True converts must forsake Idols. They must say with repenting Ebraim, What have I to do any more with Idols? Hos. 14.8. Many would fain serve the Lord and their Idols too, but that will not be, if you will bee mine, you must renounce your Idols, faith God, You must forget your kindred, and your fathers house, Psa. 45.10. that is, wee must abandon all those corruptions which wee are strongly inclined unto by nature; and those Idolatrous, and superstitious practices, which wee were brought up in; wee must renounce them all, and give up our selves entirely to Christ our spiritual Husband, then, and not till then will hee take pleasure in us, and desire our beauty. Such as desire to have communion with God, must first put away their Idols, Gen. 35.1, 2. Josh. 24.22, 23. Judg. 10.16. 1 Sam. 7.3. Psa. 16.4.5. True converts turn from those vanities to the living God, Acts 14.15. and have a special command given them to keep themselves pure from Idols, 1 Joh. 5.21. They know that the Lord is a jealous God, and cannot endure contrivals, nor to have his worship mixt with the inventions and fancies of men. As I have shewed at large before
Verse 5. of the Prophecy of Amos.

God cannot abide halting and halving between two opinions, 1 Kings. 18. 21. if we will Worship God, we must abhor Idols, for we cannot serve both, Josh. 23. 17. no man can serve two such contrary Masters that have contrary commands, ways, and ends. There can be no communion between Christ and Belial, 2 Cor. 6. 15. and therefore they that will goe to Mass with their bodies, pretending that they keep their hearts for God, are mere dissimblers. They partake with Idolaters in their sin, harden them in their Idolatry, and sin against the Prophets counsel here, that forbids men to goe after Idols.


3 Obs. Superstition is a toy/some-thing.

It makes men that they cannot rest, but they must run up and down, now to Bethel, anon to Gilgal, and then traverse the Country, and goe a Perigrination to Beersheba, so mad are men upon Idols, that they are not content with those at home, but they must be gadding abroad after more. Thus the Papists at this day, though they have Idols more than a good many at home, yet must goe a Perigrination after more; and if you see the pervers cave nature of man, how directly opposite it is to God, he bids us goe one way, and we goe quite another. He bids us goe to Jerusalem, and they goe one to Dan, another to Bethel, another to Gilgal, and a fourth to Beersheba. So true is that, Homo est inversus decalogus, Man is a perverse, cross-grained-piece to all Gods holy commands.

4 Obs. Idolatry brings desolation and ruine upon Cities and Kingdoms.

Gilgal shall goe into Captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought, and the Virgin of Israel shall fall. When Bethel Gods House, shall become Beth-aunen, a house of Idols and Vanity, then follows Beth-aun, an house of misery and affliction. They that follow such lying vanities forfake their owne mercies. Idols themselves are most vain, Vanity, and things of nought, and nothing doe they bring but nought with them. Hence the Scripture calls them, Elilim, things of nought, Lev. 19. 4. x Chron. 16. 26. Psa. 96. 5.
2. Gnat Sabim, Sorrows, because they bring men to sorrow, captivity, and misery, 1 Sam. 31. 9. Psal. 16. 4. & 115. 4.

3. Gullim, filthy dung and excrements, because they are loathsome to God, Levit. 26. 30. Deut. 29. 17. Ezek. 6. 4. 5. 6.


5. Seguirim, Devils; such as worship Idols, are said not to Worship God, but Devils. They forsook the Lord and his Worship, to worship Devils, Levit. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 17; 2 Chron. 11. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 20. 21. Rev. 9. 20.

Great reason then that we should abominate Idols, which bring such sorrow and misery upon places, incensing the Lord to set fire upon them, as it follows in the next verse.

VERSE 6.

Seek the Lord, and ye shall live, lest he break forth like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.

Good things are hardly believ'd, and slowly practis'd, and therefore the Prophet here renew's his Exhortation of seeking God by true Repentance, and that he might the better prevail with them, he useth a double Motive.

The first is drawn from the danger which would ensue if they refused; the Wrath of God would break forth upon them like a consuming fire, so that all their superstitious Sacrifices at Bethel should not be able to quench it.

The second is drawn from the glorious and tremendous Majesty of God, with whom they had to doe; and this is accurately set forth, ver. 8, 9.

In this Verse we have a Repetition of the fore-going Exhortation to seek the Lord, that they might live, q. d. If ever you desire to be truly happy, you must forsake your Idols, and false worship, devoting your selves wholly unto God.

2 Here is a Reason to inforce the duty, Left the Wrath of the Lord break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.

Here the Holy Ghost seems to prevent an evasion, the Israelites.
Ver. 2.

Of the Prophecy of Amos.

And he might say, If the Lord be thus angry with us, we will go to our God at Bethel, and they shall succour and shelter us. Nay, saith the Lord, you do but make your refuge when you go thither for aid, for none of your Idols shall be able to quench the fire of my wrath, no not in Bethel.

By Fire here is meant the VVrath of God, which should break forth like fire, in sudden, terrible, and irresistible judgments, devouring all before it, so that none should be able to quench it; so much the word in the Original imports. It is used for the carrying on of a thing against all difficulty, or a rumpore, pervae-succesful breaking through in despight of all opposition. All the world compared with God is but so much dry stubble, or a few dry thorns before a consuming fire, Exod. 15. 7. Isa. 47. 14.

Fire is taken two ways in Scripture, literally and figuratively, for the Element of Fire, or for ordinary fire.

1. Literally, and strictly, for the Element of Fire, or for ordinary fire.

2. Figuratively, and Metaphorically, for the VVrath of God, or any effects of his wrath, any Judgement which he sends upon the wicked, be it Sword, Plague, Famine, or whatsoever distress; yea the very Flood which drowned the world may in this sense be called Fire. Thus it is usually put in Scripture for all manner of dreadful Judgements; as Psal. 18. 7, 8. Isa. 66. 15. Jer. 49. 27. Amos 1. 4. from this fire of God's wrath comes fire from Heaven and consumes the wicked, Gen. 19. 24. Exod. 9. 24. Levit. 10. 2. Numb. 11. 2. 1 King. 1. 10. and at last they must ly in unquenchable fire, Isa. 30. 33. Mat. 3. 12. & 25. 41.

In the house of Joseph; that is, amongst the Israelites, or ten Tribes, who are oft called Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, Samaria. By Joseph here is meant Ephraim, for Joseph is oft put for Ephraim his Son, Amos 6. 6. Revel. 7. 8. and Ephraim is oft put for the ten Tribes, because Jeroboam the first King of Israel (after the division of the ten Tribes) was of the Tribe of Ephraim, 1 King. 11. 6.

Observations.

1. So great is the patience and clemency of the Lord, that he is very loath to destroy men.

Y 2

Hence.
Hence it is that he sends his Ministers, rising early, and coming late unto them, exhorting them again and again to seek him, and turn to him, that they may live and not dye. See ver. 4, 5, 6, 14, 15.

2 Obst. The Wrath of the Lord is exceeding terrible.

Hence it is compared to fire, which is the most terrible, tormenting, and affrighting Element.

Quest. But how is anger said to be in God, when he is impassible?

Ans. Anger and Wrath are ascribed to God improperly, and metaphorically, by an Anthropopathy; not as a perturbation, and trouble of mind, as it is in us; but as an act of revenging Justice, which Justice as it simply burns against sin, is called anger, but when it doth more fiercely wax hot against sin, and Sinners, it is called Wrath and Indignation, Isa. 64. 5.

This Wrath of God is,

1. Formidable.
2. Durable.
3. Inevitable.
4. Irresistible.
5. Unexpressible.

It is formidable and terrible; Fire of all Creatures is the most dreadful. Hence the doleful Torments of Hell are set forth by fire, Matt. 3. 12. and God's Wrath is called, a consuming fire, Deut. 4. 24. which burns up all that stands in its way. This made him cast out Angels, hurl out Adam, drown the old world, fire Sodome, rove out the Canaanites, Lev. 18. 25. and destroy Jerusalem. As all in God is infinite, his Mercy, Justice, &c. so is his Wrath, which makes it so exceeding terrible and intolerable. Should all the Creatures set to their help, yet they were not able to uphold a man under the burden of God's wrath.

Hence the dearest of God's Servants (though they have had God's Spirit to uphold them) yet have cried out of this, as a burden too heavy for them to bear; and have chosen rather to endure any tortures, than to live under the wrath of an angry God. They fear not him who can but kill the body, but they say with the Prophet, Psal. 76. 7. Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may stand before thee when thou art angry? Gods
Gods wrath is like a great Bell, it is long in raising, but when it is up, it makes a hideous noysse. Or like Lead, which is cold of it self, but when once melted, nothing scalds more terribly. What calmer and smoother than the Sea; yet when stirred what more tempestuous?

2 It is Durable. It is not for a day or two, but it is an abiding wrath, Joh.3.36. It is a fire that never goes out, but shall abide on the bodies and souls of the Reprobates to all eternity, Math.18.8. and 25.41.

3 It is inevitable, there is no flying from it, Amos 9.1,2. If a King bee angry with us, we may fly out of his Dominions, but if the King of Kings bee against us there is no flying out of his Territories.

4 It is irresistible, it is like a violent wind, or a mighty flood, which carrieth down all before it, Psal.90.7,8,9. Should all the world rise in opposition against God, they would bee no more before the fire of his wrath, than a little dry stubble, or a few crackling thorns. Wood is longer in burning, and leaves some coals behind, but stubble and thorns are suddenly and utterly consumed; and scarce any ashes left, Exod.15.7. Is.4.5.24. and 9.18. and 47.14. Fire and water have no mercy, there is no intertacting them; such is Gods wrath in reference to the wicked, as good speak to the fire not to burn, or the water not to drown, as to the wrath of God not to consume wicked men; it must and will burn them, and none shall quench it, Deut.29.20. Though Moses and Samuel stood before the Lord to intreat, yet the sentence cannot be reversed, wrath must devour and consume the wicked, Jer.15.1. Though prayer hath in many cases quenched wrath, yet sometimes the wrath of God cannot be quenched by prayer, not intertreated down, there is no speaking to it.

5 It is unexpressible. It is infinite, and so beyond the tongues expression, or the hearts imagination. Hence Moses, See more in Mr. Leight Bo asks, Who knoweth the power of thy wrath? Psal.90.11. It surpasseth our knowledge! Wee may over fear the wrath of men, 1.2.3.9. and Mr. but wee cannot have too dreadful apprehensions of the wrath of God. All other fires are like painted or imaginary fire compared with this. Hence the Holy Ghost is fair to use metaphors and allusions to set it forth to us. Sometimes comparing it to fire, which is a most furious element, laying all waste.
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

whirl before it, *Nahum* 1.5,6. Sometimes to water, and to a
mighty flood which swiftly and irresistibly carries down all be-

Sometimes to a Moth, which secretly and insensibly ears
thread by thread till the whole piece be consumed, *Job* 13.
King, and if that bee as the Messenger of death, Oh what
is the wrath of the King of Kings? *Prov* 16.14.

Then take heed of provoking him to anger; better have all
the world in rage against us, then God against us. Their wrath
is but finite and limited, both in respect of time and place,
but God's wrath is infinite without either bank or bottom.

Take heed of all sin, especially of those God-provoking
sins, as

and following Antichrist, *Rey* 14.9, 10. and 19.20.


3. *Neglecting to reform: things amiss in God's worshipping*,

4. *Fornication and Sodomitical sins*, *Gen* 19.24. *Cor*
10.5, 8.

5. *Murmuring at God's dispensations*, *Cor* 10.5, 10.


When ever we perceive the fire of God's wrath to break
out in Sword, Plague, &c. by our prayers and tears we should
labour suddenly to quench it, *Numb* 16.46. A fire the longer
it burns, the more dreadful it is; and the harder it is to
quench it.

3. In all our approaches to this great and mighty God,
whether in Prayer, Sabbaths, Sacraments, &c. come with the
greatest fear and reverence, for he is a consuming fire, *Heb*
12.28. This holy fear must bee an ingredient into all our ser-
vice, *Psal* 2.11. It is said of Luther that hee prayed with
such fear and reverence, as remembering hee had to do with
God, and yet with such assurance and confidence, as with a
Friend, and Father.

4. *Bee thankful for Christ, who hath delivered us from wrath
to come*. The Angels fell and lye under this wrath, but
Christ was cursed that wee might bee blessed, and hath un-
dergone God's wrath for us, that wee might bee freed from it.
Ver. 7. of the Prophecy of Amos.

In time of temptation, set this as a screen between the fire of God's wrath, and thy soul. Hide thyself in the clefts of this Rock, and get thy soul covered with thy Saviour's Righteousness, and then thou mayest stand with comfort and confidence before this consuming fire.

Verse 7.

See who turn Judgement into wormwood, and leave off Righteousness in the earth.

The Prophet having called on Israel to repent, hee comes now to set before them their sins which they should repent of. Hee had called upon them before to forfake their Idolatry and sins against the first Table, ver. 5. now he calls on them to repent of their sins against the second Table, viz. their perverting of Judgement and Justice, their cruelty, and oppressing of the poor, verse 11. and their Bribery, verse 12.

Seek ye the Lord, yee who have turned Judgement into wormwood.

1 Here is a sin reproved, and that is perverting of Judgement, set forth by an elegant Metaphor and Allusion of turning Judgement into wormwood.

2 Here is an exegesis or fuller explication of this sin. They leave off righteousness in the earth. It is usual in Scripture to make the latter clause explain the former.

3 Here are the persons which are guilty of this sin, and those are the Princes, Judges, and Rulers of Israel, included in the Pronoun Yee.

4 Here is their duty set down in the next verse, They must turn from their sin, and seek the Lord who is the great Creator and Governor of all:

q.d. O yee Rulers of Israel, who have not only provoked mee by your Idolatry, but have also cast away all care of Righteousness and Equity, and given your selves up to all manner of cruelty, bribery, rapine, and iniquity, and have thereby turned the sweetest Justice into the bitterest wormwood; now repent, and seek the Lord, that yee may live for ever.

The Prophet here principally taxeth the great ones, and the Rulers of the people, who had the deepest share in this guilt; they should have been patterns of Justice and Righteousness.
to their inferiors; but they being evil themselves, corrupted the rest, as bad humours use to flow from the head to the body, and therefore the Prophet falls heavy upon them, as hee did before, Chap. 4.1.

These corrupted Justice, and made that which is in it self most profitable and pleasant, to become bitter and distasteful by oppressing the poor and helpless. This is called Wormwood here, and gall and poyson, Amos 6.12.

1 Because such unrighteousness and oppression is very displeasing and bitter to God.
2 It is bitter to the poor and oppressed.
3 In the end it will bee bitter to the Oppressors themselves. This is finis opus, though not finis operantis. In the conclusion it will bee gall and wormwood, yea deadly poyson to their souls, though they intend it not.

Justice and Equity is a most sweet and precious thing, and doth wonderfully help to preserve the peace and prosperity of a Land. This is a sanctuary and shelter for the innocent and the oppressed; but these oppressing, self-seeking Rulers had made a poyson of a remedy, and turned that which was ordained for the safety of the afflicted, to his ruine. These Rulers had turned Justice into wormwood many ways.

1 By Bribery, Amos 4.1.
2 By Partiality, justifying the wicked rich man, favouring the kinfman, the friend, the briber, but condemning the poor and innocent, who had no bribes to give them.
3 By delays tyring out the poor, and so forcing him to give up his cause.
4 By wresting and perverting the Law to their own ends, contrary to the genuine sense of it.
5 By hindring such evidence as might clear the cause. And leave off righteousness in the earth.

They let it lye in the dust, and trod it under foot. That which was their duty, yea their glory, viz. the execution of Justice, that they neglected and fleighted as a most contemptible thing: They abused the righteous, and did grinde the faces of the poor, Amos 8.4,5,6. There was no place left for any righteousness amongst them; their seats of justice, were places of injustice; and their Courts of equity, Courts of iniquity.
Observations.

Ver. 2. Perverting of Justice is very bitter, and displeasing to God and man.

Look how distasteful Gall and VVormwood is to us, so distasteful is unrighteousness to the righteous God; it is as poison and hemlock to him. Amos, 6. 12.

Hence he so oft complains of it, and denounces it in many woes against it, as in Psalms 82. 2, 3, and in Isa. 5. 7, Com. on Psal. 20, 23, & 10. 1, & 59. 4, 13, and Lam. 3. 35, 36. As Psal. 82. 2. Obs. 5.

Nothing is more sweet and delightful than an impartial administration of Justice, so nothing is more bitter and displeasing to God and man than unrighteousness. It is a sin to omit righteousness, but it is a faire greater aggravation of the sin to contemn it, and trample it under foot, as these did here.

Great is the number of wicked men, and were it not for Justice that did restrain them, every man's lust would be a law, and the reins would be let loose to all manner of villany; so that it would be safer living amongst so many wilde Beasts, than amongst men. Justice is Ruler, duty, security, and glory, as I have shewed at large on Psalms 82. 4. p. 35, 36, 111, 139.

Verse 8.

Seek him that maketh the Seven Stars and Orion, and sendeth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night, that calleth for the waters of the Seas, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the Lord is his name.

This rustic plain Prophet begins here to raise his file. The better to awaken these sensual and secure sinners, he sets before them the dreadful & glorious Majesty of that God with whom they had to do, & d. you have not to do with a dead and impotent Idol, that will be pleased with dead and duff services, and pacified with childish toys and trifles; but you have to do with the living and Omnipotent God, who is the Creator and Governor of all things, who appoints the vicis-

...
studies of Day and Night, of Summer and Winter; who 
numbers the Stars of Heaven, and calls them all by their 
names; who waters the earth with rain, and strengthens the 
weak against the strong, and makes the spoiled victorious over 
the spoiler. It was the great study of the Prophets, and spe- 
cially of this our Prophet, to set forth the Lord in his Majesty 
and Glory, that they might the better work upon their Heart-

In this Verse we have a magnificent description of God's 
Gnmitpotency, he is,

The Creator of the Stars,  
The Disposer of the Times,  
The Former of the Clouds, and  
The Orderer of Yarres;

And therefore the Prophet calls upon them yet once more, to 
seek this Great, Almighty One. This oft pressing of this duty 
notes the necessity, Excellency, and difficulty of it. It is not 
to call a matter to repent as many imagine, the heart of man 
is exceeding hard, and his eyes are stope against God's coun-
tels, so that the Lord is forced to call again, and again, for 
secondance, and admittance.

Seek ye him.

These words are not in the Original, but are necessarily un-
derstood, and to be supplied from Vers. 4, 6.

Who maken the seven Statres, and Orion.

The Prophet begins first with the Stars, because the Majesty, 
Power, and Wisdom of God is wonderfully seen in their mo-
tion, order, multitude, and magnitude. Under these two Con-
stellations all the rest of the Stars are comprehended, by a Sy-
nechocie of the part for the whole; for he that made one made 
all, and the least are ordered by him as well as the greatest. But 
because these two were most eminent and obvious, and com-
monly known; therefore he chiefly insisteth in these two; 
they are mentioned only twice in Scripture, viz. Job 9. 9. & 38. 31: and in the Text.

The Pleiades or seven Stars, and Orion, are opposite one 
to another.

1 They have contrary situations, Orion dwells in the East, 
and Pleiades in the West.

2 They
of the Prophecy of Amos

2 They appear in contrary seasons, *Pleiades* ariseth about March, and brings in the Spring; but *Orion* appears about November, and brings in Winter; so that, when thee saith, *Seek the Lord who made Pleiades and Orion*, it is as if hee had said in plain English, *Seek him who makes Summer and Winter.*

3 They have different Influences:

1. *Pleiades* is a Constellation usually called the seven Stars; they arise in our Hemisphere about the Spring, and are therefore called *Vergile, quasi veris vigiles.* Hence we read in *Job 38:31* of *Pleiamus delicius*, the sweet influences of the *Pleiades*, because they bring in the sweet and pleasant Spring with them; when they appear, the trees and plants begin to flourish. These *Pleiades* have their name from sayling, *πλευαδες*, because after the cold and stormy Winter is past, Saylers begin to put to Sea. These *Chimah* or seven Stars appear in a cluster about the midst of heaven, they are commonly known by Shepherds and Rusticks. *Amos* being an Herdman had taken notice of them.

*Orion* is a Constellation of Stars that produceth cold, when it appears then Winter comes. It ariseth in our Hemisphere about November. As the *Pleiades* do loose the earth and set it at liberty, that it may bring forth delightful fruit; so *Orion* by his frosty bands is said to binde up the earth, *Job 38:31* and bring in variety and change of weather, with many storms and tempests: Hence the word *cheev*, as it signifies a fool, and one who is unconstant, now of one minde, and anon of another; so his Star is called by this name by reason of the unconstant and mutability of weather which it brings with it.

*Seek yee him who turns the shadow of death into the morning.*

These words are taken by some literally, and by others metaphorically, I shall take in both, though the literal bee most genuine; *q.d.* It is this great and mighty Lord who makes great changes in the Air, and wonderful alterations in States and Kingdoms. It is hee that turns the grossest darkness into the brightest day, and the lowest adversity into the highest prosperity; and on the contrary, hee can (when pleaseth him) turn our day into night, our light into darkness, and our mirth into mourning.

See more in *Amos 8:9.*
Chap. 9. 6.

He calls for the waters of the Sea (by vapours and clouds) and pours them upon the face of the earth (by flowers of rain), and makes the day dark with night. He calls for the waters of the Sea (by vapours and clouds) and pours them upon the face of the earth (by flowers of rain), and makes the day dark with night.

The wickedness of day and night are not equal, but proportional. It is the Lord who is the great protector and defender of the just. He is the source of all light and salvation. He is the one who appoints and orders the waters (as he expends himself) to rise up from the Sea, and turn into rain, which afterwards he powers forth upon the earth. The Sun draws up vapours out of the Sea, and the air is thus refreshed. It is by his Almighty hand that we are sustained. For he is the one who makes things happen, and makes the day dark with night.

The beginning of the day of his birth, the 3rd day of the month of Tishri, and the 14th day, in the valley of the shadow of death, is the day of deliverance. Such deadly darkness, such as the very image of death, shall be the 23rd of the 9th month. In the very darkness of the day, we shall be delivered. The Lord will lead us to the valley of the shadow of death, but in our midst he will be with us, and we shall fear no evil. In the very darkness of the day, we shall be delivered. The Lord will lead us to the valley of the shadow of death, but in our midst he will be with us, and we shall fear no evil.
Ver. 8. of the Prophecy of Amos.
therefore bee will not bee deluded with your superstitious fopperies.
The summe of all is this, Seek, yee him who hath formed and framed the heavens, and all the Stars therein, who turneth the blackest night into a clear morning, and causeth the brightest day to end in a dark night, who waters the earth with rain, the Lord is his name who doth this.

Observations.

1. It is lawful for a Minister to press the same truths again and again upon his people. Thrice in this Chapter doth the Prophet call on Israel to seek the Lord. Thrice in one Psalm is God Almighty power repeated, that the Church might triumph in it, Psal. 46, 1, 7, 11. Christ preseth that Precept, See that hath an ear to hear let him hear, again and again, Rev. 21, 11. Paul oft put his hearers in minde of what hee had delivered to them, Rom. 15, 14, 15. So Peter put his hearers in remembrance of the same things, 2 Pet. 1, 12, 13. Yea so long as I live I will put you always in remembrance. This is profitable, See Mt. Robi and safe for our people, Phil. 3, 1. To write the same things to Son on Ephesians, me is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Abundans cautela non nocet. This is a means to help the memory, yee are naturally forgetful of the best things, and therefore had need to have line upon line, and precept upon precept, Isa. 28, 10, 13. especially fundamental, practical precepts, such as Faith, Repentance, Obedience, Death, Judgement, &c. should oft be press. When the Gentiles heard Paul preach Christ, they desired to hear the things again the next Sabbath day, Acts 13, 42.

This helps to strengthen our graces, to quicken us to our duties; as the sounding of the Trumpet quickens the spirit of a private Souldier, and it confirms us in the truth of the things delivered; as the doubling of Pharaoh's dreams assured him of the certainty of the thing.

Caut. Yet a Minister must not preach the same things out of idlenes, spending all the week in an Alehouse, or in some secular affairs, and then come with a crambe recita, some crude, idle, addle, undigestted stuffe, Cursed are such as do this work of the Lord negligently. An idle Minister is the
An Exposition

worst man in a Parish, for whereas an idle Artificer hurts but his Family, an idle Minister hurts a whole Congregation.

But when we repeat and inculcate things out of conscience, and for the good of our people, this is commendable. Besides, there is no Minister that is studious, but if he do come to press the same point again, he hath some new arguments or enlargements; for Divinity is such a depth, that we are always learning, and may finde out somewhat which we knew not before.

Bee not then offended when you hear necessary truths oft preft, this is sate for us, and good for you. Many have itching ears, they must have novum, and nihil, they are all for novelty, they cannot endure wholesome, plain preaching; whereas we have but two things to preach, credenda & agenda, faith and good works.

2 Obs. The names which are commonly given to Stars may be used by us.

Chimærah, and Kefil, Pleiades and Orion were names given to those Stars by men, and yet the Holy Ghost uteth them here, and speaks with the vulgar in their own language. So uteth Heathenish names in the New Testament, Acts 28. 11. wee read of a Ship in which Paul fayled, called Cæsar and Pollux, two Pagan-sea-gods. So for dayes and months wee may call them by such names as are best known to the people with whom wee live. If wee live amongst a people that usually say the first, second, third month or day, wee must say so too. But if wee live in a land where they say January, February, March, &c. Monday, Tuesday, &c. wee must say so too, else how shall we understand one another? Thus the Jews called their months sometimes by Chaldee names, as Nisan, Adar, Cislon, and Tammuz, from the Idolatrous feafts of Tammuz, which they celebrated yearly in the fourth month, Ezek. 8. 14. wee may as well say Lauaz, as the Jews say Tammuz.

It is true, David fayes, bee will not once make mention of Idol gods, Psal. 16. 4. but that was by way of adoration and reverence, or to swear by them, but in a civil respect to distinguish dayes, and to make known our mindes to those that wee speak to; thus the Prophets themselves have used them.

3 Obs.
The Lord is the maker of the Stars.

Who that made these two Constellations, made all the rest, for under these two the rest are comprehended, Job 9,9. It is hee; and hee onely that hath garnished the heavens with Sun, Moon, and Stars, Job 26,7. Much of Gods Power and Wisdom is seen in the Stars of Heaven, every flower of the field sers forth his praise; but these declare his glory in a more eminent manner, Psal. 19,1. And therefore the Lord calls upon his people in the Text to seek and serve him, why for it is hee that made Pleiades and Orion, i.e. hee made all the glittering stars; and if the floor of heaven bee so admirable, what is the inside?

Wee should therefore dayly admire and praise him, who hath made the Sun to rule the day, and the Moon and Stars to rule the night, for his mercy endures for ever, Psal. 136, 5-8,9.

Much of God's Magnitude is seen in the Multitude, Motion, and Influence of the Stars.

1. For Multitude, they are for number numberless, none but God that made them can number them, Psal. 147,4. He tells the number of the Stars, and calls them all by their names; hee knows them as exactly and particularly as we know those men, whom wee can presently upon sight call by their names. Men can reckon some, and count to about a thousand three hundred, but hee calls them all by their names.

2. Their Magnitude, Much great bodies shew the greatness of that God which made them. Most men look upon the Stars as some small lights, like the blaze of a candle, but when it shalt bee made appear by reason that one Star is bigger than the whole earth, it may well move admiration in us.

3. Their swift and regular motion. That these mighty bodies should bee carried about the world every day, and more exactly in order, not one of them out of course, though they have shine above five thousand years, yet still they continue their former vigour and brightness. The fixed Stars keep their own Orbs constantly; so should wise bee constant in Gods
way, and not bee like Planets or wandring Stars, carried to
and fro with every wind of doctrine, Jude x3.

4. They have great Influence upon the creature, though
not so great as judicial Astrologers would make the world be-
leeve.

4. Obs. Rain is the gift of God.
   It is bee that calls for the waters of the Sea (by whose va-
pours the clouds and rain are made) and poureth them out
upon the earth, Job 5.10. But of this at large on Amos 4.7
and 9.6.

5 Obs. That second causes must lead us to the first cause
of all.
   The Prophet here describing the Physical original of the
rain, and shewing that the waters of the Sea were the mate-
rial cause of it, and the Sun the instrumental cause to draw up
those vapours, yet bee tells us that God is the efficient cause
of all, it is bee that calls for the waters of the Sea, and un-
less bee move, the other can do nothing, Nil si prima vetas,
causa secunda valet. Many talk of nature, and study nature so
long till they forget the God of nature, and pore so much
upon the creature, that they forget their Creator.

6. The consideration of Gods Omnipotency should humble us.
   This is the reason why the Prophet so much insists on this
point, Amos 4уществt. and 9.6.

Verse 9.
That strengtheneth the Spoiled against the strong, so that
the spoilèd shall come against the Fostress.

The Prophet having set forth Gods Omnipotency in the
works of Creation, comes now to clear it farther by his
works of Gubernation and Providence, hee can with ease
strengthen the weak and destroy the strong; there is nothing
too hard for him.

In this verse wee have a Prelepsi, or preventing of an ob-
jection, whereas the Israelites might say, Wee dwell in Sa-
maries, a strong fortified City that hath stood it out many a
time successfully against its enemies, wee have likewise a po-
tent and successful King, Jeroboam the second, and therefore
it is not for us to fear. To
Ver. 9. of the Prophecy of Amos.

To this the Prophet answers, that they had no reason to trust in these creature-confidences, for the Lord could easily raise up the Assyrian who should spoil both them, and their Kingdom.

Object. If hee do come, wee will flye to our strong Holds and Fortresses.

A misdemean. And I will send the Destroyer (saith the Lord) against the Fortress. There is no power nor policy against the Lord, all Forts and Fortifications are but vain if hee be our enemy. God can send mighty Adversaries against us who shall destroy our Forts, and us in them.

In the words wee have 1 A Position or Proposition, God strengtheneth the spoyle against the strong.

2. An Inference. Therefore the spoyle shall come against the Fortress, and take it. The vulgar Latin, and all the Popish gang, that leave the Original, and follow the Latin Translation, render it subrident vastrare, God laughs at the destruction of wicked men. But the word signifies to corroborate and strengthen, and not to laugh or smile.

Others conceive, that the Lord here threatens that if they did not seek him, but would trust in their strength, and creature-confidences, and still went on to contemn his warnings, he would send some weak, spoyle, contemptible enemy, and strengthen him with the spoyle which hee should get, so that hee should destroy them, for hee gives victory to whom hee pleaseth, and can make the weak to prevail against the mighty; and therefore Israel ought to stand in awe of him, and flye unto him for mercy. This way the Chaldce Paraphrase goes.

But the Original favours the Geneva Translation, which runs thus, Hee strengtheneth the destroyer against the mighty, and the destroyer shall come against the Fortress.

The original word Shod which our Translation renders spoyle, is usually rendered a Destroyer, a Waster, a Spoyler, a Plunderer, Isa. 16.4. Let mine out-cafts dwell with thee Moab, pina. be thou a covert to them from (Shod) the spoyler, for the Extortioner is at an end, the spoyler ceaseth, and substantively it is put for devastation, waste, and spoyle, Isa. 22.4. and 59.7. Hos. 7.13. So that wee may take the words either generally, that the Lord is hee that strengtheneth the Destroyer a-
An Exposition

against the Mighty, when they sin against him, and provoke him.

Or particularly, as spoken to Israel, it is the Lord that strengthens the Assyrian (who is called the Spoyler by way of eminency) against these Idolatrous Israelites who thought themselves strong and mighty.

And the Lord will bring him against the Fortress: that is, against the fortified City of Samaria, and the other Cities and Towns depending on it, Isa. 17.3.

q.d. You think your selves safe and well, because you are armed and fortified, and therefore you slight my Threatenings, and promise your selves peace, and think that none shall bring you down, not once considering that you have to do with God, and not with man, who can strengthen the weak against the strong, and hath many Destroyers at hand ready to execute his vengeance upon a rebellious people.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 If we take the words according to our Translation, the Observation is, That God can strengthen the weak, and make them overcome the strong. It is hee that strengthens one, and enfeebles another, Ezek. 30.24. and can make wounded men to subdue his enemies, Jer. 37.10. He can make one Abraham with his family to conquer four Kings, Gen. 14.9.18. he can make a Joshua to slay Amalekites, destroy Midianites, and subdue Canaanites, Num. 31.7. We should not then kill our own hands, or sacrifice to our own nets, but ascribe the praise of all our victories to the Lord, who strengthens the wasted and the spoyled against the spoyler, and can make Jacob a worm to thrust mighty Mountains, Isa. 41.14.15.16. Josh. 6.5.15.1 Cor. 2.27. Jer. 31.22.

2 No Forts, nor Fortifications can preserve a sinful people from destruction.

Though they should build walls as high as heaven, and dig ditches as deep as hell, yet if sin bee within, all Fortifications without are vain; as I have shewed at large elsewhere.
VERSE 10.
They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.

There are two great impediments that keep men from repentance. The one is a low conceit of God; the other is an high conceit of themselves. The first the Prophet removed Verse 8.9. by setting before them the glorious Majesty of God. The second hee comes to remove in this and the following verses, by setting before them their sin and misery, that so (if possible) hee might fit them for mercy.

In this Verse wee have a second sin and cause of Israels ruine, and that is obstinacy and hating of reproof. This was their sinning sin which helped to ruine them with a witness; the Lord in great mercy sent Physicians to them, but they abused them, and like frantick Patients threw the physick to the walls, they hared to bee reformed, and cast Gods words behind them.

The words admit of some difficulty. The question is, Of whom doth the Prophet here complain, whether of the Rulers, or of the people?

Answe. Of both. 1 Of the people, They hate him that reproves in the gate; that is, they hate the Judges who executed judgement in the gate; they hate him who thus cenusereth and judgeth them for their sin; for there is a double reproof, A civil reproof given by the Magistrate, his just sentence upon the wicked is a real reproof of his wickedness, and that Magistrate which faithfully and impartially thus reproves men in the gate, must look to bee hated by the wicked of the world, so was Job that renowned Magistrate, Job 3.1.10.

2 And most genuinely, it is taken for spiritual reproof, by the Prophets who were wont to reprove open sins openly: They hate him that reproves in the gate, that is, in the publick and open Assemblies; for the gates of the City were places where usually was much concourse of people, Prov. 9.4. and 8.3. There the Judges kept their Courts of Judicature, and erected their seats of Judgement for the administration of Justice, and determining of causes, as appeareth, Gen.

1. For the ease and convenience of the Citizens, that they might follow their suits without impediment to their other affairs.

2. That Country-men might have justice easily and freely before they entered the City.

3. That the Judges might take heed of doing unjustly, since they had so many to see and hear what they did.

4. To shew the equality and indifference of Justice from which none were excluded, but as the gates of the City were open to all, to go in and out at pleasure, so should the Courts of Justice.

5. To intimate that the chiefest strength of Cities, and safety of States doth consist in the due execution of Justice, which is as gates and bars against sin and wickedness. Take away this, and gates of brass cannot preserve a City from destruction.

Here sometimes the Prophets did preach God's word, and publish their Prophecies to the people, either in the gates of the Temple, as Jer. 7. 2. or in the Gates of the City, as Jer. 17. 8. 9. 20. and 19. 2. and 22. 2. and 26. 10.

2. Here is an aggravation of their sin, They abhor him that speaketh uprightly; or that speaketh what is sincere and right; that is, in plain English, they abominate that man, and abhor that Minister that faithfully declares the counsel of God unto them without halting or halting, and this is made a Periphrasis of a faithful Minister, he is one that doth not blend, nor mix the word of God, but he delivers his will plainly and sincerely to his people. They hated the Judge, but they abhorred the Minister; now abhorrence is the height of hatred.

The people could not bear the censures of their Rulers; but neither Princes nor people could endure the plain and powerful reproofs of the Prophets; and therefore the Prophet here chargeth the Judges, and the great ones more especially (as appears by the context, ver. 7. 11, 12, 15.) for hat-
Ver. 16.

of the Prophecy of Amos.

Great men love to live as they list, they love not bands of restraint, they must do what please themselves with a non-obl.ons, without control. Though they do unjustly, yet none must tell them of it, for they have eyes, but they neither can nor will see, they have ears, but they will not hear; for their hearts are hardened to their own destruction, Isa. 6 9, 10.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Open sinners must be openly reproved.

Those that sin before all, must be reproved before all, that others may fear, 1 Tim. 5 20. These Judges who acted unrighteously in the gate, must be reproved by the Prophets in the gate.

2. Ob! It is a sad aggravation of men's sins to hate those whom God hath authorised and commissioned to reprove them for their sins. To lay snares for him that reproved in the gates, Isa. 29 21. To devise devices against plain-dealing Jeremiah, and with Ahab to hate God's faithful Micaiah, and to seek their death and destruction, who labour to bring us to life and salvation, is the height of wickedness, Gen. 19 9, 1 Kings. 22 24, 26. Jer. 38 6. Matt. 14 3. Acts 7 54, and 9 29.

Truth breeds hatred, and light is irksome to the fore eyes of wicked men. They draw the Curtains, and cannot endure the light that reproves them; and it is worth observing, that the viler men have been, the more they have hated plain reproofs, as the Sodomites, Pharaoh, Ahab, Herod, &c. they were all reprehension-proof. But the better men have been, the more submissive to reproofs, as David, when Abigail stopt him on one hand, and Nathan on the other, hee blesteth the one, and loves the other. So Hezekiah when the Prophet Isaiah told him that hee must lose all, hee receives it meekly, with a Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken, Isa. 39.
39 aye. So Constantine and Theodosius, how crafty and submissive were they to the Ministers of Christ, when the Roman Caesars (most of them) persecuted to the death such as opposed them in their Tyrannical practices, they were punished as sedition and trouble of the State, that did in the least trouble them for their sins.

And this is the great sin of England, and bodes some judgement approaching, that we cannot endure a plain-sounding soul-searching Ministry: we must have smooth things, or nothing, Isa. 30:10. The Idolater must not be told of his Idols, the superstitious man of his ceremoniousness, nor the incontinent man of his Herodius, &c. Men love such as will daub over their vices, and give them such service or favor as will not bite them, Missa non mordet. It is observed that the French Reformed Churches some years before that bloody massacre, did affect a frothy, flashy kind of preaching, not regarding that which touched the conscience. Whether this be not our case, let the Reader judge.

Verse 10.

Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat, ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink of them.

We are now come to a third sin, for which the Prophet reproves this people, and that is for Oppressing the poor, and this was more particularly the sin of their Rulers and Grandees. They that should have been the keepers of the Law, they were the greatest breakers of it; they that should have been the Vindicators, they were the Violators of it. The Prophet therefore strikes not at the foot, viz. the common people; but he strikes at the head, from whence all disorder descended upon the body.

In this Verse we have Their Sin,

Their Punishment.
Ver. 18. of the Prophecy of Amos.

1 Their sin was Oppression; they trod upon the poor, which appeared by two cruel acts; they took away his corn.

2 In the Punishment we have, The frustration of those Projects.

Their Projects were Building of fine houses,

Planting of Vineyards.

Their frustration follows. They shall not dwell in the one, they shall not drink of the other.

Your treading is upon the poor; that is, upon the afflicted, and godly poor especially, Amos 2.7, 8. where the hedge is lowest, there these beasts get over. Amos 4.1. Those they tread upon in a mean contemptible manner, as the dirt and mire in the streets; grinding them with cruel impositions, and oppressing them with grievous vexations, keeping them under in extreme slavery, and laying them as low as the dust; now to lie in the dust implies a very low, base, and despicable condition.

1 King. 16. 2. Job 16. 19. The word in the Original signifies properly to despise or trample under feet by way of contempt, Isa. 14. 25, and 18. 2, and 63. 18. But metaphorically it signifies to oppress and vilify.

You take from him burdens of Wheat: that is (say some) you extort such great bribes, and lay such great burdens on them, that they are forced to sell their necessary food to feed you with money.

Others refer it to the cruel money, who lent the poor money till their harvest came in, and then were so rigid and severe in exacting their debts, that they made them bring their very corn which should support their Families for payment.

Others refer it to the cruel Usurers, who were not content with money for their money, but they must have corn too; which after they sold at dear rates to the poor, Amos 8. 4. 5.

But what ever Oppression it was specifically, yet in general the Prophet reproves it as a crying sin, that they dealt so harshly and cruelly with the poor, as first to rob them of their money, and then by force or fraud to make them bring and bear upon their own shoulders that little which they had left to sustain themselves, and their families. To take away mens goods and castel is sad, but to take away their corn, which is
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

the staffe and stay of their household, and to make them carry it themselves, and become their own executioners, in carrying away the livelihood of their Families, is such a crying sin, that the Lord swears that hee will bear no longer with such Cannibals that devour the poor alive, Amos 4:1,2.

Wee have seen their sin, now follows the Punishment. They shall build houses of hewn stone, but shall not dwell in them. Ordinary houses will not content these Earth-worms, they must have curious Palaces built with hewn, squared, polished stones, that they might bee beautiful, firm and durable.

This was their project, by rape and rapine, by bribery and extortion, they built fine houses, but they shall not dwell in them. This but spoyle all, either they shall go into Captivity, or be cut off by untimely death, as the rich fool, Luke 12:20. or their houses shall be burnt, or else their enemies shall possess them, according to that threason, Dem. 28:30,39. Thou shalt build a house and not dwell in it, thou shalt plant a Vineyard and not eat the grapes thereof. But who then shall enjoy them? why thine enemy. As thou shalt betroth a wife, and thine enemy shall lye with her, so the like misery shall attend thee in thy building and planting. It is misery enough to have these things taken away by enemies, but it is a great aggravation of this misery, when after we have taken much pains to get them, and have set our hearts upon them, and are filled with hopes and expectations of enjoying the fruit of our labours, then on a sudden to have them all snatched from us, and so our hopes to be frustrated, and others to enjoy our labours, this is bitter.

Or if they should escape these miseries, yet the Lord can smite them with sickness, so that they shall not enjoy what they idolized; or else they have a prodigal heir, or some other vexation befalls them; so that in the very fulness of their sufficiency they shall bee in straits, Job 20:22. Jer. 17:11.

2 They should plant pleasant Vineyards, but not drink the wine of them. Great was their care and cost to build houses and plant Vineyards (under these two synecdochally are comprehended all other creature-delights) but they were deceived in their hopes, for they should neither enjoy the one, nor the other; and we see by daily experience, how these transitory things are tossed like a foot-ball from one to another;
Voc.Dr. of the Prophecy of Amos. 185

The man hath it on his toe, and anon another, at last comes one and trips up his heels, and gets it from them both, and at last comes death and strips them of all.

Ordinary dwellings and plain Vineyards content not these men, they must have the choicest stone buildings, and the most exquisite and desirable Vineyards, so much the Original imports. Vineyards of desire, i.e. most desirable and delicate Vineyards. The Hebrews have no superlative degree, and therefore they use to express it by putting the Substantive in the Genuitve Case; see Dan. 9. 23. he is called Ishbosheth, a man of desires, i.e. a most precious and desirable man. So a pleasant Land is called, a Land of desires, i.e. a most desirable Land, Jer. 3. 19.

Yet their sin deprived them of all these temporal delights, the Lord did retaliate them in their own kind, as they had spoied the poor, and taken all from them, so now the Assyrian should come and cast them out of all.

Observations.

1 Oppression and trampling upon the poor is a crying sin.
   It will not let the Lord rest till he bring Judgements upon the heads of the oppressors, Psal. 109. 16. Ezek. 16. 49. Joel 3. 19. Amos 3. 1.

2 Obs. Worldly men lavish all upon self.
   These should have honoured the Lord with their riches, and spent them in works of Piety and Pity to the poor; but they spent them in building sumptuous houses, and pleasant Vineyards; all of the best save the best religion; they idolized the Creature, and loved it above the Creator, this ruined them. Like Swine they fed upon the mast, but forgot the donor.

3 Obs. Luxury breeds cruelty.
   When ordinary building cannot content, nor necessaries, please, but they must have all of the finest; then follows trampling upon the poor, wracking of rents, and inventing all base means for money. Such great sins seldom go alone, but like great men they have many attendants, Amos 2. 7, 8.

4 Sin and punishment are inseparable.
Verse 28.
For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins, they afflict the just; they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

In this Verse we have a Reason why the Lord would bear no longer with this people, viz. because of their of sin, cruelty, bribery, and unrighteousness, and because the high and lofty ones of the world are apt to concern the poor plain Prophets of the Lord, and to slight their Message, and say to Gods Amos, you wrong us; for we are not the men that you take us for, therefore the Prophet brings in the Lord himself, saying,
of the Prophecy of Amos.

1. I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins.

2. Though you act your wickedness never so secretly, and hide your oppressions, and patiences and put griefs on your unrighteous practices before men; yet nothing is hid from mine eye. I understand your thoughts afar off, and know them before you think them, your words before you speak them, and your works before you do them, Psal. 139. 1, 2, 3, 4. So that however you may deceive men with your pretences of Law and Equity, yet you cannot deceive me, for all things are naked to mine eye.

3. The Prophet having to do with stubborn Sinners, to make the threatening the more ponderous and effectual, he brings in the Lord himself, saying, I know your ways, and your wickedness, you think your selves Lords Paramount, and none may question you, or say unto you, what do you? But you must know that there is a Lord above you, and a greater than you, to whom you must certainly and suddenly give an account.

4. The Prophet sets down the Sins of these great ones especially.

1. Generally, and in the lump.

2. They were for Number, Rabbins, many.

3. For Nature, Gnatzaumiae, great and grievous.

Their sins were not secret infirmities, but great and crying enormities, so hideous that they were no longer to be endured or born, and therefore the Holy Ghost multiplies words, the better to work upon them. They were guilty of Transgressions, manifold transgressions; Sins, and mighty sins. The word which we render Transgression, signifies a proud transgression of Gods Law, and a malicious rebellious against God, Psal. 5. 10.

5. The word Gnatzaumiae signifies both mighty in strength, and many in number. Such were the sins of this people, they were for number numberless, and for nature, grand and grievous, habitual, chronical sins. They were such as admitted of all manner of aggravations. They were multitude, they were grandiose, exceeding transgressions, and four, often called, Amos 2, 4. 5, 6. Eccles., P. Schools, Guard, Rules.

6. So the number seven is oft used in Scripture for many, as Ewes, 26. 24.
Abo. 11. 2. they abounded with Idolatry, Oppression, Un
justice, Security, &c. 3. All these were acted in a time
when God was pouring Mercies upon them, saving them by the
hand of Jeroboam the second, and giving them Victory over
their enemies. 2 King. 14. 25. 26. Now these are called
Strong Sins, either because they cried strongly for punishment,
and did as it were bind God's hands that he could not shew them
no mercy; or rather because they were committed with a
stiff and stubborn mind strongly bent upon sin and wickedness,
drawing on iniquity with the cords of vanity, and sin as it were
with Cart-ropes, Isa. 5. 18. they were wilfully set on sin, and
did use all means to draw it to themselves.

2 He lets down their sins particularly, specifically, and as
it were by retail.

1. They afflict the just.
2. They take bribes.
3. They oppress the poor.

This Sin was written in Capital Letters, as it were on their
fore-heads, and therefore they are so oft charged with it. The
word Tsweet signifies to bind one hard together as we doe an
enemy, and straiten, vex, oppress, and afflict one. So Psal.
129. 14. Many are they that afflict me from my youth; God hath
left their cords.

2. They take a bribe, viz. to pervert Justice, contrary to
Gods express command, Exo. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 17. and it is made
the badge of a wicked man to do so. Prov. 17. 24. they con-
demned the poor innocent man that could not bribe, and ab-
solved the wicked rich man that could bribe well. Thus, they
justified the wicked, and condemned the just, both which are
an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 17. 15.

The word which we translate a Bribe, signifies a Ransome;
these mercenary Judges put, Malefactors to ransome themse-
thes with money, and to pay a rate for their redemption. E. G. If
one had killed a man, it was but paying a Ransome (though the
Law lay, no Ransome shall be accepted for such a sin, Nunm.
35. 31.) and he was quit. So if any were accused for Theft,
Adultery, Witch-craft, &c. it was but bribing lustily, and
they were presently acquit, and pronounced innocence; thus
instead
of the Prophecy of Amos.

instead of punishing them with death for their sins, they one-
ly fined and merced them.

They turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

The Judges set in the gate to do justice (as I have shewed
before, ver. 10.) yet even there they perverted justice.
They oppress the poor in the gate, i.e. in the publick judgement
which was exercised in the gate. In open Court they per-
verted the cause of the poor, either by a corrupt flating of
the case, or concealing the merit of the cause, or by delays,
&c. The good man trusting to the equity of his cause, is cast,
and for want of a bribe (which the rich man brings) is non-
fused. Thus their fountains did run poyson, their Courts of Justice
were Courts of Injustice; and their Courts of Equity, courts
of Iniquity, and therefore the Lord is now resolved to bear no
longer with them, but even to destroy them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Hardened, incorrigible sinners are not worthy of a reproof:
And therefore the Lord here turns his speech from these Rui-
ers, and complains to himself and to his people, saying, They
afflict the just, take bribes, &c. We do but wash a Blackmore,
and labour in vain, when we speak to such posts and stones, as
I have shewed elsewhere.

2. Obs. All the ways and works of men are under the inspe-
cion of an All-seeing God.
All things are naked and anatomized before the eyes of
him with whom we have to do, Psal. 94. 9, 10. Heb. 4. 13. He
knows not only an action or two, but hee knows all the wayes
that men take, Job 23. 10. Men may deceive others, and
themselves too, but they cannot deceive God; he sees through
their projects, and fayes to them as the Prophet said to the
wife of Jeroboam, Come in thou waste of Jeroboam, why fainest
shew thy self, to be another than thou art? The secret plottings
and contrivements of mens hearts are not hid from him, Psal.
on Job. 4. 16.

94 11. Ezek. 11. 5. The great ones of the world may vail
their villanies, and hide them from the eyes of men, and es-
ce their hands; but there is a greater than they whose eyes
behold all their doings, and whose hand will bring them unto
justice. All their pompe shall shortly lye in the dust, and they
hand stript and naked before God's dreadful Tribunal.
We should therefore all of us lead a life worthy of such a presence, and take heed of provoking him by our sins, who cannot look upon them but with a vindictive eye, and one look of his eye purs all into torment; if he but look on the earth (which never sinned against him) it trembles, Psal. 104. 32. I have read of some, that have had such lively, sparkling eyes, that they have affrighted such as beheld them, but what are their eyes compared with God's?

3 Obi. Wicked men by long continuance in sin come at last to be high and mighty sinners.

As in goodness the repetition of the act intends the habit, and the sons of Sion go on in God's ways to perfection, Philip. 3. 13, 14. Heb. 6. 1. So the sons of Belial conceive sin, travel with it, and then bring it to perfection, James 1. 15. As men when they come to their full growth, are strong, and men of might; so when sinners are come to their full growth, they become great and mighty sinners, as we see, Eccle. 8. 11. Jer. 3. 5. and 44. 16, 17. Ho. 2. 5. They set their hearts upon sin, their greediness after it, shews the strength of their attachment to it, Epb. 4. 19.

This bodes some judgement approaching, when men's sins are for number many, and for nature hainous and habitial. As there is a woe hangs over the heads of such as are mighty to drink, wine, and men of strength to pour down strong drink, 1sa. 5. 21. So judgements are prepared for all obdurate; mighty sinners, Deut. 29. 19, 20. It is said of Nimrod that he was a mighty Hunter, Gen. 10. 9. So we may say of too many, they are mighty Oppressors, mighty Worldlings, mighty Epicsures, and therefore we must look for mighty miseries. Ingenia beneficia, ingenia vitia, ingenia saephe. As it is the glory of a man to be much and mighty in the service of God, Luke 24. 19. Acts 7. 22. So it is men's great debasement, when they are much and mighty in the service of sin and Satan, Jer. 8. 2. Mis. 7. 3.

4 Obi. Bribery is base.

It blindes the eyes, perverts judgement, condemns the innocent, acquires the nectar, and brings confusion and disorder into a land. These wicked men asked their sins in all the Cases, but would confest them in no case. They asked in the Nominative case by seeking a name to themselves. In the
Verse 13. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Genuine by fornication both spiritual and corporal. Amos 2. 7, 8. In the Divine by Bribery. In the Accusative by destroying and flattering of the righteous. In the Vocative by flattering, and in the Ablative by robbing.

5. Ob. Pursuing of justice to the oppressing of the poor, is a Land-destruction sin.

That which brought Israel and Judah into Captivity, was more especially their sins of Injustice and Cruelty, as is fully proved by a learned Pen.

Verse 13.

Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time.

The Prophet goes on to shew the sad and deplorable condition of this obstinate people, whom neither God nor man could work upon. The Lord tells them in the precedent verse, that he knew all their works, and the Prophets told them of judgements coming upon them for these wicked works; but they mistook the Prophets of the Lord, and hated him that reproved them in the gate, and were so resolvedly set upon sin, that the Prudent resolved to bestow no more counsel in vain upon them.

In the words we have 1 The property of the Pious, they are prudent, wise, intelligent men. True believers, and such as fear God, are the truly wise men of the world. They do nothing rashly and inconsiderately, but do all with good advice. They wisely compare things together, they observe the mysterious ways of providence, and so become men of much sagacity, and can guess at the consequences of affairs. These are called prudent men. 1 Sam. 16. 18, Prov. 13. 16, and 16. 21. Hb. 4: 3. They fore-cast, and consider what is to be done and spoken, how when, where. As his words are spoken (super rotis factis, Beopmann. Prov. 25. 11) in season, with a due concurrence of all circumstances, so his works are done in due season, fitly and successfully.

The original word signifies a cautious, circumspect, prudent understanding man: hence they are oft called wise men, intelligent men, and men of good understanding by a Me-
Metonymy of the effect, because Prudence is a fruit of wisdom. 2. It signifies an Instructor and Teacher, who gives instruction, and makes others to understand; hence many of the Psalms are intituled, *Maschil le-David*, i.e. a Psalm of David, teaching and giving Doctrinal instruction. 3. Sometimes by a Metonymy of the effect, it is put for prosperity and happiness, because they usually attend upon Prudence. So *1 Sam. 18. 30. Isa. 52. 13.*

1 Carnal.

Prudence is three-fold. 2 Ethical and Moral.

3 Theological.

1 There is a Carnal Wisdom and Prudence, when men are wise only for themselves, seeking their own ends, ease, and advancement. *Luke 16. 8.* this is so farre from wisdom, that it is called and counted folly in God's Dictionary. *Luke 12. 30. 1 Cor. 1. 19. & 3. 19.*

2 There is a Moral Prudence, which is found in the civil wise men of the world, *Isa. 29. 14. & 49. 7. Matth. 11. 25. Acts 13. 7.*

3 There is a Theological and Divine wisdom, which is conversant about Divine and Spiritual things, and in this sense the faithful and regenerate are called Wise and Prudent, *Deut. 4. 6. Matth. 7. 24. and 25.*

Some Criticks make Wisdom to be the speculative part, and Prudence the practical, Wisdom to be infused, and Prudence acquired. But these are so involved one in another, that one cannot be without the other; and therefore we finde them oft confounded in Scripture, and used promiscuously one for another.

2 Here is the effect of their prudence, *They shall keep silence.*

3 Here is the time when they shall keep silence, it is *In that time, viz.* in that time of Israel's obstinacy, and in that time when God shall punish them for their obstinacy, and give them up into the hand of the Assyrian for a prey, for he speaks not of present, but future evils, and therefore it is not in hoc, but in loco tempore, it is not in this, but in that time.

4 Here is the reason of their silence, and that is, because it is an evil time; but in respect of the evil of sin, and of
Ver. 13. of the Prophecy of Amos.

the evil of Sinning. 1. They were evil times in respect
of the evil of sin. All manner of sin, in all manner of per-
sions abounded both in City and Country. Sin was come
to that height amongst them, that it was dangerous to speak
truth unto them; yet they silenced the true Prophets, and
commanded the Amos to bee gone, and molest them no
more with his preaching. They hated reproof, they afflicted
the just, and oppressed the poor, therefore the Prudent shall keep
silence.

2. The times were evil in respect of the evil of Punishment;
for where the evil of sin goes before, the evil of punishment
always follows. The Sword, Plague, Famine, should all
pursue them, and if they escaped one of those evils, yet ano-
ther should arrest them, ver. 19. In both these respects times
are called evil in Scripture, Jer. 18. 11. Ephes. 5. 16. 2 Tim.
3. i.e. though the latter seems here to come to be the most ge-
nuine, it is a time of evil, viz. of punishment, of great misery
and desolation, so the word is often used for the evil of punish-
ment, Psa. 77. 19. Jer. 15. 11. Micah 2. 3. therefore the times, ver. 18.
prudent shall be silent before the Lord, and not once murmur Eze.
against his just dispensations.

3. Others but not so properly, make the words to be a com-
monin of a punishment, q. d. Since you will not hearken to
the counsel of my Prophets, but shut your eyes against the
light, hating to be reformed, and abhorring such as speak truth
unto you, ver. 10. therefore I will punish you with the silence
of the true Prophets, Ezek. 3. 26. and other pious men; they
shall bestow no more counsel in vain upon you, since you are
flaring Dogs, my holy things shall not be given to you, Matt.
7. 6. but I will leave you to Sycophants and Flatterers, that
shall daub over your sins, and lead you blindfold to destruc-
tion. They could not endure sound Doctrine, and therefore
they should be fed with lies for that pleased them best. There
is hope of good when good men speak; their lips will disperse
knowledge Prov. 15. 7. but when a people shall delight in
none but fools and flatterers, their ruine is not far off.

4. Others thus; their enemies shall be so Tyramnical and

An Exposition

Chap. 5.

194.

The cruel, that it will be their prudence not once to murder, but silently keep in their grief to themselves, lest if they complained they should exasperate their enemies, and so be worse used. This is an ancient Glos, but not to genuine.

5 These times were evil times, for even the Rulers of the people were unruly, and corrupt both in doctrine and manners. They were grown so violent and virulent, that they would neither hear, nor bear a reproof; they fought his death, who fought their life; and threw dirt in his face, who showed them the glass; if any reproved them, they wretched and misinterpreted all their sayings, devising devices against them to destroy them. They were come to that height of sin, that the malady was too strong for the medicine; and good counsel could do them no good, it was but casting peas before swine, which would be trampled underfoot and lost, the more they reproved them for their bribery, oppression, idolatry and cruelty, the more they enraged them, and therefore the prudent shall keep silence, since it is such an evil time. This sense suits best with the context, ver. 20, 22, 23, 25.

Q. But must not Ministers speak against sin, for fear of bringing themselves into danger, nor speak against the evils of the times, unless they be sure to be free from suffering?

Ans. Ministers are bound by their Office to witness against the worst of evils in the worst of times; so did the Prophets, so did the Apostles. A minister must not pretendly give over his Ministry, or forbear reproof because of some approaching danger, yet he may be silent and forbear reproach, when those sins have been sufficiently witnessed against already, and men sin not for want of light, but desperately against the light; in such a case we have no need to put ourselves upon danger; and therefore our Saviour bids us, when our sins are not such alone, Matt. 15: 14. when we see that our reproaches do but exasperate and harden, we may yield for a while, and reserve our selves and our exhortations for better times; when men passions are quelled, and they will hear us; so that this makes nothing for Court-Parasites, and Times-servers, who under pretence of Prudence live like dumb dogs, never once barking against the Idolatry, Superstition, Apostacy, and prophaness of the times, for fear of displeasing the Grandees of the time; they dare not pray for Sion, nor speak in defence.
of the Prophecy of Amos?
defence of God's Cause and People, for fear of suffering. This is so faire from prudence, that it is the greatest imprudence in
the world for any man, for fear of man's wrath to run into
God's displeasure, and to avoid Temporal pains to run into
eternal. Christ will be ashamed of such as be thus ashamed
of him, and his truth, before an adulterous Generation, Mark.

Obj. Tyrants threaten me.

Ans. And thou must learn to contempt their threatenings.
He is not fit to be a Minister of Christ, that cannot suffer as
well as doe for him.

Every Minister is, or at least ought to be a Soullier of
Christ's, now a Soullier must not be a whining Milk-sop, but a
hardened, seasoned piece, 2 Tim. 2. 3. Necessity is laid upon
us, and woe to us if we preach not the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9. 16.
When God commands us to preach, and man forbids, the Ap-
pistle in this very case tells us, that it is better to obey God
than man, Acts 4. 19. & 5. 29. It is no dishonour to the
Kings on earth, to see the King of Heaven served before them;
yea the worse the times are, the more should the zeal for God's
glory consume us. When Lot saw the wickedness of Sodom,
his righteous soul was vexed from day to day with their abo-
minations. No prudent man can be totally silent, when hee
sees his God openly dishonoured, as we see in David, Nathan,
Michaiah, Paul, &c.

The Prophet therefore speaks not here De furu, but De
facto; not what men should doe, or not doe; but he rather
intimates (such was the iniquity of the times, and the malice
of those in authority) that De facto, they would not suffer
them to speak against the corruptions of the times. So that
they should be silent not Actively, and Spontaneously, but
Passively, by reason of the rage of wicked men, and their ob-
stinacy in their Idolatry, Superstition, and unrighteousness.
They would not suffer any to speak against these, their beloved
sins, or if they did, they would cast them into Prisons, or Ban-
nishment, or blast them with flanders, or by other things
make them contemptible, and then slay them.

6 And lastly, the most genuine sense of the place is this;
The Prophet had told them, that for their mighty and mani-
fold sins they should lose their Houses and Lands, their

Orchards
Orchards and Vineyards, and all their pleasant things; now he tells them that God was so just in his Judgments, that all pious prudent men, should in a holy silence and submissive-ness of spirit, adore and admire the Justice of God therein, without any fretting or murmuring at them, though they were great and grievous, yet considering the multitude and magnitude of their sins, and comparing God's dispensations with their provocations, they could not but say, Righteous is the Lord, and just are his Judgments. The true believer which judgeth aright of Sin and its concomitants, shall silently acquiesce in the evils of Punishment, which God shall bring upon Israel, but not in the evil of Sin which men commit; so that their silence here is opposed to murmuring against God, and not to their reproof of the sins of the time: for we read that the Prophets did not hold their peace, but Amos and Hosea especially did sharply reprove those wicked men, and denounced God's Judgments against them to the last.

OBSERVATIONS.

I. Pious men are prudent men.

He that truly fears God is the true Hammashil, he is the only wise, intelligent, prudent man. When we walk exactly according to Rule, that is true wisdom, Ephes. 5. 15. Hence fifty times in the Proverbs the godly man is called a Wise man, and every wicked man a fool. When men know the true God, and serve him in a true manner, with a perfect heart, this is real and supernatural wisdom, Job 28. wise, all other men be they never so worldly wise are fools, and men. (as I have proved at large elsewhere.) Hee only is the wise Merchant that hath parted with all for Christ, Matt. 13: 44. The world looks upon good men as a pack of Fools, scarce fit to live in the world, but see how the Holy Ghost here dignifies them with the title of prudent men, whose understandings are well enlightened in the knowledge of their duty, and what is fit to be done, in respect of time, place, manner, event, &c: he searcheth into the very bottom of things, and sees them inwardly.

I. Their prudence appears, in a wise discerning of times and seasons. There is a fit time for every thing, and what is done
of the Prophecy of Amos.

of the Prophecy of Amos.

in that season it is beautiful. Now the prudent man observes the season, he hath a singular skill in timing a word, Isa 50.4. He knows when to speak, so did Abigail, 1 Sam.25.36. and Heser 18.19, and when to be silent, 2 King. 22.36. It was an high commendation of the men of Issachar, that they were men of understanding and knew the times, and what Israel ought to do, 1 Chron.12.32.

2. His prudence appears in works of Piety, he reads, prays, mediates, &c. with prudence and discretion. He observes vices to hear, and he is swift to hear, James 1.19. He watcheth unto prayer, and observes the fittest times for that exercise, Ephes.6.18.

3. In works of mercy. 1 To the soul, he prudently times his speech, and wisely considereth the party which he speaks to, and what his condition requires, Isa.50.4.

2. To the outward man, he gives discreetly according to those known circumstances, required in giving, Est modus in dando, Quid, env. cui, quando, quamodo.

4. In executing Justice, he weighs and ponders all circumstances, and then gives sentence accordingly, see my Com. on Psa.82.4. 4.

5. In the discharge of his particular calling, he orders his affairs with discretion, Psa.112.5. Prov.14.9.15.

6. He fore-sees dangers, and prepares for them before they come, Job 3.25. Prov.22.3. and stops troubles in the beginning, Gen.13.8.9. He is quick-sighted, and wise as a Serpent, though harmless as a Dove, Matt.10.16. Religion doth not destroy our wisdom, but rectifies it, and makes it more solid. Hence Jacob used all prudent means to pacifie Esm. Gen.38. 4.5.6. and Paul to deliver himself, pleads that he was a Roman, and set the Pharisees and Sadducees at variance about the Resurrection, the better to escape himself, Act.16.37.38. and 22.25. and 23.7. and Christ himself used it, Matt.21.24. Hence he is said to deal prudently, Isa.52.7.11.

7. His Prudence appears in his Prudent choice. A mans wisdom appears in nothing so much as in that. He pastureth by transitory, fading, uncertain, earthly things, and chooseth real, solid, substantial, durable riches, which none can take from him, Luke 10.41.42. and 16.9. He seeks Gods face and favour, and makes him his ultimate and chiefest good. Hence to be wise, and seek after God are joyed together, Psa.14.2. 8.
An Exposition

is most solidly wise, who doth most solidly and seriously seek God.

8 They act so frequently as if they were to do all themselves, and when they have done all, yet they rest upon God, and seek unto him by prayer as if they had done nothing; Gen. 32.7, 10.11, and 43.10, 14. Neh. 9.9.

So that prudence you see is a Cardinal virtue, of all virtues it is one of the most eminent and excellent, and makes us most like unto God. Where this virtue is in reality, no virtue is wanting. This is one special means to raise men to honour, as we see in Joseph, David, Abigail, Nehemiah, Daniel, &c.

To attain is, 1. We must beg it of the God of Wisdom and Prudence, who is the true donor of it, 1 Chron. 29.12. 1 King. 3.9.11.12, Psal. 119.125, 144, 169. 2 Cor. 1.10. 11.12. James 1.5.

2 Get acquaintance with the word of God, make it the man of your counsel, consult with it in all your actions and undertakings. This will make you wiser than the Ancient, wiser than your enemies (though they may be deep Politicians) and wiser than your Teachers, Psal. 119.98, 99.100, 104.

3 Treasure up experiments: As in all other Arts and Sciences a man can never excell, till he hath by long practice gained experience: so it is here, We see that youth is heady and rash; but Prudence is usually with the aged, Job 12.12.

With the Ancient is wisdom.


2 Obs. That it is a point of prudence sometimes to keep silence.

As there is a time to speak, Eccles. 3.7, viz. when God may be glorified, and our brethren edified, so there is a time to be silent, viz. when we have no call to speak, or understand the depth of the matter in question, or when our own passions, or the passions of those we speak to are up, and men are in a heat, then it is good to be silent. A man that will give counsel, or take counsel must have a composed, calm'd, quiet spirit, before he can profit himself, or others; even Christ himself, though he had many things to say, yet seeing his Disciples could
could not bear them, he concealed them, Job 16.12. Hence silence is oft made a note of prudence, Prov 17.28, and 32.16, and 33.17, 27.28. Herein Saul's wisdom appeared, 1 Sam. 10. 11. and David's, Psal. 35.12, 13, 14, and Christ, Mat. 26.63.

But especially when a people are incorrigible and incurable, when they are dogs and swine, flying in the face of a reprover, and trampling God's truths under their feet, we are then commanded to forbear; Prov 9.7, 8. Hos 4.4, 17. Mat. 7.6, and 15.34. Left they abuse, not only the truth, but those that publish it too; for God is tender as of his Gospel, so of those that publish it also. So when those sins we reprove have been sufficiently witnessed against already, so that men sin not for want of light, but directly against light, in such a case we have no obligation to run our selves into danger; so when there is no probability that the evil which we bring ourselves into, shall be balanced with any proportionable good to others; for this is an affirmative precept, and binds semper, but not ad semper; it binds at all times, but not to all times, but only when God may be glorified, his people edified, and his enemies mouths stopped; and therefore it is well observed by a Reverend Divine; That when times are so evil, that they will not bear evil to be spoken against, nor good to be spoken, it is time for the prudent to keep silence; for though in some cases we must bear our testimony openly for truth and holiness, whether men will bear it or no; yet we are not urged with that necessity at all times, &c. Such times there may be, when it will be our wisdom to be silent (at least for a time) as Mariners use to cast anchor in a storm, and rest for a time till it be over, and Water-men when the Tyde is against them, they creep by the Bank-sides till having advantage of the Tyde they can get over more easily. Paul was zealous against Diana at Ephesus, yet his prudence so moderated his zeal, that he spake not particularly against Diana, but only delivered this general Doctrine, That they were no Gods which were made with hands. The prudent man considers not only what he ought to do, but also what he can do, and sometimes gives place to the storm, referring himself for better times, as Elijah did when he fled from Jezebel, and Paul was let down in a Basker.

Many cry out the times are bad, when by their unadvised speeches,
An Exposition

200

See Mr. Edw. Symons Ser. on Amos 9. 13. preach 1643. Greenhill on Ex. 29. 21. and Mr. Baxter's Ser. on Jam. 1. 25. p. 231.


Parum interes inter fidem negare & nobis esse ruere Fulgent.

See more in Amos 6. 10.

They must not fret nor fume, but kiss the hand that smites them, judging themselves, and justifying God in all his dispensations to us, such a holy submissive frame was in David, 2 Sam. 16. 10, 12. Psa. 39. 2. and 37. 7. and Job 1. 21. and 2. 10. and 40. 5. and in Christ, Acts 8. 32. 1 Pet. 2. 21.

The prudent man can see a good hand of providence in all, he can see light in darknesse, comfort in discomfort, rising in ruin, all things for good, Rom. 8. 28. and this keeps him silent. He sees an absolute sovereignty in providence, the Lord may take away health, wealth, life, &c. and none may say unto him, what dost thou? Job 9. 12. The prudent man sees all God's dispensations, ordered with infinite wisdom, Job 9. 4. The Lord weigheth all the afflictions which he dispenseth to his people, Jer. 18. 11, and frames the evil which he brings upon them, Lam. 2. 17. yea he deliberates and deviseth evil even against Babylon, Jer. 51. 12. He likewise seeth justice in all, and that he is punished less than his sins deserve; and this makes him lay his hand upon his mouth, and say,
Ver. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Yet, though the Lord's dispensations seem harsh and hard, yet the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. Psal. 145. 17. Micah 6. 9.

Lastly, be considers that all is done, by an infinite reaching Motives to Providence, which looks at many things at once; the same Warre shall humble the Church, destroy Babylon, and set Jerusalem free; God hath Plots above the plots of Politians, and Mr. Symons ends that they think not of; his ways are deep and mysterious, above our reach, Isa. 45. 15. The same pillar of Cloud shall be dark to Egypt, yet give light to Israel. The same fire shall refine the metal, and consume the dross; let patience then have its perfect work, James 1. 4. So shall we keep the possession of our own souls, and it may be get the possession of other mens too.

VERSE 14.

Seek good and not evil, that ye may live, and so the Lord the God of Hosts shall be with you, as ye have spoken.

The Prophet once more renewes his Exhortation to Repentance, he had called on them thrice before, Seek, seek, seek; he comes now with a fourth Quaestio (if by any means he might work upon them) Seek good and not evil.

§ 1 A Precept.

In the words we have § 2 A Prohibition.

§ 3 A Promise.

We have a Precept, Seek good, viz. such as is prescribed by God in his Word; q. d. You have formerly followed evil, and the Devil the father of it, in worshipping Idols which are oft called Devils; but now return to the Lord, seek good, especially seek God who is the fountain of goodness, that you may live indeed.

Judicious Calvin following the Chalde Paraphrase, renders it, Seek beneficence, (at salva reverentia santo viro dig- num nihil ali- missima ) I conceive this Exposition to be too strait, for by quod quaes. seeking of good is here properly meant, seeking of God, as appears by comparing this place with vers. 4, 6. To seek God.
Chap. v.

An Exposition

is to seek good, and to find life, for with him is the fountain of life. Psal. 36. 9.

2. I do not find the word Tob so signifie benefiicee in any place of Scripture, but it is renderd good, pleasant, profi- 

able, fair, sweet, joyous; all which are very desirous matters, and therefore should quicken our endeavours after them.

3. Yet I deny not that benefiicee may be one branch of

dark which is here called for; seeing they had been given to violence and rapine, now he calls upon them to return, and by benefiicee and works of mercy to break off their trade of cruelty, and to seek God, and all manner of good contained both in the first and second Table, that so they

might live.

2. Here is a Prohibition. Seek not evil any longer, to which you have been addicted for so many years, Amos 3. 4. If you will be mine (faith the Lord) you must give your sins a Bill of

divorce for no man can serve two such contrary Masters. Shall

evil, i.e. all manner of sin without exception, for Sin and E-

vil are Synonyma’s in Scripture, Rom. 7. 19, 20. that which

the Apostle calls evil in one verse, he calls it sin in the next.

Sin is truly called evil, 1. Formaliter & per se. 2. Effectu.

1. It is evil in its owne nature, it is a transgression of Gods

Law, and is directly opposite to him who is the chiefe good.

2. It is the caufe of all the evil of punishment both in this life

and the next, Rom. 6. 2. Sin is the caufe of Gods Wrath, 

and Gods Wrath brings destruction and misery with it; so

that sin being Causa causan, must needs be Causa causae. 3. It

comes from the Devil, that evil one, and leads to him, and so may well be called evil, 1. Joh. 3. 8.

3. Here is a double promise to encourage them to set upon the duty. 1. You shall live, of which before, vers. 4. a. The 

Lord of Hosts will be with you; if you will but return, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, you shall be secured from wrath to come, and received into Gods favour, he will dwell in the midst of you, and bless you. There is an Emphasis and

weight
Vers. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos.

weigh in that little word, So, Seek good and not evil, and when you are so qualified, fitted, and prepared by holiness for communion with an holy God, and your wills are made conformable to God's will, then he will be with you, by his Wisdom to direct you, by his Power to protect you, by his Mercy to pardon you, by his goodness to provide for you, so as you shall want nothing that may be for your good, according to those precious promises, Levit. 26. 12, 13. 1 King. 8. 13. Psal. 84. 11. Thus when the people were called to the Passover, they are commanded to prepare themselves, and so to come, 2 Chron. 35. 6.

4. Here is the manner how the Lord will be with them, and that is, Even as you have spoken, q. d. you boast and brag that you are my people, my peculiar, my inheritance, my Children, and that I will direct you, defend you, and provide for your safety, but these are but your own vain dreams and delusions, for you cannot be my people, so long as you walk contrary to my commands, persecuting my Prophets, trampling upon my Poor, hating righteousness, and loving iniquity. But if you will be my people indeed, then walk as becomes my people, Seek good, and not evil; return sincerely unto me, and then the Lord will be with you indeed, as you have spoken. You shall finde him really present with you, to assist and comfort you, but till this be done you cannot expect his favour, two cannot walk together till they be agreed, Amos 3. 3.

Others read it thus; So the Lord shall be with you as you desire, q. d. It is your desire and prayer that God should abide with you, doe you seek and serve him faithfully, and then you shall finde it true that yee have spoken. But the former reading is most genuine. The sum of all is this, Hitherto your life, O ye men of Israel, hath been a series of iniquity, you have followed Idolatry and evil, but not good; you have commended God despised his Prophets, despised his Spirit, oppressed the poor, multiplied sin; and yet you promise your selves peace and prosperity, life and happiness, boasting that the Lord is your God, and you are his Covenant people, and therefore you need not fear. But if you will indeed live, then hearken to my counsel, Turne from your Idols, Worship the Lord in sincerity, amend your lives, and give up your fetishes to God, walking in paths of piety and obedience.
An Exposition

once before him, and then the Lord will be with you indeed, and you shall live in his favour for ever.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. The destruction of wicked men is from themselves, 

Hos. 13. 9. 

The fault is not in God, for he calls upon them here again, and again, to return and live, and swears that he desires not the death of sinners. Ezek. 18. 31, 32. 

& 33. 11. he gives them hopes of pardon if they will but come in, and lay down the armes of their rebellion. God is not to be blamed, it is mens owne wilfull impenitency that ruines them.

2. Obs. Such as seek God shall find good.

Before he called upon them to seek God, and now he explains himself, and tells them what that is, it is to seek good. Good is the object of our desires, now there is none good but God, he only is Essentially, infinitely, absolutely, and independently good; all the good that is in the Creature it is finite, dependent, derivative, and is found eminently only in God. All the goodnefs that is scattered up and down in the Creature meets eminently in him, so that have him, and have all. The Devil, the World, and Sin promise men good, but there is no reality in those promises. They make golden promises, but leaden performances; they promise joy, but bring forth sorrow; they promise liberty, but they bring men into thralldome. But God is better than his word to his people; and doth for them above all that they can speak or think. Seek therefore him, and you shall finde all manner of good for soul and body, for this life and a better; and after all changes you shall experimentally conclude with David, It is good for me to draw near to God, Psal. 73. ult.

3. Obs. It is not sufficient that we seek good, but we must also turn from evil.

God hath oft joyned them together, and we may not separate them, Psal. 34. 14. & 37. 27. Isa. 16. 17, Matt. 3. 18. Luke 13. 7, 8. Ephes. 4. 23, 23. Colos. 3. 9, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 11. It is not sufficient that we turne from evil, but we must doe good. As negative Christian is no Christian, Rives did not rob Lazarus, yet is condemned for not relieving him. So
of the Prophecy of Amos.

chose, Matt. 3:15. 42. 43. &c. Many would have God and their sins too, like the Samaritans that served God, and their Idols too, 2 Kings. 17. 33. 34. but he that turns to God, must give a bill of divorce to his former sins, he must forget his kindred and his fathers house, Psal. 45. 10. 11. we that were sometimes slaves to sin, must now become servants to God, and it must be as natural and delightful to us to serve him, as ever it was to sin against him. As a vessel that is full of poison must bee emptied of it, before it can bee filled with better liquor; so our hearts must be purged from corruption, before they can be filled with grace. Most pretend that they are the Lords people, and that they belong to him, but as we are, he saies to us, as Jehu saied to the men of Sanaaria when they complemented with him, and told him they were his servants, and would do all that he should bid them. If you will be mine, (faith Jehu,) then cut off the heads of your Masters sons, and send them to me, 2 Kings. 10. 3. 6. So if we be the Lords real servants, we must cut off not the heads of our sons, but of our sins; nor sacrifice our children, but our selves to God, mortifying our beloved corruptions, and then he will be our God, and we shall be his people.

4 Obf. The special presence of God with a people, is a choice mercy.

Hence the Church so oft glories in this, Psal. 44. 17. 18. The Lord of hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge; and sadly laments the want of it, Jer. 14. 8. 9. as the inlet into all misery, Deut. 31. 17. Jer. 6. 8. God's special presence is the glory of a place, Zach. 2. 5. God himself will be an impenetrable wall of fire to defend his people, and to offend their adversaries, and their glory in the midst of them. Where God comes, peace and plenty, consolation and protection, and all good comes. Hence they are pronounced blessed and happy, that have the Lord for their God, Psal. 144. 16. as I have shewed at large elsewhere. As the residence of a King is the glory of a place, so God's presence amongst his people makes them glorious. Hence the name of Gods Church, is Jehovah-Shammah, The Lord is there, Ezek. 48. 16. he is there, as the founder, favourer, and preserver of it: It is more to say, The Lord is here, than to say peace and plenty, and all creature-comforts are here; you may make what you Dd 3 will
will out of it, for all happiness is furnished up in this short pres-
vice, I am with thee.

3 Obs. Impenitent sinners may think themselves highly in
God's favour, when he is greatly incensed against them for their
wickedness.

These Itraetices because they had some priviledges, there-
fore they concluded that God loved them, and would never
punish them for their Idolatry, bribery, cruelty. But they con-
ceived that he would abide still amongst them, as they had
vainly labyd but the Lord tells them, That he abhorred both
them and their services whilst they walked in such irreigious
practises, ver. 21, 22, 23. So it was in Judah, their Judges
were corrupt, and their Prophets covetous, yet they lean up-
on the Lord, and conclude that God was amongst them, and
for them still, Micah 3, 12. but ver. 12. they found that he
was amongst them to their sorrow.

Verse 15.

Hate the evil, and love the good, and establisb judg-
ment in the gate; it may be that the Lord God of Hosts
will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

The Prophet still goes on with his Exhortation to Repen-
tance, he had to do with an hardened people, upon whom
sleight. Exhortations would make no impression, such hard
knots and knarls must have hard beeties and wedges; such
tough humour must have stronger physick; and therefore the
Prophet that he might drive this nail to the head, renewes his
Exhortation, and calls upon them a fifth time to forsaite their
evil ways, and to turn to the Lord who was ready to receive
them.

Repenceance consists of two parts: The first is a dying to
sin: The second is a living to Righteousness. We have both
in the Text.
1. We must hate evil, there is dying to sin.
2. Love good, there is living to Righteousness.

Hate evil, that is, hate sin which is the evil of evils. It is
evil in it self, and the cause of all the evils in the world. Do
not only forbear sin, and refrain from it for a time, and then
return with the dog to his vomit; but hate it, not with a
sleight,
Ver. 15. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Deceit, notwithstanding, but with a deep, implacable hatred, such as men use to have against their deadly enemies, whom they prosecute with the greatest violence.

Do good. It is not sufficient that we shun evil, but we must also do good. We must not only pull up weeds, but we must bring forth good fruit, for man, matter and manner. We must remember diligently to do good not compulsively and forcibly, but freely, Psal. 110. 2. Give benum, sincerely out of love to goodness, cheerfully, Deut. 28. 47, and constantly. Luke 1. 5, 6, 7. Zachary and Elisabeth lived in the days of Herod, a known Tyrant, yet they feared him not, but kept their righteousness, not only in their youth, but in their old age, the text saith they were well stricken in years, yet they continued righteous before God.

3 Because their matter is injustice, therefore he calls upon them to testify the truth of their repentance by parting with their beloved sin, establishing justice openly in the gate, by setting up such just judges as should execute justice faithfully and impartially without respect of persons, q.d. Hierarchus have neglected justice, Amos 4. 1. and 5. 12. and have made your laws your Laws, and have ruled according to your own will, and not according to thy will; but now repent, and execute justice, they will show mercy and favour to you.

4 The better to encourage them, here is a promise of mercy. The Lord will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. The Assyrian had made great slaughters amongst them, and left them but a remnant, 2 Kings 14. 26. yet he bids this remnant return, for then he would be gracious to the remnant of Joseph; that is to the remnant of Israel, as before, ver. 6. He had told them before, ver. 3. that God would decimate them, and here he tells them that God would be merciful to this decimated Remnant if they would but return to him.

5 To keep them from security, the Prophet comes in with a peradventure, the Lord will be gracious to you: He says not positively and absolutely, The Lord will destroy you, for then he had made them desperate; nor yet assertively that God would deliver them, for that would have made them presumptuous and careless; but he uses a prudent, well tempered speech, which on the one hand might keep them from presumption, and on the other from desperation, (so wise and
and cautious should all Gods Ministers be; yet he gives them a little crevice of light and hope, and comes with a perdventure the Lord may yet be gracious to them. He speaks some what doubtfully to shew the difficulty of the work, and the better to excite their industry, and awaken them out of their security. Such bene sperantium formula, such hints of hope are very frequent in Scripture. 1 Sam. 14. 6. and 2. 12, 22. and 16. 12. Lam. 3. 29. Joel 2. 14. Jonah 3. 9. Zeph. 2. 3.

O3. The Papists to keep their vassals in darkness and doubting, amongst other Scriptures they bring in this to prove that no man can be assured of his Election and Salvation in this life.

Answ. But the Answer is easie; 1 The Lord doth not speak here of the Election, or eternal salvation of such as truly repent; but of their deliverance from outward afflictions and calamities which were threatened against them for their sins, ver. 6. These sometimes the Lord inflicts upon his people notwithstanding their repentance (as we see in David) and this he doth either for chastisement to make them flye from sin for the future, or else for trial.

2 The Lord sometimes after he hath threatened judgements upon the wicked, yet upon their feigned humiliation holds his hand (that the world may see how highly he esteems the true repentance of his people) as we see in Ahab and the Ninivites. Considering therefore these various dispensations of God, the Prophet speaks doubtfully here, and exhorts them to repent, referring the event to Gods wise and gracious providence. So that such places speaking of temporary chastisements, make nothing against the certainty of our Election.

3 The particle ut, perdventure, is not alwayes dubitative, but sometimes assertive, q.d. seek the Lord sincerely, and then without doubt, he will receive you graciously, and so the word is used, Job. 14. 12. Peradventure the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out. Caleb speaks not here dubitatively, but beleevingly, q.d. Though the work be difficult, yet the Lord will be with me, and by his help I shall drive out these formidable Giants out of Canaan, so Heber 4. 14. So here the Prophet doth not question whether God will receive a penitent sinner to mercy, for that the Scripture proves abundantly, Ezek. 33. 11, but the Prophet by this perdventure, gives
Wen. 19. of the Prophecy of Amos.

It gives them some hopes that if they would turn to God, she would turn to them, and either remove or diminish the calamities which were coming on them.

4 Dav. Suppose we grant that it is a doubting speech: yet it makes not for their purpose, for it is not to be referred to God, as thought it were doubtful whether he would pardon the sins of penitence, for we have his hand and seal for that. But it is to be referred to those secure sinners, of whose repentance the Prophet might well doubt; lest either it would be none at all, or else but feigned and hypocritical.

Yea, fifthly, Should we grant that it is a doubting speech, and to be referred to God, yet it makes nothing for Popish or Arminian doubting, for the Prophet seeing to what a height of impiety these sinners were come, thought it not fit to comfort them presently, and raise them up suddenly, but first to humble them, and by speaking doubtfully to give them a hint of the hainousness of their sins, as though it might well be doubted whether the Lord would forgive them or no; that to them being feared and humbled might be fitter for mercy: And because things that are hardly come by, are more earnestly sought, therefore the Prophet intimates unto them, that it was no easy matter to obtain forgiveness for such hainous sins, that he might hereby incite them to a more thorough repentance, and crying for mercy.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Good things must be often pressed upon us.

This People were so hardened and habituated in sin, and Satan had so befriended them, that they took darkness for light, and evil for good; so that the Prophet was forced to double and treble his Exhortations to them, and to give them line upon line, and Precept upon precept, and to drive them nails of the Temple day after day, till they were fastned in their hearts, Eccle. 12. 11. We are like a dull Knife, which must be whetted over and over till it be brought to an edge; It is the very metaphor of the Holy Ghost, Pem. 6. 7. Thou shalt teach (or what) my word upon thy Children: they must be sharpened that it may make a deep impression upon their hearts.
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

Obl. Sin is a evil thing.

Hate evil, that is, hate sin, it is indeed the evil of evils; all other plagues and evils are as nothing compared with this. A man may live under glad sensations, and yet be under dear affections. It is sin alone that makes us the object of God's hatred, and therefore it should be the object of our cure; it should be abominable in our sight which is so abominable in itself, Jer. 44. 4.

Obl. We must not only forbear sin, but we must hate it.

As many as man restrains from an oath, that yet never fears an oath, Esther, vi. 9. So many a man forbears sin, that doth not truly hate it. A wicked man for fear, or shame, or for some self-ends may restrain sin for a time, but a good man hates it with a deep, deadly, implacable, irreconcilable hatred. Such as love the Lord cannot but hate evil, Psal. 97. 10. yes they abhor it, now abhorrence is the height of hatred; 1 Tim. 6. 5. Neither that which is evil; hate it, as you would hate Hell itself.

We must hate it universally, true hatred is æterna gen, Faith Arisitice it is against the whole kind. He that truly hates one sin as it is sin, will hate every sin. Quantum defendit de omnibus. As the persecutors hatred is not against one or two good men, but against the whole Church of God, his desire is, that the very name of Israel might be had no more in remembrance, Psal. 83. 4. and therefore they seek to raze it to the very foundation, Psal. 137. 7. even so should we deal with sin.

We must hate it not only Odio usury nonius, but also Odio similitudinis, not only fly from it, but pursue it with an hatred of enmity.

Obl. Exercising of Justice and Judgement is a duty very pleasing unto God.

Hence the Lord doth call for it both here, and elsewhere, Jer. 2. 27. Psal. 67. 3. 4. See my Commentary there.

Obl. When the Lord delivers his people from outward Judgements, or purges their sin, it is most gracious and mercy, but the merit of vicissitude would make him no.

Peregrination the Lord will be gracious to you; it is one of God's royal Attributes to be Gracious, and to love freely. Exod.
Ver. 131. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Exod. 24. 6. From the Alpha of our Election, to the Omega of our Salvation, all is Free-grace, as I have shewed elsewhere.

6 But, in times of distress God usually gives his people some grounds of hope, and some glimpse of comfort to quench them so dry.

Hence he so oft comes with a peradventure; God may give repentance, 2 Tim. 2. 25. who can tell, and who knows whether God may not repent of the evil that he intends against us? Joel 2. 13. Jonah 3. 9. As then are the means, and commit the success to God. Take away hope, and you take away endeavour; impossibility of obtaining breaks the heart. Though thy sins have been great and grievous, yet pray, and use the means, peradventure they may be pardoned, Acts 8. 23. 23. arise and be doing, and say as Jonathan did, when he went against the Philistines, 1 Sam. 14. 6. Come, let us go against these Philistines; it may be the Lord will work for us; for it is alone with him to save with many, or with few. Be not therefore despondent; it is the nature of faith to oppose discouragements. Love knoweth no difficulties, but makes men strive; say then as the Leper, 2 Kings 7. 3. Why stand we here? if we stay, we shall all die of this famine. If we go, we perish; come, let us fall upon the half of the loaves; we cannot live; Nothing venture and nothing have.

Verse 16, 17.

Therefore the Lord, the God of Hosts, the Lord saith seven, Wailing shall be in all streets, and they shall say in all high ways, alas, alas! and they shall call the Husbandmen to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation, to wailing. And in all vineyards shall be wailing, for I will pass thereon: the Lord, the Lord.

The Prophet had often fore-warned this obstinate people of Judgements approaching, and called upon them to fly from the wrath to come; but, since they continued the Word...
and warnings of the Lord, he tells them now, that the Sword should come and cut them off; and as they had sinned generally both in City and Country, so now they should be punished generally, for all places should be filled with weeping and wailing.

The Prophet having finish'd his Exhortation to Repentance, now returns to his Threatenings again; where we have the sad Calamities which were coming upon Israel;

1. By the wailing which should be in all streets:
   Set forth 2. By the weeping which should be in all High-ways,

1. By the Persons which should

   1. Natural, real mourners, Husbandman, as the
   2. Artificial, hired mourners, and such as had skill in Lamentation.

3. Here is the reason and ground of all this weeping and wailing, and that is Israel's impenitency, and contempt of those warnings which God gave them by the Prophets. They would not hearken to their counsel, but hated reproof, Therefore wailing shall be in all streets.

4. Here is the certainty of all this. It is the Lord, the God of Hosts, that saith it. The better to awaken them, he tells them they had not to do with a dead Idol, or with an impotent man, but with an Omnipotent God, who was able to inflict whatever he had threatened against them, as appears by the majestick Titles which are given to him, who is the Lord, the God of Hosts. This people were apt to soothe themselves, and cry peace when there was no peace, and therefore the Prophet deals plainly with them, and bids them not flatter themselves with thoughts of impunity, for their mischief should now be turned into mourning, and their singing into sorrow; yea such sad calamities should come upon them, that all should mourn, both Citizens and Tulchicks, both real and Artificial mourners.

1. The Citizen shall lament in the streets, the loss of his friends, and riches;

2. The Husband-man shall lament, to see all his labours swept away by the cruel Assyrian.

3. The
of the Prophecy of Amos.

3. The Vintor that was wont to sing for joy, shall now lament for the loss of his Vintage.

4. All others should lament in the very high ways, the several distresses which should come upon them, crying, Alas! Alas!

5. Their calamity should be so great, that those which were wont to be hired in an Histrionical, mimical manner to lament and howl at Funerals, should now mourn in sober sadnes, and good earnest, and therefore the Prophet saith, they shall call not only for the Husbandmen, but also for those that are skilful in lamentation, that they may weep together. As in a time of mirth men call their neighbours together to rejoice with them, Luke 15:6. So in this time of great mourning, they shall call the Citizen, the Husbandman, the Vintor, and the Artificial mourner to bear their parts in this doleful Ditty.

Call for such as are skilful in lamentation to wailing.

It was the custome of those times in those Eastern Countries in times of great mourning to send for singing-men and singing-women that could sing Artificial lamentations to provoke men to weeping. 2 Chron. 35:25. Job 3:8. Eccles. 12:5. Their miseries here should be so great that they could not sufficiently bewail them themselves, and therefore they should send for these to help them. The Jews of latter times borrowed such a corrupt custome of the Heathens to augment their grief at Funerals.

1. They had Minstrels, which with their mournful tones and sad tunes inclined the affections of the people to mourning for the dead. Of these there were two sorts, 1 Some played on Pipes. 2 Others sounded Trumpets. At the Funerals of great men they sounded Trumpets, and at the Funerals of inferior persons they sounded Pipes. Hence we read that when Jesus raised Jarius his daughter, he called out the Minstrels, Mark 5:38. (See in Mr. Catesby, 3, 23. 3, 38.)

2. The women especially that had an art in mourning, and skill in making exquisite lamentation, were hired at Burials for the same purpose, where going along with the Corps by outward significations of their sorrow both by voice and gesture, they moved the company more strongly to mourning and to sympathize with them. These, the Romans called praecurrer.
An Exposition

Christi, quos in hae opus monefis, chief or skillful mourners. These had venales lacrymas, they made a trade of their tears, making a greater howling and noise than real mourners did, as Horace testifies. From the Heathen this custom came to Rome also, where for money, the vilest of men shall have out-side mourners more than a good many. All kind of hypocrisy is odious to God, but this is gross hypocrisy to make a great howling when there is no reality. It is only vox, clamor, sibilato, & præterea nihil. The Prophet therefore doth not approve of these hypocritical howlings, and artificial lamentations to get money, but saith shews that their sorrow should bee so great that it should need help to express it.

Observations.

1. When the word cannot mend a people, then comes judgments and ends them.

First, God warns men down by the sword of the Spirit, Heb. 6, 5, and then cuts them off by an enemy's sword. This is God's usual method, as hath been experienced in all ages. When men will not hearken to the voice of God's messengers, it is a certain sign that God intends to destroy them. 1 Sam. 2, 25. 2 Chron. 25, 20, Prov. 29, 1.

2. Oh! Where sinners go, there sorrow follows.

We read before of this people's idolatry, bribery, cruelty; now comes weeping, waiting, lamentation, &c. Wicked men's mirth ends in mourning. See more on Amos 8, 3.

Verse 17.

And in all vineyards shall be wailing, for I will pass through thee, saith the Lord.

These Israelites boasted much that God was with them, and he would never leave them who were his Covenant people. The Prophet tells them that God would abide no longer with them, but would now pass through them in wrath, and not only the citizens and husbandmen, but even the visitors also should mourn for the spoil that should be made among
Ver. 17. of the Prophecy of Amos.

among them. In the time of Vintage there was woe to be great mirth and jollity, Psal. 4. 7. they sung merrily, and did shout for joy, Isa. 16. 10. Jer. 31. 30. yea but their sins had marred their mirth, so that now they shall have weeping instead of singing. In all Vineyards shall be mourning. All had sinned, and now all shall suffer.

3. Here is the reason of their mourning, viz. because the Lord will pass thorow them, he will not dwell, nor abide amongst them in love and favour as they vaunly fancied, but he would pass thorow them like an enemy, and execute justice on them, Thorow Egypt when he sent an Angel to smite all the first-born thereof, and thereby filled every house with wailing and lamentation, Exod. 11. 4. and 12. 12. So I will pass thorow you with plagues, and will cause the destroying enemy to pass thorow all your land, saith the Lord.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Sin increaseth God against a people.
   And makes him pass thorow them in wrath, like lightning, doing general execution upon them, terribly, suddenly, incredibly. But of this before on ver. 6.

   Citizens, Husbandmen, Visitors, all had sinned, and now weeping and wailing shall be amongst them all. But of this the Amos 6. 2. 3.

Verse 18.

We unto you that defie the day of the Lord, to what end as it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.

We are now come to the third part of this Chapter, where the Prophet inveighs against two sorts of sinners. The first are mockers and despisers of the Prophets threatenings. The second are such as abused in their Ceremonies and Sacrifices, Ver. 21. 22. 23.

In the precedent Verse the Prophet had told them that the Lord
Lord would pass throrow them in wrath, these impudent sinners in a taunting, sarcastical way ask the Prophet when this would be, q.d. You Prophets tell us of a dark and dismal day, a day of wrath and trouble which will come upon us; but we see nothing comes; if God be in earnest let him make speed and come when he will, we fear neither him nor thy threatenings; nor do we believe that ever such a day will come, or if it do come, yet it will not be such a dreadful day as you speak of; for God will not forsake his people which he hath spared so long from destruction.

Thus these desperate Atheists being wholly drowned in security, sensuality, and carnal delights, scoff at the Threatnings, and jest at Gods judgements, neither fearing the one, nor expecting the other, but esteeming the words of the Prophet as wind, and his cominations as a vain mockery.

To these Foutards, at the Threatnings and mockers at the Lords long-suffering, the Prophet answers: What is that desire the day of the Lord? it will come too soon upon you without wishing for; did you but know the terror of it, you would never desire it. To what end is it for you thus to speak? Did you but know what kind of day it is that is basting on you, you would not so much desire it; you will think it comes too soon when it comes (the Devils thought so, Mat. 8, 29.) when God comes he will come as an armed enemy against you to your utter destruction; so that you have great cause to fear, and by repentance to prevent, rather than to desire that day; yet these hypocrites either as conceited of their own innocency, and confiding in their priviledges, desired this day, or else in mockery and scorn, they cry, When will that day come, which Amos so much talks of, we would fain see it. So you shall (faith the Prophet) time enough to your sorrow; For it is a day of darkness, and not of light; and therefore woe be to you that thus scoffingly desire the day of the Lord, you will finde it no jesting matter when it comes, it will be a dark and dismal day to you, though now you make your selves merry with it.

By a day of darkness here is meant, the time in which God would destroy the Kingdome of Israel, according as the Prophers had fore-told. Allegorically and allusively this is true of the day of Judgement, it will be a day of darkness and terror to all wicked men; but literally, this day of darkness and
and not of light, that is, this day of exceeding darkness (as the Hebrew idiom imports) as we may see Amos 9.4. I will set mine eye upon them for evil, and not for good. The denial of the contrary hath a great emphasis in it, q.d. I will bring upon them all manner of evil, but not good. So here, It shall be a day of darkness, and not of light; that is, it shall be a very dark and dismal day in which they shall finde no light of comfort from the Lord, but wrath shall come upon them to the utmost. In that day the Lord will exert his power in executing his vengeance on the Kingdom of Israel for all their Idolatry, Apostacy, Security, Hypocrisie, &c. The various and inevitable calamities of this day, are elegantly set forth in the next verse, where the Prophet shews how the judgements of God should beget them round, so that if they escaped from one evil, yet another should apprehend them, and if they fled from a Lion, yet a Bear (which is more savage) should devour them.

It is usual in Scripture to call a day of Adversity, misery and distress by the name of Darkness, as Job 20.16. and 23. 17. and 30.26.Isa.5.30. and 21.22.Joe 2.3.Zeph.1. 14. 15. Hence the doleful condition of the damned is called utter darkness. As light signifies prosperity, joy and comfort, Hos.8.16. Job 18.6. and 38.15. Psal.97.11. and 112.4. So darkness signifies calamity and sorrow, as I have shewed on Amos 8.9.

Quest. But why doth the Prophet denounce a Woe against those that despire the day of the Lord, when it is the earnest desire of the Saints in Scripture that the day of the Lord would come, and they daily pray, Thy Kingdom come, and it is made a kind of a Periphrasis of a believer, that he is one that longs for the day of the Lord, 2 Tim.4.8.

Answ. We must distinguish, 1 Of days; 2 Of persons.
1 There is a double day of Judgement; 1 There is a day of temporal judgement, when the Lord ariseth to execute judgement upon the heads of incorrigible sinners, such as the old world, Sodom, Jerusalem; and these days have in them a glimpse and shadow of that great day of the Lord, and therefore they are called a day of blackness, and darkness, a great and terrible day which none can abide, when the earth shall tremble, and the Sun and Moon be dark, and the
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

Saw withdraw their light, Joel 2:5, 10. All these hyperbolical terms set forth the dreadful desolation which should fall upon the wicked in this life. But this is not that day which the Saints desire.

The day which the gymly so much desire and long for is that great and general day of Judgement, that day of their full Redemption when they shall enjoy both in body and soul full communion with Christ, their Head.

2 We must distinguish of persons, some are beleevers and some are unbelievers, and hypocrites, the Prophet speaks not here of beleevers, but of self-conceited hypocrites, who being puffed up with high conceits of their own innocency, & thoughts that God would acquit them, thought the Prophets condemned them, they conceited that would God deal more gently with them than those harsh, plain-dealing Prophets, and would not judge them so bad as they had reported them to be. But no and alas to you that thus desire the day of the Lord! for if our day be terrible, how terrible will the day of the Lord be? if you cannot bear our words, how will you endure his heavy hands? you think us Lions, and therefore you shite from our day, but the day of the Lord will be as a Bear, which will rear and torment you wotte.

The summe of all is this, We to you incredulous and sore sinners, that mock at the yeldings of the dark and disunited day which is coming on you, scornfully asking when will it come? assure your selves it will come soon enough to your sorrows; you shall finde that it is not a day of mirth and pleasure, but of anguish and trouble, when you shall shite from our danger, and run into another, as if one should shite from a Lion, and a Bear should more him.

Observations.

1 In all ages there have been some profane mockers and disriders of God's judgements.

Thus it was in the Prophet's times, when they told the wicked of the burden of the Lord, that is of God's wrath which should light upon them in some heavy judgements for their sins, Isa. 13:1; and 22:5. they usually mock them for their pangs, saying, What is the burden of the Lord, and when will it come? you have often told us of it, but as we do not feel it, so we do not beleive it, and therefore let it make haste that we may see it. So doth Isa. 5:19. Jer. 17:15. The Prophet:
Ver. 18, of the Prophecy of Amos.

The prophet tells them of a night of misery that was coming on them, but those accursed Edomites triumphantly ask, Watchman, what of the night? [Isa. 31:11, 13]. Is it much of a night of horror and desolation, of war and confusion, but when will it come? Oh, said the Prophet, the morning comes, and also the night; you have had a morning of prosperity, assure your selves you shall also have a night of adversity, and therefore if you will inquire of the Lord by me his Watchman, do it seriously, and not facetiously, return and come to God with speed.

Thus some conceive that the Prophet recites the scoffs of prophane ones, when he saies, Precept must be upon precept, and line upon line. [Isa. 28:10, 12]. Peter and Jude both foretold us, what we have found too true in our own dayes, That in the last dayes there should be mockers, which should mock at the general day of Judgement, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world. Because Judgement is not presently executed on the heads of wicked men, therefore they set their mouths against heaven, and blaspheme the most High.

Ob. God will not bear with scorners.

When sinners are come to that height of impudence and prophane saies, that they jeer at Judgements, and mock at Gods Messengers, then shall their bonds be made strong, and their sorrows multiplied, [Isa. 28:14, 15, 16, 17, 18]. [Isa. 36:16, Prov. 3:3, 4, Jer. 23:33, 34, Ezek. 7:5, 6, and 12:22].

The day of the Lord, especially that last day will be a dreadful, and a dismal day to such; they will not be able then to stand in the Judgement, [Psa. 130:1, and therefore the Apostle saies, Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? [1 Pet. 4:4]. The Apostles interrogation is not dubitative, but affirmative, they shall appear no where with comfort, nor with confidence, especially in these days.

1. In a day of publick calamity, when sword, Plague, Famine comes, then the hearts of the wicked shall fall, when they shall howl upon their beds for the loss of their creature-comforts.
An Explication

2

comforts, and shall have a trembling heart, failing eyes, and sorrow of mind. |  

1. As the righteous that prepare for troubles, shall rejoice in the midst of them, Job 5:22, Hab. 3:17. To the wicked shall be overwhelmed with amazement and horror, and shall rage like wilde Bulls in a net, Isa. 51:20.

3. The day of death is a dismal day to the wicked, even the King of Thrones, Job 18:14. The most terrible of all terribles said Aristotle when he came to dye. The thoughts of it will make a Bully azzare knees to knock one against another for fear.

3. But specially that great day of the Lord, when he shall come as a Thief in the night, suddenly, terribly, and unexpectedly upon the wicked of the world, 1 Thess. 5:2, 2 Pet. 3:10. That will be a dark and terrible day to them, when even the Kings and Captains of the earth shall cry to hills and mountains to hide them, Rev. 6:16,17.

Where then will those blasphemers of our time appear that scoff at God's threatenings, and desire their own damnation, which the Devils themselves dare not do, for they believe and tremble? Who are these that provoke the Lord to anger? Are they stronger than he? Who can abide his wrath, or the thunder of his power? Job 26:16. Shall the whelp challenge the Lion, the clay its Potter, or the creature its Creator? Let the potters strive with the potter of the earth, but not to him that striveth with his Maker, Isa. 48:9. To such as these, the day of the Lord will be darkness, and not light, i.e. full of perplexity, and misery, leaving them void of comfort or counsel.

Verse 19.

As if a man did fly from a Lion, and a Bear met him, or went into the house, and leaped his hand upon the wall, and a Serpent bit him.

His people still dreamed of impunity, and because the Lord bare long with them, therefore they concluded he would never come; or if he did, they would shift for themselves; and if troubles were in one place, they would flye to another.
another, but the Prophet tells them, that these things would not
avail them in the day of God's wrath, for all places should be
full of snares and dangers, so that there should be no safety
at home or abroad; for God would multiply evils upon them.
So that if they escaped one, yet another should apprehend
them; as if a man being in the Field or Wood should flye
from a Lion, and a furious Bear should meet him; or flying
from a Bear, a Serpent should bite him. It is a kind of Gra-
dation, where the speech riseth, and the Prophet shews that
if they escaped one evil, yet they should fall into a worse.
To have a Lion pursue a man is very dangerous, but to fall
into the mouth of an hungry Bear is worse, but to escape
both, and flying into an house for shelter and succour, and
laying his hand upon the wall to ease and uphold himself, to
have a Serpent sting him there, where he looked for most secu-
ritv, this is worst of all. The Lion is a more noble, generous
creature; it spares a yielding prey, and seizeth not on dead
carcases; but the Bear spares none, no not the dead. The two
and forty children which mocked Elias were torn in pieces
not by Lions, but by ten Shee-bears, a King. 2. 24. which are
more savage and cruel. Hence comes the Proverb, Loomes mori
fugit, occasiis incidunt in Ursam, he fled from a Lion, and fell into the
mouth of a Bear, that is, he fled from one danger, and fell
into a worse. There is no creature more fierce and fell than a
Bear, especially when she is robbed of her Whelps, and
therefore when the Lord threatens to come against Ephraim
in a dreadful manner, he tells them he will come against
them as a strong Lion, as a subtle Leopard, yea as a raging
Bear that is robbed of her Whelps; Hos. 1. 7, 8. The like ex-
pressions are frequent in Scripture, 2 Sam. 1. 8. Prov. 17. 12.

Lam. 3. 10. Thee hypocrites conceited that changes would quicquam fore
peace them, if the Lion were but dead, oh then they should be
quieter. No (saith the Prophet) a Bear shall meet you. Oh
but if the Bear were but dead, then we should have rest, no
(saith the Prophet) a Serpent shall bite you. These are a due, and mutu-
proverbial kind of speech; by which is set forth the great
danger which should encompass Israel, no place should be
safe, but they should be set round, so that when they thought
to flye from one trouble, they should fall into a worse; and
whilst they shunned the Styx, of one calamity, they should

F. 3.
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

fall into the Charybdis of another. If they went abroad, there were Lions and Bears to devour them; if they staid at home, there were Serpents and Snakes that lay lurking in holes and walls that should bite them, and sting them to death. Thus when the day of the Lord should come, they should not be able to escape, but flying from one cruel enemy, they should fall into the hands of another, one misery should follow in the neck of another until they were quite consumed.

By a Lion here some understand Tigrabphilus, King of Assyria, who formerly oppressed Israel, and by a Bear, Salmanasar, a latter King of Assyria, which dealt more sharply and severely with Israel, and who at last proved insatiable Serpents to them, when he besieged and ravaged Samaria, and took all Israel captive. To this some conceive the Prophet Hosea alludes. Hosea 13:7, 8. The Lord had been as a tender Nurse unto this people, he brought them out of Egypt into Canaan, chose them for his own peculiar, above all the people of the world, and gave them the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, as you may see, Deut. 32:10, to 15. But they abusing those mercies to the dishonour of that God that gave them, he now resolves to meet them no more like a Father to embrace them, but like a Lion to eat them, like a Bear to devour them, and like a Serpent to sting them to death.

Observations.

1. There is no escaping when God pursues.

Neither fields nor houses can shelter us if he be against us. Let men flye up to heaven, or dig into hell, or hide themselves in the bottome of the sea; yet there God's eye doth see them, and his hand will finde them out; as I have showed at large on Amos 9:2, 3, 4. Let Jonah flye to sea; and God will meet him there with a tempest, Jonah 1:3, 4. If men escape the paw of the Lion, yet the Bear and the Serpent shall meet them. God will send rods to chastise a disobedient people. He hath variety in store; and if one will not do, another shall. He will send evil upon evil, lots upon lots, and enemy upon enemy, until he hath quite destroyed us. Neither strength, nor courage can save us in a day of wrath.
Ver. 20. of the Prophecy of Amos.

14, 15, 16. Let men fly from an iron bow, yet a bow of steel shall smite them thorow, Job 20, 24. and if they get out of a pit, they shall fall into a snare that shall hold them fast. Hsa. 24, 17, 18. Jer. 48, 44. and if they fly seven ways, yet seven hundred ways before their enemies, yet they shall not escape; for God will send a sword among them, and if they escape one danger, yet another shall arrest them. Deut. 28, 35. Wicked men think to escape by shifting, e.g. when they be in trouble of conscience then they desire to dye; thinking thereby to free themselves from misery, by running into eternal misery. So when God, by the preaching of the word do teach people, they think that God would deal more gently with them, and therefore they appeal to him; now what is this but to fly out of the smoak into the fire, and to avoid a lesser, to run into a greater mischief?

Verse 20.

Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

The Prophet having shewed this people the terror, and unavoidableness of that great day of the Lord which was coming upon them for their sin, concludes all with this sharp and sacred Epiphonema, Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light?

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, q.d. To what end do you desire this dreadful day of the Lord? Do you not know that it will be a dark and dismal day, when you shall lose your lives and liberties, your goods and your relations? when your joy shall be turned into sorrow, your prosperity into adversity, and your light into the shadow of death. It is not therefore for such obstinate sinners as you, to think that the day of the Lord should ever yield you any light or comfort, for the Lord will come as an armed enemy against you, who have been so long open enemies to him.

2 To assure them of the truth of what he spake, he doubles it, saying, It shall be a day of darkness, even very dark, q.d. Take it for a most certain truth, that you shall have all sorts and degrees of darkness amongst you, you shall have outward and
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

inward, corporal and spiritual darkness and misery. See more ver. 18.

2. 3. To make the words more weighty and emphatical, there is added a denial of the contrary to the Affirmation, which is an usual Hebraism, and intends the speech. So Isa. 38:1. Thou shalt die, and not live, i.e. thou shalt surely die. So Ezek. 18:21. He shall live, and not die; i.e. he shall surely live. So Job. 1:20. he confessed and denied not, i.e. he plainly and openly confessed that he was not the Christ; so it shall be a day of darkness, and no light, or brightness in it, that is, it shall be a very calamitous day, which will bring with it many evils, but no good; much sorrow, but no joy; much darkness, but no light of comfort, ease, direction, or good counsel.

Observations.

1. A dark and dolorous day will certainly and suddenly seize upon secure and obstinate sinners.

Therefore the Prophet doubles and trebles it, saying, The day of the Lord will be darkness, and not light; then he asks the question, and doubles the Interrogation, and all to assure them of the truth of what he spoke, and to hasten their Repentance. The darkness of sin brought upon them darkness of sorrow, and provoked the Lord to take away his corn and wine, and oil, and to strip them naked, as in the day when they were born. Since they would not serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things; now they should serve the Assyrian in woe and misery, and in the want of all things, Deut. 28:47, 48.

A good man if he fall into trouble, yet he riseth again, but the wicked shall fall, and never rise more, Prov. 24:16. If a good man sit in darkness, yet the Lord will be a light unto him, Psal. 97:11. Micah 7:8. and turn all to his good in the conclusion. As the wicked man in the fulness of his sufficiency is in straits, Job 20:22. So the good man in the fulness of straits hath an All-sufficiency of comfort, so that he cannot but say, the Lord hath done all things well, and it is good for him that ever the Lord afflicted him; yea that great and terrible day of the Lord, when Christ shall come in his glory to judge.
judge the world, shall be a day of joy and refreshing to all the Saints, Ps. 98.4. to 9. Luke 21.38. But to the wicked, who have Christ the Judge for their enemy, how dark and dreadful will all his days of Judgement be? When he shall lay his Vindictive hand upon them here, how full of despondency and despair will they be, when they shall be totally forsaken of all their hopes and comforts? So that if they look upward, God is against them; if downward, Hell and the Grave wait for them; if inward, a guilty Conscience accuseth them; if outward, all the Creatures are ready as so many Serjeants to arrest them, on the behalf of their Lord and Master. Thus wee see how the Day of the Lord will be darkness, and no light nor brightness in it to the wicked.

Verse 21, 22, 23.
I hate and despise your feast-days, and I will not smell to your solemn assemblies.
Though ye offer me Burnt-offerings, and your Meat-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace-offerings of your fat beasts.
Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Viols.

Wee are now come to the Fourth and last part of this Chapter, which contains,

1. A Reproof. 2. A Commination of these hypocritical Israelites, who confided in their Services, and Sacrifices, in their Festivals and Songs, conceiting that the bare performance of those external Rites (though separated from internal obedience) were highly pleasing unto God; and that he would never destroy a People that served him as they did. This their folly the Prophet confutes in the following Verses, where he tells them, that all their Services were odious unto God, and so farre from appeasing him, that they incensed him the more against them; and that because they were untoward.
1. **An Exposition.**

1. The **Sacrificers** were grand Apostates and Idolaters. They refrained in the work done, and in their Ceremonious observances, and bodily worship, devoid of all faith or true obedience, and so became abominable to God.

2. They failed in the **Matter** of their Worship, it was not of Divine institution, but of their own invention, and therefore it is so oft Emphatically called, yours. I hate your sacrifices. They went directly contrary to God's command, for he commanded them to worship at Jerusalem, in his Temple there, but they left the Temple, and went a whoring after Cakes and Idols at Bethel, Gilgal, Dan, and Beersheba. Thus they changed the place of God's Worship, 1 Kings 12. 29. Then they changed the time, ver. 31. and the Priests, ver. 31, 32. no wonder then if God reject their services.

3. They failed in the **Manner**, they should have performed all those duties singly and sincerely, in obedience to God's command, but they meerly sought themselves in all they did,hypocritically resting in their external observances of Feasts and Sacrifices, of Songs and Musick in their Temples, thinking by this means to expiate their sins. In this Verse therefore, we have a Protefs, of preventing and anticipating of an Objection, whereas they boasted that they were the people of God, and did service to him. To this the Prophet brings in the Lord, saying, I hate and abhor your Services, since they come from such wicked persons, who are my profest enemies, and what you doe, hath no foundation in my Word, but is a more will worship of your own invention.

In this and the two next Verses we have:

1. **Feastivals,** as Sabbath.
   1. **New-Moons,**
   2. **Solemn Assemblies,**
   3. **Burnt-offerings,**
   4. **Meat-offerings,**
   5. **Peace-offerings,**
   6. **Vocal,**
   7. **Intrumental,**

2. Here
2 Here is God's abhorrence of all these services, expressed in a variety of words, as
1 I hate them.
2 I abhor them.
3 I will not smell them.
4 I will not accept them.
5 I will not regard them.
6 Away with them.

3 Here is the reason of this, because they are,
1 Your Feasts.
2 Your Sacrifices.
3 Your Songs.

They are none of mine, either for matter or manner, but they are of your own inventing and appointing, and therefore I abhor them.

I hate, I despise your Feast-days; or, I hate and reject your Feasts with much disdain, as vile and contemptible things, you think you highly please me with them, and think to pacify me by them, but your thoughts and mine differ much, for I tell you plainly, I hate and abhor both your persons and performances; till you mend your manners, and execute Justice and Righteousness in the earth, all you doe is odious to me, and I look upon it with the greatest disapprobation imaginable; you think that I should delight in your solemnities as you doe, but my Romack loathes them, and turns at evey dish and duty. The Stomach digesteth with wholesome food and turns to it, but that which is unwholesome the Romack turns at the very sight and shent of it. When people feast sincerely, God uleth (in a sense) to feast with them, and their wine cheers him; Judges 9:13. It is an hyperbolical speech, and imports, that God is delighted with the sacrifices of his Servants, and highly approves of their obedience in them. But the hypocrite of these Israelites, like Colquintida in the por, spoyleth their feasts, and made the Lord to loathe them, as we doe meat which is butthensome to the Stomach, which maketh us sick till we have rid our stomachs of it; as Christ threatened to doe with lukewarm Laodicea, Revelation 3:16. I hate, I despise, the doubling of the word is emphatical, and sheweth the greatness of God's indignation against them for their hypocrisy, for of all sins God most abhors that, as being most directly opposite to his Name, who is a God of Truth and Righteousness. I hate your feasts, or feastival Sacrifices, the word Ga...
An Exposition

which we render: Feasts, signifieth both a Feast, and the
Sacrifices which were offered on those Feast-dyes. Hence
some render it, I hate your sacrifices, so the word is used, Exod.
23, 18. Ps. 118. 27. Isa. 29. 1. The first of my feasts, i.e. of the
Lamb which was sacrificed for my Feast, shall not be kept untill the
morning; so that it imports, that God hated both the feastivals,
and the sacrifices which they offered at those feasts.

But our reading is good, I hate your Feasts, for the despising
of their Sacrifices follows in the next verse. The Jews had
many Feasts, they had Sabbaths, New Moons, the Feast of
Tabernacles, Pentecost, Trumpets, and the Jubilee. But the
Lord tells them, That he will not smell in their solemn assem-
blas. It is a Metaph. q. d. I greatly loathe them; meek as oft
as you will, but I will not meet you there, nor once smell in
your assemblies. To smell a sweet favour, signifies God's fa-
vourable acceptation and approbation; thus when Noah of-
fered a Burnt-offering to the Lord, it is said, the Lord smelt a
sweet favour which pleased him well, Gen. 8. 21. so Levit.
26. 31.

I will not smell in your days of restraint or prohibition, so the
words are in the fountain; that is, I delight not in your Feast-
ival-days, wherein people are restrained and prohibited their
ordinary labours, Levit. 23. 7, 8, 36. Joel 1. 14. when they
offered sacrifice in a right manner, then God esteemed them
as a sweet smelling sacrifice, Exod. 29. 18. Levit. 1. 9, 17,
17. Ezek. 20. 40. they were very grateful and acceptable to
him, being types of Christ, in whom he is well pleased. The
burning of the Sacrifice in it self yielded no such sweet smell,
but the faith and obedience of the person being in Christ, this
made it so delightful to God.

The people when they brought their Offerings, they brought
Frankincense with them, to burn for a sweet favour to the
Deut. 33. 10. Psal. 66. 15. Ezek. 16. 18. the better to re-
represent the sweet odours of our Saviours Sacrifice, Ephes. 5. 2.
But these Formulæ resting in the bare doing of the work
without faith and obedience, their sweetest incense was
as noytome dung in the nostrils of God, Isa. 1. 13. Mal. 2. 3.
This may be more truly said of all Popish Incensings in their.

Obj.
Ver. 32. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Obj. But did not the Lord institute and appoint Sacrifices, how then is he said to have them?

A. It is true, the Lord for good ends did command them, as 1. To keep up the publick assemblies of the faithful in their meetings to serve the Lord, which else would quickly have decayed. 2. To mind them of Christ and his Sacrifice, of which these were shadows. 3. Hereby they made an open confession of their faith to the world, testifying what God they served, and in whom they believed. 4. Hereby they testified their thankfulness for mercies received. 5. They served for Mellif. Theoc. the maintenance of the Ministry, and by consequence to further the Worship of God, 1 Cor. 9. 13.

The Lord therefore doth not simply condemn Sacrifices, and religious services, but the formal and hypocritical performance of them, when men fail both in man, matter, and manner, as these did. So that when the Scripture seems to condemn Sacrifices, and says, I require not Sacrifices; this must not be Logitius not taken Absolutely, but comparatively, q. d. It is not so much the ανέδοξος, fed outward sacrifice, as the sacrifice of an humble and contrite heart which God requires, Psal. 51. 16, 17. So Matt. 9. 13. See Dr. Gege on Heb. 10. 5.

I will have mercy and not sacrifice, i. e. mercy rather than sacrifice. God requires both inward and outward obedience, but that which he chiefly delights in, is the inward.

Observations.

1. External Sacrifices, and Services separated from internal obedience, are odious to God.

Many think they highly please him by such hypocritical, Hypocrita qua. outside services, when they never more displease him. Of the inebia hypocrical Jews (who did yet partake of the Sacraments) it is said, that with many of them God was not well pleased, sue Cafarinus. sub licentia, sub i. e. he was highly displeased. It is a Meiosis, 1 Cor. 10. 5. Calvin.

Circumcision without obedience, is uncircumcision, Rom. 2.

25, 26.

There is scarce any sin in all the Scripture that hath harder


10. See what an heap of displeasing expressions are here.
An Exposition

Chap. 3.

1. To what purpose are your sacrifices?
2. I delight not in them.
3. Who required them at your hands?
4. Bring no more vain oblations.
5. They are an abomination to me.
6. Your feasts I cannot away with.
7. They are iniquity.
8. My soul hates them.
9. They are a trouble to me.
10. I am weary of them.
11. I will hide mine eyes from you.
12. I will not hear your prayers.

All their sacrifices were as the offering of a dog, or a swine, in sacrifice, which had been a hateful crime in the time of the law; yea the Lord accounts it as idolatry and murder, Isa. 66. 3. It is to no purpose for Israel to cry, My God we know thee, unless they do the thing that is good, Hos. 8. 2. 3. The Scribes and Pharisees went farre in externals. Hence we read of the strict, accurat, exquisite sect of the Pharisees, Acts 26. 5. but our righteousness must exceed theirs. It is obedience that God prefers before all the sacrifices in the world, Psal. 50. 8. 9. 14. 25. 51. 16. 17. hence Samuel tells Saul, that obedience is better than sacrifice, 1 Sam. 15.

See more before on Amos 4. 4. & 5. 5. and in my Common 2 Tim. 3. 5.

22. it is more spiritual, and so more pleasing to God. A wicked man may sacrifice a beast, but a good man offers himself in sacrifice, Rom. 12. 1. now the more difficult the service, the more acceptable it is to God, and all good men. A zealous David loves not cheap, outside services, he will not offer to his God of that which cost him nothing; the service which God delights in, is spiritual service, Job. 4. 43. 24. and this God's servants delight to give him, Rom. 1. 9. As they desire that God should not put them off with shewes and shadowes, and shelles of duties, so they desire not to serve him by halves, but to doe what they doe for him, and to him, with all their hearts, and with all their might. Luther was wont to say, that God preferred Adverbs before Adjectives, and loved bene

Noli extrinsecus pecus aures, ariein quæerere, habes in se quod occidas. Si te excelsus dicit, lazinguabitur.
of the Prophecy of Amos

better than honour; he looks to the manner as well as the matter of our services. This may convince any sober man, that the Popish Religion is a false religion, because it is such a Ceremonious, outward religion; all for Bowing, Ringing, Singing, Saying, Knocking, and the traditions of men; and in these outward performances they exceed the godly; as an Harlot in painting and outward attire may excel an honest Woman; but the King's Daughter hath an internal excellency, she is all glorious within, being adorned with all the graces of the Spirit; *Psal. 45. 13.*

**Verse 22.**

Though ye offer me Burnt-offerings, and your Meat-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

This people confided much in their hypocritical Services, and multiplicity of Burnt-offerings, Meat-offerings, Peace-offerings, &c.; they thought by the bare performance of these duties to pacify God's wrath against them for their sins. The Prophet therefore goes on still to convince them of this their folly, and tells them plainly, that God neither regarded them, nor their Sacrifices.

In the time of the Law we read of divers Oblations and Sacrifices, amongst the least we have three in the text,

1. Burnt-offerings.
3. Peace-offerings.

1 The Burnt-offering, was one of the most excellent, and the choicest of all the Sacrifices for sin, and the most acceptable to God; it is called an *Holocaust* or whole Burnt-offering, *Ab ובכש,* because it was wholly consumed by fire, there was no part reserved for the Priest, or for the People, but all was burned, &c. and offered up to God. It hath its name from ascending, be-*manas,* cause by burning all in the fire, it went up in smoke and va- *Gnolab,* ascend pour. It was a daily sacrifice made by fire, *Numb. 28. 3,* *Le. 5. 1,* elevation, *Holocaustum;* *vitr. 1. 9.* *Job 1. 5,* & 42. 8. and was used both at ordinary and extraordinary Festivals. It consisted either of Fowls, as *Job 1. 5,* Turtles
Turtles and Pigeons, for the poorer sort, 
Levit. 1. 14, or else of Lambs, Rams, Goats, and Bullocks, &c. for the richer sort. The end of it was to make an atonement for Sinners, 
Levit. 1. 4.

Obj. But the burning of a Beast is a poor unsavoury thing, and must to represent so great a mercy.

Ans. We must not look upon Gods Ordinances with carnal, but spiritual eyes, else to an eye of sense, 'Circumcision (which was an honourable seal of the Covenant) would seeme contemptible and dishonourable, yea a bloody and a cruel thing, as it did to carnal Zipporah, Exod. 4. 25.

So in our Sacraments, how contemptible to a carnal eye, is the sprinkling of a little water, a bit of Bread, or a cup of Wine, but consider them as Gods Ordinances, which he hath ordained, to seal and assure us of our reconciliation with him in the Blood of Christ, and so they are weighty matters. A little Wax and Paper are small matters to look upon, yet they may be a means to convey matters of great worth unto us.

2 Meat-offerings. Minchah, in a large sense is taken for any gift, but here it is taken strictly for an Oblation made of fine flour, Levit. 2. 1, 2. Numb. 6. 17. & 15. 4. & 27. 39. 2 Chron. 7. 7. Ezek. 43. 27. it was always joyned to the Burnt-offering, or daily Sacrifice; only the voluntary Meat-offering was not.

The end of it was to acknowledge, that they had all their food and provision from the bounty and blessing of God.

3 Peace-offerings; These were Eucharistical for Mercies received, and resemble our sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving, Heb. 13. 5.

It is called Shelem, because this sacrifice was offered for the peace, safety, and prosperity that they had already received, or should hereafter receive, either generally or particularly; and this they did either voluntarily of their own accord, or as bound by vow, Levit. 7. 15. 1 Chron. 16. 1, 2. & 2 Chron. 7. 7. but the other Sacrifices were necessary and commanded.

2 Here is God's desestation of all their Sacrifices; I will not accept them, neither will I regard them, i.e. I abhor them; yea though yee bring the fatted of your Beasts, I will not vouchsafe them a look. They were wont to feed their Oxen very
very far, that their sacrifices might be the more acceptable. But the Lord tells them, that since the persons that offered them were so lewd, and lean in obedience, that he took no pleasure in such sacrifices; and therefore he bids them desist till they had mended their manners, and reformed the abuses that reigned amongst them.

But here Bellarmine (that great Achilles of the Antichristian Bellarm. de of Cause) comes in with his Sophistry, and would prove from seu Sacram. hence the inefficacy of the Sacrifices of the Old Testa ment.

But the Answer is easy. 1. Legal Sacrifices are to be considered, either abstractly, absolutely and simply in themselves, and so the blood of Bullocks and Rams could not expiate sin, But secondly, consider them Relatively, and Typically, as relating to Christ, who was the Lamb slaine from the beginning of the world Vertuallly, though not Actually, Rev. 13. 8. and so they were of great weight and worth, assuring believers that by the Blood of Christ all their sins were blotted out and pardoned.

2. We must distinguish of Sacrifices.

1. Some are commanded by God, and offered to him by believers, in a right manner, and those are highly pleasing unto God, and beneficial to believers; as we see in Abel, Heb. 11. 4. and Levi, 5. God never faith to the seed of Jacob, Seek my face in vain. The sincere services, and sacrifices of such, are a sweet smelling favour unto God.

2. There are Sacrifices which are mere Will-worship, offered up by wicked men, in a false manner, without faith; and of these Amos here speaks, and says, that their Sacrifices were odious unto God.

Now, let us see what Jesuitical and Sophistical arguing here is; 1. Because Sacrifices do not expiate sins per se, therefore they do not expiate sins Relatively, viz. by the merits of Christ typified by them.

2. Because God abhors the sacrifices of wicked men, therefore he abhors the sacrifices of all men. Now, who knows not, that A particular ad Universale non valet argumentum. Because some men are Sophisters, therefore all men are Sophisters; and because some men oppose the truth against light
OBSERVATIONS.

1. Wicked men may perform all the external duties of religion as well as good men.

Dost the good man offer burnt-offerings? So do these. Dost he offer meat-offerings, and peace-offerings? So do they. Yes; do they offer the fat? So did these. Cain offered sacrifice as well as Abel, Gen. 4. 5. Dost the good man fast, pray, give alms? So did scribes and pharisees. Yes, the hypocrite may excel the child of God in externals, as hideous mourners make a greater noise than real ones.

Let no man then rest in externals, and think because he doth these, and more may be done by a natural man. But let us sincerely live our prayers, and live up to our duties and privileges, so shall we do more than any hypocrites whatsover.

2. Obs. The sacrifices and services of wicked men though never so fat, and good for master, yet as coming from them are odious unto God.

If the person please not, nothing pleases; God had no respect to Cain, and therefore he rejected his offering, Gen. 4. 5. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 15. 8. and 21. 27. the tree must be good before the fruit can be good. We should therefore labor for faith and perseverance that our persons may please, and then all will be pleasing. The Lord had first respect to Abel, and then to his offering, Gen. 4. 4. Though for master the sacrifices may be the same; yet when they come from a believing heart, they are far more excellent and acceptable, Heb. 11. 4. By faith Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain.

3 Obs. The services and sacrifices which we offer unto God must be of the best.

We must bring the finest flour, Levit. 2. 1. and the fairest of our flock, Exod. 29. 13. Levit. 3. 3. if the blind and the lame were abhorred of David's soul, how much more of God? he accurst such as bring such maimed sacrifices to him. We may
Verse 23. of the Prophecy of Amos.

may not offer unto God of that which cost us nothing. But as he is the best of beings, so we must give him the best of our days, our youth; and the best of our services, thankfully acknowledging all our famines, riches, comforts, and prosperity comes from God. It is said of Prometheus, that himself did eat the flesh of his Sacrifice, but the skin and the bones he gave to Jupiter; even so deal too much with the Almighty, they keep the flesh and the fat to themselves, they spend their youth and health in their own pastimes and pleasures, offering the skin and the bones of their doteage to God; If they have a Son among all their children that is weak and sickly, why set him to the Ministry. So in their Tithes and dues they keep the fat to themselves, and give the flavelings to their Ministers. The worst is thought too good for God, the worst Corn, the worst Calfe, the worst Lamb, &c. his Ministers shall be sure to have, yea it may bee none at all of many.

Verse 23.
Take them away from me the myrhe of thy Songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Psalms.

The Prophet goes on in reproving them for their hypocritical services, wherewith they thought to please and pacifie God. Take away from me the myrhe (or multitude) of your Songs; they contented not themselves with a song or two, but they had their multitudes of songs. Hypocrites that delight in toys and human inventions, and a Ceremonious, external, pompous worship, know no bounds, they spare for no cost or pains, but even tire out themselves in will-worship; morning, noon, night, midnight, all too little for Idols, but nothing for God, he is not in any of their thoughts. They placed a great part of their Religion in Singing and Mufick, and external services, they thought that God was like themselves, and would be pleased with such things as pleased them; and as Children are filled with rattles, so they thought to pacifie God with their Songs and melody.

But away with your Songs and Mufick (faith God) they are a burden to me; you doe but tire your selves and me too.
to no purpose. Do not think to please me with the Musical harmony of your formal devotions, whilst I hear and abhor the discordant noyse of your sins and enormities.

In the time of the Ceremonial Law God did indulge the Jews the use of many Musical Instruments in his Worship, which are now abolished (as I have proved at large on Amos 6.5.) Vocal and Instrumental Muskick was at that time a part of God's instituted Worship, as appears, 1 Chron. 25. & 2 Chron. 23. 18. now the ten Tribes did imitate Judah in their Songs, but abused them to the Worship of their Idols, and polluted them with their Impiety, Idolatry, and Hypocrisy, when they should have Worshipped God in Sion, they Worshipped Baalim, with the Calves at Dan and Bethel. Hence the Lord threatens to turn their music into mourning, Amos 8.3.

The word which we render, Noise, in the Original signifies a clamour, a trouble, a tumult, a multitude; which being all united make a compleat Periphrasis of a Pophish Quire. It is a clamorous, troublesome, tumultuous multitude, when they meet together they make a horrid, hideous noyse, which takes with God no more than the grunting of a Swine, or the Brayning of an Ass, as St. Jerome long since hath well observed.

The Viol is here put Synecdochically for all kind of Musical Instruments, which David had prepared in great abundance for the praising of God; which these abused to the praise of Idols. The word Nebel which we render a Viol, is by some called a Psaltery, a Harp, an Organ; the Instrument is now out of use, and it is not certainly known what it was.

**Observations:**

1. All the singing and praises of wicked men is an abomination to the Lord.

Away with them (faith God,) they are a burden to me, your Vocal and Instrumental Muskick, your Viols, Harps, and Organs, your Songs and Sonnets are in mine ears but as the howling of a Dog. Praise is not comely in the mouths of Sinners. As for the wicked, faith God, What hast thou to doe to take
of the Prophecy of Amos.  

Ver. 23.

take my name into thy mouth? Christ would not be praised nor published by Devils. The bellowing of those Bulls of Ba-

san, and roaring Steers in the Papacy (many of them being
deep in the Quire, and deeper in the Ale-house) with all their
Theatrical Musick is an abomination to the Lord, his soul
loathes such swill, and that one Quere. Who hath required these
things at your hands? is enough to sweep both the workmen
and their work, out of the Church of God. These are a mere
Noize, a Voice, and nothing else; they draw nigh to God
with their lips (scarcely that) when their hearts are farre from
him; yet this is the greatest part of their Worship (as Gu-
ter hath well observed.) Ringing of Bells, and roaring of Or-
gans, is a great part of Papists Divine Services.

In Papatu, Or-
ganorum con-
tecessus, &
campanarum
beatus, non postrema cultus Divinipars esse crediur. Guater.

It is the musick of the Heart, and not of the Tongue that
God delights in, it is this which makes us like the Angels in
Heaven, when in our degree we praise that God on earth,
which the Angels continually adore and praise in heaven. We
should therefore be much in this duty of praising God, for
though the Ceremony be vanish, yet the substance abides
still.

Away then with that Histriional and confused chanting,
which even the Learned and wiser sort of Papists have con-
demned, as Aquinas, Alderus an Abbot, Cajetan, and others,
as I have proved at large on Amos 6. 5. At present hear what
A Lapide the Jesuit saies against thofe, Qui inconditio & con-
A Lapide in
suis vocibus tumulturiae bane & spluunt. Videant cantatores Amos 5. 23.

me totam Psallendi devotionem collocent in voce canora, in subi-
ilitate modulandi, in agilityo tonos minuendi, &c. Dum instan-
avium minuant, ut curiosorum artes tivellent, & ad serapi-
ant, ne mediant se Deo. Aue for a me tumultum canicorum su-
orum.

H 3

VER.
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

Vera e. 24.

But, let judgement run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

WE have seen before what God did not require of this People, and that was Sacrifices without faith and obedience. 2. Woe are come to that which he did require of them, viz. an active lively faith, shewing it self in justice and righteousness towards our neighbour; so that if they should say, Since God rejects our Services and Ceremonies, what would he have us doe? why the Prophet answers, He hath shewed thee O man what is pleasing to him, and what he desirous of thee, viz. to doe justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

Interpreters vary about the sente of the words, 1. The Rabbins and those that follow them, make it a commination of Gods Judgements against Israel for their sins; they read it thus, And judgement shall run down, or be resented as waters, q. d. Though you abound with Ceremonies and Sacrifices, and think to shroud your selves under their shadow, yet I will cause my Judgements to break in upon you like waters in abundance, and my righteous vengeance as a mighty stream shall bear down all before it, because of your Idolatry and Hypocrify.

2. But the words are properly an exhortation to amendment of life, this people had been grossly guilty of injustice and unrighteousness, and therefore God calls upon them now to break off their unrighteousness, and to give themselves up to equity and righteousness, that their repentance might be as eminent as ever their sin had been. Let Judgement therefore run down, or run down like waters, i. e. be always ready to doe Justice and Judgement, let it abound and extend it self to all, doe not supress it as formerly you have done, Amos 4. 1. & 5. 7. 12. but let it run fully and freely to every one that hath need; content not your selves with a drop or two, but get rivers of righteousness, which may abundantly refresh all the opprest and needy of the Land; so much the phrase imports, as you may see, Isa. 48. 18. O that thou hadst barked
Ver. 24, of the Prophecy of Amos.

to my Commandments, thou hast thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the Sea, q. d. Hadst thou obeyed my commands, thou hast thy peace been as a river, that abides and runs continually, and thy righteousness, i.e. the fruits of thy righteousness, viz. thy prosperity and happiness should have been as the waves of the Sea, which are abundant and perpetual. This sense is most genuine, and agrees best with the context and thread of the discourse; the former sense is Rabbinical and awkward.

3 Others distinguish between judgment and righteousness, thus.

1 By judgment they understand a faithful and impartial execution of justice.

2 Under righteousness they comprehend all the duties of the first and second Table, relating both to God and man. So the word righteousness is sometimes used in Scripture, as Rom. 6. 18. Ephes. 6. 44.

But with submission to better judgements, I conceive that judgement and righteousness here are Synonimae, signifying one and the same thing; and that the latter clause is exegetical and illustrates the former, as it doth frequently in the Scripture, Let judgment run down as waters, what is that? Benachab E why let righteousness run down as a mighty stream, i.e. let nothing hinder you from a constant and vigorous execution of Justice and Equity, and this execution of Justice is oft called Righteousness, Psal. 72. 2. Acts 17. 31.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 God delights in Justice and Righteousness more than in Sacrifices.

I hate your sacrifices, I abhor your feasts (saith God) but let judgment run down as waters; it is that I delight in. As obedience is better than sacrifice, and mercy than burnt offerings, Psal. 6. 6. in Justice and Equity (which is one branch of our obedience) is better than sacrifice; of the two, God had rather have Justice without a sacrifice than sacrifice without Justice; and therefore (saith God) Away with your songs and sacrifices, give me righteousness and obedience. It is not thousands of Rams, nor rivers of Oyl, but doing justly, which...
An Exposition

which God requires of us, Micah 6. 8. so Isa. 1. 17. Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow; without this all our religion is vain. Let men profess Angelical Sanctity, yet if they doe not what is just and righteous, all is but hypocrisy, James 1. 26.

2. Obs. Rulers must abound in judgement and righteousness. They must not only doe an act or two of righteousness, for one act doth not constitute; but they must be rivers always running with righteousness. This elegant Metaphor of a River may give us some hints how Justice should be executed.

1. Openly.
2. Fully.
3. Freely.
4. Universally.
5. Constantly.

1. Judgement must be executed openly, that all may see the equity of the sentence. Rivers run openly, who so will may see them. So Courts of Justice should be open; hence the Judges of old sat in the Gates, where all might see and hear what they did.

2. Fully, Justice must run with a plentiful and an abundant stream. They must not confine Justice, nor imprison it, but as occasion requires they must abundantly dispense and disperse it abroad. They must not content themselves with a few drops or acts of Justice, but it must run down with a mighty stream. Goodness is of a diffusive nature; now Justice is a singular good, and therefore should be communicated to all.

3. Freely, the river offers its self freely to all, who ever is athirst, may drink of it freely. Men should not be bribed and hired to doe Justice, but it should flow as freely and spontaneously from a Ruler, as water from a spring. The light of the Sun, and the liberty of the Air should not be more cheap and free, than Justice amongst us.

4. Universally and commonly, without respect of persons. When justice is duly administered, it must run down as waters and streams, which run by the poor many doors, as well as by
Ver. 25. of the Prophecy of Amos.

by the rich; and by the poorest Cottage, as well as by the

5. Constantly, Rivers run continually, the stream is always

rowing down: so should Magistrates be constant pro re nata,
as occasion requires in the execution of Justice, in the places

of their abode.

6. Zealously and vigorously. A mighty stream carries down

even before it: So a good Ruler breaks through all impediments,
disencouragements, and temptations that might hinder the free

course of Justice. No friends nor foes, no gifts nor bribes,
can hinder him from a faithful discharge of the duties of his

place. As we see in Moses, Job, Samuel, Nehemiah. This

is God's work, and he is cursed that doth it negligently. When

men are good, it is a joy to them to do judgement, Prov. 21.

8. 14. p. 112, &c

15. and this is the way to safety and settlement, Isa. 32.

16. See Mr. Patrick

17. 18. Dan. 4. 27.

Verse 25.

Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the

wilderness forty years, 0 house of Israel?

The Prophet comes now to conclude the Chapter with an

Amplification of the Superstition and Idolatry which from

first to last did abide in Israel. Their Fore-fathers of old were

Idolaters in the wilderness; there they worshipped the golden

calf, and Baal-Peor, Numb. 25. 1, 2, 3. No sooner were

they come to Canaan, but they were on their knees to Baal and

Ashtaroth, Judg. 2. 13.

Yea and then their Posterity (faith the Prophet) have

justified them in their Idolatries, and shewed that the evil is

hereditary, and so the more to be abhorred; in that you have

added Calves to Calves, and Idols to Idols, lest they should

boast of their Ancestors, the Lord upbraids them with their

Fore-fathers, and tells them that they were Idolaters

before them, and were punished for their Idolatry, and so

they had been like them in sin, so they should

be like them in suffering.

In the words we have, 1. Israel's sin, They sacrificed not to

God, but to Idols, as in the next verse.

1 I

2 Here
An Exposition

Chap. 9.

Here is a double aggravation of their sin, both in respect of Time and Place.

1. Here is the Time, how long they grieved the Spirit of God, not forty days, but forty years, even the whole time of their abode in the wilderness.

2. The Place, it was in the wilderness, where they lay under the Rock, and were kept under severe Discipline, and where the Lord led them miraculously, and fed them miraculously, with Manah from Heaven, giving them waters from the Rock, and with a mighty hand protecting them, and carrying them upon Eagles wings, above the reach of many dangers and distresses, Amos 3. 1, 2.

This is locus difficillimus (faith Mercer) this verse, and especially the next are two of the hardest verses in the whole Prophecy. Many doubts do here arise.

Quest. 1. Why doth the Prophet charge this people with not offering sacrifice in the wilderness, when they never lived in the wilderness, but lived many ages after their Fore-fathers came out of the wilderness? as appears by the series of those Judges and Kings which governed them, since the time that they came from Egypt.

Ans. Though the same numerical men were not in the wilderness, yet the house of Israel was there, and what their Fore-fathers did, is imputed to the posterity who made up one body with them, and were bound up in the same bundle with them.

These walking in the Idolatrous steps of their Fore-fathers, justified their Idolatry, and as they worshipped the golden Calf in Egypt, so these worshipped the golden Calves at Dan and Bethel. Thus they being heirs of their Fathers guilt, and imitators of them in their Idolatry, the Lord chargeth them here with their sin also, saying, Have ye offered to me sacrifices in the wilderness? Here doth not say, Have your Fore-fathers offered sacrifice to me? but he chargeth them with the sin; and this is usual in Scripture, when the children walk in the Ancestors sins, to charge the children with the sins also, as Matt. 23. 35. Our Saviour chargeth the Jews with the blood of Abel and Zacharias, whom they slew. How could they slay those that were slain long before they were born?

Ans. By imitating their cruelty, they approved of the like
like cruelty in their progenitors, and so became partakers with them in their sin, and should partake with them in their plagues: not only for the murdering of John the Baptist, and those of latter times; but even for the blood of all the Saints that ever was shed to that day, even from the blood of righteous Abel, the first that ever was slain, to the blood of good Zacharias, who was so barbarously slain between the Temple and the Altar, &c. God will visit the sins of the Fathers upon you their children, that have walked in their wicked steps, with the greatest severity, because ye have sinned against the greatest Light: and if the blood of one innocent Abel lay so heavy upon Cain, that he cried, his punishment was greater than he could bear; how sad is your condition that are charged with the blood of so many thousands of innocent, holy men! so that as all Believers are the children of Abraham, and have Interest in all the Promises that were made to him: So all persecutors are the seed of Cain, and have interest in all the Curses which fell upon him.

Quest. 2. How are all condemned, here as Idolaters, when we read of some good men amongst them that sacrificed to God, and not to Idols? as Moses, Eleazer, Joshua, Caleb, Phineas, and Aaron, the Saint of the Lord, as the Psalmist calls him, Psal. 106. 16.

Answ. The Prophet condemns the body of this people in a multitude ab rupta fuerat, id est versus popul us meritis damnatur. Calvin.

Quest. 3. Have ye sacrificed to me? The Interrogation is a strong Negation. So Joel 1. 2. &c. You have not sacrificed to me all that time, but you have discovered your averseness from me, and your proneness to Idolatry on all occasions. But how can this be true, when we read that the Israelites did sacrifice to God in the wilderness? when the Covenant was ratified, they offered Eucharistical sacrifices to Jehovah, Exod. 34. 4, 5. And after the dedication of the Tabernacle, and the consecration of Aaron's sons, and at the celebration of the Feast of the Passover, Levit. 8, 21, 28. & 9. 2. Numb. 7. 3. &c. 9.

Answ.
An Exposition

**Chap. 5:**

_Answe._ Though they did offer some sacrifices the first and second year that they were in the wildernes, yet after they did not so ordinarily and so frequently, as when they came into Canaan. For in the wildernes they lived in want, and had not that plenty of Sheep and Oxen, as they had when they came into Canaan. They had scarce any flesh to eat, much less to sacrifice, therefore the Lord fed them with Mannah and Quails. Besides, they were in a fleeting condition, and so unfit for sacrificing, or for circumcision, and therefore 'twas omitted in the wildernes for a time. They were not settled nor fixed, but as the Tabernacle removed, so they removed, and till they came to fix and settle, they could not so well sacrifice.

2. The Answer I say most genuinely in that little Empirical word _Mee_. _Hast ye offered sacrifice to mee?_ q. d. 'Tis true, I grant, you have offered sacrifice (faith the Lord) but 'twas to your Idols, and to Devils, _Deut._ 32. 16, 17. and not to mee, both you and your Fathers worshipped Calves and Creatures, and the host of Heaven (as in the next verse) and not me, and therefore I will punish you as I did them. _Ezek._ 20. 15, 16, 18, 21. _Isa._ 43. 22, 23, 24.

'Tis true, they thought they worshipped God, and did him good service, but since they kept not to the Rule, but worshipped the Lord according to their own inventions, with rotten hearts, and unhallowed lives, therefore the Lord disowns all that they did, and tells us, that they did not sacrifice to him at all.

_Quest. 4._ *How is it said that for forty years space in the wilderness they did not sacrifice, whereas 'tis apparent that the two first years at least they did offer sacrifice?*

The Answer is easie; 'Tis usual in Scripture, for roundness of number (though some few years may be under or over) to name a full and compleat number, as here forty years for thirty eight, that is, not forty precisely, but well nigh forty. So Abimelech is said to kill his feventy Brethren, when he killed but sixty nine, for Joabham escaped, _Judg._ 9. 5. So the seventy two Disciples are, called the feventy. So _Gen._ 43. 13. it is said, _Thy servants are twelve brethren_, yet in the same verse it is said, one is not. By the like Syenechoche they are called twelve Apostles, when one was wanting, _1 Cor._ 15. 5.
So the Lord threatened to punish Israel forty years in the wilderness, whereas they were not punished forty years complete, for the punishment began to be inflicted on them about the second year of their departure out of Egypt, as appears by comparing, Numb. 1. 1., with 14. 33. and 32. 13. See more, Deut. 29. 5., Judg. 20. 46. 2 Sam. 5. 5.  See the large Annocat. on 2 Sam. 5. 5.

**OBSERVATIONS.**

1. **Teaching by Questions and Interrogations is very Emphatical and lively.**

2. **God bears long with sinners.**
   Forty years he was grieved with Israel, in the wilderness. He bore with those ten Tribes well nigh three hundred years before he destroyed them; He bore with the old World a hundred and twenty years; He bore with the Amorites four hundred years. Tis one of his Royal Attributes, that he is a God of infinite Patience, and Long-suffering, Exod. 34. 6. See more in my Com. on Hos. 13. 12. p. 4 to 11.

3. **To sin against mercy aggravates sin.**
   For this people to sin against God in the wilderness, where he led them, and fed them miraculously, and upheld them in the midst of so many dangers, doth greatly heighten their sin.

4. **Long continuance in sin is very displeasing unto God.**
   Hence the Lord so often mentions this forty years obstinacy of Israel, as that which exceedingly offended and grieved him, Numb. 32. 13. Psal. 95. 1. Act. 7. 42. &c. 13. 18. This made the Lord to complain of Jerusalem, Jer. 13. ult. Ob Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once bee? 11 3. He.
An Exposition

He denounced a woe against them for their hypocritical delaying and defaying; Woe unto thee, wilt thou not be made clean? 'tis not, canst thou not? but wilt thou not? They were wilfully impenitent; 'tis this rebellious will of men that destroyes them, Psal. 78. 10. Isa. 30. 9, 15, & 43. 24. Jer. 3, 8 & 6. 16, & 8. 5 & 44. 17. Zach. 7. 11. Rom. 3. 7.

Obj. Why will turn.

Answ. You do but dissemble (saith God) with mee. When shall it once bee? what? not after so many wooings and warnings? what? not after so many years purifying Sermons? nor so many melting mercies? nor so many awakening judgements? nor after so many Sabbaths and Sacraments, feasts and fasts? will nothing cleanse thee from thy old abominations? Oh when shall it once be? This obstinate persevering and continuing in sin, makes the Lord so oft to upbraid men with it, as that which will be their bane, Exod. 16. 28. Neh. 92

Ps. 78. 40. Luk. 13. 44.

5. Children that imitate their Fore-fathers in sin, shall bee like them in punishment.

God will visit the sins of the Fathers upon those children that tread in their steps, Exod. 20. 5. Hence the Lord so oft forbids us to follow sinful Fore-fathers, Psal. 76. 5, 6, 8. Exek. 20. 18. Zach. 1. 4. And Stephen aggravates the sins of the Israelites, saying, That as your Fathers did, so do ye, Act. 7. 51.

6. Idolatry, Hypocritical service, is no service.

Have ye offered Sacrifice to mee? (saith the Lord to those Hypocrites) no, you have not served mee at all.

1. Since you do not worship mee according to Rule, but according to your own inventions, I abhor it, and account it as null.

2. Your hearts are rotten; what the heart doth not, God accounts as not done, Isa. 43. 22, 23. 34. Though they abounded with sacrifices, yet God saith there, They brought him none, vita, in sincerity. As knowledge without practice is no knowledge, 1 Sam. 2. 12. So duties not practised are no duties in Gods esteem.

3. They served not God alone, but served him and their Gods too, and therefore God disowns all they did, as not done to him, for he will be served truly and totally, without hating or
VERSE 26.

But ye have born the Tabernacle of your Moloch, and Chimm, your Images, the star of your god, which ye made to your selves.

These Hypocrites were ever and anon boasting of their Sacrifices, to them the Prophet in the person of the Lord the further answer, and tells them, it is true, Your fore-fathers made a show of serving me, carrying my Tabernacle, and all things belonging to it, in the Wilderness; but their hearts were set upon their Idols, and they worshipped their Moloch, and the other Images of those Planetary gods, and not me.

This but spoils all.

The better to convince them of their Idolatry, the Prophet here instanceth in three of their chief Idols,

Moloch,
Chimm, and
The Host of Heaven.

1. The Prophet instanceth in these Heathen Idols to shame Israel.
2. Here are the setters up of these Idols, and these are, these wicked men themselves, which ye made to yourselves.
3. Here is their love and affection to those Idols, they bare them, and carried their Images about with them.

This is, Locus difficilis & valde perplexus (say Interpreters) it is a difficult, knotty, perplexed Text. I never yet met with its fellow, Quot verba, etc. mysteria, it hath more mysteries, and various interpretations than words. I shall endeavour to clear up all.

Q. The first Query is, What is meant by Moloch here?
A. Under this grand Idol are Synecdochically comprehended the rest of their Idols. This Moloch was an old abominable Idol, which the Ammonites, and other Heathens worshipped. Hence it is oft called, the abomination of the Ammonites, 1 King. 11. 7. & 2 King. 23. 13; in other places it is called
An Exposition

Chap. 5.
called Molech, Lev. 18. 18. and Milcom, 1 King. 11. 5, 33. Zeph. 2. 5. and by Amos and St. Stephen it is called Molech, Acts 7. 43. they both upbraid the Jews for worshipping this abominable Idol, and that in the Wilderness, where the Lord shewed them so many signal Miracles and Mercies; there they began to practice this foul Idolatry. The Ammonites had many gods, but one among the rest was their Patron, and tutelar god, which they called their King, Jer. 49: 1. 3. Amos 1. 15. (as they did this Molech) but the Holy Ghost calls it an abomination, for that which is highly esteemed in the sight of men, is an abomination in the sight of God. This Idol not only Ammon, but Israel trusted in, as their Guide, and Leader in their travels; which shews their horrid ingratitude in casting off God, who had been so long their Protector and their King, and now to chuse an Idol, and a Molech for their God and Guide, and therefore it is emphatically called yours, Your Molech, which you chose for your God and King. To this Idol the Israelites most inhumanely, and barbarously offered their Sons and Daughters in Sacrifice, Lev. 18. 18. 21. & 20. 2. 13. & 10. 10. 2 Kings. 23. 10. What this Idol should be, is hard to determine. 1. Some say, it was an hollow Idol shaped like a man.

2. Others make it an hollow Image made of Brass, having the face of a Bullock, and hands spread abroad like a man, that openeth his hands to receive somewhat. There were seven Chappels built for it, before which the Image was set, who so offered a Fowl or Dove, went into the first Chappel; if he brought a Lamb, he went into the second; if a Ram, into the third; if a Calf, into the fourth; if a Bullock, into the fifth; if an Oxen, into the sixth; and if he offered his Son, into the seventh, and he kissed Molech; as the Sacrificers in Hosea killed the Calves, Hos. 13. 2. The Son was set before Molech, the Image having fire put under it was made burning hot, then the Priest taking the Child, put him into Molech's burning armes, and to the end that the Father might not hear the cry of the Child, they did beat upon Tabers, whence the place was called Tophet, of Toph, which is a Taber.

3. Others conceive that it was the Star of their god, probably Saturn, the highest of the Planets, to whom the Phaniens sacrificed their Children, saith Tertullian.

4 Many
4. Many think it was the same Idol which we call Baal, to whom they sacrificed their Sons and Daughters, Jer. 7. 31. 
& 19. 5. & 32. 35.
5. And most genuinely, it is conceived that this Moloch whom they worshipped was the Sun, which is King of Planets, and chief of Stars: the most operative of them all, and full of splendor; which some did worship by the name of Beel-samen, 1. 4. 7.
Lord of Heaven; for as the Moon is called Melachab, the Queen of Heaven, Jer. 7. 18. & 44. 17, 25. So the Sun is called Melech, the King of Heaven, whom the Persians worshipped as their God.

And Chinn your Images.

Their second Idol was Chinn, and here again Interpreters are divided, and though it be not much material to know what this Idol was; (the sin reproved being not in the name, but in the thing, which was an abominable Idol, however called) yet 1. Some say this Chinn was the Idol Hercules, which in the Egyptian Language was called Chon, but varied into another Language might easily make Chinn. St. Luke calls this supposed Deity, Remphan, Acts 7. 43. from Rapha, which signifies a Giant, and thereupon some have thought it was 7. đẹp in Acts. Hercules, who was wont to be pourtraied in a Giant-like form. The Evangelist useth this name rather than Chinn.

1. Because he followed the Translation of the Seventy, who being appointed by Ptolemy King of Egypt, to translate the Bible, they use the Egyptian name Remphan in their Greek Translation.

2. The name Remphan being better known to the Jews in those days, (who made great use of the Septuagint,) than that of Chinn, therefore the Evangelist mentions that rather than the other.

3. Others conceive that it might be Jove, or Mars, or Venus especially, which Planet they worshipped as their Guide and Leader in the Wilderness; it being the Leader of the Morning, and fore-runner of the Sun, and is called Lucifer, which is said to be placed in the fore-head of Moloch, because it goeth before the Sun-rising. This Planet the Sarazens worship at this day.

4. But most genuinely, it seems to be the Idol Saturn.
An Exposition

which in the Arabian, and Persick Language is called Chium, and Amor speaking of that time more especially when Israel wandered in the Wilderness of Arabia, where they committed this foul Idolatry, calls the Heathen god after the Arabian Language, Chium, or Chivan. Besides, the Egyptians at this day call Saturn in their Language, Rephan, or Ramphan, as Luke doth.

You have born the Tabernacle of your Moloch.

Moloch, veste.

Or you have erected a Tabernacle to him, as your King. Some read it, you have born the Tabernacle of Sicemh your King, which they conceive to be the name of some Idol; indeed Sicemh may serve to have some affinity with Succoth, a Goddess of the Babyloniens, 2 Kings. 17. 30. But the Holy Ghost which is the best interpreter of it tells, by St. Luke (who following the Septuagins, which read it Succoth, not Sicemh) renders it a Tabernacle, and so justifies our Translation.

And Chium your Images.

Here we see the love and affection of these Idolaters so their Idols, they bear them, and carry them on their shoulders (say some) by way of pomp and honour, as Idolaters are wont to doe, Is. 46. 7. the Prophet speaking there of an Idol, tells us, that he is born on mens shoulders to the place where he must stand, to be seen abroad.

2 Others conceive, that the Images of this Idol-god were enshrined in some little portable Tabernacles (as the Image of Diana had its shrines, little houses, or caskers to put it in, Acts. 19. 24.) which the people as many of them as were given to Idolatry, carried about with them among their Ruins. So Rachel took her fathers gods, and brought them with her when she was into Canaan, Gen. 31. 34. As good men by Prayer take in God for their companion with them in their journeys, Gen. 35. 3. Acts 21. 5, 6. Idolaters carry about with them their Idols, Hosts, Crucifixes, &c. for religion and protection false, as to many true and Gods in their voyages and journeys.

3 Here is the malady of their Idols, for forth in the plural number, and Chium your images, which imports the great number of them, and doubles their fame. 1. They made New-gods. 2. They make images of these New-gods in ho-
of the Prophecy of Amos.

most of them, contrary to Gods express Command, Exod. 20. 4.

Or Chiasm your Images, that is (say some) your notable Image, the plural number for the singular (as oft) especially in names of dignity.

Hence we may observe against the Papists, that the Scripture condemns not only Idols (which themselves confess unlawful) but also Images for religious Worship; God will not be Worshipped by any visible Picture, and therefore the Prophet condemns both Molech and Chiasm with their Images, yea the Evangelist condemns the very Figures of those Idols which they made to themselves, Acts 7. 43. See more, Dr. Reynolds de lib. Apocryph. Lect. 219. &


The Star of your god.

Or, the Star which is your god, or rather the Images which you worship are like a Star, either like the Sun, or Saturn; for their gods were nothing but Planets, or Stars which they worshipped, in, or by Images representing them, Acts 7. 41. 43. Figures which ye made to worship them (saith St. Stephen) even the Host of Heaven, as the Stars are oft called, Deut. 17. 3. Psal. 33. 6. Is. 34. 4. & 45. 12. Jer. 33. 22. Dan. 4. 35.

The Heathen Idolaters were great worshippers of the Host of Heaven, and this piece of Idolatry the Jews had learnt from them, Jer. 8. 2. and with this St. Stephen charges them, Acts 7. 42. that they worshipped the Host of Heaven, i. e. Sun, Moon, and Stars, as it is written in the Book of the Prophets, viz. of the lesser Prophets, (of which Amos is one, out of which this text is quoted) all the twelve being bound together in one Book, lest they should be scattered, or lost, by reason of their smallness.

Many of the Jews conceived that all the Stars were Gods, and that there was some Deity in them, and therefore they worshipped them, as appears 2 King. 23. 11. Jer. 7. 18. & 8. 2. & 19. 13. & 44. 17, 19, 27. Zeph. 1. 5.

With the like Sin the Prophet here chargeth them, viz. with Idolizing the Star of their god, or the Star your gods. Hee speaks it sarcastically and tauntingly, q. d. see what goddy

K k 2
These Israelites had many other deiters, and false gods, if we may believe Josephus Antiqu. 1. 4. c. 6.

An Exposition

You have forsaken the living God for dead ones, and have changed your glory into shame; and have left the God that protected you, for Idols that cannot protect themselves.

Which ye have made to your selves.

All these feigned Deities with their Images are your own inventions, and figments of your own brain, I never commanded any such kind of worship from you. Hence Idols are called the work of men's own hands, Psal. 115. 4. and the Lord threatens such as worshipped the work of their own hands, because they provoked him to anger thereby, Jer. 2. 16. & 25. 6. & 44. 8. Acts 7. 41. to shew the vanity and nothingness that is in Idols, and the folly of Idolaters in worshipping such things as themselves had made, they are oft called, The work of men's own hands; and their own inventions, with which they please themselves, though they displease God.

Q. But whom doth the Prophet charge here with all this gross Idolatry, whether the Ancestors, or the Posterity?

A. Both. He begins with their fore-fathers in the Wilderness, and the better to humble them who so much boasted of their fore-fathers, he labours to convince them of their gross Idolatry, and sheweth how early they began to practice this sin, when they worshipped the Golden Calf, and Moloch, as appears by the prohibitions against the worshipping of it, Levit. 18. 21. & 20. 2.

2. He chargeth the Posterity, and brings down this Idolatry along to their times, shewing how they had justified their ancestors in their Idolatry, by worshipping the Calves at Dan and Bethel, and following Baal, yea and worshipping the Host of Heaven, 1 King. 11. 5. & 2 King. 23. 5. 11. Ezek. 8. 16. Zeph. 1. 5.

The summe of all is this. It is true, O ye Children of Israel, that your Progenitors made a great shew of serving and honouring me, carrying my Tabernacle about with them, in the Wilderness, pretending that it was their glory to have me present among them; when indeed their hearts were set upon their Idols, and false Deities, as Moloch, and Chiun, the Sun, the Moon, the

Stars,
Ver. 16. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Scattered, and all the East of Heaven, as appears by the words used of those Images, and representations of their Idol-gods which they carried about with them, to worship them; and you their Posterity have trod in the foul steps of your fore-fathers, and have out-gone them in Idolatry; therefore I will now banish you to the remotest parts of Assyria, even beyond Babylon.

Observations.

1. Naturally we are exceeding prone to Idolatry.

This is clear from the example of these Israelites, to whom the Lord so oft appeared, Exod. 19. & 33, &c. both in ways of Judgement, and of Mercy. To them the Law was given, and to them were committed the Oracles of God, Psal. 147. 19, 20, Rom. 3. 2. & 9. 4, 5. and yet how frequently and fearfully did they and their Fathers fall into this sin, and this was not only the temper of these Jews, but of us Gentiles also. Ob. 26. Ob. 1.

So, we are easily seduced, and lead away with dumb Idols.

2. Cor. 12. 2.

When men know God, yet walk not up to their light, but see more in my wiltfully sin against it, then God gives them up to a reprobate sense, so that they worship Stocks and Stones, Stares, and Imas. Ob. 4. Ob. 5.

Thus it was with the Gentiles, Rom. 1. 24, 25, 26, &c. Those that will not believe and obey the Truth, God will give them up to strong delusions to believe lies, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11. false Prophets shall arise and cry down Ordinances, and you shall believe them; they shall cry up Superstition, Idolatry, Libertinism, &c. and you shall follow them. This is a sad Judgement, yet usually God thus puniseth Sin with Sin, as blindness with blindness, ignorance with greater ignorance, and idolatry with greater idolatry; when men begin to fall from God, they fall to worship Calves, Stares, Stocks, and Images. They never rest till they come to destruction.

As all Sin, so especially this of Idolatry is very prolisical. See Manon. 42, 1 and my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 13. P. 726. &c. Greenwood.

Per secundad seculum, one sin usually makes way for another.
another. Sin and error is endless, wicked men (when the Devil drives) know not where, nor when they shall stop or stay, Prov. 23. 36. Hos. v. 1. & 13. 2. Jer. 9. 3, 5. Sin hath no foundation, but runs on and multiplies in infirmities. Abuses that at first burn lance to Idols, at last burn his children to them, 2 Chron. 33. 8. as these Jews did theirs to Moloch. It concerns us then to keep close to the Rule, for if we swerve never so little from that, we shall suddenly run our selves into a Labyrinth of Superstition, Sin and error.

3. Fore-fathers must not be followed in sin.

These Israelites forsook the Rule to follow their Fore-fathers in their Idolatry, and now they perish with them. But of this before.

4. Idolaters are deeply in love with their Idols;

They hug them, they carry them, they kiss them, Hos. 13. 2. In Jer. 8. 2. we have five expressions to set forth the strong affections which Idolaters bear to their Idols. They love, serve, seek, worship, and walk after them, as if they could never do enough for them. They had as lieve part with their lives, as part with them, Judg. 18. 24. You have taken away my gods (saith Micah) and what have I more? q. d. you have even taken all, since you have taken away mine Idols, which are so near and dear to me. They are married to them, no wonder then if they love them, Hos. 4. 17. Besides, they are gods of their own making, Exod. 33. 1. and it's natural to every one to love its own worksmanship.

5. Idolatry defiles men.

It makes men worship Pots and Pictures, Stars and Planets, Dogs and Cats, Onions and Leeks, any thing save God. As those that are given up to corporal uncleannel, care not with whom they commit it; so 'tis in Spiritual Whoredome. Affection blinds the judgement, and befores men. Idolatry is a bewitching, flesh-pleasing-sin, which steals away the heart, and therefore is compared to fornication, Ezek. 16. 22. to 18. which infamates and steals away mens hearts. The Whore of Babylon hath all alluring Ceremonies, Altars, Images, Gorgeous Vessiments, Muffins, &c. with many other enchantments to seduce men, Rev. 17.
of the Prophet of Amos.

2, 3, 4. Hence we read of the delectable things of Idolaters, Is. 44. 9. The sight of the Sun, Moon, Stars, and all the host of Heaven, should have convinced them of the Majesty and Glory of their Creator, and have induced them to worship him; but they being besetted and blinded by Sin and Satan, worshipped the creature instead of God, and serve those which were made for their service.

Besides, what man that is well in his wit will trust in such gods for safety, as cannot save themselves from fire and spoil? All their Idols, the Calves and alt., Hes. 18. 9, 6, were carried away by the Conquering Assyrians, according to the custom of Conquerers, which was to carry away the gods of the Conquered Nations, Jer. 42. 12.


Hee hath the Host of Heaven, 1. Angels, 1 King. 22. 19. Luk. 2. 13. 2. Hee hath Sun, Moon and Stars, even the Stars in their hosts shall fight against Sisera, Judg. 5. 20. These Stephen calls the Host of Heaven. 3. All creatures are his Hosts and Armies, ready to execute whatsoever he commands, Job 25. 3. Amos 9. 6. Fear therefore to offend this Lord of Hosts. But of this before.

7. To worship the Host of Heaven is a great sin.

Hence the Lord upbraids these Israelites both fathers and children with this sin, and threatens to send them into captivity for it. This the Lord oft forbade them, Deut. 4. 19, and blames them for it, 3 King. 17. 16. 2 Chron. 33. 3, 1. Jer. 2. 13, 18. 19. 13, &c. 44. 17. Ezek. 8. 16, and commands that he should dye that did it. Deut. 17. 3, 4, 5. Job calls this kind of Idolatry a denying of God, and a sin to be punished by the Judges, Job 31. 26, 27, 28. How much greater is their sin, See Carlyon Job which worship gods of their own making, gods of Wood and 31. 26. 4. 4.

Stone, Crosses, Crucifixes, Images, &c. Idols which their own hands have invented, and their own hands have made, yea that with five words of confection can create their Creator, and then worship the works of their own hands. How great this Idolatry is, Confess the Jesuits shall tell you, if (faith be not really and corporally present in the Eucha-

which are the Catholics the grossest Idolaters in the world. but ex-

Talis esset Idol-
tolatia, qualis in orbe terrarum
naufragium vel
vita, vel audi-
tus sine. Cofeer.

Theriad..
An Exposition

Chap. 3.

themselves. God will rid his hands of such, and send them beyond Damascus, yea beyond Babylon, there they shall live in misery and slavery, serving sin and Satan in the want of all things, who would not serve God with joy and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things. The Israelites of old made a golden calf, and worshipped the works of their own hands, but it cost many of them their lives, Exod. 32:27. 'Tis a good Rule, Deo Deo, nil suse Deo, In God's worship we must do nothing without the warrant of his Word, Deut. 32 ult. Mal. 28:20, all must be done according to the Pattern, even to a Pin, Exod. 27:29, hence 'tis said nine times in one chapter. That all was done as the Lord commanded Moses, Exod. 39, 5, 7, 21, 26, 39, 37, 42, 43.

V. 27.

Therefore I will cause you to go into Captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose Name is the God of Hosts.

We have all along seen Israel's sin, we are now come to their suffering.

I will cause you to go into Captivity.

The Lord had freely given them the holy Land for their Inheritance, to the end that they might serve him with gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things; but, since they had defiled that good Land with their abominations, the Lord resolved to rid the Land of them, and to send them into captivity beyond Damascus, which was fulfilled when Salim took Samaaria, and subdued the Kingdom of Israel to himself, 2 Kings 17:6, 8. g. d. Since your fore-fathers were bad, and you are worse, treading in their Idolatrous Steps, and out-going them in sin, therefore I will bring upon you the judgements threatened, driving you out of your own Land, and dispersing you in foreign Countries.

In the words we have, 1. A judgement threatened, and our banishment and captivity, I will cause you to go into captivity.
Ver. 27.

of the Prophecy of Amos.

1. Here is the extent of this captivity, 'tis beyond Damascus, faith Amos, beyond Babylon, faith Stephen.

3. Here is the meritorious and procuring cause of this suffering, and that is their sin, implied in the illative particle. Therefore, you have been Idolatrous, Superstitious, Hypocritical, &c., therefore you shall go into captivity.

4. Here is the confirmation of this commutation; 'tis not I, but the Lord, whose name is the God of Hosts, that hath said it, and he both can and will do it, unless by timely repentance ye prevent it.

I will cause you to go into Captivity beyond Damascus;

q. d. I will send you packing farther than the people of Damascus, for the Syrians of Damascus were carried captives but to Kir, 2 King. 16. 9. but you shall be carried captives farther than them, even to Persia, and the region of the Cappadocians, Ezra 8. 17.

2. And more genuinely, whereas they looked on Damascus, (the Metropolis of Syria, a City of praise, i.e. a renowned, goodly, wealthy, strong City, Is. 7. 8. & 8. 4. Jer. 49. 25.) as an impregnable fortress, and frontier defence for all their Country, and they might think to get shelter there, the King thereof being their confederate; the Prophet tells them that Damascus should not save them, for they should be carried captives beyond Damascus, even into the farthest and remotest parts of Assyria, beyond Babylon.

3. But how shall we reconcile Amos and Stephen? Amos saith they shall go beyond Damascus, but Stephen saith they shall go farther, even beyond Babylon, Acts 7. 43.

And, Some conceive it might be some mistake of the Scribe, beyond Babylon, for beyond Damascus, but there is no ground for such a conceit.

2. The Answer is easy, the difference is only verbal, not material, in words, but not in sense. What the Prophet spake somewhat darkly, Stephen declares more clearly, according to the truth of the history, and the verity of what was done, and 'tis a known Rule, that the Penmen of the New Testament do give the sense, though not the very words of the Prophets, which they quote, when they cite places, they do not translate, but explain and expound them further. Like writing in Greek,
AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF AMOS.

VERSE I.

Woe to them that are at ease in Sion, and trust in the Mount of Samaria, which are named chief of the Nations, to whom the house of Israel came.

In this Chapter the blunt Prophet raiseth his voice, grows Rhetorical, and is very eloquent; (as St. Austin from this very Chapter hath long since observed,) not with a fantastick, frivoly, affected eloquence, but with a grave and decent elegancy of speech, suitable to the dignity of the matter which he treats of. Hee that makes the dumb to speak, and out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hath ordained strength to confound his enemies, can by his Word and Spirit make a stammering Moses, a rusticall Amos, and silly fisher-men, fluent of speech. No matter what the Instrument is, if God be but the Teacher.

In this Chapter is contained the Sum of Amos his fifth Sermon, where we have sin and sorrow, security and misery extending each other.
Here is a reprehension of Judah and Israel, for their carnal security, & sensuality. V. 1. to 6th.

2 For their slowness and folly, in taking no warning by the example of their rich and populous neighbour Cities, which God had destroyed for their sins. Vers. 2.

3 For their contempt of God's threatenings, which brought forth oppression and tyranny. Vers. 3.

4 For Pride, Luxury, and Riot, especially in their Rulers and rich men. Vers. 4, 5, 6.

5 For Inhumanity, want of sympathy, and brotherly compassion towards such as were in distress. Though the whole Land was depopulated, and all the open Country was exposed to the fury of the merciless enemy, yet because their fenced Cities (whereof Jerusalem and Samaria were the chief) were at present free, they lived at ease, and never regarded the miseries of others. Vers. 6.

6 There was amongst them, perverseness, obstinacy, and rebellion. Vers. 12.


8 Carnal confidence, and gloriation in that which could not help them. Vers 13.

The Lord had born long with these their great provocations, and used all means to amend them, but all in vain, and therefore now follows their woe and punishment. As first Captivity, banishment and deportation out of their own Land. Vers. 7.

2 Detestation of them and their privileges. Vers. 8.

3 Desolation and destruction of their Cities, by the Sword, confirmed by God's Oath. Vers. 8.

4 Desperation, and sinking under their carnal confidences. They should be so terrified, that they should not once dare to make mention of the name of the Lord. Vers. 10.

5 The Pestilence should rage so terribly, that if a numerous family be reduced to ten, those ten shall dye, and for want of others, a mans Unde shall bury him. Vers. 9, 10.

6 An Epidemical and general destruction of rich and poor, Palaces and Cottages, none shall escape, but as all had sinned, so all should now be punished for their sins, from one end of the Land to the other. A foreign enemy like a violent flood should over-run the whole land from North to South, and from one side to the other.
Of the Prophecy of Amos

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion.

In this first Verse, the Prophet thunders against the secure, and sensual Inhabitants of Judah and Israel, and especially against the great ones, Qui sunt divitiis, sc vivitis primum sunt; as they abounded in wealth, so in wickedness also; who gave themselves to Pastimes, and Merriment, in deslight of the Prophets threatnings, and that in a time when Gods Judgements were round about them. Though Amos were primarily sent to Israel, yet Judah being partaker with them in Sin, he all along in this Chapter joyns them together in reproof.

In the words we have, 1. A Judgement denounced, included in the Particle, Hoi, Woe, which is used three waies in Scripture.

1. By way of Commisseration, when we are grieved at the calamities which we see are coming upon a people, Jer. 6. 4. & 13. Nec. Micah 7. 1.

2. By way of Imprecation, when we pray for the destruction of the incurable enemies of Gods Church, Psalm 40. 14, 15.

3. There is a woe of Prediction, and denunciation, which is also set into the Woe here meant, where the Prophet fore-tells, and denounceth Judgements temporal and eternal, against this obstinate and back-sliding people. Hee threatens them with a Woe of Captivity, and general desolation here, which was but a fore-runner of their eternal destruction hereafter. And the woe of denouncing miseries against an impenitent People, is very frequent in Scripture; as Isr. 3. 11. & 5. 11. 18. Ezek. 16. 23. Matt. 21. 23. & 23. 23. 25. Luke 6. 24. The Prophet had oft fore-told them of evils approaching, but they were no wise awakened thereby; but Princes, and people still lay secure, and sung a requiem to themselves, putting the evil day farre from them; therefore the Prophet falls to denouncing Woes against them, the better to awaken them out of their deep sleep, and security. The Woe prefixt in the front of this Verse, is to bee understood in the rest of the Verse, as ver. 3. Woe to them that put the evil day farre from them. Woe to them that lye upon beds of Ivory, &c. ver. 4. Woe to them that chant to the sound of the Viols, ver. 5. Woe to them that drink wine in bocce, ver. 6.
2 Here are the Persons against whom this Judgement is denounced, and those are,

1. Secure wealthy sinners, who lived quietly, and carelessly, at ease, in pomp and pleasure, without any fear of God's judgements, or any sense of his displeasure. This more especially concerned the great ones of those times, who took no notice of God's hand on their inferiors; though the Regions round about lay waste, yet they lay snorting, and secure, in their fenced Cities, making their guts their God, and slighted all his threatenings; they were full themselves, and they little regarded who else wanted.

2. He thunders against Carnal confidant-ones, who trusted in the Mountaine of Samaria; that is, they trusted in the strength and riches of Samaria, their chief City, as if it were invincible; and by reason of its situation impregnable. They trusted not in God, but in their wealth and walls.

3. Ungrateful men; God had made them the Head of the Nations, and brought them into Canaan, a Land flowing with Milk and Honey; and by his owne Almighty Power he planted them there, and drove out the Canaanites before them, (Psal. 44. 3. & 78. 55.) but they forgot the God of their Mercies, and fell to Luxury and Riot. He made them the chiefest, most famous, and renowned of all the Nations, he had separated those twelve Tribes from all the rest of the World, to be his owne peculiar people (Exod. 19. 5. Jer 2. 3.) they were to him as the flower and first fruits of the Nations, whom he prized and preferred before them all.

To whom the House of Israel came.

This is another Privilidge; these two Cities, Jerusalem, and Samaria were the chief Seats, and residence of their Kings, and therefore here was a great confluence of people, both for Civil and Ecclesiastical affairs, and went to Jerusalem, and the ten Tribes to Samaria.
Ver. 1. "Of the Prophecy of Amos."

3. Here are the Places where those Sinners dwelt, and that is in Jerusalem, of which Mount Zion was an eminent part, and therefore so put for Jerusalem itself (a parte praestanti sit denominatio) this was the Metropolis of Judah, as Samaria was of the Ten Tribes. Samaria is principally threatened, yet because the other two Tribes were their brethren in sin, therefore he threatens them with part of punishment.

The inhabitants of these two chief Cities were more secure and sensual in the midst of God's Judgements than other parts of the Land, and therefore the Prophet deals more sharply and roundly with them, and by a Prolepsis prevents a cavil, where as they might object, that they were the chief of the Nations, and all the people resorted to their Cities for Justice, and for the Worship of God, and therefore they concluded, that God would not destroy them; Tea, therefore faith the Prophet, God will destroy you, because you sin against such Mercies and Privileges.

Observations.

1. The Scripture is full of Divine Rhetoric and Eloquence.

Carnal, worldly-wise men look upon the Bible (as St. Aug. Confess. did before his conversion) as a book of a low, incompr. l. 3. c. 5. unlearned style. This very sixt of Amos will in part confute such. The Prophecies of Esay abounds with such a fluent, divine, grave, and lofty style, that all the eloquence of Cicero, p. 93. & Rivers and all the flowers of Demosthenes, with the rest of those ad- mired Heathens, is but as Chaff to Wheat, and Dross to re- fined Gold. Hence the Scripture is compared to a pleasant Garden deckt with Flowers, and a rich Garment befted with Pearls; when the depth of learning that there lies hid is uncovered, then the glory of the Word does affect us, and leaves a deep impression of its excellency upon our spirits. VVee should not therefore barely read the VVord, but search the Scriptures, and dig those Mines, that wee may the better finde out the Golden Oare. John 5: 39. VVee should also bless God, who hath given such variety of gifts unto men, for the good of his Church. Some are Eloquent Ora- tors. 1 Sa. 3: 3. Others are Amos Disputants, and mighty in Pp 3.
An Exposition

convincing, as Apollos, Acts 18. 24. 28. Some are mild; and
gentle, as Barnabas, others more fierce and fervent, as Peter
and Paul. Some excel in prose, others in poetry, as David,
who is stiled, the sweet singer of Israel, many spiritual songs
are scattered up and down the Scripture, but none excelled
in that gift, like David, who was more especially inspired by
the Holy Ghost, and singularly qualified for that purpose. All
these hath God gifted for the good of his Church, 1 Cor. 3. 27.

Observ. 2. Those that are highest in privileges may be
nearest to miseries.

Woe to Sion first, and then to Samaria; So Rom. 2. 9.
See more in my Com. on Hof. 13. 15. P. 49.

Wrath falls upon the Jew first, and then upon the Gentile. To
be secure in other places was sinful, but to be dead and care-
less in Jerusalem the City of the Living God, where his
Temple and Worship was, this doubled their sin, and there-
fore the Prophet Emphatically sets a Woe upon their heads.
Woe to them that are at ease in Sion.

3. Gods Ministers must denounce woes against the wicked.

As they must proclaim promises to the penitent, so they
must denounce judgments against the obstinate. They must
make a difference, to some they must be lenient, and to oth-
ers severity, Judg. 22. 23. What dreadful woes do all the
Prophets denounce against impenitent sinners. Christ, who
was love it self, and in whom there was no fault, nor guilt; yet
how many dreadful woes did he denounce against the hypo-
critical Pharisees, even eight woes together, Mat. 23. 13,
14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29. If men will be so bold as to pro-
claim their wickedness, Ministers must be so bold, as to pro-
claim their woes.

4. Woe and Sorrow is the portion of secure sinners.

Both Legal woes, and Evangelical woes; temporal, spi-
Rual, and eternal woes. The Law cries, Woe to such
sinners, and to doth the Gospel; but Gospel-woes are
the sadness of the two; for if the Law say, woe to us, yet
the Gospel may say mercy to us; but if the Gospel say,
woe to us, where shall we find mercy? This true, sin-
ers may laugh and be merry in the acting of sin, but woe and
weeping is in the conclusion, Luke 6. 25. The end is death,
Rom. 6. 21. As all the promises of Grace and Mercy hang
over the heads of the godly, and drop blessings upon them
which
which way soever they go; so clouds of wrath hang over the
heads of the wicked, dropping judgments upon them even in
their highest prosperity, when they think themselves most free
from misery. The mirth of every secure sinner that goes sing-
ing to hell, is no better than madness; for where security
goes before, destruction ever follows; When memory Peace,
Peace, then comes Sudden and Swift destruction, Luk. 12. 19, 20.
1 Thes. 5. 3. Secure Life became a booty to its enemies,
Judg. 18. 27. Carelesse Ethiopians shall be made afraid,
Ezek. 30. 9. And carelesse Daughters shall be troubled, Isa.
32. 9, 10, 11. God is much displeased with a people, when the
fire of his wrath shall beset them round about, and yet they re-
main unhumbled and insensible, Isa. 22. 12, 13. and 42. al.
5. God usually fore-warns me of woe, before he sends woe.
Hee first cuts men down with the sword of his mouth, be-
fore he cuts them off with the sword of his hand. Hee delights
not to take sinners at an advantage, but loves to exercise his
patience towards them, that they might repent; as wee see in
both the destructions of Jerusalem, the one by the Caldeans,
which was fore-told by the Prophets, and the other by the
Romans, which was fore-told by Christ. But of this at large
elsewhere.

6. Carnal Confidence ruines a Land.
When men forsake God, and trust in men and moun-
tains, in Kings and Kingdomes, in Guards and Garrisons,
both they and their creature-confidence shall perish; for, as
there is no policy, so there is no power or fortifications that
can defend us against God, Prov. 31. 30, 31. Use means wee
may, but we must not Idolize them; prepare armies, and strong-
holds, but not trust in them. They are branded that trust in
Riches, Psal. 52. 7, 9. and cursed that trust in men, Jer. 17.
5, 6.

7. Ingratitude is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying
sin.
God had made this people the head of the Nations, and
chose them for himselfe from amongst the Nations, but they see my Com.
fought against God with his own blessings, and as they were on Hos. 13. 16.
increased, so they sinned against him, abusing the good P. 103, 104.
Land which hee had given them, to Idolatry, riot, and excess;
still at last the Land spewed them out.
Verse 2.

Pass ye on to Calneh, and see, and from thence go to Hemath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistims, see they better than these Kingdomes? or their borders greater than your borders?

The Prophet goes on to awaken Israel and Judah out of their security, and to drive them from their carnal confidence in their Mountains, Ammunition, and fortified Cities; to this end hee sets before them Gods Judgements on the Assyrians, Caldeans, and Philistims, those Idolatrous and Heathenish Nations, whose bounds were larger, and their Cities stronger than theirs.

Hee instanceth in three, Calneh, Hamath, and Gath.

1. Calneh, this was an ancient, wealthy, great City, built by Nimrod after the Flood, in the Territories of Babylon, Gen. 10.10. It was afterwards enlarged by the Parthians, and called Ctesiphon, and was made the Metropolis of the Kingdom.

2. Hamath, called here the great and mighty City to distinguish it from a City of that name in the Land of Israel, Josh. 19.32,35. It lay on the North side of Israel, and was a boundary of the promised Land, Num. 13.21. & 34.8. Zach. 9.2. 'Twas built by Antiochus, and thereupon called Antiochia, and was the Metropolis of Syria. 'Twas destroyed by the Assyrian for all its power and greatness, Isa. 10.9.

3. Gath, a strong City of the Philistims, well known to Israel for its enmity against them, 2 Sam. 1.20. 'Twas at last taken, its walls were broken down, and it made tributary to others, 2 Chron. 36.6.

These bordering famous Cities were well known to them, and therefore the Lord instanceth in them, though under them synecdochically other flourishing Cities which were made
Ver. 2. of the Prophecy of Amos.

made a desolation, may also bee included. Hec bids them See, and diligently consider the downfall of those places, that their falls might make them fear, and flye from securitie, oppression, and carnal-confidence, lest they be ruined as these were, and they bee made an example unto others since they were

will not bee warned by others.

Bee they better then these Kingdomes, or the borders of their Land greater than your borders?

These words admit of some difficulty. Some make the Interrogation a Negation, q.d. Are these Nations better than yours? in no wise, for do but compare your Kingdom of Judah and Israel with those Kingdomes, your Cities with their Cities, and your borders with theirs; and it will easily appear, that none of those Nations are better than your Nation, for either they are Tributary to others, or ruined: God hath done more for you, than for them in many respects, the greater is your sin, and the greater will your punishment bee, if you abuse so pleasant a Land, and such rich mercies to the dishonour of him that gave them. Thus they bring in the Lord upbraiding them for their ingratitude; that they had not rendered according to the mercies hee had shewed them.

This sense is good, and many learned men go this way, and though it must be acknowledged, that if we look on Canaan, Israel's Land with all its priviledges, it was the glory of all Lands, Ezekiel 20.15. yet other Nations might surpass it for strength, and greatness of Cities, for largenesse of borders, and for amenity and fruitfulnes of soil, as Babylon did.

But with submission to better judgements, I conceive the Interrogation to bee here an Assertion, and the genuine sense of the place to be this, That it was in vain for them to trust in their Mountains, Riches, and strong Cities, since other Nations with their Metropolis which were greater and stronger than theirs, were now decayed and ruined. That Almighty hand which brought them down, notwithstanding all their Ammunition and Fortifications, will also bring Israel down, notwithstanding all their riches and strength. Behold therefore as in a glass, whither Luxury, Oppression, Security, and abuse of Mercies hath brought those Cities, and do you fear by their Examples.

The summe of all is this, O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and
An Exposition

and Samaria, that glory in Mount Sion, and trust in the Mountain of Samaria; Go and see what I have done to Calneh, Hemath and Gath, three potent, populous, famous Cities, feared in three different Kingdoms, viz. Babylon, Syria and Palestina; consider how I have made them a desolation for their sins, and have brought their borders into a narrower compass, though they were larger and pleasanter than theirs, and were fortified both by Art and Nature: Bee warned therefore by their example, and go not on in your Idolatrie, Luxury, Security, and Obstinacy, lest you also become a desolation like to them.

Observations.

1. We should diligently observe, and carefully consider the Judgments of God on others.

We should not let a judgement passe that we see at home, or hear of abroad, without learning something of God from it. As we should consider his mercies to make us love him, so we should consider his judgments to make us fear him. Hence 'tis that God bids his people here, Go, Go, Go, Go to Calneh, Go to Hemath, Go to Gath, and consider what I have done to them for their sins. Go not with your feet, but with your affections; go not in body to view the ruines of those places, (for that you may do and be never the better,) but in your Meditations go thither, and observe Gods hand upon them to awaken you. As a man may go to Heaven even whilst his body is on earth, yet by Meditation hee may ascend thither; so by Meditation we may go to Germany, Savoy, Ireland, Poland, and see Gods Judgements there. Do not barely think of Gods Judgements, but ponder every circumstance, and rest not till you have suck'd some benefit out of them, and got your heart affected with them.

Wicked men never once think of God; or his judgements, they forget him, daies without number, and he is not in any of their thoughts, and as for his judgements they are far above out of his sight; or if he slightly think of them, than is all: But you must know that there are three Acts of the Soul, 1. Cogitation. 2. Meditation. 3. Consideration. Cognition is a thought and away. Meditation is a dwelling longer upon an Object. But Consideration looks round about, and...
all Circumstances of Judgments and Mercies, that they may take a deeper impression upon our hearts; and this is that which the Lord so oft calls for; He would have us consider our ways, to humble us, Hag. 1. 5. 7. His Judgments to fear us, Job 23. 15. His Mercies to allure us, 1 Sam. 12. 24. His Word, that we may attain the practical knowledge of it, 2 Tim. 2. 7. This consideration fortifies the soul against sin, See more in my it layses before us the losse and hurt which attends upon sin, Com. on 2 Tim. so that we cannot rush into it with that boldness, as the 3. 4 P. 118. wicked and inconsiderate do. Jer. 8. 6.

2. Gods Judgements on others must awake us.
   Their destruction must be our instruction. As Gods people here must go to Calneh, Hemath, and Gath, so he bids them go to Shiloth, and consider what hee did to that priviledged place, and be warned by their woes, Jer. 7. 12. 'Tis a great favour when the Lord reacheth us our lessons on other mens books, and backs, making them examples unto us, when hee might have made us examples unto them.

3. Sin brings famous Cities to ruine.
   Wee see here three famous Cities with all their Territories made a desolation for their sins. Let men make walls as high as heaven, and ditches as deep as hell, yet if sin reign within, it will ruine all, Deut. 13. 16. P. 75. This brought the Kingdom of Israel into the hands of the Assyrians, 2 King. 17.7. to 19. and Judah into the hands of the Chaldeans. Sins, especially crying sins, do emasculate mens spirits, and weaken the hearts and hands of a people, so that they become an ease prey to a cruel adversary.

VERSE 3.
See that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to draw near.

IN this Verse the Prophet goes on with his charge, especially against the Judges, Rulers, Counsellours, and those in Power and Authority in the Kingdom of Judah and Israel. Hee chargeth them in this Verse with two sins, which were the effects and evidence of their security before mentioned, Verse 1. The first is the contempt of Gods Threarings,
An Exposition

Chap. 4

God oft foretold them by his Prophets that Judgements were coming upon them, but they would not believe it, but the evil day far from them; Sleighing Gods Threatnings as they had been but fables, and would never surpize them. Though they walk in ways of wickedness, adding sin to sin, and daily provoked the Lord to anger, yet they blest themselves in their evil ways, promising themselves peace and prosperity for all that. They were setled upon their lees, and lived without any fear or thought of danger, giving themselves up to Idlenesse, Wantonness, Pride, Luxury, Violence, and all manner of Iniquity; not once thinking of the destruction which was coming upon themselves, and the Kingdom. Yea they counted it a loathsome thing (as the word in the Original signifies) once to mention the evil day. They were so given up to mirth and jollity, that they would not once hear of sorrow. They thought themselves privileged by having the Temple, and Gods worship amongst them, against all storms and tempests. But the further they put away the evil day, the nearer it was to them; and though they could have wished there had been no such day, yet their wishes were but vain, for the Lord had decreed to bring a dismal day upon them; and it is not the counsels of men, but the counsels of the Lord, that shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations, Psal. 33.10, 11. As they had their evil day of sinning, so God was determined to bring upon them an evil day of suffering.

Q. But what was that evil day?

A. The evil day here meant, was more especially the day of their Captivity, when the Assyrian should come and carry away Israel, and the Babylonian should come and carry away Judah out of their own Land into Captivity and banishment. This evil day the Prophet calls before, a day of darkness, and not of light, Amos 5.18, 19, 20.

The words are read by some passively, thus, Yee are separated, and set apart by divine Justice for an evil day, even for a day of banishment and slaughter, q.d. Yee have long lived in sensuality and security, as if you had been far from an evil day. But here primarily meant of some particular judgement coming upon Israel, yet it may be extended unto the day of the general Judgement, which will be unto the wicked in a way of minimency, the evil day of sad and doleful tidings, James.
Verf. 3. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

And yet you are marked out, and set apart for an evil day. All the evil days which you have hitherto escaped, do but lead you to an evil day from which there will be no escaping.

But the words are better read actively (according to our Menaddim, e. Translation) setting forth the danger that attends voluptuous and sensual men, whose belly is their God, who lye upon beds of Ivory, and sing to the sound of the Viol, yet put the evil day far away. Their work all the day long was to do evil, and yet they put the evil day far from them with abundance of scorn and contempt.

And cause the seat of violence to draw near.

Here is a second effect and fruit of their security, and that is Tyranny, and Injustice, Cruelty and Oppression. They cause the seat of Violence to draw near. This sin doth necessarily follow the former, for when men are hardened in sin and security, putting off the Threatenings of God, and driving away all fear of danger from themselves, such must needs grow outrageous and cruel, terrifying others with their Violence, Oppression, Rapine, and Unrighteousness, Amos 3:10. So much the word in the Original implies; Iniquity acted by force, and violation of Justice.

Ques. But what is meant by causing the Seat or Throne of Violence to draw near?

Answ. 1. Negatively; it cannot be meant of the Assyrian, or any other enemies power that was coming near; Ye cause the seat of Violence to draw near; that is, (say some) by your sins ye cause the violent Assyrian and Babylonian to draw near, and come against you to your own destruction. This is a Truth, but not from this Text.

2. Much less can it be meant of causing any false feasts or Sabbaths to draw near; as the Septuagint mistaking the Original (as they do very often) do render it, appropriating it not Sabbata; sabbata mendacia, as if they had set up false Sabbaths, quiesere. which God abhorred. But this is far from the scope of the Text.

3. Neither is it put Antithetically, by way of opposition to the former clause, qu. d. O yee voluptuous and secure sinners, yee put the evil day far from you, and yet by your sins yee pull it upon you, persevering still in your oppression and cruelty; you would fain put off the judgement from you, yet you will

Q. 93
not remove your sins, which cause the Judgement.

But the meaning briefly is this. The Prophet chargeth them with their going on in their Luxury and Inhumanity, oppressing, and vexing the poor and needy, which had no helper. They were so hardened in their sin, that now nothing but unrighteousness, and violence reigned amongst them. They had turned the *Seat of Justice into the Seat of Injustice, and the Throne of Majesty into the throne of Iniquity, establishing mischief by a Law (Psal. 94. 20.) rushing violently into sin, as the Horse into the battle; abusing their power to the abasing of their brethren. So much is implied by the Seat, and Throne of violence, as appears by the like expression, Rev. 2. 13. Christ commends the Church of Pergamus for her constancy to the truth, and that in a place where Satan had his throne, i.e. in a place where Heresie, Superstition, Idolatry, and all kind of wickedness prevailed, and bare sway without control: for where sin reigns, there Satan rules, and there he erects his throne. So these sensual and secure sinners, had set up a throne of violence, and a seat of iniquity, that is, they were come to the height of oppression, and cruelty, as being monsters, rather than men.

OBSERVATIONS.

Three Observations do Naturally flow from these words.
1 That God hath an evil day, to bring upon evil men.
2 That evil men put this evil day farre from them.
3 That when they do so, then they run into violence and outrage.

1 Of the first, That God hath an evil day, to bring upon evil men. As they have had their time of provoking him, with the evil of sin, so he will find a time to vex them, with the evil of punishment. Such violent oppressors are the proper objects of Gods hatred, Psal. 11. 5. and though for a time they may escape trouble, yet they are not delivered from it; all their preservations from evil, are but reservations to greater evils. The Lord hath many ways to deliver the godly, but he hath no way to deliver the wicked, they having refused all ways of his appointment for their owne deliverance, therefore as to them, be kneweth many ways to reserve them to
the Day of Judgement, to be punished, 2 Pet. 2. 9. When Beasts
have been fatted in pleasant Pastures, then they are brought
forth to the slaughter, Jer. 12. 1, 3. As God hath made all
things for himself, so he hath destinated the wicked for wrath,
Prov. 16. 4.

2. It is the property of wicked men, to put the evil day farre
from them. They look upon Gods Judgements at a distance,
not so much as once dreaming of them, till they light upon
them. They cry, Peace, peace, when sudden and swift de-
struction is at hand. This is usual with wicked men, the god
of this World hath blinded their eyes, and they willfully
put out their owne eyes, lest they should see that
which would but trouble them, and hinder their carnal
mirth. They cry, Let us eat and drink (even when Judg-
ements are ready to fall upon their heads) and if wee must
dye to morrow, let's be merry before we dye.- Isa. 22. 13.
thus they are jeering, when they should be fearing; they take
no notice of Gods Judgements, they are farre above out of
his sight, Psal. 10. 5. Let Noah warn the Old World one
hundred and twenty years together, of an approaching Judge-
ment, yet they knew nothing till the flood came, and swept
them all away; and as it was then, so faith our Saviour it will
be at the end of the world, Mat. 24. 37, 38, 39. 2 Pet. 3.
3. 4. This hastens wrath, when men cry, the dayes are pro-
longed, and because Judgements are deferred, therefore they
will never come; this makes the Lord come suddenly upon such
sinners, Ezek. 12. 22, 27. Amos 9. 10. Sensuality and se-
curity close mens eyes, that they cannot see an evil day ap-
proaching, Luke 21. 34. It makes men feel trouble before they
see it, and to be past hope before they had any fear of hurt.

Wicked men, when they are in prosperity, they dream
they shall so continue to eternity; hence the Prophet brings
them in, making Covenants with Death; and agreements with
Hell, and compacts with all other troubles, that they should
not come nigh them. Thus they foolishly conceive, and speak,
Isa. 28. 15. If the over-flowing scourge pass thorow, yet it shall
not come nigh us. Thus they make their eyes the refuge, and under
falsehood doe they hide themselves. notwithstanding all the
Judgements threatened against them for their sins, yet they
vainly promised themselves safety, and impunity, as if they
had
had been at a sea with the Devil, and Hell, and thereupon call for Wine, and strong drink, pampering and flattering themselves in their sin, confidently concluding (as if all the World, and Time itself were at their dispose) that to morrow should be as this day, and much more abundant, q. d. Those sad Predictions of the Prophet will never come, but we shall escape as well for the future as we have done hitherto, yea better, and more happily, Isa. 56. ult. But let us be moved with fear as Noah was, Heb. 11. 7. and get into the Ark of God’s favour and protection, and then we may sweetly sing, The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear? at famine and destruction in an holy security thou mayest laugh, for in six troubles the Lord will be with thee, and in the seventh he will not leave thee, Job. 6. 19, 20, 21, 22. get an holy, prudent, providential fear, to prepare for troubles before they come, and then you will not be dismayed at them, when they do come; Darts fore-seen are darts, Job 3. 25. Psal. 46. & 112. 6, 7. Hab. 3. 16. Realize dangers as if they were present, that will help to awaken us; but when men look upon Judgments at a great distance, and think it may be many years hence ere they come, or they may not come in their days, or they may not come at all; this breeds security, and security breeds tyranny and oppression, for so it runs, They put the evil day farre away, and then cause the fear of violence to draw near.

3 Obs. Where carnal security, and Atheistical contempt of God’s Judgments goeth before, there cruelty, violence, and all manner of wickednesse follows. Where health, wealth, peace, and security goes before; there pride, oppression, blasphemy, and cruelty usually follows, Psal. 73. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. & 94. 4, 5, 6, 7. especially when wickedness gets into the Throne, and sits on the seat of Judicature, having all power in its hand to oppress the poor, and vexe the needy, then it becomes exceeding tyrannical and cruel.
That lye upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon
their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and
the Calves out of the midst of the stall.

The Prophet goes on with his Charge against the Rulers of
Judah and Israel. In this verse he charge them with
a fourth Sin, which was an effect and evidence of their secu-
rity, and that is Luxury and Sensuality; they spent their time
in eating, drinking, sleeping, in mirth and music, without
any sense or sorrow for the afflictions of Joseph. Like Swinish
Epicures, they minded nothing but their pleasures, stretching
themselves on their Ivory-beds, eating the fatter of the flock,
inventing variety of Music and Melody, and new waiés to
increase their mirth; drinking wine in deep carousing cups,
and anointing their bodies with the principal and most pre-
cious oynments which those times and places afforded. And
that which highly aggravates their sin was this: that all this was
done in a time of mourning, when God's hand was upon the
Regions round about them, and they should have humbled
themselves in dust and ashes, and lay on the very ground for
their great provocations; yet then were they lying on beds of
Ivory, and gave themselves up to all manner of pastimes and
merriment. The Prophet therefore the better to awaken them,
doth raise his voice, and in a most curious Rhetorical strain
doth set before them their lust and luxury, their sin and
miserly.

Quest. The question then will bee, whether this curious fare,
costly beds, and other creature-delights be simply unlawful?

Ans. They are not per se, and in themselves simply unlawful.
God allows great men to lye better, and fare better, and
go finer than inferiour persons, provided they use them sober-
ly, seasonably, and thankfully. The Lord hath given us all
things richly to enjoy, 1 Tim. 6. 17. But then we must not a-
buse them to riot and excess, especially in a time of mourning,
for that is a God-provoking sin, Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14. So
that it is not the sober use, but the profane abuse of the crea-
ture which displeaseth God; use them we may, but not luxu-
riously.
riously and unseasonably. 'Twas the sin of this people; that they were riotous in a time of mourning, and did indulge themselves in these sensual delights, even when the fire of God's wrath was kindled against them, and the Prophets were denouncing the utter destruction both of King and Kingdom; when they should have abated, rather than abounded, and have abridged themselves of their lawful liberties, seeing God's hand on their Brethren round about them; but they, like foolish Epicures, laid not to heart the afflictions of Joseph, but like the rich glutton, they fared deliciously every day, not once thinking of the misery of poor Lazarus, Luke 16.

So that here we have, 1. The Sin reproved, and that is, Luxury. 2. The kinds or specification of this Luxury, and that is fourfold,

They exceeded

1. In Eating, Verse 4.
2. In Musick, Verse 5.

They lye upon beds of Ivory.

Ordinary beds content, not these effeminate ones, they must have costly, curious beds made of the finest Ivory, filled with the softest feathers, and no doubt but they were adorned with gold and silver, as others had been before them, Hos. 2. 6. They were so proud that even their beds, which should have minded them of their graves, proclaimed their pomp and vanity.

They lye upon Ivory bed-streeds; or as the words are, in the fountain, they lye upon Bed-streeds of the Tooth; viz. such as were made of the Elephants Tooth, which we call Ivory. Not that the Bed-streeds were wholly made of Ivory, but some principal part of them were adorned with this rarity, which came from India, and remote parts, Ezek. 27. 15. They were not lesi eburnei, but eburni; not totally made, but checkered or covered with Ivory; for herewith stately things were wont to be garnished because of its whitenesse and dearness, for what is far fetched, and dear bought, delights the wantons of the world. In those Eastern parts they delighted much in Ivory; hence in Scripture wee read of Ivory-houses, 2 Kings 20. 39, Amos 3. 15. Ivory-Palaces, Ptd. 45. 9. Ivory-Thrones.
Of the Prophecy of Amos.

Thrones, 2 Chron. 9. 17. Ivory-benches, Ezek. 27. 6. Ivory-Towers, Cant. 7. 4. Ivory-Vessels, Rev. 18. 12. and Ivory-beds, as in the Text. On these they lay sleeping, having little else to do. They were not leiti, discubitoriis, beds to lie and eat on, (as the custom then was) but leiti laetiivi, soft beds on which they lay sleeping, and stretching themselves idly and lasciviously, for so it follows,

They stretch themselves upon their Couches. When they should be serving God in their places and callings, they in a lazy, lustful, lustful manner, yawn and stretching their pampered carcasses upon their Couches.

Some read the words thus, They are luxurious upon their Couches, that is, they stretch themselves luxuriously and lasciviously upon their beds, ver. 7. the word is used, Ezek. 17. 6. for a luxurious Vin.: The sense is the same.

They eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the Stall.

Sins seldom go single; before they lay daintily, and now they feed daintily; ordinary fare will not down with them, they must have the fattest and finest that can be picked out of the flock, and most fattening fold. They chuse the fattest out of the places where they were kept to be fattened, be it field or fold. Great beasts are fed in Pastures, but Calves are fed in Stalls, where they are fed with their Damms milk quietly and obscurely, which helps concoction, and fattens them sooner. Thus they gave themselves up to ease and delicacy, pammpering themselves with the finest fare.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. A lazy, sensual, Epicurean life that is spent in eating and drinking, sleeping, and pastimes, is very displeasing unto God. This makes him frown upon the head of those that are at ease in Sin, lying on beds of Ivory, stretching themselves upon their Couches, and feeding on the finest fare, fattening and feasting themselves every day, like the rich glutton, Luke 16. 19.
308

An Exposition

Such Sensualists, that live in pleasure and wantonness, St. James rebukes, James 5. 5. These are sins Majoris adhærentia, they are hardly shaken off; these sensual Epicurean lufts do estrange the heart from God, close up the eye of the soul, emasculate the spirit, and unfit men for the service of God or man. Hence the Scripture so oft condemns them, Deut. 21. 20. Eccles. 10. 16. 17. Luuk. 21. 34. Rom. 13. 13. 14. We should therefore carry weaned affections to these creature-enjoyments, and use these things, as though we used them not. He that hath beds of ivory, and lives in a Princely Palace, yet should carry such mortified affections to them, that if the Lord should call him to lye on a pad of straw in prison, he must be ready cheerfully to do it. Grace it humbles a man, and makes him know his deserts; a good man that goes in Silks and Sattins, yet can be thankful for Raggs (when God calls him to them) knowing that he is less than the least of all God's mercies. We should therefore keep a watch over our hearts in our eating, drinking, sleeping, cloathing, for fear of excesses. Licetis perimos omnes.

2. Ministers must not rest in Generals, but they must descend to particulars.

When the Prophet had denounced a woe against those that were at ease in General, ver. 1. now he descends to Particulars, and tells them of the sins of their beds and boards, of their luxury, drunkenness, sensuality, inhumanity, &c. This particular applying of the Word to the souls of people, is the only way to convince and convert them; for what is spoken in general to all, few will apply particularly to themselves. This made the Prophets and Apostles to deal so plainly with their people, Isa. 58. 1. Ezek. 16. 2. Mat. 11. 21. 23. Joth. 4. 17. 18. Acts. 2. 36. 37.

Be not then offended at the plain and powerful preaching of the Word. You will suffer the Lawyer to tell you of the flaws in your estates, the Physician to tell you of the diseases in your bodies, the Watchman to tell you of an approaching enemy; and will you not suffer the Minister to tell you of eternal dangers, that so you may prevent them?

3. Sins (especially great ones) seldom go alone.
Ver 5. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

Security went before, now follows Luxury, Sensuality, Drunkenness, and Inhumanity. As great men have great attendance, so great Sins have many followers; and as there is a concatenation of Vertues, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. so there is a See my Com. on concatenation of Vices also, 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.

**Verse 5.**

That chant to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves instruments of Musick, like David.

The Prophet goes on, in aggravating the Sins of these loose, luxurios Rulers, who gave themselves up to mirth and merriment, to feasting, singing, and Musick, as if they had been continually at some Wedding, or celebrating some Feast to Bacchus; and that in a time of mourning, when Gods Wrath was upon the regions round about them, the inferior people were in deep distress, and Samaria itself was ready to be made a prey by the cruel Assyrian; yet in this juncture of time, when they should have fallen to Prayers and Tears, they fall to mirth and merry-making, not baring an ace of their woned pomp and pleasure; and therefore the Prophet goes on, in denouncing Gods Judgements against them, saying, Woe to them that chant, or quaver, as it is in the margin, to the sound of the Viol; They joyn their voyce to the Instrument, they play and sing.

Before they pleased their Palates, and now they delight their ears with Musical Instruments, that nothing might be wanting to compleat their pleasures. They sing to the mouth of the Viol (so it is in the fountain) they curiously quaver, and sing their part in Conson; they form and frame their Tones, rising and falling according to the Tune, and Harmony of the Viol, or Pflartery, the word will bear both. It was an Instrument that was round and hollow, much like a bottle; and Nebel signifies a Bottle as well as a Viol. The Seventy call it Pflaterion, and so the word is rendred, Psal. 33. 2. Sing to the Lord with the Pflartery, or Viol. Before they had luxurious feasts and now they adde lascivious musick.

The better to Patronize their prophane Musick, they bring William Williams in David, for their pattern. They invent Instruments of Musick, like
An Exposition

David was a great Master of Musick, he invented many Musical Instruments, which he used in Spiritual praising of God, and raising of his Spirit in his Worship. 1 Chron. 23. 5. But these abused their Musick, to the satisfying of their sinful lusts and pleasures, and that in an unseasonable time; as if they would out-face God, and his Judgments, and their prosperity should never change. Under the Viol, Synecdochically is comprehended other Musical Instruments then in use, as Harps, Sackbuts, Organs, Timbrels, Trumpets, Cymbals, &c. under one kind the rest are comprized; so faith the text, They invent to themselves Instruments of Musick. They were not content with one or two sorts of Instruments, but they invent variety of them, the better to gratifie their lusts. Plaine Musick pleaseth not them, but they beat their brains to get the most curious Organs and Instruments that can be gained for love, or money. They set their heads, and their hearts to work, that they might find our ways to please their lusts.

Observations.

Abused Musick is displeasing to God. Musick in itself is a good gift of God, Gen. 4. 21. and must be used to Gods glory, and not to gratifie our lusts. Epicures are all for amusement and Musick, for singing, feasting, dancing, and drinking, they have their portion in this life, and they care for no other.

Now Musick is abused when it is

1. Excessive.
2. Unseasonable.
3. An incentive to Lust.

1 Musick is sinful when it is Excessive, when men give themselves up to mirth and Musick, neglecting the duties of their calling. These tempt the Tempter to destroy them, and sin against their owne Prayers, when they desire they may not be led into temptation, yet by such prophan courses they lead themselves into them.

2 When it is unseasonable; so here, in a time of mourning they fell to Musick, and drove the fear of God farre from them.
them. Awoe is denounced against such, Is. 5. 11, 12.

3 When it is made an Incentive unto Lust, and is used with drinking, dancing, feasting, dalliance and filthy Songs, jeering at Piety and pious men. Thus the Drunkards made Songs of David, Psal. 69. 12. and the Churches misery was Solent resp. eun. 

their enemies musick, Lam. 3. 63. such kind of corrupt mu-

sick hath a great influence in corrupting mens manners.

4 When it is used to promote Idolatry, Exod. 32. 18. Dan. V. D. Willet

3. 5. Amos 5. 23. In Popery, the greatest part of their Di-

evine Service is spent in Theatrical Musick, and singing of

Anthems, where the peoples ears are tickled, but their hearts are never touched. St. Austin complains, that in his time hee Aug. Constel,

was more taken with the Musick, than with the matter that was sung. Idolatry hath many props to uphold it, as the Au-

thority of great men, glittering Pictures of Gold and Silver to please carnal eyes, and variety of Musick to tickle mens harms, and allure the ignorant, who have their minds in their harms, and are apt to admire what they never understand. They were Idolaters, who had the Cornet, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, Psaltery, Dulcimer, and all kind of Musick in their Worship, Dan. 3. 5.

Apotstolical simplicity suites best with Gospel-worship. It

is not the custom of our Churches ( saith Justin Martyr) to sing their Meeters with any such kind of Instruments, but their man-

ner is only Plain-songs; and gives very good Reasons in the same place for it.

Q. But doe you condemn all manner of Musick?

A. No, for Musick itself is not unlawful, but the abuse of it. We must therefore distinguish of Musick.

1 There is a grave, composed, pious Musick, by which con-

templation is promoted, the affections are moved, sadness is expelled, the spirits are raised and revived, composed and Epist. 40. As-

fitted for Gods Service and praise; and to this end the most pious and noble spirited men have used it; as Moses, Exod. c. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

15. Deborah, Judg. 5. Hezekiah, Isa. 38. 20. Jehosaphat, Dialog. 3.

2 Chron. 22. 27, 28. the Levites, Nehem. 12. 27. 1 Chron. 20. 33. and the Saints, Rev. 14. 2. 3. This Elisha called for a Minstrel, 2 King. 3. 15. the better to quiet and compose his spirit, which had been disquieted by a wicked King; and to
An Exposition

It is up in praying and praising God, that so he might be the fitter for Prophecy, and the duties of his calling, and to receive what God should reveal unto him; and for this end the Prophets also used it, 1 Sam. 10. 5. Thus David used it, and commanded it to be used in praising God, 2 Sam. 6. 5. 2 Chron. 5. 12. Psal. 150. As prophane Musick delights the Devil, and lets him into the soul, so holy Musick and singing is like a scourge to drive Satan out of our hearts and houses. When the evil spirit vexed Saul with sadness and melancholy, David with his Harp helpt to drive it away, 1 Sam. 16. 23.

2. There is a light, loose, lustful, prophane, emasculating Musick, whereby the corruptions which are in the heart are excited, and the fear of God is expelled. Job brings in the wicked with their Timbrel and Harp, rejoicing at the sound of the Organ, Job 21. 12, 13. Against such the Prophet denounceth a Woe, Isa. 5. 11, 12, and 24. 8, 9.

The Philosopher told the Fidlers, that he could be merry without such musick, much more may Christians say so. St. Jerome saith, Let the singer be thrust out of thy house as noxious, expel out of thy doors all Fidlers, Singing-women, with all this Quire of the Devil, as the deadly songs of Syrens. So Chrysostom, Cymbals, and Pipes, and filthy songs, are the very Pompas and Hog-potch of the Devil. Antigonus, Master to Alexander the Great, hearing his Scholar sing, he broke his Harp, and threw it away, saying, Etatis tua jam regnare convenit, non canere; 'Tis time for you now to reign, and not to sing. The former sort of musick in private may be useful, but this latter sort is odious and abominable.

Obj. We read of Harps, Timbrels, Organs, and other Instruments of musick used by the Jews in their publick worship of God, as appears by the Titles of many Psalms, Psal. 4, and 5, and 6, and 8, 45, 54, 60, 61, 67, 69, 70, 80, 81, 150, and therefore we may use Musick now in Gospel-times.

Ans. It doth not follow, for there were many Ceremonial Rites used in the time of the Law, which are abolished in the time of the Gospel, of which this is one. The Church was in its infancy in Old Testament-times, and therefore the Lord allured them to his worship by external Rites and Ceremonies, which by the coming of Christ are abolished, the Substances
Verse 3. of the Prophecy of Amos.

'Now the shadows are gone. The Gospel calls for a plain, simple, spiritual worship, John 4. 23, 24. As for the Musick of the Temple, it was typical, and prefigured the joy of God's people in the remission of their sins in Gospel-times.

There was both Precept and President in the Old Testament for Musick in the publick worship of God, 2 Chron. 29. 25. and 2. 7, 6. But there is no Precept nor President in all the New Testament for the use of Organs, or any Musical Instruments in the publick worship of God in these Gospel-times, that ever I could see; They were not used in publick worship in the Primitive times, as I have shewed before out of Justin Martyr. Organs were brought into the Church (lay some) by Pope Vitalian, or Vitellius, about the year 660. He was a lusty Singer, and great Musician, he brought Prick-song, Descant, and all kinds of pleasant Melody into the Church; and the better to delight vain people, he joyed Organs to his singing. Thus was Paul's Preaching, and Peter's Praying turned into vain singing, and childish playing, to the great loss of time, and utter undoing of many men's souls.

Alfredus an Abbot in Yorkshire, about the year 1160, inveighs notably against Popish Musicians; All types and figures now ceasing (faith he) whence hath the Church so many Organs, and Musical Instruments? To what purpose is that terrible blowing of Bellows, expressing rather the cracks of Thunder, than the sweetness of a voice? To what purpose serves that contraction and inflection of the voice? This man sings a base, that a small tune, this a treble, that a divid, &c. So that poor people come not to an Oratory, but to a Theater; not to pray, but to gaze about them; neither is that dreadful Majesty feared before whom they stand, &c.

Cornelius Agrippa complaining of the men of his time, tells In lib. de Venetius, That it was more like the howling of beasts, than the voice of men, whilst the Choristers say descant, like a sort of Colts, 0 Boantes poniis, quam Orantes. ther bellow a tenor, like a company of Oxen; others bark a Coup. Pet. Martyr. ter-point, like a kennel of Dogs; others roar a treble, like a sort of Bulls; others grunt out a base, like a company of Hogs; so that a foul, ill-favoured noise is made; but the matter is not understood. Thus he.

'Tis clear against the Rule, which commands, That all things
An Exposition

Chap. 6.

things should be done to edification, and with understanding.

Face sunt super- X Cor. 14:19, but such a hideous noise breeds confusion, as
frisio bonos is apparent in Popery, and is condemned by all our learned
Papistarum, qui Psalms in Te-
musical rebeastes
Musei Theatro sed linguad non intellecta sensu sapient & tumelum ut si interemur lingu-

2. The Organs used by David differed much from ours;
Theirs were 

Organum. Species hisusmodi esse

cantat, cithara, decem chordis coaptana, & hic cum plectro percussor.

Nabia verbo duidem sonos habens, digitiis tangitur, & reliqua. Hinc

perspicere desine hisusmodi Organa 
& David confeixe, diversa suisse à

nostris, &c. P Polly. Virgil. de In-

vent. Rerum. lib. 1. cap. 15. mibi

p. 22.


Cantabat sanis,

Cantabat libis, cantabat

maspis siba suberibus. Ovid.

Farr. 1. 6. V. De

Conformit. sons.

Objec. This is but some novel opinion of some Precise per-

Answ. Such kind of Church-Musick was not used in the

Church, in Justin Martyrs time, who lived in the first Century. Bellarmine confesseth that for 820

years after Christ, the Church wanted it:

Had such Organical Musick been necessary and useful, in all probability it would have

found a speedier admission into the Church. Hence 'tis that the wiser sort of Papists have

condemned it, as Judaizing. So did A-
quinas, and Cardinal Cajetan on Aquinas, and in his Commen-
tary on 1 Cor. 14:19, and the Jesuit Salmeron on the same

place. Yea, the Jesuit de Valencia tells us expressly, that in

Aquinas his time, which was about 1270 years after

Christ.
"Of the Prophecy of Amos."

Christ, Musical Instruments were not used in the Church, for fear lest they should seem to Judaize. That curiosity of singing and quavering, so that the matter which is sung cannot be understood, is condemned by the Learned Hooker, and by Queen Elizabeth, Injunx. 49. and by the Homily of the Place and Time of Prayer, Part 2. p. 131. where such chanting and playing on Organs, is said to have displeased God sore, and filthy defiled his house and place of prayer, and that for it justly he destroyed many Nations; and if this kind of worship were of absolute necessity, then not onely Cathedrals, but all Churches and Chapels were bound to get it. Latin-service, I suppose, is abhorred by all, but this kind of chanting, when people know not whether men curse or blest, wherein is it better?

Caution, yet this must not take away Vocal Musick, which isall to be practiced by Gods people in the solemn Assemblies. The melody of the heart and voice is the sweetest harmony in Gods ear. This is Apostolical, and is oft commanded 1 Cor. 14. 15, 26. Ephes. 5, 19. Col. 3. 16. James 5. 13. "Twas practised by Christ himself, Matt. 26. 30. and by the Primitive Christians in Trajan the Emperour's time, whilst St. John the Evangelist lived. When ever the people of God received any signal mercy, they presently framed it into a song of praise, that they might the better remember it, Num. 31. 17. Deut. 31. 19. Judg. 5. Yea many portions of Scripture were put into songs, as the book of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Solomon's Song. Singing or Psalms is an ancient Ordinance practised by Saints, both in the Old and New Testament. Holy singing is an excellent means to scatter the Devils temptations, to allay passions, and to make us courageous in Gods ways. When we are dull and heavy, this is a means to quicken our affections, and refresh our spirits. Be not drunk with Wine, but be filled with the Spirit. How? by singing of spiritual songs in a spiritual
ritual manner, Ephes. 5. 18, 19. Paul and Silas the better to quicken and comfort themselves in Prison, sing Psalms there, Acts 16. 25. In the Psalm that is intituled for the Sabbath, Psal. 92. 1, 2. the Psalmist tells us, it is good to praise the Lord, and to sing to the name of the most high. God delights to see his people practise this Ordinance, he is not only pleased with the Prayers, but also with the Praises of his people; and gives them victory not only for Prayers, but for Praises also, 2 Chron. 20. 21, 22. When the Ark was brought into the Temple with singing, it is said, The glory of the Lord filled the house, 2 Chron. 5. 13.

Woe then to those that glory in their shame, viz. in singing profane, filthy, obscene Songs; but are ashamed of their glory, viz. of singing the Songs of Sion, which is not only our duty, but our glory; not a burden, but a blessing, not only a service, but an Angelical privilege; yet how many dare not sing a Psalm in their Families, for fear of reproach and suffering? Christ will be ashamed of such as are ashamed of him, and his Worship, and will shut them out of Heaven, that fear men more than him, Mark 8. v. 12. Revelations 21. 8.

We must begin our Heaven here, if ever we will sing with the Saints in glory hereafter, Rev. 14. 3. & 15. 3. They that will not sing here, must howl hereafter. Our Tongues are called our glory, and we cannot use them better, than in glorifying God with them.

That we may perform this Duty rightly,

1. Understandingly.
2. Affectionately.
3. Religiously.
4. Decently.

1. We must sing with the Spirit, and with understanding, Psal. 47. 7. 1 Cor. 14. 15. Many sing, but understand not a word of what is Sung. God abhors such blind sacrifices. It is reasonable service that he requires, Rom. 12. 1.

2. Affectionately; with grace in the heart, Col. 3. 16. that is, we must exercise the graces of the Spirit in singing, we must sing with joy, faith, fear. We must act the graces of the Spirit in singing; when we sing of Judgement, we must tremble.
ver, when of Promises, believe; when of Commandments, obey. This is to sing David's Psalms with David's Spirit. Get your spirits tuned, and framed to what is sung, that it may not be a Carnal, but a Spiritual Song. Hence David used to tune, and prepare his heart before he sang, Psal. 57. 8, 9. Heart and Voice must go together. Singing with Musick in Publick was Ceremonial, and Typical, it is now gone; but singing with Heart and Voice is Moral, and perpetual. We should therefore labour rather to get our hearts affected with the matter, than our ears and senses with the manner of singing.

3 Religious. To the Lord, and not to Saints must we sing praise, and it must be done (as all other Duties) with reverence, as in God's presence.

4 Decently. As all other Duties must be done decently, and in order, so must this, 1 Cor. 14. 14. As all curiosity, Quaesitio, fire, perturbation, and Vain-delights must be avoided; so rudeness, feed, jubilous disorder, and confusion must be shunned. We must observe the Tune, and join all together as one man in the Duty, as those Singers did, 2 Chron. 5. 13. with the voice all together must we sing unto God, Psal. 52. 8.


2 Obs. Wicked men are apt to abuse the Practices, and Examples of God's people.

Sometimes they take offence, and stumble at their infirmities, and falls, which should be a means to keep them from falling. Sometimes they imitate their good actions, but then they do it in an evil manner, and to an evil end; if David dance before the Ark, then the wicked will dance before Dagon, and peccal, wrest that *purely zealous act of David's, to Poutrowize mine. David's Psalms may be dancing. If David set up Musick to praise God, they will set up quan psalm.}

S f 3
An Exposition

Chap. 6.

up Musick to plesse their Lufts. They had Musick here like David, but they had not the heart of David. They had the matter, but they faile in the manner. They abused David's example, for though he was a great Musician, a Master of Musick, and the sweet singer of Israel; yet all his Musick was not for Carnal, but Spiritual pleasure; to fit him the better to praise God, and to meditate upon his works.

Two men may doe one and the same thing, and yet not be the same; because it comes not from one and the same Principle, nor tends to the same end. Cain and Abel both offer Sacrifice, yet from different Principles, and with different acceptance, Gen. 4:3. The Pharisee, and the Publican, both pray, the one hollowly, the other heartily, Luke 18:10. Wicked men may doe the very same work, which good men doe. Materially, but formally and finally they differ much. David here used Musick piously, but these Epicures profanely. David was bettered by it, and his affections were raised Heavenward; but these were corrupted by their Musick, and their hearts made more sensual and base.

Verse 6, 7.

That drink Wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief Ointments, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.
Therefore they shall goe Captive with the first that goe Captive, and the banquet of them that stretch themselves shall be removed.

The Prophet goes on with his Charge against the Grandees, and Rulers of Judah and Israel. In this Verse he chargeth them with Apostacy, Inhumanity, and want of compassion to their distressed brethren. The whole Land was over-run, and exposed to the mercy of merciless men; but because themselves were safe in their fenced Cities, viz. Jerusalem and Samaria, they lightly regarded the afflictions of others; but instead of mourning with such as mourned, they drank Wine in bowls, and drowned themselves in sensual delights.
Ver. 6. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

So that we have here a further amplification, and fuller description of their Luxury,
1. They drink Wine in bowls.
2. They anoint themselves with the chief Ointments.
3. Which highly aggravates their Sin, they did all this in a time of sorrow, even when Joseph, that is, their Brethren and relations round about them were in deep distress, but they were not at all affected, or afflicted with it.

They drink Wine in bowls.

They made it their Trade so to doe. The Participle of the Present Tense notes a continued act. They drank not Wine in ordinary Cups, Beakers content not them, they must have Bowls, and those not ordinary ones, but large and capacious Vials and Vessels, Silver or Golden Goblets like Basons; for so the word Mizrak is used, for such Vials or Basons as used to carry the Blood of the Sacrifices to the Altar, where it was poured out, Exod. 27. 3. Numb. 7. 13. 1 King. 7. 40. Zach. 14. 20. They drunk by measure out of measure, they were so addicted to drinking, that they could scarce find Vessels bigge enough to satisfie their lusts.

They anoint themselves with the chief Ointments:

In those hot Eastern Countries the Jews were wont to anoint themselves (especially at Feasts,) with sweet smelling Oyl, and other sweet Ointments, to express their joy and cheerfulness, and for the refreshment and consolidation of their Limbs. With it they anointed their Members, and specially their Head, for the preserving of health, and reviving of the spirits; hence those Aromatical Ointments were of great esteem amongst the Jews, as being a special part of their Treasure, 1 Sam. 8. 13. 2 King. 20. 13. The thing was lawful in itself; and therefore we find it commanded by Christ, Matt. 6. 17. and practiced by holy Persons, as Ruth 4: 6. David, 2 Sam. 18. 20. & 14. 2. Psal. 32. ult. Hezekiah, 2 King. 20. 13. Hence our Saviour justified the Woman that anointed his Feet with Ointment.

An Exposition

Luke 7:46. And another that poured a box of precious Oyntment upon his head, Mat. 26. 7. to 13. 'Twas used much by the Jews at their Feasts and Funerals, Luk. 23. 56. but now in Gospel-times, and especially in our cold Countries, 'tis out of use.

The thing in itself was good, for God gives * Wine and Oyl to delight us, Psal. 104. 15. Job 29. 6. Prov. 27. 9. And therefore the Prophet doth not here simply condemn the use, but the abuse of these things. He blames them for their riot and excess; they must have Wine in great bowls; and the * first or top of the Oyl, that is, they must have the best and costliest Oyntment, not for necessity, but for luxury and luft, and that in a time when God's judgments were on the Regions round about them, and many were gone into captivity; yet they are not at all moved with it, but go on securely in their mirth and merriment, without any sympathy of the afflictions of Joseph, for so it follows.

But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

This * But is a sore blot upon them, let Joseph sink or swim, yet they are not broken in spirit for the breaches of Joseph; they have no pain, fellow-feeling, or heart-grief for the oppression of their brethren, or for those calamities past or present, which were upon them.

Some take this affliction to be that particular breach, and great rupture which the * Syrions made amongst them, when they had broken them to shivers (as the word imports) as appears, 2 King. 13. 4. 23. and 14. 26. Their affliction was bitter, for there was none shut up, nor any help left; many were slain, and many carried into captivity.

Though this be a truth, yet 'tis better taking the words in a larger sense, viz. for all those afflictions which the house of Joseph suffered (which was a type of the Church) by their corrupt Judges at home, and by the cruel Syrions, and merciless Assyrians, abroad. They had endured much already, and were like to suffer more; yet these secure, vicious, voluptuous Rulers laid it not to heart.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

By Joseph here, is more especially meant the Ten Tribes, or the whole Kingdom of Israel, so the word is used. Psal. 77. 15. and 80. 1. Amos 5. 6, 15. Hear O thou Shepherd of Israel, i.e. of the Ten Tribes, which were taken from Reuben, and given to Joseph, the best of Jacob's sons, and a principal Patriarch, Gen. 48. 16, 22. 1 Chron. 5. 1. 2. Because of Jeroboam, the first King of the Ten Tribes, who was of the posterity of Joseph.

3. The Prophet seems to allude to the history of Joseph, who was cast into a pit by his brethren, and after sold to the Midianites for a slave, his brethren in the mean time, eating, drinking, feasting, and little regarding the misery and anguish that Joseph was in, Gen. 37. 23, 24, 25, 27.

The summe of all is this, Though your Brethren, the seed of Joseph, be in great distress, and even broken in pieces with Violence and oppression, which might have made them even sick with sorrow; yet such is your inhumanity, that you have given up your selves to all Intemperance and Sensual delights, pouring down Wine out of your carousing-cups, and anointing your selves with the most precious and fragrant Ointments, without any minding of your brethrens miseries, or once regarding their doleful condition.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Voluptuous men spare for no cost or pains to gratifie their lusts.

These men went to India for Ivory, to the foids for the fattest; they provided musick to please the ear, odoriferous perfumes and oynments for the smell; the fat and sweet for their palates, and fine beds for their lusts. Here is all for self, nothing for God that gives all, he is not in any of their thoughts, Isa. 57. 8, 9. When the Kingdom of Heaven should suffer violence by them, they are violent for sin; they lavish gold out of the bag for it, Isa. 46. 6. every one acts in his sphere for Idols; The Children gather wood, the Fathers kindle the fire, and the Women knead the dough, Jer. 7. 18. So great is their affection to Idolatry, that every one in
An Exposition

Chap. 6.

the family consists some thing, and acts that part which is most proper for him; 'tis for Children to gather sticks, for men to make the fire, and Women to bake. The like industry for Idols, we may see, Isa. 41. 7. and 44. 12, 13, 14. Wicked men delight only in sensual things, which makes them so active for them. They delight in eating, drinking, anointing, in silk, satins, purple, pearls, marble, &c. See what a shop of such wares mystical Babylon hath, Rev. 18. 12, 13, 14. Great men have many great advantages of good education, wealth, time, power and reputation, which they should improve to the donor's glory, and not fight against God with his own Treasure. As is excellently set forth in that elaborate Tract, failed, The Gentleman's Calling.

2. Ministers must have a special eye upon the manners of their people.

See how the Prophet here chargeth this people with their excessive and inordinate eating, drinking, anointings, musick, &c. If a Minister do but touch upon these things, how apt are people to cry, what? may we not eat, drink, and play as we please? no, you may not; for you may perish by the use of lawful things, if you use them unlawfully.

We Ministers are watchmen, and must see that our people go not astray in manners, as well as in doctrine; and therefore when the Prophet Isaiah had reproved the men for their sins, hee then sets forth his Looking-glass for women, Isa. 3. 16, &c. and gives us an Inventory of the females vanity, setting them forth in their colours from top to toe.

3. There is a woe hangs over the heads of drunkards.

Woe to them that drink Wine in bowls, till they have besotted themselves, and are made insensible of God's judgements on themselves and others. Every Prophet hath a woe against such. Woe, saith Isa chap. 5. 11, 12. And, VVoe, saith Joel, chap. 2. 5. And, VVoe, saith Habakkuk, chap. 2. 15, 16. Drunkenness blots the name, consumes the body, and destroys the soul, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

4. Lawful things when abused become unlawful.

Feasting in itself is lawful, but feasting in a time of mourning is unlawful. Wine and Oyle are things in themselves lawful, and may be used moderately for necessity and delight, to refresh and fit us for the service of God, but not for luxu-
Ver. 6. of the Prophecy of Amos.

5. Thus the Saints used them (as I have shewed before in the Explication), but to abuse them to lust and luxury, is a great provocation. Pro. 7. 17. Ezek. 23. 41.

5. Luxury brings forth cruelty.

Where riot and excess go before, there cruelty, inhumanity, oppression, and contempt of Gods people follows. This see in the Sodomites, Ezek. 16. 49. And those voluptuous wantons, James 5. 5, 6. As piety makes men pitiful, hence good men are called Chafidum, misericordes, merciful men; such was David, Job, Zachaeus, &c. so impiety breeds cruelty, as we see in Nabal, Dives, &c. So true is that of Pythagoras: first (as he) Pleasures and pastimes creep into Cities, then luxury and satiety, after that violence and cruelty, and then destruction. Hence Solomon condemns luxury especially in great ones, as that which makes them pervert judgement, Prov. 31. 4. Eccles. 10. 16.


Here is a woe set upon the heads of those that laugh when Sion weeps, for this woe must be applied to all that went before, Ver. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6. Woe to them that are at ease in Sion, but they are not grieved for the affictions of Joseph. Woe to them that eat, and drink, and sing, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph; This is the burden of this doleful Dirge, that they did not mourn in a time of mourning, nor once take notice of Gods anger, which yet they could not but see was kindled round about them, and ready to seize upon them, as it did suddenly after. Many are so stupid, that they will not bear a lust or a pleasure, though Gods people be in never so deep distress; like the King and Haman, that sat sitting and carousing, when Gods people were in great perplexity, Hest. 3. ult. To such I may say, as Elisha said to Gehazi, 2 King. 5. 26. Is this a time to receive gifts and garments, Olive-yards and Vineyards? the Leprosie therefore of Naaman shall cleave to thee, and to thy seed for ever. So say I, Is this a time to drink healths, to rant, to dance, and roar, when the Church of God, like Joseph, is sold, imprisoned, massacred, and murdered? will not the Lord visit for these things, and shall not
An Exposition

his soul bee avenged on such a Nation as this?

7. God takes notice of our sins of omission, as well as of our sins of commission.

'Tis not sufficient that we do not oppress or spoil God's people, but 'tis our sin, and we must answer for it, if we be not grieved when they grieve, and weep not when they weep. Divus did not rob Lazarus, but he went to Hell for not relieving him, 
Luk. 16. 29, &c. and at the last day men must answer, not only for oppressing the poor, but for not succouring them, and sympathizing with them, 
Mat. 25. 41, 42. No praying, no reading, no hearing, may bring a man to Hell, as well as an irreverent and formal performance of these duties.

8. 'Tis our duty to sympathize with God's people in their miseries.

God hates a flouting apathy; he commands us to remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them, 
Heb. 13. 3. And to weep with them that weep, as well as to rejoice with them that rejoice, 
Rom. 12. 15. And to shew pity and compassion to our Brethren, 
Zach. 7. 8, 9, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 8. And as 'tis commanded, so 'tis commended to us by the Example of God's servants, who have over-looked their personal comforts, when the publick hath farse in sorrow. Thus Moses, though he lived at Court amidst all the delights of Egypt, yet hearing that God's people were in distress, hee leaves all, and joynt himself to the people of God, chusing rather to suffer affliction with them, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, 
Heb. 11. 24, 25. Heaster so far sympathized with God's people in their misery, that she ventured her life for their preservation. Good Mordecai was very much troubled at their troubles, 
Heb. 4: 1, 2, and gracious Nehemiah, though he was cup-bearer to the King, lived at Court, and wanted for nothing, yet see how deeply hee was affected with the afflictions of God's people, 
Neb. 1. 4, &c. So holy Daniel searching the Prophecies of Jeremiah, and thereby fore-seeing the calamities that were coming on the Church, though himself were advanced to honour, and made a chief President of the whole State; yet he could not but mourn, even till he fainted again with sorrow, and was sick, 
Dan. 8. 27. and 9. 3. and 10. 2, 3. Thus honest-hearted Uriah denied himself in point of lawful liberties, and cannot rest not sleep at home in peace, when the Ark and Israel are in danger, 2 Sam. 11. 11. Jerome was a
man of large affections this way, Jer. 9. 1. and 13. 17. and 30. 7. and writes a whole Book of Lamentations for the Church. David, though himself had many troubles, yet in the midst of them all he desires the Lord to redeem Israel out of all its troubles, Psal. 25. ult. And desires an heavy imprecation against himself, if he prefer not Jerusalem to his chiefest joy, Psal. 137. 5, 6. Hee owns Gods Church, and sides with her, and prays for her, though she were in Babylon, ver. 1, 7. Paul had a care of all the Churches, and witheth their prosperity in every place, and could be content to be accursed, so they might be blessed, Rom. 1. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 11. 26. We have two notable instances for this purpose in Eli, and the wife of Phinehas, 1 Sam. 4. 18. Israel is fled before the Philistims, that was one stab, 2. There is a great slaughter amongst the people, that is a second. 3. Thy two sons are slain, that is a third. But when he heard that the Ark of God was taken, it broke his heart, and his neck together. So the wife of Phinehas, the death of her Father-in-Law, and the death of her Husband, must needs affect her, but the loss of the Ark affects her more nerly, and therefore she doubles that, The glory is departed from Israel, and the Ark of God is taken; and the names her childe Ichabod, that is, there is no glory, seeing the Ark, which was the glory of Israel, and a sign of Gods special presence amongst his people, was gone, she took pleasure in nothing, q. d. All the glory and excellency of Israel is now taken away from us, since the Ark is gone, which brought such glory and renown to Israel.

Christ himselfe, how tender was he over his Church and People? he comforts them, he counsels them, and before he dyes, he makes an excellent prayer for them, John 14. 15, 16, 17. Many will be companions with Gods People in their Exaltation, but Se. John was their companion and brother even in affliction, Rev. 8. 9.

Gods People are men of publick spirits; they serve not themselves, but God and his Church in their Generation; Act. 13. 3, 6. Paul spent himself for the People of God. They can pass thorow honour and dishonour, profit and disprofit, be anything or nothing, so God may be glorified; and his People edified. They are living members of Christs mystical body; now its natural for the members of the body to seek
seeks the good of each other, and if one member suffer, all the rest sympathize.

Besides, the Church is dear and dear to God, and therefore ought to be precious in our eyes; it is his Benjamin, Joseph loved all his Brethren, but he loved Benjamin with a more intense love, and provides a double Meil for him. God loves all his Creatures, but his Church is his Spouse, his Love, his Glory, the apple of his eye; he reproves Kings for their fakes, and plagues Nations for opposing them, as Egypt, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Tyre, &c. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and if the poorest Saint suffer, their head is presently sensible of it. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Now as the Church is dear to God, so it is to the People of God, who in their degree and measure do imitate their heavenly Father, sympathizing with his people in their distresses. We all prize excellent things, now the godly are the only excellent ones of the earth, Psal. 16. 3. They are of the Blood Royal; Christ is flesh of their flesh, he hath made them Kings, and Priests; No Pedigree like the Churches Pedigree, She is Jerusalemabove, and is the Mother that nurtureth and feedeth us all with the Bread of Life, Gal. 4. 26. They are the pillars of the earth, the stay and strength of Nations; as Samsons strength lay in his hair, so the strength of Kingdoms lies in these. Lot was a means to preserve Sodom, and till he was gone out of it, it could not be destroyed, Gen. 19. The world endures for their fakes, and fares the better for them every day. So long as the Chaff is mixt with the Wheat, it is preserved from burning, but when the Wheat is gone, the Tares are soon consumed. These are precious in Gods eye; their Persons are precious, Mal. 3. 17. their Prayers are precious, Cant. 2. 14. their Tears are precious, Psal. 56. 8. their Desires are precious, Psal. 10. 17. their Names are precious, and their Death is precious, Psal. 112. 6. & 116. 15.

Now if we must pray for all men, even for Pagans, then much more for these precious ones; if we must pray for our enemies, Matt. 5. 44. and must be affected with their miseries, Psal. 35. 13. 14. then much more for our friends. If the Prophet wept for Moab, and Babylon, what should we doe for Zion? Esaie 16. 11. and if Abraham were so impor-
tunate for wicked Sodom, and all the people must lament for

Nadab.

An Exposition

Verse 7.

Therefore shall they goe Captive with the first that got Captive, and the banquets of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

We have before seen the Sin of the Rulers of Israel, we are now come to the several branches of their Punishment, whereof the first is Captivity, and deportation out of their owne Land. The Lord had borne long with them, and waited many years for their returne, but they abused his Patience, and turned his grace into wantonness, and therefore
fore now he is resolved to put an end to all their Pastimes and pleasures.

In this Verse we have, 1. A Judgement threatened, and that is Captivity, Ye shall go into captivity.

2. Here are the Persons which must goe into Captivity, and those are the secure Grandees, and Voluptuous Rulers of Israel. They shall goe Captive with the First that goe Captive, of the Inhabitants of those Cities, for the Country was spoyle, and many of them captivated before. But the Rulers who were the prime offenders, and had been first in sin, should now be first in punishment. They shall have the primacy amongst the Captives, they shall goe in the front of them, and lead them the way into Captivity. As in Dignity and Luxury they were before others, so now they shall have precedence in Punishment; as you may see, 2 King. 17. Before they were all for the head of the Ointments, and now they should have the head in Punishment. They must have the head and chief delights, and now they shall have the head and chief of sorrows.

3. Here is the Time when they should goe into Captivity, and that is suddenly. Now shall they goe, i.e. it shall not be long, but the Asyrian shall carry them out of their owne Land into Captivity; in Gods due time it shall come to pass. It was about sixty years after that the Captivity came, which was but a short time comparatively, it is said even now to come upon them, because Gods decrees are sure, and what he determines to doe, is as sure as if it were already done. Thus to shew the certainty of Babylons downfall, it is said, Babylon is fallen, Rev. 14. 8. that is, It shall as certainly be destroyed, as if it were already done. Her fall is decreed by God, and is already begun in the hearts of Gods people, and shall from henceforth be more and more advanced, till it be utterly destroyed. So the Lord had decreed the Captivity of this People, and exercised them with variety of Afflictions, by the Syrians, and Assyrians, till at last they were carried out of their owne Land.

4. Here is an Exegesis, or further illustration of their misery, and the banquets of them that stretch themselves shall be removed. The Prophet alludes to those before, ver. 4th, who wanonly stretch themselves upon their beds of Ivory, and...
An Exposition

Chap. 6.

Those luxurious, lazy wantons, that gave themselves up to feasting and banqueting, to riot and lasciviousness, shall have their mirth turned into mourning, and their Organs into the voyce of them that weep.

Their Banquet shall be removed. It is a Meiosis, i.e. all their jollity, pride, and pleasure shall be taken from them, and instead thereof destruction and misery shall pursue them; so that they shall have neither minde, nor Money to make Feasts, who were wont to spend all upon their backs and bellies.

The words are rendred by some, thus: And the sorrow of them that stretched themselves is at hand. This comes from the various rendring of two words in the Original, the first is the word Mirzach, which the Vulgar render Fation, but without any ground at all; others, Sorrow; but the word properly signifies a Funeral-feast, for in those days they had feasts at Burials, as well as at Bridals, Jer. 16. 7. The word is used but in one place more in all the Scripture, and that is, Jer. 16. 5. Enter not into the house of mourning; or as the Margin renders it, goe not to the Mourning-feasts, or Banquets which were wont to be kept with abundance of riot, pomp, and jollity. These Funeral-Feasts were first ordained for the comforting of such as were grieved for the loss of their friends by death, but these here abused them to wantonness, and excess.

The other word which causeth this diversity, is the word Suv, which signifies to approach, or to depart; it is here taken in the latter sense, according to our Translation; The banquets of them that stretched themselves shall be removed, q.d. all your mirth and merriment shall cease, and yee shall be carried Captive into a strange Land.

5. Here is the ground of all their sorrow, and suffering, included in the Illative Particle, Therefore, therefore shall they goe Captive with the first, viz. for their security, oppression, luxury, and inhumanity.

The words being thus cleared, the Observations follow.

Observations.

1. Security, Luxury, and Inhumanity, doe bring a People into Captivity and misery.

These
These sins ruined the Old World, Sodom and Jerusalem, Ezek. 16. 49, 50, and 21. 3, and 13. Luk. 17. 26, 27. And if they be found reigning in England, they will ruin it too. If we abuse good Land in dishonouring God, hee will call us out of it into captivity.

3 Those that are Leaders in sin, many times are Leaders in suffering.

When such as excel others in gifts, and dignity do go before them in iniquity, 'tis just they should lead them the way into captivity. God is no respecter of persons; be they Princes or Peasants, Sovereigns or Servants that sin against him, they shall not escape; if Kings offend, they have a King above them that will not spare them; Psal. 62. 14, and 76. 12, and 110. 5. Isa. 30. 33. Hence the Apostle would have Masters to know, that if they wrong their servants, yet they have a Master in Heaven that will right them; Ephes. 6. 9. Great men that abuse great blessings, shall have great punishment. Many Great men think, that their greatnes should privilege them in their wickedness; when 'tis an aggravation of their sin, and hastens judgement; 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. And therefore we many times finde the poor spared, when the richer are plundered and slain, 2 King. 5. 12, 13, and 25, 20, 21, 22. Jer. 39. 10. when those that should bee patterns of Piety, become patrons of impiety, prophaneness, and luxury, going before them in sin, it is just with God that they should be punished before others; as we see in Saml. Ahab, Zedekiah, and many Heathen Emperours, whom Justice cut off for their luxury and cruelty.

3. God turns the mirth of wicked men into mourning.

Their feasting into fasting, and their banquets into funeral feasts, where there is, or at least-wishe ought to be, weeping and mourning.

Many men drive away sorrow and trouble of mind, and cannot endure the thoughts of mourning; but though they fly sorrow, yet sorrow will not fly them, but will suddenly sur prise them, and damp their pleasures. Dan. 5. 45. Luk. 12. 20. It will be our wisdom therefore Actively, and freely to afflict our selves, to weep and mourn for our sins, James 4. 8, 9. Else we shall be humbled Passively, against our wills, and God will bring some plague upon us, till he have either bend-
ed or broken us. We should therefore fear to displease him in whose hands are all our times, Dan. 5. 23. Both of sickness, of living and dying; All our times are in God's hand, Psal. 31. 15. And it is well for us they are so, for if they were in other hands we were undone. We see Job's times were but a little space in the Devil's hands, and how sad was it with him. He that sat to day like a King, how suddenly is he, on the Dunghil? His Carcel are taken from him, his Children slain, his Body full of boils, and his Soul full of terrors. And thus it would be with us all; and worse, if we lay at the mercy of Satan, who rages more now than ever, because his time is but short, Rev. 12. 12. It would be sad with us, if our Times were in mens hands, whose mercies are cruelties, they would deal with us as Pharaoh did with Israel, or Herod with John Baptist.

3 It would be ill with us, if our times were in our own hands; it is ten thousand times better that they are in God's hand. For, 1. Now they are in the hands of a most wise God, who knows what is better for us than we do for ourselves. 2. They are in the hands of a merciful God, who turns all to good to his people, and hath promised to pity and spare us, as a man spares his Son that serves him, Psal. 103. 13. All his ways are mercy in making promises, and truth in keeping them, Psal. 25. 10. 3. They are in powerful hands, he is able to keep what we have committed to his trust, Job. 10. 28, 29. 4. They are in faithful and trusty hands, friends may deceive us, Misab. 7. 5. but he is truth in itself, he cannot deceive, nor be deceived.

2 It may comfort us in afflictive times, that all our afflictions are in God's hand, for matter, manner, time, and measure, Rev. 2. 10. He shall cast some of you, not all. 2 He shall cast you into Prison, not into the grave.

3 It is but for ten days, not ten years. God sets them their bounds, and larges to these Metaphorical waves, as bee doth to the Natural, Hitherto shall ye come and no further. He measures out the days and nights, and months and years, that our trials shall continue, Job 7. 3. As we came into the world by Providence, so we go out of the world by Providence.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

dence. God hath set us our bounds which we cannot pass, Job 7: 1 & 14: 5. neither men nor Devils can take away our lives from us till our work be done, Job 7: 20. we should therefore be courageous in duty, and run hazards for God, in whose hand is our life, and not be afraid of man who must dye, Isa. 51: 12. we have our day and to morrow to work, and till we have finish our course none can hurt us, Luke 13: 35. to God the Lord belong the issues from death, Psal. 68: 20. we should therefore submit our wills to Gods will, being willing to live so long as he would have us live, and to dye when he shall call for us.

3. We should bless God, who hath brought us forth, into the best times that ever the Nation saw, our Lot is fallen in pleasant seasons; they are happy times in respect of means, though we have made them unhappy for want of hearts to improve them. We should not therefore quarrel at the Providences, and various dispensations of the times, but rather admire and adore the wisdom and goodness of God in them, so did Daniel, ch. 2: 20, 21.

4. We should improve the time which we have from God, unto his praise. Who plants a Vineyard and doth not eat the fruit of it? Our time is Gods, and therefore great reason we should spend it to his praise, Acts 13: 36. It was the great commendation of the men of Issachar, that they understood the times, and knew what Israel ought to do in them, 1 Chron. 12: 32. It is the greatest wisdom in the world, to observe the opportunities and seasons of grace, Ephes. 5: 15, 16. Hence our Saviour chargeth us as a great sin upon Jezabel, in that she gave her space to repent, but the repentant not, Revel. 2: 20. most live as if time were at their owne dispose, they are very liberal of others right, promising themselves many days and years, when they have not assurance of one day, Isa. 56: 9. Luke 12: 20. As we cannot add one cubit to our stature, so we cannot add a day to our daisies. How sad then is the condition of wicked men, who daily dishonour that God in whose hand is their life? Consider, your times are in the hands of that God to whom you are profess enemies, and with whom he is angry every day, Psal. 7: 12, 13. though he bear long, yet he will not alway bear, for their feet shall slide in due time.
Verse 8.

The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord of Hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his Palaces, therefore will I deliver up the City, with all that is therein.

In this Verse we have a Prolepsis, or preventing of a Plea which Israel might make for themselves, saying, We are the people of God, in Covenant with him, and have received Circumcision, the seal of the Covenant, and at this day we doe enjoy many glorious privileges, and signal favours from him, and therefore it is not like that he will destroy us, whom he hath loved so long, and made the head of the Tribes, and the glory of the world. To this the Prophet answers, Deceive not yourselves with any vain confidence in your pomp, and privileges, as if your glory and excellency could secure you from divine justice; for I must tell you from the Lord, that since you have abused his blessings, he abhors your Excellency, hates your Palaces, and will destroy your Cities wherein you trust, ver. 1. and the better to assure you of the truth of all this, he hath sworn it, The Lord hath sworn, that he abhors the excellency of Jacob.

In this Verse we have, 1. A Commination, I will deliver up the City, with all that is therein; q. d. you glory in your two fortified Cities, viz. Samaria and Jerusalem, you trust in the riches, strength, and fulness of them, but though they be never so full of men, money, and all manner of store; yet for your sins I will deliver them, and all their riches, with all the inhabitants into the hands of the Assyrians, and Chaldeans for a prey. Though in their own conceit they seem invincible, by reason of the multitude of men and ammunition, yet I will empty them, and will send an enemy to besiege them, into whose hands I will deliver them.

By City here is meant, the Citizens and their substance, all should become a prey to the merciless enemy; both in Samaria and Jerusalem, for by a Synecdoche both are here threatened; both had sinned, and therefore now both shall suffer; Samaria shall be sacked by the Assyrians, and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. It is true, that in this Chapter, and in the
whole Prophecy, the Prophet speaks primarily, and principally to the ten Tribes; but secondarily, and concomitantly to Jerusalem, and the other two Tribes, as I have shewed, ver. 1.

2 Here is the ground of this destruction, and that is, God's detestation of them for their sins. I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and therefore I will deliver their Cities into the hands of their enemies. Some render the words thus, I abhor the Pride of Jacob, that is true, for as the Lord abhors Pride in all, so especially in his Israel, a people near unto him. The word signifies both Pride and Excellency, but because this people confided in their Privileges, and boasted of their Dignity, therefore the word is most properly rendered excellency. The word is sometimes taken in evil part, for pride, and arrogancy, Exod. 15. 7. and sometimes in good part, for magnificence and excellency, so here; for the Prophet in this Verse doth not enveigh against their pride, (he had done that before,) but he labours to remove their carnal confidence which they placed, 1. In the Temple, which is called in Scripture by the name of Excellency and Glory, because it was that where-in they gloried, Psal. 47. 4. Exek. 24. 21.

3 In their Riches, Dignities, Privileges, and Prerogatives, wherewith that Nation was adorned above all the people of the world, Rom. 3. 1. 2. & 9. 4. 5. they thought that the bare having of these would shelter them from punishment, but the Lord tells them, that he abhorred both them and their privileges, and since they had abused them, and so forfeited them all, they were now so much the more hateful and abominable to God; q. d. You look upon your selves as the only high and holy ones of the world, but I tell you (saith God,) since you abuse my blessings to my dishonour, I look upon you as a pack of profane, ungodly men, and will deal with you accordingly; and therefore tell not me of your Temple, Sacrifices, dignity, and riches, for I tell you, to your faces, that I detest both you and your excellencies, and abhor your蹩ety Pax Armenod, i.e. places, which you have built by oppression and cruelty; and have abused to my dishonour.
Here is the confirmation of this Commination. The Lord hath sworn it, even the Lord of Hosts, who is Omnipotent, and hath all power in his hand to execute his purposes. The Lord doth not only say it, but swear it; the Jews were hard of belief, and slighted the threatnings of the Prophets, therefore the Lord confirms it with an Oath, saying, I have sworn by myself, or as the words are in the fountain, I have sworn (Benaphsho, in anima sua) by my Soul, or Life, the Lord swears by himself, because there is none greater than he. The soul is the man, and he that swears by his soul swears by himself, and therefore the soul (according to the Hebrew Idiom) is oft put for a man’s self, as Psal. 3. 2. Jer. 51. 6. Matth. 25. 26. It is an Anthropopathy frequent in Scripture, Gen. 23. 16. Jer. 51. 14. it is spoken of God after the manner of men, as an Hand, an Eye, a Face, a Foot, is oft ascribed to God; so here and elsewhere, a Soul is ascribed to God, Isa. 1. 14. Jer. 5. 9. 29. which is God himself, for whatsoever is in God, is God.

Q. d. If we believe men who swear by their soul, or life, (which yet is as nothing) how weighty ought my Oathes to be with you (faith the Lord) when I put myself to pledge; and if you will not believe my Prophets, yet believe me, whose Decretes are immutable, whose Judgements are intolerable, who cannot fail, and who make their Threatnings in execution against you, since I am the Lord of Hosts, whom all Creatures do obey as their Suprême Commander.

Observations.

1. Swearing in itself is lawful.

God himself who cannot sin, yet swears by himself, Isa 45. 23. & 62. 8. Heb. 6. 13. The Lord to strengthen our faith in the truth of his Promises, sometimes swears, Gen. 22. 16. Psal. 132. 11. Heb. 6. 17. and sometimes he confirms the truth of his Threatnings with an Oath, to make us fear, Psal. 95. 11, Heb. 3. 11. thrice happy they for whose sake the Lord swears, and most unhappy they that believe him not when he swears; since he that believes not God makes him a Lyar, 1 John 5. 10. not by any transmutation of God; but
Ver. 8. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

but because hee esteemes his Word and Promises as a false thing.

2 Wicked men are hardly brought to beleive the Threatnings of God.

The Lord must swear here to awaken them out of their Stupidity, so sotish are men by nature, especially when hardned in a way of sin; and if Gods owne people in whom there is a Principle of Grace, be slow of heart to beleive the Doctrin of the Gospel, Luke 24. 25. 26. how hard is it to work those truths upon those who have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

3 God is the Lord of Hosts.

He hath all Power in his hands, and all Creatures at his command, ready to execute his wrath upon wicked men. This Title is given to God above two hundred times in the Old Testament, and but once in the New, Jam. 5. 4. the reason is, because this is a name of Majesty and Terror, suitable to Old Testament times; but in the New Testament he hath more sweet and mild Titles, as Father of Mercies, God of all consolation, the Saviour of all men, &c. We should therefore fear to displease him, who hath the higher Host of Heaven, Myriads of Angels, and the lower Host of Creatures on earth, all ready at the least beck of their Lord and Master to destroy his enemies.

4 No Privilidges can preserve a sinful people from ruine.

Let them be exalted to Heaven in excellency and glory, and be loaded with riches, nobility, dignity, and preheminence, yet if they abuse those Privilidges they shall be thrown down to Hell; Matt. 11. 23. God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation such as work righteousness are accepted of him, and such as work unrighteousnes, be they Jews or Gentiles, are rejected of him. When God shall chuse a people to be an holy people to himself, and they shall walk unholly, and live like the profane of the world, it is just with God that they should perish with them. Many boast that they are Christians, they are Baptized, they hear the Word, and receive the Sacrament, Aye, but do you walk up to those Privilidges, and answer them with obedience; if not, you are but baptized Heathens; yea a drunken Turk is nearer Heaven than a drunken and dissolute Christian. Meet Titular

X x Christi-
An Exposition

Chap. 6.

Christians, are no Christians. As he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, so he is not a Christian that is one only nominally; we must be internal ones in spirit and in truth, answering our Gospel-Priviledges with Gospel-Practices, and then we shall be happy, Rom. 2. 25. 28. 29.

5 Sin makes God to hate our very dwellings and Palaces.

He loathes the habitations of wicked men, and looks upon them as so many Swine-styes, and sinks of Sin. The habitations of the wicked are cursed of God, Job 12. 6. & 15. 34. Zach. 5. 4. As we should keep our bodies pure, as becomes the Temples of the Holy Ghost, so we should keep our houses pure from Sin, and put away iniquity far from our Tabernacles, that they may be Bethels, houses of God, and not Beth-aven, houses of vanity and iniquity, Job 11. 14. & 22. 23. this is the way to keep our houses in peace, Job 5. 34. Prov. 1. 10. & 8. 6. and to make our Families flourish, Prov. 14. 11.

We should rather desire with those holy Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to live in Tents, and mean houses, where we may serve God (remembering that we are but Strangers and Pilgrims here, but Citizens of Heaven) than to live (as these Epicures in the Text) in stately Palaces, abounding with sensual luxury, and all manner of riot, till they be destroyed.

6 When men will not believe the Threatenings, they shall feel the punishment.

The righteous do hear and fear, but the wicked never fear, till they feel the Sword and Pestilence upon them. When no warnings can mend a People, then Judgements end them; as we see in the old World, Jerusalem, and others; Lot’s Sons in Law would not believe till they were burnt, Gen. 19. 14. nor Pharaoh till he was drowned.

7 It is Sin that ruines Cities.

Israel sinned, and now City and all is taken. It is this, that hath brought fire and sword, desolation and destruction upon the most glorious Cities. Many complain of Instruments that have betrayed them, but it is our sins that have betrayed us into their hands; and therefore Magistrates, Ministers, and Governors should improve their interest for the stopping of Sin, that so they may prevent the ruine of those places where they dwell.
VERSE 9.

And it shall come to pass, if there remaine ten men in one house, that they shall dye.

Wee have heard of Israel's Captivity before, but since that could doe no good, now comes the Pestilence; and that no ordinary one, which usually leaues some un-touched; But such a terrible, destructive Pestilence, that should sweep away all before it; insomuch that if ten men remaine alive, they shall all dye, and they shall be buried not in an ordinary way, but they shall be burnt, and that by the nearest relations, which was used by the people of Israel, only in cases of extreme necessity, 1 Sam. 31. 12.

In this Verse we have, 1 A Judgement threaten'd, viz. death, You shall dye, i.e. by the Pestilence. Those that escaped the Sword, and were not killed, or carried away by the enemy, the Pestilence, or some other Judgement shall slay them, as appears by the next verse.

2 Here is the fierceness of this Pestilence, it shall sweep all before it, this is more than the Pestilence usually doth; God had corrected them before with lighter rods, yet he left some alive; but now if ten men remaine in some very numerous Family, they shall all dye together. This sets forth the dreadfulnes of Gods wrath against this people, for when the Plague rages very fiercely, yet it usually spares some, if there bee four or five in an house, usually one is spared, or if eight in a Family, it may be two are spared; but when there are ten in a Family, and they must all dye, this is dreadful indeed. By Ten the Prophet signifies many, because ten is the utmost of single number; It is a certain and distinct number put for an uncertain, the like we find, Numb. 14. 23. Levit. 26. 26. Job 19. 3.


3 Here is the certainty of this dreadful destruction. It shall come to pass; that is, it shall certainly come to pass, for God hath so decreed it, and there is no resisting.
OBSERVATIONS.

1. Judgments seldom goe alone.

When God begins to correct a people he takes them up for all together, and spends one rod upon them after another, till he hath either mended or ended them. God wants not variety of ways to cut off rebellious sinners, if they escape one Judgement, yet he hath another to arrest them, Amos 5:19; & 9:1, 2, 3. Matt. 24:7. He hath moths, thieves, rust, and cankers to rob us of our comforts, Jam. 5:2, 3.

2. Desperate Diseases must have desperate Cures.

When gentler corrections will not work on a people, then come direful plagues and end them. Those sinners were become desperate and incurable, and now the Lord sets upon them with direful judgements and consumes them; that so all the Nations round about might hear and fear, and doe no more so wickedly.

3. Incorrigible sinners are cut off by the Pestilence.

God had used all means to reclaim this People, but all in vain, therefore now they must dye for it. So true is that of the Apostle, The wages of sin is death, Rom. 1:31. & 6:23. Sin and Death came into the world together, Gen. 2:17. Dan. 9:24. Rom. 5:12. How blind then are the Socinians, that can finde no place in Scripture where it is said, that death is the punishment of sin.

4. What God hath decreed shall certainly be effected.

Though we cannot bring it to pass, yet he can and will, whether it be for the overthrow of the wicked, as here; or for the comfort of the godly. The counsel of the Lord shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations. Men may plot, and contrive ways to overthrow the Doctrine and Discipline of Christ, but these devices and counsels of men shall not stand; it is the counsels of the Lord only that shall abide, Psal. 33:10, 11.
And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord.

WVHat the Prophet had express somewhat obscurely in the precedent Verse, he sets down more fully and clearly in this, viz. That the Pestilence should be so dreadful, that it should destroy whole Families, insomuch that there should not be living men enough to bury the dead. There should neither be Father nor Mother, Brother nor Sister, Son nor Daughter left alive to doe the last office of Burial for them; but a man's uncle, or Kinsman must doe it for him, else he may ly and rot above ground.

This shews what great desolation the Pestilence had made amongst them, that the Uncle, or nearest Kinsman (to whom the right of succession to the Inheritance belongs) must be constrained to burn the Body, that so he might carry the bones out of the house with more ease. This was servile work, and belonged to mercenary men appointed for that purpose, Ezek. 39.14. but for want of such ordinary Officers to doe it, the Kinsman must doe it.

So that in this Verse we have, 1. An Amplification of that great desolation which the Pestilence should make amongst them, it should be so terrible that it should destroy whole Families, and cut off those ordinary Officers which were appointed to bury the dead; insomuch that the next Kinsman must be forced to doe it; neither shall he doe it in an ordinary way, but he must burn his bones. Calvin and others make the Uncle alone to be both the burner of the dead, and the burier of his bones; they read the words thus, His uncle shall set them ad to take him up and burn him, that he may carry the bones out of the house. This reading seems to be most genuine and agreeable to the Text and context, setting forth the dreadful hand of God.
An Exposition

God upon them, in that the Pestilence should be so fierce, that they should want ordinary Officers to bury the dead.

Q. But how are they said to burn their dead, when it appears both by the Old and New Testament that the Jews did bury their dead? Gen. 23. 4. & 49. 31. & 50. 5, 25, 26. Mat. 8. 21, 22. Joh. 19. 41, 42.

A. It is true, usually they did bury their dead in times of Peace, but in times of Warre they sometimes did burn their dead, as they did Saul, and his Sons, to prevent further abuse which might be offered to their bodies by the Philistines, 1 Sam. 31. 12, 13. so in times of great conflagration to prevent stench, and further infection, they burnt their dead, as in the text; They might also burn them to cleanse the house (which was fallen to the Kinsman) from legal uncleanness by the dead, Numb. 19. 14. Hence we read of their Vespiiones, and Polliiones, their burners and their burners of the dead, and so had the Gentiles, and the Romans, they burnt their dead to ashes, and put their ashes into Urns (as appears by *Virgil, Ouid, and others) and Pitchers of Gold, Silver, Brass, or Marble, with great care and ceremoniousness. These Jews being themselves Idolaters, did symbolize too much with Heathens and Idolaters in this thing.

2 Here is the reason why they burnt the dead, and that is, that they might the easier carry the bones out of the house, when the flesh was burnt off before.

3 Here is a Conference between the Kinsman, and him that lies in the house, and he shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house; that is, to him that is within the house, as Jonah was said to descend into the sides of the Ship, Jonah 1. 5. So these for fear did run into some corner of the house, to hide themselves from the infection.

The Question which he asks is this, Is there any yet with thee? viz. left alive in the family, or dead, that I may burne them, and bury their bones.

2 Here is the Parties answere in the Negative, No, there is an end of all, there is not * one left, they are all dead and gone, according to that, verse nine, If ten men be in one house, they shall all dye.

The Prophet largeloth himself in this discourse, about Gods Judgements, the better to awaken these Sotish, Sensual, Secure Sinners.
3 Here is the inference upon this answer, then shall he say, *Hold thy tongue*, be silent, be patient, doe not fret, nor fume, doe not mutter nor murmur against God, as if he had wronged you, because he kills you; but acquiesce in his just Judgments, and silently submit unto his will, for it is his work, *Amos 5:13.* As for us, our sins are so great, and grievous, that we dare not once call on the Name of the Lord, for a release, or mitigation of his Judgments.

4 Here is the reason why they must keep silence, *viz.* Because the Lord was just in all that he did unto them, and therefore they might not once make mention of the Name of the Lord by way of complaint, thus some. Interpreters sweat; and are much perplexed with the various Versions of this Text, insomuch that there are almost as many Interpretations of it as there be Interpreters.

2 Say some, It seems to point at these two, who agree to *see more to this be silent in what they had done, lest they should be sequestred as unclean by the Law, being legally polluted by touching the dead, Numb. 19:14.*

3 Others give this gloss, *Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord, q.d.* Be silent, lament *race, quia non not for them: for they are not worthy lamentation, they are so wicked, that they will not once remember God: nor cry to him, though he bind them with the cords of affliction.

3 Others make it the voice of desperate persons (according to the Margin of our Bibles) *Ve have not, or we will Desperatam illorum* not make mention of the name of the Lord, q.d. it is bootless to pray, for God is set to plague us, and will not be pacified; let us therefore eat and drink, since to morrow we must dye. *Never tell us of God's name, for he is our enemy, and we cannot endure to hear of him, for neither he nor his Ministers doe ever Prophecy good unto us. If we should call upon him we may mind him of us, and so bring new plagues upon our selves. This agrees best with verse eleven, which follows immediately.*

4 Others thus: *These Hypocritical ones, that formerly gloriied that they were God's people, his peculiar, his inheritance, his holy ones, &c. God's wrath shall lye so heavy upon them, that they shall boast no more of this, for they shall bee dumbe when they hear God's name, and abhor it as desper*
rate reprobates use to doe. He will not suffer them any longer to take his name in vaine, his wrath shall burne so fiercely against them, that they shall not dare once to make mention of his name, or to come neer him who is a consuming fire.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Decent burial is a mercy.

It is reckoned as a judgement here, that these wicked men should want the honour and solemnity of ordinary burial. It is a mercy to have a Grave, and therefore when the Kings of Judah are recorded, their burials are also mentioned; and those of highest merit were buried in the upper part of the Sepulchers of the Sons of David, 2 Chron. 32. 33. Also a good King was honourably buried, with great solemnity, 2 Chron. 16. 14. and so was King Zedekiah, Jer. 24. 5. But so was not wicked Jehoram, 2 Chron. 21. 19. and it was a curse upon Jehoakim, that he should be buried with the burial of an Ass, and be contemptibly cast into a ditch, Jer. 22. 18, 19. It is reckoned as a judgement, when men have no burial, Psal. 79. 3. Dem. 28. 26. 1 King. 21. 23, 24. Jer. 14. 16. or 16. 4. and therefore David commends the burial of Saul, he blesseth and rewardeth the men of Jabez for it, 2 Sam. 9. 5.

The Body is a piece of Gods Workmanship, curiously wrought, Job 10. 8. & 33. 4. Psal. 139. 5. and therefore must not be carelessly thrown away, it was redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, and is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. & 6. 15, 29. and shall be raised up at the last day, and be made like to Christ glorious Body, 1 Cor. 15. 25. Phil. 3. 21.

It is one of the last offices that we can doe for our Relations, we should therefore decently commit their bodies to the grave, as to a bed of rest, Isa. 57. 2. there to remaine till the general Resurrection of us all. So they did by Steven, Acts 8. 2. and the Patriarchs, Acts 7. 15, 16.

Caution. Yet we must beware, 1. Of the poperies of the Papists, who keep the bones of Saints (supposed Saints most of them) unburied, that they may worship them, kiss them, and offer to them. 1 Bones are a part of mens bodies, and
of the Prophecy of Moses.

ought to be buried decently as well as the body, &c. 2. 19. Jps. 24. 32. It is reckoned as a punishment to have the bones lyeth unburied, Isa. 14. 19. Jer. 8. 19.

3. There is no Precept nor Prescript in all the Word of God, that commands such Worship; yea, the Lord himself hid the body of Moses, that it might not be idolized, Jud. 9.

3. Those Relicks have proved to be the bones of Asles, Stags, Theeves, and Murderers, who are kept in their graves, where Calv. who in the City of the Church, besides you may see the folly of Superstition, when they should be imitating the Graces of the Saints, they are gathering their bones and breecches, their caps and girdles, their hairs and habits, At Rome, who Vol. 2. & lifts may see St. Martinus Boots, St. George his Sword, S. Crispins Cutting-knife, Josephs Breecches, Maries Smock, Thomas his Shoe, the Milk of Mary, the Swadding-clouts of Christ, and the Asles Head, that he rode on. So that Rome is a Church where Relicks and Images are worshipped; God Almight, in a mighty pictured, Vowes violated, Prophanenets countenanced, half Communions administered, Humane Traditions equalized with Scripture, and Ceremonies multiplied.

2 Caut. Yet our greatest care should be for our Souls, what See my Com. will it avay us to have the body perfumed, spiced, and embalmed, when the Soul which is the noblest part shall rot, and perish? Look to your Souls, and then God will provide for your bodies; when the Mid-wives feared the Lord, he made them houses.

3 Caut. Yet we should not be dismayed, when the bodies of Gods Saints be given to the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of Heaven, Psal. 79. 2, 3. faith fears not such things. V. Aug. De Co. He that numbers the hairs of our heads, will not lose our bones; vit. Dei, l. 1. he that is so careful of our excrementious parts, will not suffer our essential and integral parts to perish. Solemn burial adjoos to the comfort of the living, but not of the dead. Lacedarius had no Funeral solemnities, nor Marble Monument, yet was he carried into Abraham's bosome:

--- Faciltos latitura Sepulchri,
Celo regitum qui non habit Ursam.

Lucan. 1. 16.
An Exposition

Chap. 6.

2. Obs. God's people must be patiently silent in calamities.

They must not be stupidly silent, for Grace doth not raise, but raise, as Job, Jeremiah, and other Saints have done. It is an holy silence, and not a sinful silence, which is here enjoined us. When Gods hand is heavy upon us, not only our Tongues must be silent, Lev. 20. 2. 3. 1 Sam. 3. 18. Isa. 36. 6. 7. 8. Amos 5. 15. Zeph. 1. 7. but our Souls must keep silence to Jehovah. Psal. 62. 1. My soul waiteth upon God, so we read it, but others according to the Original, thus, My soul is silent, quiet, submits, and subject to God, my affections are subdued to him. Many mens Tongues are silent, but their hearts are full of rage and fury; yea many mens words are smooth as oyl, when their hearts are like drawn swords. But a gracious soul in all humility adores the just Judgements of God upon himself, and others, without any murmuring or contradiction. He doth not impatiently fly in Gods face, nor charge God foolishly, Job 1. 7. but he peaceably resigns himself, and all he hath unto Gods dispose; God is the Potter, and he is the Clay, ready to be formed and framed, raised or ruined, made or marred, as he shall please. He gives the Lord a blank as it were, and bids him write what please himself, and it shall please him. Murmuring doth but double our strokes, it is a slandering of God, and a charging of him with folly, which he will not bear at our hands; and therefore when ever Israel fell to murmuring, a Judgement presently followed; other sins he can bear withall, but not with this. Unlearned Heifers may gait their necks, but they cannot break the yoke. Wild Bulls in a Net, by rosting and tumbling do but intangle themselves the more. Isa. 51. 20. it is Prayer and Patience that will mend all; fret not then at Gods dispensations, neither quarrel with his Providences; but judge your selves, and justify him, so shall you have peace. Lev. 26. 40. 41. 42. Judg. 10. 15. 2 Chron. 3. 6. Ezra 9. 13. Neh. 9. 33. Psal. 51. 4. & 119. 137. Dan. 9. 7. 1 Cor. 11. 31. Let us not like Sons of Adam justify our selves, and lay the fault upon God, but let us kiss the hand that smites us, and say, Righteous are thou, Lord, and just are thy judgements.
3. Obi. Hypocritical shows and shadows of Religion will stand a man in no stead in a day of wrath.

These idolaters cried, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord; they boasted that God was their Father, and they his people, that they knew him, and were known of him above all the people of the earth, Hos. 8. 2. But now the day of wrath is come, they dare not once make mention of the name of God, they are so oppressed with the guilt of their sins. It is not crying Lord, Lord, but doing God's will sincerely, that shall ye... us comfort in calamitous times, Matt. 7. 21, 22. 2 Cor. 7. 11. A dead Breast can doe us no service, and dead Graces will stand us in no stead. Let us not then cheat ourselves with falseks instead of substance, and with counters instead of gold; let us not be alms, but altogether Christlike, not having a name only to live, but let us live indeed; that we may be Nathaniels. Israelites indeed, in whom there is no reigning guilt, Job. 1. 47.

4. Wicked men in calamitous times are full of despondency and despair.

Though in times of peace they may boast how God loves them, yet when God awakens their Consciences by his Judgments, the very name of God is terrible to them, and they could wish he were not: Then either they hide themselves with Adam, or run from him as Cain, Gen. 4. 13, or hang themselves with Judas, or cry with these wicked ones, Job 21. 14. Depart from us. Or, they blaspheme because of their pain, and like Serpents fly in the face of him that toucheth them, Rev. 16. 13. and like Heathens, who in their calamities curse their gods, and bear them, as the Authors of all their misery; and at last they shall cry to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them and hide them, Luke 23. 30, Rev. 6. 16.

These cry, There is no hope, Jer. 18. 12. and therefore they banish the thoughts of God out of their hearts, Psal. 10. 4. his Spirit, and will not once make mention of him in their troubles. These are beaten, but not bettered; corrected, but not amended; and in some respect worse than Heathens, of whom Seneca observes, Diligens Diu. That they were most busy in worshipping their gods, when they were most displeased. But we have those that fly from God when he draws nigh to them, thoughts of God are never more pleasing.
to a gracious soul, nor never more displeasing to wicked men than when they are in trouble.

VERSAS XIII.

For behold the Lord commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.

In this Verse we have an Amplification, and Confirmation of the precedent commination, verf. 8. The Prophet tells them, that the destruction shall be general, high and low, rich and poor, great and small, none should escape, but as all had sinned, so all should suffer; a foreign enemy like a violent flood should over-run the Land, so that there should be no escaping.

These Sinners were secure, and carnally confident, trusting in their two victorious and successful Kings, Jeroboam the second King of Israel, and Uzziah King of Judah, they slighted the words of the Prophet, and therefore the Lord resolves to preach to them in another manner viz. by the Sword of the Assyrian, and Chaldean, who should make them feel what they would not believe.

In the words we have,

1. The causal Particle, For, which hath relation to the eighth and ninth Verses, where the Lord threarest to destroy the City with its fulness, and to add the Pestilence to the Sword, and gives you the reason of it in this verse, Mandaevi Dominus, the Lord hath commanded and decreed it, and none shall be able to reverse it.

2. Here is an ecce, behold, to incite both our Attention and Intention, it calls for our ears and eyes.

3. Here is the matter to be marked, and that is the command and charge of God to destroy his people for their provocations, The Lord commandeth, and he will smite the City, q.d. you have not so doe with an impotent man, but with an Omnipotent God, who as he hath made all things, so he hath them all at his beck, to help or hurt us as pleaseth him. Hee needs not Armies, he needs not Instruments to confound his adver-
of the Prophecy of Amos.

adversaries, it is but speaking and it is done, Psal. 44. 4. & 148. 5.

Q. How doth the Lord smite the City, when hee only commands that it should be done?

A. It is a Rule, Quod quis per alium facit, per se facere videtur. In that the Lord commands the Assyrians and Chaldeans to destroy, ver. 14. he is said to doe it himself, because they were but his rods, and the instruments in his hand to chastise his people; whoever be the Actor, yet God is the Author.

4. Here is the Univerality of this destruction, he will bring down great and small, he will cause the Assyrians and Babylonians to smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts. The word which we render Breaches, signifies also droppings, which by little and little rot the house, and so make breaches and ruptures in it; but in this place it properly signifies ruptures, and breaches.

They were all incorrigible, and incurable, both great and small, and therefore now they shall be punished, and perish together, both houses and inhabitants. Their Palaces, and great fragments.

Houses in Sion, and Samaria, should have a great down-fall; and the lesser houses should chop, and chink, and moulder away. By these expressions the Prophet intimates, that both noble and ignoble should perish together; as they had overthrown the Law, and all equity, ver. 12. so now God overthrows them.

Some conceive, that the Prophet here alludes to some Earth-quake, which should make breaches and clefts in their houses, but the Prophet confutes these; and tells us, that it shall be done by the hand of an enemy, ver. 14. Others Allegorize, and apply this to the two Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which are called two houses, Isa. 8. 14. By the great house (say they) is meant the Ten Tribes, which did excell in wealth and dignity. By the lesser house is meant the Kingdom of Judah, which was little, compared with Israel; the Pervictita regnum Israel should be so ruined by the Assyrians, that it should never be repaired; but the Kingdom of Judah should only have some clefts and chaws made by the Babylonians, which were in part made up again, after the seventy years Captivity in Babylon, by Ezra and Nehemiah.
OBservations.

1. Matters of moment must especially be marked.

Great Judgements were coming upon this People, and the Lord by an Ecce, Behold, labours to awaken them to the consideration of them. The birth of Christ is a matter of great moment, and therefore the Angels come with a Behold, Luke 2. 10. the seasons of grace are matters of great moment, and therefore a double Behold is set upon them, 2 Cor. 6. 2. Our Original Sin is a matter deeply to be thought on, and therefore it hath an Ecce set upon it, Psal. 51. 5. and so on the Day of Judgment, Jude 7. Rev. 22. 7.

2. Warre and Pestilence are Gods Servants, which come and go at his beck and commandment.

As all Creatures are his Servants, Winds, and Seas, and Sun obey him, Job 9. 7. so all Armies are his, he is Lord of Hosts, and if he but stamp or hiss for an Enemy, or call for a Pestilence on the Land, they readily obey, Psal. 7. 18. 22. Lev. 26. 25. Jer. 47. 6. 7. he can destroy the most potent enemy by the most impotent and contemptible means, as Froggs, Flies, Lice, Psal. 105. 31.

If he say to such and such Diseases, Go, seize on such a man, or such a woman, they go; if he bid them cease, they cease. We should not therefore bribe the Sergeant, but compound with the Creditor. Run not in your sickness and distress to Physick or Friends, but make peace with God in the first place, and then all shall be at peace with you.

We should also be patient under all Distressions, looking at Gods hand in all, seeing him ordering and disposing all for the good of his. This will make you dumb and silent, when you see it is the Lord that doth it, 2 Sam. 16. 10. Psal. 39. 9.

Joh. 18. 11.

3. Obs. Universality in sin brings universality in suffering.

The generality of this People were corrupt, and now they are generally ruined. As rich and poor were Idolaters, Apostates, and Prophane; so now they should beLas and ruin together.

4. Obs. Sin brings a curse on our dwellings, and takes sacred fabrics in the dust, as I have shewed before on another place.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Var. 12.

Shall Horses run upon the Rock? Will one plow there with Oxeen? for ye have turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock.

IN the precedent Verse the Lord threatened a general Judgment against these general Sinners, but they trusting to their own strength and glory, feared no Judgements, but conceived that the Lord who had taken them into Covenant with himself, and adopted them for his owne peculiar people, and adorned them with many Privileages above the rest of the Nations round about them, would not deal so sharply with them as the Prophet threatened; but would take some gentler course, plowing them still by his Prophets, and labouring to reclame them by their Ministrery.

To this the Lord answers in this Verse, by a Prolepsis, he prevents this evaision and vain conceit, telling them, that it was to no purpose to take any more pains with them, or to correct them with gentler rods, for they remained still obstinate and perverse, falling away more and more, growing worse and worse; so that he did but plow the rocks, and so break his Plows without any incease; and sow the sands, losing his labour on them; and therefore he is now resolved, that his Spirit should no longer contend with such rokke, rebellious Sinners, nor his patience wait any more upon them. The Interrogation is a strong Negation: Shall Horses run upon the rock, or Oxeen plow there? No, they will not, they are not fit places for such purposes; and doe you think that I will alwaies sing to deaf men, and beftow my cost and care upon such rokke and hardened Sinners, that will bring forth no fruit?

It is a Proverbiale speech, andsignifieth lost labour, and therefore we use to say of such as labour in vaine, They goe about to plow the rocks, and sow the sands.

Sic ut frustra laboraret, sicut vellet incitare equos ad sursum in Petra, aut sibi vectis eam vellet arare; sic ut frustra labenta, dum vos barctor ad faciendum reicta, quid placet perversi effis. Piscator.

Interpreters vary much in their Exposition of this first branch of the verse. See five various senses in a Lapid, and
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

fix in our large Annotations; that which I have given (with submission to better judgements) I conceive to be most genuine, and best agreeing with the context; which is the surest and soundest way of expounding Scripture, and is of more weight than an hundred sic dixit of this and that man.

So that in this Verse we have, 1. The Lord's resolution to plow these rocks no longer.

2. Here is the Reason and ground of this Resolution, viz. for their Injustice, Oppression, Tyranny, and all kind of cruelty towards the poor. There was no righteousness to be found among them, they had turned Judgement into Gall, or Poyson, (as the word also signifies) because poyson is the bitterest part of poysonous beasts, to wit, the gall. The word also signifies the Head, and is put for Poyson, because the Poyson of Dragons lies in their head, Deut. 32. 33.

And righteousness into hemlock, or wormwood, so the word properly signifies, and it is so rendered in other places, as Jer. 9. 15. Lam. 3. 15. Amos 5. 7. They absolved the noicer, and condemned the innocent; they acquitted the wicked, and condemned the just; they favoured the rich, who could bribe well, and oppressed the poor who had nothing to give, Amos 4. 1. so that their Courts of Justice were as sweet as Honey to the wicked, but as baneful and bitter as gall to the godly.

Justice in it self is a most sweet and pleasant thing; it is the very asylum and sanctuary of the poor, and the oppressed; but these luxurious ones had turned this sovereign Medicine into a deadly Poyson, and made that which is in it self sweet as honey, to become bitter as gall unto the oppressed, and as hemlock to the poor, which is a dangerous venemous weed, killing him that tastes of it.

Observations.

1. The patience of the Lord will not always wait upon impenitent sinners.

He will not always plow the rocks, and sow the sands, nor take pains with such ground as brings forth nothing but Byrars and Thorns; such barren ground is nigh to cursing, Heb. 6. 8. Isr. 5. 1. to 8. The Lord had planted his Vineyard in an Horn of
Verse 12. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

Oyl, i.e. in a very fruitful oyl, from whence he might justly expect the generous fruit of sincere obedience; he fenced it about with his gracious Protection and good Laws; he removed all impediments of growth and fruitfulness; but when he came to look for grapes of obedience, behold the wilde grapes of cruelty, injustice, and disobedience; he therefore resolves to take away the hedge, break down the wall, lay it wait, and expose it to the fury of every wild beast. Barren trees are good for nothing but fuel. *Matt. 3. 10. Mark 11. 13. Luke 13.* Rogers on that 6. to 10. When the Lord by his Word and Spirit hath long Parable. striven with men, labouring to bring them to Repentance, but they will not be wrought upon, but are like the Cypress tree, the more it is watered, the more it withers; the Lord at last resolves to make a final end with them, and utterly to destroy them, *Gen. 6. 3. Isa. 1.*

2. Proverbs of speeches are commendable. The Lord himself useth them in Scripture. All Proverbs are commendable, especially sacred ones. They are short, witty, pithy, concise speeches, like Jewels that contain much worth in a little room. They prove themselves, and will have no nay, they have many words, and help the memory, a man cannot tell how well to forget them, or gain-say them. Hence Solomon abounded with them, and Christ a greater than Solomon occasionally used them; as, *No man can serve two Masters, a tree is known by his fruit.* He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, it is better to give than to receive, &c. And it is observed, that the more learned any men are, the more pithy, sen-sionable, and Proverbial they are; as we see in *Plato, Plutarch, Seneca, Aristotle, &c.*

3. Obser. Pursuing of Justice is a Land destroying sin. There is not a more infallible fore-runner of a Nation ruine, than when Courts of Justice are turned into Courts of In justice; and Courts of Equity become Courts of iniquity, Isa. 17. 10. 4. 5. it causeth Jerusalem’s day to draw near, *Ezek. 22. 6, 7.* A corrupt Judge is a cold Fire, a dark Sun, a dry Sea. A false Teacher that poisons Souls, an unskilful Physician that destroys Bodies, and a corrupt Judge that perverts Justice, are three great F. protes.
An Exposition

An Exposition

Verse 13.

Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?

In the first Verse of this Chapter, the Prophet upbraids the Israelites with their carnal confidence; and in this Verse he amplifies that exprobration; Yee are they (saith he) which rejoice in things of nought, and glory in your own strength, to your own confusion, as it follows, versus 14.

In this verse we have this Peoples sin, They rejoice in a thing of nought. And in the next verse we have their punishment.

Q. The Question will be, what is meant by a thing of nought, or of no moment, here?

A. By a thing of nought, 1. Some conceive an Idol is meant, which is called a thing of nought, or nothing, an Idol is nothing, 1 Cor. 4:8. Materially it may be wood or stone, but formally it is nothing. Though it may be something in respect of mens vain conceits, yet it is nothing in respect of any Divine power or vertue, for it can neither hurt nor help. These people worship the Calves, and worship Baal, and other Idols, and so might be said to rejoice in things of nought. But,

2. Others conceive they rejoiced in Creature-comforts and Priviledges, such as Riches, Honour, Power, Success, the Covenants, Circumcision, Adoption, 8c. all these they boasted and bragged of, as if they could have sheltered them from Gods Wrath, but since they were rebellious and disobedient, the Prophet tells them they should doe them no good in the day of Gods Wrath, for they were but things of nought, and meet nothing compared with God; and in no wise to be rested in.

3. And most genuinely, To rejoice in a thing of nought, is to rejoice in an arm of flesh, to rejoice in Armies, Strength, Victo-


Ver. 13. of the Prophecy of Amos.

... and Succesffes; for so it follows in the latter part of the verse, which is exegetical, and illustrates the former, 

**Verse 13**

\[ 	ext{Have we not taken them by our owne strength? It was their constant practice to rejoice in a thing of nought, and to trust in their owne strength.} \]

**Verse 14**

By *Horns* here is meant the power, dominion, glory, and excellency of a people. It is a Metaphor taken from horned Beasts, whose strength and beauty lies in their horns. So *Dem. Rule 56.*

**Verse 15**

Thus they said, viz., in their hearts, and thoughts at least, for what words are to us, that thoughts are to God, his Word and Spirit search the inward parts of the Soul, *Jer. 17. 10.* I Cor. *17. 13. Petre accipit pro excellencia.*

**Verse 16**

Thus they made themselves strong and impregnable by their own power. The Prophet seems to allude to the power and success which *Jeroboam* the second, one of the Kings of *Israel* had, in whose reign *Amos* prophesied. This King was very successful and prosperous, he enlarged the borders of the Kingdom, and took divers Cities from the *Syrians,* 2 *King. 14. 25, 27, 28.* So *Judah* was very successful under King *Uzziah*, as appears, 2 *Chron. 26. 1. to 17.* These Victories and Succesffes made them proud, and lift up their horns, as if by their owne power and policy they had got the victory. Thus they rejoiced in a thing of nought, as if by their owne strength they had enlarged their borders, and could now defend themselves against foreign enations.

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *Have we not taken our selves horns by our owne strength?* See what impious Arrogance, and Vain-glorious boasting here is, every word gives a crake, *Have not we taken, Have not we taken, have not we taken to us Horns, yet more.* Have not we taken to us Horns by our owne strength? They did all, God did nothing, he is not in any of their thoughts. I have read of Pope Adrian, who having built a stately Colledge at *Louvaine,* caused this to be written in golden letters over the gate, *Utrecht* planted him, there was he born; *Louvaine* watered him, there he got Learning; and *Cesar* gave the increafe, for he made him a Cardinal: one wittyly comes after and subscribes, *Hic Deus nihil fecit, God had nothing to doe here.* So these men ascribed all to themselves, and...
An Exposition

that out God. Though the Lord by an Almighty hand had brought them out of Egypt into the Land of Canaan, and drove out the Canaanites before them, and by a strong hand preserved them in that good Land; yet so proud, ungrateful, and disingenious were they grown, that they sacrificed to their own Net, and assumed all to themselves, saying, Have we not gotten these Victories by our owne strength? The Lord can now no longer bear with this Sacrilegious robbing him, of the honour which was due to his Name: and therefore in the next Verse he tells them, That he will raise up a Nation against them, that shall utterly destroy them.

Observations.

1. The Creatures excellency is all but vanity.

Take the Quintessence of all the Riches, Power, Pomp, Beauty, Morality, and delights of the World, and put them in one scale, and put Vanity in the other, and they will prove lighter than vanity; and therefore they may well be called, things of noughts. But of this at large elsewhere.

2. Ob. Such is means corruption and madness, that be rejoiceth in things of noughts.

He dislikes what is truly good, and delights in vanity, Psal. 4. 6,7. Hence Solomon spends the whole Book of Ecclesiastes in dissuading men from this folly and madness. St. Chrysostom tells us, that if he had a vowe-like Thunder, and a mighty Mountain for his Pulpit, and all the Men and Women in the World for his Auditory, he would chuse that Text to preach on, Psal. 4. 2. O ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanity?

3. Gods Word is a critical word.

It discovers the thoughts and intents of mens hearts, and lays their inside open, so great is its power and efficacy. Gods Word resembles God, as he is the only Heart-searching God, so his Word is the only Heart-searching Word. It pierceth to the very Marrow, and discovers to us our most secret thoughts and affections, Heb. 4. 13. and can tell us, whether we delight in things of nought.

4. Wicked men ascribe that to their owne power and policy, which is due to Gods Power, and Grace.

If they have success and victory, they presently lift up their Horns and push at God, that they may the better sacrifice to their own Net, and burn incense to their drag. Hab. 1. 15, 16.
Ver. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos:

Thus Sennacherib King of Assyria boasted of his power and success, as if he could conquer not only Jerusalem, but its God also, Isa. 36. Thus that Heathen that went forth to battle, being admonished to call upon the God, answereth, that it was for cowards to pray, as for himself, he was resolved to try his own strength in battle, he did so, and was slain. Let others kiss their own hands, Job 31. 27. and ascribe all to Idols and themselves, but let us, with all the servants of God, ascribe the glory of all we are, or have, to God alone, for what have we that we have not received from him? 1 King 8. 24. Psal. 10. 7. & 44. 5. 6. 7. 8. & 89. 9. 10. 17. 18. on 2 Tim. 4. 1 it is by the grace of God that we are what we are. 1 Cor. 15. 10. p. 410.

VER. 14.

But behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the Lord the God of Hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hemath, unto the river of the wilderness.

These words contain the Conclusion of the fifth Sermon, which Amos made to this People. We have seen their sin before, we are now come to their suffering. This people gloried in things of nought, and would not believe the Prophets words, but now they should be taught by blows, and made to feel what they would not fear, and therefore the Prophet begins with a But, behold, q. d. you think by your own strength and power to subdue your enemies, but I will raise up against you the Assyrian, a mighty nation, that shall chase you from one end of the land to another.

The Lord had told them before of Judgements in general that should come upon them for their sins, now he comes to particularize the judgement; he tells them who shall inflict it, on whom, and how farre. They had forsaken God, and cast him off, and now he forsook them, they trusted to their own strength but God sends against them a stronger than they, that should subdue them.

But I will raise up against you a nation, &c.

In the words we have, 1. The Adverseeive Particle, But.
2. The Note of Attention, Behold.
3. The matter to be attended, I will raise up against you a Nation, viz. the Assyrian against Israel, and the Babylonian against Judah; for the bounds here set for the promised Land, do imply both Kingdoms, primarily Israel and Samaria, and secondarily, Judah and Jerusalem, as I have shewed on Ver. 1.

The Kingdom of Israel was overthrown by Sennacherib King of Assyria.
An Exposition

Assyria, and the City and Temple of Jerusalem, by Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon; these God raised up to cool their courage, and abate their pride.

4 The Lord tells them what this Nation shall do to Israel, They shall afflict them, they shall press and oppress them by violence and Tyranny; they shall hem them in, and so straiten them, that none shall escape.

5 Here is the extent of this affliction, and how farre it shall go, and that is from Hemath, which was situate in the North border of Canaan, looking Eastward, ver. 2. Unto the river of the Wilderness; that is, to Sichor, a river of Egypt in the South, looking Westward, and parting the Land of Israel from the Land of Egypt, Numb. 34:5, 8. Joll. 3:35. & 15. 47. x Chron. 13:5. It is called the river of the Desert, because it came out of the Desert; some think it was the river Nilus, but the bounds of Canaan never extended so farre. Jeroboam had regained those bounds to Israel, they were proud of the Prize; but about thirty years after Tiglath-Pileser regained it all from Israel, and laid it to the Assyrians; and not long after comes Salmanesar the King of Assyria, and takes Samaria, and subdues the whole Kingdom of Israel. About one hundred years after, Judah was carried captive into Babylon, according to that woe denounced against them, ver. 1. When Wars arise yet some use to escape, but here the Lord threatens, that they shall be oppressed from one end of the Land to another. Though the Country were large, and spacious, and there were many ways to escape, yet the enemy should beat them so strictly that there should be no escaping, but all should go into Captivity. As all had sinned, so all should now suffer for Sin. So that this verse seems to be a kind of Antithesis, and check to their Carnal confidence in their own Strength and Success. 

Ver. 6. Jeroabam hath recovered your borders, but I will send one that shall recover all from you again. He restored all from Hemath to the Sea of the Plain; and I will send the Assyrian who shall wait Israel from Hemath to the Sea, i.e. from North to South, and from East to West; and then shall you see how insin your firmness was; when your Valour shall be turned into weakness, your Glory into shame, and your Mirth into mourning.

6 Who is it that faith all this? why it is one that can and will perform it, It is the Lord, the God of Hosts; who hath the Army of the Assyrians, and all other Armies at his beck and command, ver. 8.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Pride goes before destruction. In the precedent verse we read of Israel's pride and carnal-confidence, and now see their fall. When pride is in the saddle, destruction is on the crupper, Dan. 4. 30. We read of Nebuchadnezzar's pride, and ver. 31. We read of his fall. Children that hold by their own coats pull themselves down; by his own strength shall no man prevail, 1 Sam. 2. 9. Ezek. 28. 9.

2. The Lord is true in all his threatenings. Not one word shall fail of all that he hath spoken against a rebellious people. He promised to send the Assyrian against Israel here, & he did it. He threatened to send the Babylonian against Judah, and they came at last.

3. When people are rejoicing and most secure, then usually Judgments are nearest. In the precedent verse they were rejoicing, and in this verse comes their ruine. When the old World was buying, selling, marrying, and merry-making, then came the Flood and swept them all away, Mat. 24. 38, 39. When Bells ring, Canons roar, Fires flame, and there is nothing but mirth and jollity, then may destruction be at the door. When men cry Peace, peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction, 1 Thes. 5. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 1.

4. It is God who raiseth up enemies against a rebellious people. I will raise up a Nation against you. War is one of God's sore judgments. Sore judgments which he sends against a people of his wrath, Ezek. 14. 21. Amos 4. 20. When men will not serve God with gladness and sincerity in abundance, then he makes them serve their enemies in want and misery, Gen. 47. 47, 48. Isa. 42. 24, 25. The Assyrian is but God's rod, his staff, his axe, his saw, to scourge, beat, hew, and divide; they are but Instruments, it is God that is the Agent.

5. Universality in sin brings universality in suffering. As the Land had been filled from corner to corner with uncleanness, so now See my Com. it should be answerably filled with punishment. National Sins bring National Plagues, Ezra 9. 10, 11. When all the old World was corrupt, then came the Flood and swept them all away. When all Sodom, and all Jerusalem were given to wickedness, then came Judgments and destroyed them. Multitudes in sin are so far from Patronizing the sinners, that it happens wrath.

6. Sin brings a people into a desperate condition. It brings them into such straits, that they know not how to turn themselves. The Land of Canaan was spacious, and there were many ways of escaping, but their sins had brought things to that pass, that they were surrounded.
rounded with enemies, and there was none to deliver them.

7 As kingdoms have their times of flourishing, so they have their times of fading too. Israel flourished, and was successful under Jeroboam, but they fade and fall in the reign of King Hosea. The Grecian, Babylonian, and Persian Monarchies which were sometimes famous through the world, are now mouldered away, and come to nothing, and so shall the Roman.

8 God usually retaliates Sinners, and pays them in their own coin. This people had for a long time pressed the Lord with their sins, Amos 2.13. and now themselves are press and opprest with Judgments. Sodom, and Gomorrah, that burnt in luft, were burnt with fire. Nadab and Abiram, that offered strange fire, perished by strange fire from the Lord. Asa, that set the Prophet in the Stocks, had a disease in his feet. Babylon, that shed the blood of Saints, hath blood given her to drink. Hee that on earth denied a crumb of Bread, in Hell shall not have a drop of water, Luke 16.24, 25. They that delight in left-hand blessings, Prov 3.16. shall be placed with the Goats on the left hand, Matt 25.33. And those that delight in darkness, shall be sent to darkness, 2 Peter 2.17. They that say unto God, Depart now, he will say unto them, Depart at the last Day. He that will not owne Christ's truth now, shall not be owned by him then. They that trample upon the Saints here, the Saints shall tread them under their feet hereafter, Micha 4.11, 12, 13, 14. 10. so that all the wicked at last shall be compelled to say with Adam, Ezek. Judg. 1. As I have done, so hath the Lord rewarded me.

The Egyptians that worshipped creeping things, were punisht with Frogs, and other creeping things. Demosthenes and Tully, that were proud of their Eloquence, perished by it. Milo, that gloried in his strength, was ruined by it. Absalom, that was proud of his Hair, it helped to hang him, 2 Sam. 18. 9. Let every one then take notice of his sin by the suffering, and silence murmuring.

We have now seen the Sins that ruined Israel, viz. Idolatry, Superstition, Apostasy, Oppression, Luxury, Tyranny, Injustice, and Carnal-confidence, &c. If these Sins reign in England, what can we expect but that the Lord should send some Assyrian upon us, to avenge the quarrel of his Covenant on us? &c.

FINIS.
AN EXPOSITION,
WITH
Practical OBSERVATIONS
UPON
The Seventh Chapter of Amos.

Verse 1, 2, 3.
Thus hath the Lord God showed unto me, and behold, he formed Grashoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and loe it was the latter growth after the Kings mowings.
And it came to pass after they had made an end of eating the grass of the Land; then I said, O Lord forgive me, I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small.
The Lord repented for this, it shall not be saith the Lord.

His Chapter contains the Sixth Sermon of Amos, wherein are three Visions, to which are annexed the issue and operation of them, vers. 10, 11, 12.
The Prophet had before plainly and clearly set down Gods Judgements against this People, that none might complain of obscurity...
An Exposition

Chap. 3.

Come to speak more mystically, in five Types and Visions, if by any means he might work upon them. Two Visions wee have, Chap. 8, 1, 9, 9, 9, and three in the nine first Verses of this Chapter, setting forth the patience and long-suffering of God towards this rebellious People.

The three Types or Similies are of

Grashoppers, Famine, War, Fire.

A Plumb-line, three Judgements, Destruction.

The first Judgement which Amos saw was an army of Grashoppers, Locusts, or Green-worms, which should devour the Gras and Corn, and this shadowed out the want of all things, ver. 1, 3.

2 That of Fire, devouring the great deep, doth Warre, with the miseries that attend it, ver. 4. Both these had ruined Israel, but that at the mediation and intercession of the Prophet they were kept off for a time, ver. 5, 6. the duty of a faithful Pastor is to Pray and Preach, Amos doth both these; he shews them their Sins, and Gods Judgements due unto them for them, yet withall he prays for the averting of them, and was heard for that time, till at last the malady was past cure.

3 That of a Plumb-line in the hand of God, signifies the utter overthrow both of the Geonomical, Political, and Ecclesiastical estate of the Kingdom. God had measured out a time for them no repent in, but they were become incurable, and therefore the Lord there threatens to spare them no longer, and to pass by them no more, ver. 8, nor yet to accept of any more mediation for them, and therefore we doe not read that ever the Prophet interceded for the averting of this Judgement, as he had done for the former; so long as there was hope he prayed for them, but since they were incorrigible he forbears.

4 We have the slanderous accusation of Amaziah the Priest of Bethel (who being pleased with the Prophets, and freendome of speech used by this humane and down-right Prophet against both King and Kingdom,) this up King Jeroboam the second against Amos, under pretence of being a seditionist, turbulent person, and one that had conspired against
Ver. 2. of the Prophecy of Amos.

1. The more to incense the King against him, he aggravates his Crimes, as first, that he acted his Treason, not secretly, but openly. He hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel.

2. That the People were much troubled at his Doctrine, to the hazard of the Kingdom: The Kingdom is not able to bear this words.

3. Here is Amaziah's fraudulent advice, under pretence of love and kindness, he would not have Amos come any more to Babylon, lest he should run himself into danger; and therefore he adviseth him to pack out of the Kingdom with all speed, and to get into Judea his owne Country, and to prophesie there. Ver. 12.

4. We have Amos his bold reply to this false Prophets calumnations, ver. 14, 15, where he answers and justifies his calling, shewing,

1. Negatively, that he was no Prophet, nor Prophets Son.

2. Affirmatively, That he was an Hardiman.

3. How he was called to be a Prophet, he came not of his owne accord to the work, but the Lord said to me, One Prophete, ver. 15.

4. Here is Amos his Charge, to which he was primarily sent, and that was to the ten Tribes, ver. 15. Get Prophesie to Israel; he durst not therefore forake his Charge assigned him by God, and flee into Judea, (as Amaziah would have had him) but he resolved to stand his ground, and keep to his Commission, and preach to Israel though he dyed for it, as he did, being slaine (say some) by Amaziah's Son.

5. Here is a five-fold Judgement threatened by Amos against this Persecuting Prelate, ver. 17. he should suffer in his Wife, in his Children, in his Possessions, in his owne Person, and in the whole Kingdom, which he should see goe into Captivity.
Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold he formed Grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and loe it was the latter growth after the Kings mowings.

In this Chapter we have three Visions, the first whereof is that of devouring Locusts, which left little or nothing behind them. Where we have,

1. The Person revealing the Vision to the Prophet, and that is, the Lord, Thus hath the Lord God shewed me, in a Prophetic Vision, the Judgements which he is about to bring upon Israel. This he mentions to procure the more authority to what he spake, that they might see they were not figments, or dreams of his own inventing.

2. Here is the Vision itself, or what the Lord shewed him, and that is Grasshoppers, and behold he formed Grasshoppers. He did not call out Grasshoppers already made, but he saw the Lord forming and framing a new Army of Grasshoppers out of the dust of the earth, or the like; which to Gods Omnipotency was as easie, as to bring out an Army of Grasshoppers already made.

Obj. But must call these Grasshoppers Locusts, and so the very same word is rendered, Ila. 33. 4, so that what shall we call them, Grasshoppers, or Locusts?

I answer, both; that is, they are Grasshopper-Locusts. To clear this, you must know that there were several sorts of Locusts mentioned in the Scripture, some were silent, and some vocal; some good, and for food, Mat. 3. 4. Others were obnoxious and hurtful, as here in the text, and of these there were three sorts:

1 Locust-Solhem
2 Locust-Horgel, Levit. 11. 22.
3 Locust-Hagab.

And this last is the Locust-Grasshopper in the text. It was a devouring Insect, that went in great multitudes together, eating up all before them, and so bringing a Famine on the places
Ver. 1. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

where they came, Joel 1. 4, 6. & 2. 11. they are called a Nation, and an Army of Vermine, for their swarmes and multitudes.

Q. A second Queret is, Whether these Locusts must be taken Literally, or Metaphorically, properly or symbolically?

Ans. 1. They may be taken literally for an Army of Insects, which devour the fruities of the earth, and so cause a famine; this is most genuine here, and it was one of those rods with which God chastened Israel, Amos 4. 9. as for War, he speaks of that, ver. 4. but this especially relates to famine, and some Judgements begun before the time of Jeroboam the second.

2 Others take them Metaphorically, for any kind of devastation or wasting whatsoever; or else for the Assyrians, which like so many Locusts should over-run the Land of Israel, and devour all before them. Hence the Assyrian is compared to a Razor, which should shave them even to the skin, Isa. 7. 20.

3 Here is the Time these Locusts were formed, and that is,

1. Generally, in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth. 2. More particularly, It was the latter growth after the Kings mowings. After the first Mow was mowed off for the use of the Kings horses, which was worn to be sooner than the common mowth. Locusts love not to feed on ripe and hard things: their delight is in young and tender things; and therefore they are very destructive to Immanuchs, and new-sown fields. These hurtful Vermine God sent in abundance amongst them.

And here againe Interpreters differ. 1 Some take this mowing or shearing of the Grass for the grazing with the Kings sheep, whose feeding is called a cropping of the grass.

But this hath no rooting in the text; for though the word doth signify shearings, yet it is used for mown Grass, Psal. 72. 6. Virg. Georg. l. 1.

2 Others take it, for the mowing not only of Grass, but of Corn also, in the Fields; for Husbandmen (especially in those fruitful regions) used to mow their luxuriant Corn, that it might thicken and stand the better; and if this latter blade were eaten by Insects or Locusts, the Harvest was lost, and Famine ensued. The vulgar Laine mistaking the Original, render it, Serenius imber, the latter Rain: but the word is,
An Exposition

Chapter 7.

Lakeh, hortas, cordehan, i.e. the latter month, and not the latter rain; and here again comes fly to Amos, and conceive that this mowing adumbrates the devastation of Israel by the Assyrian, as fields when they are mown, and their fleece is gone, are naked and deformed, so God would raise up the Assyrian that should rob them of their riches, and fleece them for their sins.

The flourishing Grains notes the flourishing condition of Israel, but they abusing that condition, the Lord mowed them.

1. More lightly and overtly, by PUL King of Assyria, 1 Chron. 3. 26.
2. More severely, by Benhadad King of Syria, who afflicted them very sore, and gained much of their Land and riches from them.

3. There was a latter growth in the days of Jeroboam the second, when Israel began to flourish, and recover its losses, 2 Kings 15. 19: but after this they grew worse and worse, till the Lord swept them out of the Land, and would hear no more prayers for them.

Observations.

1. Formerly God revealed his mind to the Prophets (as he did here to Amos) by Types and Visions, Jer. 1. 28, 26. 3. 8c 34.
2. Ezek. 1. Heb. 1. 1. See more of this, Amos 8. 1. Obs. 3.
3. All our afflictions come from God.

It is he that forms the Locusts, sends Fire, sends out the very Time, Quantity, Quality, and Duration of all our sufferings; whatever it be, it is he that forms it, Jer. 18. 11, there is no evil of this kind in the City, but the Lord doth it, Amos 3. 6. This must make us patient, and silent, since it is the Lord that doth it, Psal. 39. 9.

2. God hath Armies of Insects, and little contemptible Creatures where with to punish disobedient people.

He needs not men to destroy us, he hath Frogs and Flies, Lice and Locusts, and these shall do it, Exod. 10. 14. Deut. 28. 38, 43. 2 Chron. 7. 13. Psal. 78. 46. Joel 1. 4. much of God's might is seen in these little Armies, they all fulfill the word of God's command. Let none then murmur at second causes, but still look up to the first, left by fretting at our troubles, we double them.
Ver. (12) of the Prophecy of Amos.

4. Naturally we are very stupid and senseless under God's hand.

Though he smite us, yet we grieve not, [Isa. 9: 12, 13. Jer. 5: 1.] and though his hand be lifted up against us, yet we will not see, [Isa. 16: 11.] The Judgement it fell here was visible, and yet they had not eyes to see it: yes though the Prophet held it forth to them by a sensible Type, and with a double EDGE, (Beshold, loe,) to excite them and quicken attention. No wonder that our Saviour cried, O hard and slow of heart, nor to believe what God hath spoken by his Words and Works, [Luke 24: 25.]

5. When People are most prosperous, many times they are nearest to fall.

Israel had success and victories but a little before; there was a shooting up of the latter growth, they lived in peace and plenty forty one years, they were grown rich, proud, and secure, and then comes the Locust and devours them; no sooner had they gotten a little greenness, but the Assyrian devours it. As Herbs when they come to flower, begin to wither, or as the Sun when it comes to the Zephyr, then it declines; so man in his best estate is altogether vanity, [Psal. 39: 5.] not only in his worst estate, when Old age hath seized on him, but in his flourishing and most prosperous condition, man is but a vain thing. Be jealous then over your selves when you abound with those Creature comforts, be like Pigeons, when they fare best they are most fearfull. It is good to think of War in times of Peace, and of Famine in times of Plenty, we know not what changes may come in the world, it is good to fear the worst, as Job did, [Job 3: 24.]

6. God's Judgments usually are gradual.

As men sin gradually, and grow from one degree of wickedness to another; so God is gradual in his punishments. First, he begins with lesser sorts, and they being slighted he brings forth greater, and plagues men seven times more according to their sins. 1. He begins here with Locusts, and destroys the fruits of the earth. 2. He takes away part of their Land from them. 3. He takes away the whole Kingdom, and sends away the people into captivity.
And it came to pass, that when they had made an end of eating the Grasse of the Land, then I said, O Lord forgive me, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?

The Prophet understanding the Mystery of the Vision, and seeing how things grew to extremity, and observing that all the fruits of the earth both Corn and Gras were like to be suddenly consumed by the devouring Locusts, and so a fearful Famine would come upon the Land; he betakes himself to his Prayers, as the best remedy against such a malady, 1 King. 8. 37, he deprecates the Judgement, and prevails. So that here is,

1 The Judgement threatened, and that is the Famine, one of Gods fore Judgements, Ezek. 14. 11.

2 Here is the means that was used for the stopping of the execution of it, and that was the prayers of the Prophet, and other good people. This Prayer is Argumentative, it is short, but sweet; little in words, but full of matter; little for quantity, but full of faith, as appears by the speedy answer, and the good effect which it had. God delights not in babling, or multiplicity of words, Eccles. 5. 2; it is the faith and fervour of the Person praying, and not the bare words which God regards!

The Prophet useth two Arguments, to move the Lord to shew mercy to them. The first is drawn from the Covenant of Free-grace, which God made with his people, it is Jacob that is in distress; by whom shall Jacob arise? 9. d. I plead not for Babylonian, Assyrian, or any barbarous Nation; that know thee not; but on the behalf of thine own Church and chosen, it is for Jacob thine inheritance; which is near and dear to thee, that hath made thyself thus bold to speak unto thee, Psa. 106. 6. 8. 93. 4. Isa. 44. 4. Remember O Lord thy Covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, spair thy people, thy thine inheritance; there is nothing works more upon God than the remembrance of the Covenant of Free-grace which
of the Prophecy of Amos.

he hath made with his people; he delights in that, Deut. 7, 9, 12. and therefore the Saints oft urge it, Exod. 32. 12. Psal. 74. 20.

By Jacob here is primarily meant the ten Tribes, or the Israelites which were the posterity of Jacob; though Judah be not totally excluded, for Amos oft glanced at them also, Amos 2, 5. & 6. 1.

A second Argument is drawn from the shatterd, sad condition of this People were in, they were little, very little and low. O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small; He is small and low in Men, in Spirituals and in Church

Money, in Temporals, and in State.

1. They were little and low in Temporals, both in Number, Riches, and Power, they were much impaired and wafted, by various calamities of Sword, Famine, and Pestilence, as appears by chap. 4. & 2 King. 14. 26. when Jeroboam the second came to the Throne, the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter, for there was none shut up or left, nor any helper in Israel.

2. They were low in Spirituals, in Ahab's time the Worship of God was generally corrupted, his Truths despised, his Ministers persecuted, 1 King. 18. 4. and such a general face of Idolatry had ower-spread the Land, that Elisha complains he was left alone, 1 King. 19. 19. and in the ninth verse of this Chapter, the Lord threatens to lay their Sanctuaries waste, and that they should have a famine not of Bread, but of the Word of God, chap. 8. 11, 12.

Thus the Prophet pleads, not Jacob's merit, but Gods mercy and free-grace, 8 much the original word imports, to be favourable; and propitious, to spare and pardon. The word is often used in the Law for forgiveness, upon oblation and intercession made by the Priest, Numb. 14. 19. Levit. 4. 20, 26, &c. Psal. 25. 11. He first beggs for pardon of their sin, for he knew right well, if the cause were removed the effect would quickly cease. Neither does he plead Jacob's excellency, but his misery, to move the Lord to shew him mercy.

q. d. Consider O Lord the low and sad estate of thy people.
they are low in Temporals, and low in Spirituals, and few in number, and if thou still go on thus with thy Judgements, all must perish, and there will be none left to praise thee; if thou shouldst enter into judgement with thy Servants, there were no abiding. But was it in the glory of a man to pass by an offence, so it will make much for thy glory to pardon and pass by the sins and transgressions of thy poor afflicted people. It makes not for thine honour, nor doth it suit with thy nature so afflict the afflicted, nor to oppress the oppressed. Hold then thy hand, spare thy People, and pity thy distressed flock.

Thus this good Prophet did commiserate their condition, and intercedes for the life of those who sought his death; it is true, he had plainly and powerfully reproved them for their sins, according to his place and calling; yet that they might see he did nothing out of hatred, but by office and command from God, not out of passion, but out of compassion to them. He now prays for them, and prevails.

By whom shall Jacob arise?

Or, who shall raise Jacob? or how should he subsist, if thou still pursue him with thy Judgements? The Original word *Kam* hath many significations, which hath caused these various lections; it signifies to arise, to stand, to establish, and abide. Some render the word transitively, for to raise, who shall raise Jacob? i.e., who shall raise and restore him, and make him happy in the enjoyment both of Temporals and Spirituals? Thus the sense is the same, take it which way you will.

By whom shall be arise?

The Prophet could not see who should effect this, and therefore he asketh the question, By whom shall be arise? he could discern no visible means how the weakness of Jacob should be strengthened, and the lowness of Jacob be exalted, and therefore he goes unto God by Prayer. As when the enemy is high we are apt to question, Who shall bring down these Gycans, these sons of Anak, these great Giganmites of the world, for they are high and mighty? So when the Church is low, and lies in the dust, our unbelief is apt to question its arising. By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is low?
Observations.

1. Afflictions are a means to bring us to God.
   When all the fruit of the land was almost devoured, now we cries Praying, Spare Lord. We are all roo like Joab in this, Absalom sent twice for him, but he would not come, at last he set fire on his Corn fields, and then Joab arose and came, 2 Sam. 14. 30, 31. Hence the Lord takes it for granted, that in our affliction we will seek him diligently, Hos. 5. vts. and so they did, Hos. 6. 1, and so did the Woman of Canaan, Mat. 15. 22. and the Prodigal, Luke 15. and Jehosaphat, 2 Chron. 20. 12. and David, Psal. 130. 1. and Paul, 2 Cor. 12. 9.

2. In Gods Ministers there must be a due temperance of sharpness and sweetness, of severity and mercy.
   They must have a holy anger against sin, yet mourn withal for the hardness of mens hearts; so did our Saviour, Mat. 23. 36. so Lot reproved the Sodomites, ye calls them brethren, Gen. 19. 7. and Moses in his zeal was angry at the people for their Idolatry, yet prays for them, Psal. 106. So Amos here sharply inveighs against the sins of this People; yet takes up a Lamentation for them, Amos 5. 1. and here intercedes for them. Our zeal must be mixt with love, though we may and must sometimes reprove men sharply, Titus 1. 13. yet must we not forbear praying for them, 2 Sam. 12. 23. so did the Vinegar intercede for the barren Fig-tree, Luke 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. every Minister must be Adamas & magnis, he must harden his face like a flint, and have browses of brass to oppose the wicked; yet must he withall be a Load-stone, by his amiable, tender, and compassionace carriage to win them to Christ; lying in the breach for them, and running hazards to save them from destruction, Ezek. 22. 30.

3. As it is the duty of all the godly, so especially of Gods Ministers to sympathize with Gods People in their misery, and to intercede for them at the Throne of grace.
   We must not only preach, but also pray for our people; as it is their duty to pray for us, 2 Thes. 3. 2, 3. so it is our duty to pray for them, especially in their troubles; it is both commanded, Joel 1. 13. & 2. 17. Ephes. 6. 18. and commanded to us by the examples of the Saints. Abraham intercedes for Sodom.
An Exposition.

Sodom, Moses for Israel, Exod. 32. 31. 32. Jeremiah for the Jews, Jer. 18. 20. Yet so zealous was he in praying for them, that the Lord was fain to bid him hold, Jer. 7. 16. How earnestly did Paul pray for the Jews, though they were his deadly enemies, Rom. 10. 1. Phil. 1. 4. Colossians 1. 3. 9. 1 Thess. 1. 2. As natural fathers, so spiritual ones (in a spiritual sense) should lay up a stock of prayers for their people. Thus the living are commanded to pray for the living, Jam. 5. 16. But we have neither Precept nor Precedent of any that ever prayed for the dead, now whatsoever is not of faith is sin; but such prayers have no foundation in the Word of God; therefore they cannot be of faith. Such prayers do neither avail the Saints in Heaven, nor the Damned in Hell, because both have an irrecoverable doome past upon them, as is fully proved by a Learned Pen.

4. Our Prayers must be Argumentative Prayers.

We must stirre up our selves that we may lay hold on God; using Arguments to move the Lord to pity us. So doth Amos here, and so did Abraham, Gen. 18. 2. 3. &c. and Jacob, Gen. 32. 11. 12. and Moses, Exod. 32. 11. 12. 13. &c. Ezra 9. 9. & Neh. 9. & Dan. 9. & David; Psal. 79. 6. 7. &c. 88. 9. to 13. & 90. 13. 14. &c. 130. 3. 4. especially we should press the Covenant; so doth Amos here, and David, Psal. 74. 20.

5. In our Prayers we must plead mercy, and not merit.

The Prophet here beggs for pardon and forgiveness because they were low, so doth David, Psal. 79. 8. 9. our Merit is Gods Mercy; it must needs be so, since all our righteousness is as filthy raggs. Hence Nebemiah when he had done great things for God, yet being conscious to himself of many infirmities, he beseecheth the Lord to spare him, according to the greatness of his mercy, Neb. 13. 22. So Daniel, a man highly beloved, yet beggs for mercy and for pardon, Dan. 9. 18. 23.

6. We must be earnest with God for the pardon of our sin.

So is the Prophet here, O Lord I beseech thee, pardon the sin of this People. He knew right well that sin was the cause of all their sorrow, and when this peccant humour was once removed, the effect would cease; and therefore the Church prays, Take away our iniquity and receive us graciously, Hos. 14. 2. the godly can bear any suffering, but not sin. When the Plague
Plague lay upon the people, David cries, Take away the sin of thy Servant, and then the Plague will cease.

7. God's own people by profession may be brought to a very low condition, both in Temporals and Spiritualls.

So it was with Israel here, which made the Prophet question, By whom shall he arise? He was brought so low that he could neither raise himself, neither was there any other that could help him up; their strength was so exhausted that there was no visible effectual means of their restauration. We may say of all Creature-comforts as Job said of Wisdom, Job 28. 13, 13, 14. Where shall Wisdom be found? the Earth faith, it is not in me; and the Depth faith, it is not in me, &c. so, where shall aid in troublous times be found? The Earth faith, It is not in me; Friends say, It is not in us; and Riches say, It is not in us, &c. It is only to be found in the Almighty; we are never so little or low but he can help us, there is nothing too high or too hard for him; though Salvation be not in our Hills, yet it is in God's hand, Jer. 3. 23. he is the Lord of Hosts, and hath all power at command; and therefore the Prophet betakes himself to his Prayers as his best refuge, O Lord I beseech thee spare thy people. This is one reason why the Lord lets things run to extremity, that he may drive us to our Prayers, as we may see in Hesters case. Now if ever we would raise a Land out of the dust.

1. We must raise our Prayers, be fervent in them, it is none but wrangling Jacobs that shall become prevailing Israels, Hof. 12. 4.

2. Raise your Faith, this lays hold on God, and engages him in the Quarrel, whilst Creatures oppose. Creatures they may make some resistance, but when Omnipotency comes against impotency, there is no abiding. See what great things Faith hath done, Heb. 11.

3. Raise your Holiness, grow therein, be holy in all manner of conversation; God never yet destroyed an holy, obedient people, such holy ones are the glory of a Land, and upon all this glory there shall be a defence, Isa. 4. 5.
VERSE 3.

The Lord repented for this, It shall not be faith the Lord.

Here we have the success and good effect of the Prophet Prayer, he prays in faith and is heard; the Lord holds his hand, and faith it shall not be; so willing is the Lord to be intreated for to spare his Church and People! The Lord repented for this. He changed not his eternal Decree, but suspended the full and final execution of it, according to his eternal Decree. When God is said to repent, it is an usual Anthropopathy, and speaking after the manner of men according to our capacity, Gen. 6.6. Exod. 32. etq. Jer. 26. 19. for God is not as man that he should repent, 1 Sam. 15. 29. and therefore it is added exegetically, This shall not be, it was no change in God, but only a stopping of the execution of the Judgement threatened, according to Gods Decree, such threatenings being conditional (as I have shewed before) what in justice he might have done, and have done them no wrong, yet such is his Mercy and Clemency that he will not doe it, but waits yet longer for their return; It shall not be (faith the Lord) whose word is good security, the Locusts shall be recalled, they shall not devour Israel; I will at thy intercession spare them yet a little longer.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 The Prayers of the faithful are very powerful and successful.

The Prophet can but speak here, and he presently speaks. What is it that Prayer hath not done? It is a kind of Omnipotent engine that lays all flat before it; if anything can help at a dead lift, it is this or nothing. All things are possible to faith, no Mountains of dangers, fears, or difficulties, but it removes them, Mark 9. 23. this binds as it were the hands of God, and commands the Commander of all things, Isa. 45. 11. The effectual fervent prayer of one righteous man (how much more of many) avayls much, Jam. 5. 16. to these the Promise runs, Psal. 34. 17. Joel 2. 17, 18. God never lays
Ver. 3. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

to the seed of Jacob, Seek my face in vain, Isa. 45. 19. The Prayer of an holy Moses, Samuel, Daniel, &c. what hath it not done? If there had been but ten righteous persons in those five Sodomitical Cities, that is but two in a City, they had been spared. We should therefore love the godly, and value them according to their true worth, who can doe such great things by their prayers. It is the happiness of a Nation to have such men in it; praying Saints are the Pillars and Supporters of the world, and the blessings of a Land, Isa. 19. 24. they are such a blessing as preserves all other blessings amongst a people; they are the strength of a Land, Zach. 12. 5. the walls and bulwarks of a place; to save such praying holy ones, God will destroy both Kings and Kingdoms, Isa. 43. 3, 4. the Lord is always nigh to help and to deliver them, Deut. 4. 7. they advance Gods Name, and set the Crown upon Gods head, giving the glory of all they have, or can doe to him alone; and therefore the Lord delighteth to make them glorious. So that the prayers of good men are very precious things, Gen. 20. 7. Job 42. 8.

Obj. The Prayers of an holy Amos might prevail much, but we are no Prophets?

A. Amos was a man subject to infirmities as we are, and he was not heard as a Prophet, but for the Promises which all believers have interest in, as well as Prophets.

Verse 4, 5, 6.

Thus hath the Lord shewed me, and behold the Lord God called to contend by fire, and it devoureth the great deep, and did eat up a part.

Then said I, O Lord God, cease I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?

The Lord repented for this, This also shall not be, saith the Lord God.

Verse 4, 5, 6.

Thus hath the Lord shewed me, and behold the Lord God called to contend by fire, and it devoureth the great deep, and did eat up a part.

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Then said I, O Lord God, cease I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?

The Lord repented for this, This also shall not be, saith the Lord God.
An Exposition

Chap. IV.

Rods in vaine upon them, he now calls them into the fire, to see whether that will melt or mend them. These three visions are of Gradation; that of the Locusts was sad, that of Fire was worse, and that of a Plumb-line was worst of all. This vision though it differ in matter, yet for method it is alike.

1 Here is the Preamble, or Preface to the Vision, 

"Thou hast the Lord God showed me."

2 Here is the Vision itself, with an Ecclesiastic in the front of it, "Behold, the Lord God called to contend by fire; that is, by War, which the King of Assyria a fierce enemy should bring upon them."

3 Here is the fruit and effect of this fire.

"It devoured the great deep, or it devoured a great abyss, and depth of waters. This fire devoured not only wood and waters above the earth, but also the waters inclined in the hollow parts of the earth, from whence fountains and rivers do run, Gen. 7. 11."

By this devouring fire most understand the Kingdom of Syria, which was laid waste and totally devoured by Tiglath-Pileser King of Assyria, 2 King. 16. 9. and by the abyss of waters is here meant multitude of people, as Ezek. 31. 4. Revel. 17. 1. the Whore sits upon many waters; that is, she hath rule and power over many people.

2 After this, it did eat up a part, and had devoured all but that the Prophet interceded for them; or it consumed a piece of the Land, or a part of the portion and possession of Gods people. By this is understood some part of Israel viz., two Tribes and a half, which Tiglath-Pileser carried away Captive into Assyria, and thereupon is said to eat up a part of Israel, 2 King. 15. 29. 2 Chron. 5. 26. Isa. 9. 1, 2.

3 Here is the Prophet's sympathy, and sense of this Judgement, ver. 5. it put him upon Prayer, and made him deplore the averting of it. Then said I, O Lord God cease, I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small? It is the very same Prayer, and the same Arguments that he used before, ver. 2. only in the place of forgiving, he puts ceasing. Cease Lord, this thine anger against thy people, and the grief of thy pasture; hold thy hand, for if thou thus go on to afflict thy people, who shall remaine of Jacob? Surely none at all. This for-
Verl. 5, 6. of the Prophecy of Amos

Obeearing being a visible effect of pardon, he defers that God would manifest it; and so it is the same Prayer in effect with
the former.

1 Obs. Hence note, that it is lawful (as occasion requires) to pray the same Prayer, and use the same Arguments as formerly
we have done.

Amos doth so here, and so did Christ, Mat. 27. 46. he prayed the third time, saying the same words, this he did
out of fervency of Spirit.

2 Obs. We must persevere in Prayer for the people of God.

As their misery doth renew, so must our Prayers for them be renewed. Thus did Amos, God threatens a second Judg-
ment, and Amos by a second Prayer averts that also. The work is good, and no difficulties should discourage us. The Church
is near and dear to God, tis his Beulah and Hezibah, Isa. 62. 8. 9. p. 182.
4. his beloved Spouse, and we never please him better than when we are importunate with him for Sions good. Hence he
so oft commands us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and promises that they shall prosper who love it; yea he bids us
command him when it is for the good of his Sons and Daugh-
ters, Isa. 45. 11.

4. Here is the good success and happy issue of his Prayer, he obtains his request, since it is for Israel that he prays, it is
but ask and have. By his Prayers and Tears he extinguisheth this fire when nothing else could doe it, and gets the Judge-
ment suspended for a time, to see if their hard hearts would
at length relent and return. This may encourage us much in
this duty of Prayer.

The Lord repented also for this: this also shall not be, verl. 6.
I will hold my hand (faith God) the fire which I threatened
shall not yet come, the Land shall not be destroyed at this
time. So gracious is the Lord, and ready to forgive, and so
quickly he repents him of the evil which he intends against his
people, especially when his Ministers intercede for them,
Joel 2. 13. he afflicts not willingly, Judgement is his strange
work, and Fury is not in him, Isa. 27. 4.

But though the Lord at the intercession of his Servants may
suspend his fiery Judgements here (though oft-times hee
pleads with them here by Fire, Sword, Famine, &c. Isa. 66.
15, 16. Ezek. 38, 22.) yet without repentance the fire of the
C e c
An Exposition

Chap. 7.

The Day will certainly devour them; God will then contend with fire, and execute the fierceness of his fury upon the workers of iniquity.

3 Obs. Hence note, That short Prayers full of faith and fervency, may prevail very much with God for a People.

It is not the loudness, or the length, or the near expressions which take with God, 1 King. 18. 26. Eccl. 5. 2. Mat. 6. 7 & 7. 21. But it is the faith and sincerity of him that prays; poor broken Prayers coming from a broken heart are of great worth in the sight of God, Matt. 15. 25. Elia's Prayer was short and pithy, and prevailed, 1 King. 18. 36. So Psal. 6. 3. My soul is sord vexed, but thou O Lord how long, viz. wilst thou delay to help me? It is an abrupt broken speech, but God can pick sense out of our non-sense.

Prayer is a work of the Heart, and not of the Tongue; words are but the outward of Prayer, it is the Hearts desire which God eyes and respects, and if thy affections fly aloft, though thy words do but creep, yet thy faith shall get what thy words cannot; yea if thou canst not speak, yet if thou canst weep, God will hear the voice of thy weeping. Tears have a voice, Psal. 6. 8. as well as words.

The Lord called to contend with fire.

Or, the Lord proclaimed that he would contend with fire, or plead, that is, punish them with fire. Thus Hos. 4. 1. The Lord hath a Controversie, that is, a Plea or Process, not only verbal, but real; that is, he had Judgements ready to execute on them. This contending notes Israel's obstinacy; we use not to contend, or goe to suit, till we have tried all other means to get our right, yet cannot get it, then we are constrained to contend. As War, so Law, is, or ought to be our last refuge. God had used all means to win this People, but in vaine, and therefore he is now constrained to contend with Fire and Sword against them.

Q. But what is meant by Fire here?

A. Interpreters vary. 1. Some take it Literally, for some extraordinary fire which should fall from Heaven and consume
Ver. 4.

Of the Prophecy of Amos.

Warning them, as it did Sodom and Gomorrah, and Aaron's Sons, Levi. 10. 2. and Job's Sheep and Servants, Job 1. 16. So (say some) God called his Angels to execute judgement on these wicked men, and to contend or plead for him by fire in their destruction.

2. By fire others understand a great Drought, when the violent heat of the Sun-beams should pierce the deepest parts of the earth, below the roots of the Corn and Trees, and so should make a perfect famine. This extreme heat and scorching of the Sun is called a Fire, Joel 1. 19, 20. A fire hath consumed the Pastures of the Wilderness, and a flame hath burnt up all the trees of the field; that is, the great heat of the Sun like to a fire hath consumed all.

3. By Fire may be meant the Wrath of God, which was now inflamed against this stubborn People, and this is the kinder of all Penal fires, and is oft in Scripture called Fire, Job 31. 12. Isa. 26. 11. Amos 5. 6. Heb. 12. ult.

4. And most truly, Fire is here taken Metaphorically for some direful and dreadful Judgement (for Fire of all the Elements is most terrible) which should consume their men, money, health, strength, Job 15. 31. 34. More especially, here it adumbrates War, which should be managed by some fiery, furious enemy, who like fire should want and consume all before it. So Ezek. 20. 48. Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, which shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree; that is, all sorts of people, both old and young, rich and poor; the fire of War shall consume them all. So Numb. 21. 28. Isa. 66. 15. 16. Jer. 48. 45. Lam. 2. 3. Amos 1. 4. 7. 10. 8. 2. 5.

Observations.

1. When lesser Judgments will not mend a People, God usually comes with greater.

The devouring Locusts could not stir this people, God will now see what the Fire will doe; Great impenitency calls for great punishment, Levi. 26. 18. But of this elsewhere.

2. Sin is the great make-base between God and his people.

It breeds contention and dissention between them, God hath a Suit and an Action against such, Hos. 4. 1. God had a Con-

See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16.

Obs. 4. p. 68.
An Exposition

Chap. 7

troverie against Israel, and cites them to answer the Plea which he had against them for their ignorance, cruelty, swearing, lying, &c. God loves his Creature, as it is his Creature, but when it becomes a sinful, rebellious Creature, he abhors it, and delights in its destruction, Prov. 1. 26. This bred the Quarrel between God and the Old world, Gen. 6. 2, 3. and between him and Jerusalem, Jer. 30. 15. Hos. 12. 2. Micha 6. 2, 3. Sin bred the first Controversie and Quarrel between God and the Angels, and between God and Adam. This turns him who is sweetnest it self, and mercy it self, into wrath and fury, Isa. 64. 5. it is sin that warres against God, and therefore no wonder if he warre against it; it is directly opposite to his holy Nature, Psal. 5. 5. and dishonours him in all his Attributes. Sinners deny his Omniscience, as if he did not see what they doe; and his Omnipotence, as if he were unable to punish; and his Justice, as if he would never call them to an account, &c. no wonder then if God have a quarrel with such.

3 Warre is a dreadful Judgement.

It is one of Gods laft and sore Rods, Ezek. 14. 21. hence it is compared here to fire, which is one of the most terrible elements that are. If the Lord should contend with Water, and send a flood upon the world, that were sad, but Fire, Fire is farre more terrible to the nature of man. As Peace is one of the choycest Mercies, so War is the saddest Judgement. Peace sweetens our blessings, and makes them blessings indeed. To have Houses, Goods, Lands, and be in continual danger of losing by enemies, imbritters all to us. Hence when the Lord would promise a choyce Mercy, he tells his People that hee will break the Bow and the Sword, and make them to lie down in safety, Hos. 2. 18, Levit. 26. 5, 6. Job 11. 19. Isa. 2. 4. & 33. 20. Hence the Psalmist calls upon Gods People to praise him for this mercy of mercies, in making our barren strong, and setting peace in our borders, Psal. 147. 12, 13, 14. It is in times of Peace, that Fields are tilled, the Gospel spreads,
Verse 7, 8.

Thus he showed me, and behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a Plumb-line, with a Plumb-line in his hand.

And the Lord said unto me, Amos what seest thou? and I said, A Plumb-line. Then said the Lord, behold I will set up a Plumb-line in the midst of my People Israel, I will not again pass by them any more.

We are now come to the Third Vision, wherein the Lord sets forth the utter destruction of Israel, God had borne long with their provocations, and waited long for their return, but since they were incorrigible and incurable, he resolves now to make a final end with them, and to pass by and pardon them no more, but to destroy them by the Sword of Salmanasar King of Assyria; which is here typified by a Plumb-line. Where we have, 1. The Vision it self, vers. 7. 2. The explication of it, vers. 8, 9.

Thus he showed me.

This is the usual Preface as before, vers. 1, 4.

And behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a Plumb-line, Gnat oboma or on the wall of a Plumb-line (it is an usual Hebraism) that is, the Lord stood on a perpendicular wall, such a one as was curiously made, and exactly squared by the Plummer.

The word Anach which signifies a Plumb-line, is variously rendred.

1 Some call it a Mafons Truel (so the vulgar Latin) with Trion camen-which they build and parget walls, for strength and elegance; and so God had been the strength and glory of Israel.

2 The
An Exposition

Chap. 7.

2 The Septuagint, the Syriack, and the Arabick render it thus, I saw the Lord standing on an Adamantine Wall, with an Adamantine Stone in his hand; implying that God had been the firme defender of his people, and a wall of Adamant to them which no hammer could break. Both these are truths, but they have no foundation in the text.

3 The word Anach (which is used only in this text) genuinely signifies a Plumb-line, which Masons and Carpenters use for the keeping of their work straight and even. Thus Zorubbabel when he was to build the Temple, is said to have a Plummeter, or Tin-Stone in his hand, that is a Measuring-line, to which a weight of Tin, Stone, or Lead was tied, Zach. 4. 10. Hence it is called Lead, Metonymically, because a Plummeter of Lead is usually tied to a Cord, or lines end to keep it straight. We read of a double use of the Plummeter in Scripture:

1. For Building, and Rearing.
2. For Ruining, and Demolishing.

1. The Plummeter is used in building, to make the Work proportionable to the Model; thus Metaphorically God himself is said to work by Rule and Line, Job 38. 5. Isa. 44. 13. Jer. 31. 39. Ezek. 47. 3. Zach. 10. 16. 21. By this the Mason and the Carpenter try the rectitude of the Structure, and what upon trial he findes to be right and regular, that he preserves; and what is irregular and exorbitant, inclining either too much to the right hand, or to the left, that he pulls down.

2. The Plummeter is used in levelling and demolishing. When the Mason layes the Line to the Work, and findes upon trial any place too well and belch out, that he demolisheth and pulls down; thus when the Lord threatened to ruine Edom's Country, he tells us, That he will stretch upon it the line of confusion; and the stone of emptines, Isa. 34. 11. That is, the Lord will measure it out for utter destruction, and perpetual ruine, so that it shall never be built, or be inhabited more. The like expression we find, Isa. 28. 17. Lam. 2. 8. and especially in the 2 King. 27. 13. where the Lord threatening to destroy Jerusalem, tells them, That he will stretch over Jerusalem the Line of Samaria, and the Plummeter of the house of Ahab, that
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Is, I will deal with Jerusalem as I have dealt with Samaria, and with the house of Manasseh as with the house of Ahab; as I destroyed those for their sins, so will I destroy these. Thus the Lord stood upon the Wall with a Plumb-line in his hand, as ready to execute his just and righteous judgments upon Israel. This is an Emblem of God's Mercy and Justice, who is the Master-builder of his Church.

1. It denotes his Mercy, in that he made this Church right and firm, like a perpendicular wall, made exactly by Line and Rule, he had curiously built it, and as carefully defended it.

2. It is an Emblem of his Justice, he stands upon the Wall of His Church, continually trying and examining whether it continue right or not, bearing with its defects, until like a wall quite bending and belching out, it can no more be mended, or set upright as it was at the first, for then he resolves to throw down all, Isa. 30:13.

This wall (by some) is made a Type of all the people of Israel, whom the Lord of old had built for a peculiar people to himself. These resembled a wall. For,

1. Walls cannot raise themselves, but are built by some skilful Architect; so this people of Israel did not raise themselves, but God of his own free love and grace chose them for his own peculiar; and exalted them above all the Nations of the world.

2. Walls have foundations; and so had this people many gracious Promises to build upon, which the Lord made to Abraham and his Seed, which they concerning came to ruine.

3. An Architect builds the walls by Line and Rule; so God did all for this People with the greatest judgement and exactness imaginable. They had all of the best, the best Church, the best Sare, the best Lawes, the best Rulers, and the most successful Judges and Kings. The Lord himself was for walls and bulwarks to them, he was Salvation round about them, and their glory in the midst of them; so great was his care and tenderness over them, Isa. 26:1, 2, 60, 18, Zach. 2:5. But since neither Mercies nor Judgements could mend them, the Lord resolves to forbear them no longer, but as he had built them up in mercy, so now he would ruin them in justice, and punish them exactly according to their demerits.
OBSERVATIONS.

1. Though the Lord bear long with the Sins of a People, yet he will not always bear.

Though the Prayers of his People may keep off Judgments for a time, yet the Sins of a People may be so great, that the Lord will hear no more prayers for them, Jer. 15.1. Ezek. 14.16, 18, 20. and therefore the Prophet here seeing this People were incurable, and Gods determination fully set to destroy them for their Idolatry and Apostacy, he forbears any further interceding for them, quietly acquiescing in the righteous Judgements of God upon them. There is a time when the Lord will shew a People no more favour, Jer. 16.13. an evil day, an only and extreme evil day, in which the Lord forbids Prayer, Jer. 7.11, 14. and restrains a spirit of prayer, and relenting from his people, Ezek. 24.23. Dan. 9.13.

2. Gods Judgements upon wicked men are just and righteous.

They are all exactly framed as it were by line and measure, Dan. 5.27. Justice is essential to God, he may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be just; hence he is called, the righteous Judge, Gen. 18.25. and the just Lord, who will do no iniquity, Zeph. 3.5. he is just in and of himself, and just in his Laws, just in his Decrees, just in the execution of those Decrees, just in the Government of the World, just in his Rewards, and just in his Judgements; he is not only righteous in some, but in all his ways, Psal. 145.17.

Do not then fret or murmur at his Dispensations towards thee or thine, his Judgements may be secret, but they are always just; whatever therefore God doth to thee or thine, yet say with David, Righteous is the Lord, and just are his Judgements, Psal. 119.17. and with Hezekiah, when he was told that he must lose all, Good is the Word of the Lord which thou hast spoken, Isa. 39.8.

We should then imitate God, as he is just and righteous in all his ways, so should we be also in our degree; doing all exactly, according to the square and rule of Gods VVord. As we must be merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful; so we must be just, as he is just; though we cannot be so by way of Equality, yet by way of Analogy and Similitude we must be
Verse 8.

And the Lord said unto me, Amos what seest thou? and I said, a Plumb-line. Then said the Lord, behold I will set a Plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel, I will not again pass by them any more.

The Lord comes now to threaten not a punishment, (as formerly) but a total destruction of this impenitent People; and therefore this Vision is not barely propounded, but by a Dialogue is so clearly expounded, that he who runs may read it. The better to quicken both Prophet and People to attention, the Lord begins with a question, Amos what seest thou? The Prophet could more easily discern the meaning of the two former Visions, viz. that of the Locusts, and of the Fire; but God standing upon a wall with a Plumb-line in his hand, was harder to understand; and therefore the Lord goes on to explain it to the Prophet.

I will set a Plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; that is, I will now actually execute my Justice on them, which I have hitherto suspended in passing by their misdeeds; as I have formerly built them up by Line and Level, so will I now make an utter destruction of them, and will lay them in the dust. I have examined their works and ways by the Rule and square of my Word, and I find them so exceeding irregular, that I can no longer forbear them, neither will I pass by them, or pardon them any more. This latter clause is exegetical, and expounds the former; I have spared them twice already, but now I will make a final end with them; I will spend no more admonitions or corrections in vain upon them, but I will deal with them as men use to doe with ruinous houses, whose breaches grow wider and worse every day than other, they pull them down, and lay them in the dust.
An Exposition

I will not again pass by them any more.

That is, I will shew them no more mercy, I will pardon them no longer; I have long winked at their sins, and let them go unpunish'd; but I will do so no longer, I will surely and severely punish them for all together, as it follows in the next verse. The like expression we have, Amos 8. 2. & Prov. 19.

See Amos 8. 2. 11. It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence; that is, to spare a man that hath offended, and not to punish him, or take revenge on him. So Micah 7. 18.

Observations.

1. Our rising and our ruiniing comes from God.

He builds us by Rule, and if we swerve from the Rule, he will set up the Plumb-line and ruine us by Rule. All our times both of rising and falling are in Gods hands, Psal. 31. 15. our adversary and prosperity is not casual, but providental. As the Lord gives, so it is he that takes too, Job 1. 21. it is he that sent the Locusts and the Fire, and now the Plumb-line of utter destruction upon this people.

2. Gods judgements usually are gradual.

As mens sins are gradual, and rise to their maximum quand fac, to the highest ascent by degrees; so doe Gods judgements. The judgement of the Locusts was sad, that of Fire was worse, but now comes the fatal Plumb-line and ends them. God doth not presently punish men so soon as ever they sin, but his patience waits, and allots men space to repent, Rom. 2. 4, 5. & Rev. 2. 21. which they abusing; God at last reckons with Sinners for all together; as we see in the Amorites, the old World, Sodom, and Jerusalem.

Verse 9.

And the high places of Israël shall be desolate, and the Sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

V V E have in this Verse a fuller explication of the Vision of the Plumb-line, and what it typified, viz.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

a total subversion both of the Ecclesiastical and Civil State of Israel.

They were wont to boast much of their fore-fathers: when our Saviour talked with the Woman of Samaria, he presently tells him, Our Fathers worship in this Mountain, John 4. 20. so here, our fore-fathers worship in Bethel, Beersheba, Gilgal, &c. and therefore they conclude that they must needs please God by following their examples. Thus they flattered themselves as the Papists do at this day, preferring the fallible Fathers before the infallible Word of God. But the Prophet plainly tells them, that the high places of Isaac (where they committed their Idolatry) should be desolate. By Isaac here is meant the house of Israel, who were descended from Isaac and Jacob. So Vers. 16. the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Arabic Versions, make the word Isaac an Appellation, and not a proper name; they render it, Laughter, or Joy; the high places of Laughter, or the ridiculous high places, and the Altars of Derision (for what is more ridiculous than for men to worship a Stock, or a Stone which themselves have carved?) shall be desolate. But this is a ridiculous version of this text, for though there be a change of one Letter in the name of Isaac, Scim instead of Tjade, yet the Learned in that Language observe, that these Letters are used promiscuously, the one for the other, and it is the same Isaac here spoken of, which is mentioned, Gen. 17. 19. & Psal. 105. 9.

By high places here, are meant Temples and Altars, erected on Mountains and Hills for the honour of their Idols, Amos 4. ult. Though God had confined them by a strict command to worship at Jerusalem, yet they must have somewhat of their own invention, they must be sacrificing on their own high Hills, high Altars, and high Places, though they dye for it. These are called the high places of Isaac, say some;

1 Because as Abraham was ready to offer Isaac in Sacrifice at God's command; so these offered their Sons and Daugh-
ters (in imitation of Abraham) to Moloch, and Baal, but there is no ground for this in the text.

2 They garnish their Idolatry with the names and examples of Isaac and Jacob, because in their times they had set up secret Altars, and offered Sacrifices there to the God of Heaven.
An Exposition

Chap. 7

Heaven. Thus did Isaac at Beersheba, Gen. 26: 25. and Jacob at Bethel, Gen. 35: 7.

And the Sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste.

That is, the Idolatrous Temples, Altars, and Groves in Dan and Bethel, and other Cities, consecrated to the golden Calves shall be destroyed by the Assyrian.

These places are called Sanctuaries, and Holy places (not that they are so indeed) but the Scripture speaks according to men's opinions of them, as here it calls these Idols Temples, Sanctuaries, when indeed they were dens of Devils, and great provocations of God's wrath against this people.

And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the Sword.

This Jeroboam was not Jeroboam the Son of Nebat which made Israel to sin, the first Author of Schism and Idolatry in the Kingdom of Israel; but this is Jeroboam the second, one of the same name, and of the same religion, a chip of the old block, he was Son to Joash, Nephew to Jehu, and Father to Zachariah; in his days the Kingdom flourished, they recovered many Cities, and enlarged their borders, but they abusing these Mercies, God threatens to destroy both the Kingdom and the Kings posterity; as he did when Zachariah the Son of Jeroboam was slain openly in the sight of the people, by Shallum (after he had reigned six months) who translated the Kingdom to his own family, 2 King. 15: 10. and this put an end to Jehu's Stock, according to the threatening, 2 King. 10: 30. Two vaine props this People rested on. 1. In their external, Idolatrous services, 2. In the power of their Kings. Both these the Lord tells them should fail them; for their Sanctuaries should be laid waste, and the house of the King cut off, and this made way for their utter ruine by the Assyrian.

Q. But why doth the Lord threaten the house of Jeroboam rather than any other family?

A. Because the Leaders of People (especially if they be wicked) lead them into Sin with themselves, and so have the Peoples sins to answer for, as well as their owne. The twenty
Vers. 9. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Kings of Israel were all of them Idolaters, and drew the people into Idolatry with them, and therefore the Lord threatens to begin with the house of Jeroboam first; both Princes, Priests, and People had sinned together, and now the Lord tells them they shall perish together. So Samuel told the people, that if they persevered in their wickedness, both they and their King should perish, 1 Sam. 12. ult.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Corruptions in the Church usually ruin the State.

For Church and Common-wealth are like the Vine and the Elme, or like those twins which are said to weep and laugh together; so long as purity in religion is preserved, the State prospers, and hath peace, 2 Chron. 17. 5. 10. Isa. 60. 12. 13. 18. God will preserve that people which preserves his truth, Rev. 2. 10, but he will depart from those that depart from the purity of his ways; and when God departs, peace, plenty, comfort, glory, &c. all goes with him, and all misery comes in like a flood, Deut. 31. 17. Jer. 6. 8. Hos. 9. 12.

2 God will destroy Idolatrous places.

The Sanctuaries and high places of Idolators shall be ruined; if Magistrates will not destroy them, God will, Lev. 26. 30. Deut. 12. 23. Ezek. 6. 3. Amos 4. ult. & 5. 5.

3 Sin, especially the Sin of Idolatry, ruins great men as well as others.

God is no respecter of persons, but if great men be great offenders, they must look for great punishment. God is terrible not only to inferior wicked men, but even to the Kings of the earth; if Jeroboam will worship golden Calves, those Calves shall be his ruine. Idolatry is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying sin, Psal. 106. 29. Amos 2. 4. 5.

4 God's Ministers must denounce Judgements against great men when they sin, as well as against inferior persons.

Yea, rather against them, because by their example they doe more hurt. This makes Amos as it were threaten the house of the King. Thus Elijah reproves Ahab; Nathan, David, and John Baptist Herod. [See more in my Com. on Psal. 82. 2. Obs. 1. p. 96. 97.

5 God transfers Kingdoms from one family to another, as he determines.
An Exposition

He pulls down one and sets up another in the Throne, and none may say to him, what dost thou? After the division of the Kingdom of Israel from Judah, they had twenty Kings of several Stocks, whereof one destroyed another. Jeroboam's Stock was cut off by Abisha, and Baasha by Zimri, and Tibul by Omri, and Omri's by Jehu, and Jehu's by Shallum, and Shallum's by Menahem, and Menahem by Pekah, and Pekah's by Hoshea. All these Kings were Idolaters, and the most of them cruel Tyrants, and Persecutors; and therefore God cut them off, that they did not live out half their days.

Ver. 10, 11.

Then Amaziah the Priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam King of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel, the Land is not able to bear all his words.

For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the Sword, and Israel shall surely be led away Captive out of their owne Land.

We have seen Amos his fidelity and love to this People, in the faithful discharge of his duty to them. We are now come to the issue and event of his Sermons, and to see how he is required for his pains, and this makes the second part of this Chapter, where we have a notable History of the Persecution and Treachery of Amaziah the Idolatrous Priest of Bethel; and the constancy of Amos in af- fecting the truth, maugre the malice of all adverse power whatsoever.

This prophan Priest being nettled with the plain and powerful preaching of Amos at Bethel, fearing lest the people should see the truth, and be wrought upon by Amos his Sermons to cast away their Idols, and return to the Worship of God at Jerusalem, and so his gains which he had by the Sacrifices and Oblations at Bethel might be lost; yea if Amos and his Party should prevail, he might fear not only the loss of his Priesthood and authority, but the loss of his life also, as a false Prophet; he therefore resolves to doe all he can, both
Vers. 10. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

by force and fraud to rid the land of his turbulent and sedi-
tious Amos. The Urchin (we say) hath but one shirt, but the
Fox hath many; and so hath Amaziah here.

1. He gets on the Lion's skin, and accuses Amos to the
King for a traitorous Conspirator against him, and a sedi-
tious Disturber of the peace of the Kingdom. Thus he pretends
great kindness to the King, and tells him the cause was his,
when in truth fell was in the bottom of the design; for he knew
if Amos prevailed, he should lose his fat morsels at Bethel,
both he and his Idols might starve together; Jerusalem would
have all the custom from him.

2. Since this way did not take, he now gets on the Fox's
skin, and as a seeming friend, counsels him to leave the King-
dom of Israel, and go to Judea; his own Country, and Prop-
hecy there, where he might avoid the King's fury. q. d. It is
not safe for thee, O Amos, to Prophecy here against the King
and Kingdom, but go to Judea, and tell them of the downfall
of Israel, there thou wilt be safe and welcome; but this is Bethel,
and it is no discretion for thee to preach against the King and
Kingdom here.

To this Charge and crafty counsel of Amaziah, Amos pi-
ously, prudently, and peaceably answers, with much courage
and constancy, Vers. 14, 15. proving his extraordinary call to
the work, denouncing God's judgments against Amaziah, and
Israel, vers. 16, 17.

In this Verse we have an Accusation, or Charge drawn up
against Amos, where we have, 1. The Party accusing, and
that is Amaziah the Idolatrous Priest of Bethel, so called to
distinguish him from Amaziah King of Judah; 2. King 12, ult.
he was Successor to those Idolatrous Priests which Jeroboam
had set up at Bethel; some great man he was at Court in all
probability, and near to the King, which made him send so
boldly to him, to incense him against Amos; the Jesuit calls Amazias, or him the High Priest of the Idols at Bethel, there Jeroboam had
placed a College of Priests, 1 King 12, 33. Amaziah might
be the Prefect, or Governor of it.

The word Cloboen, is used promiscuously for a Priest or a

praefectus regionis. Tarquinius. Cum faceret omnem nomine, non vulgarem nec minimum videre intelligere, sed inter alios insignem, velut sacrificiorum Bethel principem. Raxava.
Prince, for an Ecclesiastical or a Civil Governor. In those days (except it were in Judea) many persons were both Priests and Princes, and ruled in Church and State. Hence the word is used for a Counsellor of State, or a great man, Job 12. 19, for a Priest, Levit. 1. 12, and for Idolatrous Priests, as here, and in Job 21. 19. Gen. 41. 45. & 47. 22.

2 Here is the Party accused, and that is Amos, a poor, plaine, pious, harmless Prophet.

3 Here is the Person to whom he is accused, and that is the King, Amaziah sent to the King, he could not well suppress him himself, and therefore he sends to the Secular Power for aid, desiring he may be either silenced, or banish'd, or put to death.

4 Here is the Matter for which he is accused, viz. for Sedition, Rebellion, Conspiracy, and Treason; this he speaks to exasperate the King against him: the good Prophet did only discharge his duty faithfully, and perform that office which God had called him to, yet this is called Sedition, and conspiracy.

5 He aggravates the Crime from the Place where all this treason was acted, and that was not privily in a corner, or in another Kingdom, but openly in thy Kingdom, and in the midst of thy people Israel, even at Bethel, where was the Court and greatest confluence of all the Subjects; so that thou hadst best look to it, O King, for intestine commotions are very dangerous.

6 Here is the Peoples ill resentment of all this, The Land is not able to bear all his words. Amos signifies a grievous burden, and he had no such name for nought, for he came loaded with many sad burdens and comminations against Israel, which made this stubborn people so unable to bear his words, q. d. Such a seditious, dangerous fellow is this New-found Amos, that if thou, O King, do not suppress him, the people will; for the Land, that is, the people of the Land cannot brook, nor bear his blunt and down-right preaching, for they hate him that reproves them in the Gate, and abhor him that speaks uprightly, Amos. 3. 10. Thus they complain of Amos (without a caufe) for conspiring against the King, when themselves conspired and combined together against the King of Kings without controul.
Ver. 10. of the Prophecy of Amos.

The Land cannot bear his words, much less can I, or any one that is devoted to the service of the King. His Prophecies are intolerable, for he disheartens the people by making them despair of their own safety, so that he is no longer to be endured, O King, by thee, or thine, for the Land will never be quiet till it be rid of him, either by banishment or death; there will be nothing but tumults and factions so long as he is tolerated to seduce the people.

Thus we see how this malicious false Prophet lays on load, thinking that somewhat would stick; every word hath its weight, Quot verba, tot verera, so many words, so many daggers to stab this good Prophet. Had the charge been true, as it was notoriously false, Amos had been a man of death indeed.

To clear up all, let us look into the Charge more exactly.

Then Amaziah Priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam King of Israel.

Then, when the Prophet had made known to the people the Visions of God, concerning the ruin of the Kings house, and of the Kingdom, then Amaziah the Priest can hold no longer, but he must persecute and prosecute the Prophet. Thus persecution ever attends the faithful dispensing of the truth; flattery (we say) finds friends, but truth hatred.

He sent to King Jeroboam; that is, he sent Letters or Messengers to the King, to incense him against Amos, and that clandestinely and unknown to Amos, that so he might be condemned, unheard. No doubt but this High Priest had his Spies and Intelligencers about him, to observe what Amos preached, and now having got matter enough (as he conceived) against him, to root him out, he spitted his poison, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee.

The word which we render to conspire, properly signifies Conspirare, to bind, or to be compactly bound together in a body; but metaphorically it signifies to conspire, to rebel, to conjure and band together against one, so the word is used, 1 Sam. 22. 2. & 16. 9. & 21. 23. ut rebellavit. so that this conspiring implies that Amos had some confederates with him, that helped to carry on this conspiracy against the King; when alas, Amos was so farre from conspiring, that he was now considering how he might prevent the ruine both of...
King and Kingdom, and avert the approaching judgements. By his Prayers he had prevented two judgements, and now counsels them to prevent the third; yet Amos is a Conspirator and trouble of Israel, when it was their own Idolatry and Apostacy, and not Amos, that troubled them.

2 Amos did not utter his Passion, or speak his own private opinion; but he tells them the mind and Message of God which he had shewed him in a Vision, and commanded him to publish, touching the destruction (not of the King himself, for we read not that Jeroboam dyed by the Sword) but of the Kings Posterity, ver. 9. I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the Sword. But Amaziah conceiving that the King would be more enraged against Amos for Prophecying against him, than for Prophecying against his Children, thereupon forgets this accusation, and faith, Amos hath conspired against thee, and hath said, the King shall dye by the Sword. Not a word of truth, for Amos did not conspire against the King, neither did he say that he should dye by the Sword, yet this hath been the lot of all Gods faithful Ministers, to be counted Seditious, and the troublers of a State, solely for discharging the duty of their places faithfully.

Now by this high Charge we may see, that this false Prophet sought the life of the true one, as will appear if we frame his Accusation into an Argument, thus,

He that hath conspired the ruine both of King and Kingdom ought to dye; but Amos hath done so. Ergo, But it pleased the Lord (in whose hand is the heart of the King) to make the King so farre to favour the Prophet, as that he slighted this Priests accusation, and therefore Amaziah pretends friendship to this Prophet, as we shall see hereafter.

Now let us view the Transactions of this High-Priest, and we shall finde a compleat Character of a false Prophet, or the perfect picture of a Polititian.

1 They use to flatter and delude great ones, making them to believe that none are their friends but such as say as they say, and doe whatever they would have them doe, and humour them in their sins; and that they are their foes that like Amos here, deal faithfully and plainly with them, and this is no small part of great mens misery, that they have few about them that dare, or will deal faithfully, with them. They may,
of the Prophecy of Amos.

use the Lestany (in this sense) with that alteration which
the poor Curate used, when he saw his Lord come into the
Church, O God the Father of Heaven have mercy upon us Right
Honourable Sinners. Their state (in this respect) is farre
worse than that of inferiour persons, who are plainly and truly told of their sins, when these are soothed up to their destru-
ation.

2. They calumniate and belye the true Prophets, they ob-
serve Machiavel's rule, Calumniare audacter, falsum ad eum
adherebit, lye lustily, somewhat will stick though it be never
so false. So it was with Amos here;

3. They labour with might and maine to suppress and fi-
tence the true Prophets, they know that their Kingdom can-
not long stand, if once the faithful Ministers of Christ bee
comminenced, Light and Darkness, the Ark and Dagon,
Christ and Belial can never subsist together. This made
Amaziah here to use both force and fraud to rid the Land of
Amos.

systma non posta stare mendacium, ne momento quidem. Mercer in locum.

4. They labour so supposse good men before they can be heard.
They must not speak, nor dispute the cause. Thus Amaziah
here clancularly accuseth Amos to the King, when he could
make no defence for himself.

5. They usually mingle some truth with their lyes; As Fowlers
doe mixe some Wheat with their Chaff, to catch the Birds
the sooner. So did Amaziah here, he mixed some truth with
his lyes. Amos hath said, Jeroboam shall dye by the Sword,
[that was false], and Israel shall surely goe into Captivity,
[that was true.]

OBSERVATIONS.

1. In all ages there have been false Prophets to oppose the true.
There was a James and a James to resist Moses, 2 Tim. 3. See more in my
8, and four hundred false Prophets against one good Mi-
cah; a Pastor and an Hananiah against the Prophet Je-
8, and here Amaziah against Amos. So in the New Obst. 1.
Testament, bow bitter were the High Priests against Christ,
Job. 11. 47, 48, accusing him as an enemy to the State, and
An Exposition

Chap. 7.

no friend to Caesar. How did the Scribes and Pharisees oppose the Apostles, and since Antichrist's Kingdom hath been set up, how have Gods faithful witnesses been persecuted and slain? Persecution hath ever been the lot, especially of Gods zealous Messengers, Acts 7. 51, let a man faithfully discharge the duties of his place, and then let him look for some Idolatrous Amaziah to oppose him. When we have opportunities of doing any good, we must look for many adversaries, 1 Cor. 16. 9, Let us not then be offended, when we meet with the like usage from the world.

2 It is the property of Persecutors to undermine Gods Servants clancularily.

Amaziah sends to the King privily, unknown to Amos, and accuseth him for a Traytor, that so he might be condemned without hearing, or answering for himself. Thus they deal with Jeremy, when they could finde nothing justly against him, then they secretly devise devices against him, Jer. xi. 19. & 12. 6. & 13. 18. where we may observe the vile ingratitude of men; this Prophet had by his Prayers averted two Judgements from Israel, yet now they seek his death, who saved their life; and accuse him of Rebellion, who saved them from destruction.

Valiant men charge their adversaries in the face, it is for Cowards to creep behind. Truth seeks no shifts nor corners, it loves the light, as true gold fears neither the Touch-stone, nor the ballance; but falsity being a work of darkness, loves darkness, and is not able to stand bare-faced before truth; and therefore it makes Iyes and falsity its refuge.

3 Wicked men what ever they pretend, yet intend Self.

Haman pretended the Kings profit, when his owne ambition, envie, and revenge was that he really sought, Hes. 3. 8. So this Idolatrous Priest here pretended great love and service to the King, when Self was in the bottom of the design. He was the Priest of Bethel, and got much profit by the place, and therefore he hated Amos heartily, who forbad the people to
Ver. 10. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Come any more at Bethel, but to shun it as a place infected with Superstition and Idolatry, Amos 5. 5. and so all the fat of this self-seeking Priest of Bethel ran into the fire. This he could not bear, for it struck at his dignity and livelihood. Such men make their bellies their gods, and little regard what becomes of truth, modo hic sit bene, (as the Monk said) when he stroked his fat paunch. Wee read of low and ordinary Priests that were obedient to the faith, Acts 6. 7. when the High-ones were enemies to the Gospel. The Apostle complains that all men seek their owne ease, profit, praise, but few or none seek the things of Jesus Christ, Phil. 2. 21. How Sor. of Mr. Edm. many plead for the Papacy and Prelacy for their bellies sake, Simons, on Phil. 2. 21.

4. It is an old trick of Satan and his agents, falsely to accuse the servants of God of Sedition, Treason, and Rebellion.

Amos that was the glory and Saviour of Israel, that by his Prayers kept off many Judgements from them, yet now is called, the Troubler of Israel, and commanded to pack out of the Land, which he not hafting to doe, he was knockt in the head with a Club by Amaziah's Son, as Epiphanius, Jerome and others affirm. Thus Elijah, who was called, the Chariots and Horsemen of Israel, is called by wicked Ahab the Troubler of Israel, 1 Kings. 18. 17; 18. Haman accused the Jews for a People that kept not the Kings Lawes, and that it was not for his profit to suffer them to live in the Land, Hose. 3. 8. Thus Jeremiah that wept in secret for the sins of the Land, and by his Prayers did keep off many Judgements, yet is called a man of contention, and one that weakned the hearts and hands of the People, and that sided with the Chal. Centur. Magdeins against his owne Country-men, Jer. 15. 10. & 37. 13, 14, 15, 18. & 38. 4. Moses one of the meekest men in the world, yet is accused of ambition, and one that takes too much upon him, Numb. 16.

Yea Christ himself was called and counted an enemy to Caesar, a Fanatick, a Mad-man, and one that had a Devil. The Apostles were counted troublers of the Land, and the Pefts of the places where they came, walking contrary to the Decrees.
An Exposition

of Caesar, and setting the world on a flame, Acts 16. 20, 21, & 17. 6, 7. So Paul was counted a pestilent incendiary, Acts 21. 28, 30, 31, & 24. 5. and B. Latimer in his Sermons often tells us, that when his enemies could finde no just exceptions against his matter, yet they would accuse him for a Seditious and turbulent fellow. Truly (saith he) the Preaching of Gods Word is the cause of Sedition and Rebellion, as Tonterton-Steeple was the cause that Sandwich-Haven was ftopt up with Goodwins Sands.

The Devil began his Kingdom with a Lye, and by Lyes he still upholds it; he was a Liar and a Murderer from the beginning, but first a Liar, and then a Murderer; he cannot handomely murder until he slander first; hee must put a Bear-skin upon our backs before he can wel bait us. So they did in the Primitive times, and if any calamity befell the Land, they presently cried, Away with the Christians to the Lions, as if they had been the cause of it; whereas the world was full of miseries before they were born, and will be when they are dead and gone. The Pagans in those times gave out, that the Christians did worship an Asses Head, used promiscuous Lufts, and drunk the blood of Infants, &c. These and many more Standers they invented, meerly to make them odious, that they might murder them the better. As a man that will hang his Neighbours Dogge, must first give out that he is mad. This made so many Learned men to Apologize for the Christians, and to wipe off those calumnies which males had cast upon them. Thus did Justin Martyr, Apol. ad Saul. Romanum, p. 41, edit. Greciol. & 3 Apol. ad Anton. Pium, p. 53. Tertullian. Apolog. Minutius Felix, p. 102. 116, &c. Origen Lib. 3. contra Celsum, Tom. 3. p. 68. 1. Cyprian contra Demetrianum, p. 163. Arnobius lib. 1. adversus gentes. August de Civit. Dei per totum. He wite those twenty two Books to clear the Christian Religion from vile aspersions.

The wicked like Athaliph cry Treason, Treason, when shee her self was the Traytor. The wicked complaine of the godly for troubling Israel, when it is themselves that are the true Restagnims and troubler both of Church and State. As they have no peace in themselves, so they hinder it in others. It is the covetous Achan, the Idolater, Judg. 9. 8. the Sweare, Jer. 23. 10, the Sabbath-prophaner, Ezek. 20. 13. the Covenant-breaker,
Ver. 10. of the Prophecy of Amos.

nant-breaker, Ezek. 16. 23. the debauched Drunkard, the unclean Zimri and Cozbi, these, these are they that trouble Israel.

Touching the turbulency of Jesuits and Maff-priests, and what Incendiaries they are, and touching their sedulous Doctrine, leading to disobedience and rebellion, what a Catalogue of about forty Kings and Princes destroyed, or suitor, ibid, revexed by the Pope and his Clergy, see this clearly proved by your profitor, soterum macchinora.

Mr. John White, in his Way to the true Church, chap. 6 p. 25. and Mr. Baxter, his Key to Catholicks, chap. 48. p. 348. & c. 356. See Watsons Quodlibets, p. 69. & c. 75. & c. 112. & c. Dr. Abbot Antilgloria, p. 1. p. 36. p. 115. they reach King-killing, Bolton Comfort Afflicted. Consil. Preface, p. 3. 4. 5. D. Morton, De pacif. Regia, S. 3. and Mr. Pyn, The Treachery and Disloyalty of Papists to their Soveraigns, printed 1643. and Rome, Matter-piece. Yet to come nearer our times, what notorious slanders and lyes have the Papists raised against our Reformers? to instance but in three:

Luther,
Calvin,
Beza.

1 Luther was loaded with Papistical Lyes, he was accusato- See White's way med to them, saying, Mibi maxime pro fante, qui de me possi-to the true me loguuntur, Luthernn pacificum consules. They gave us, that Church. Did going merry to bed and drunk, he was found next morning dead in his bed, & c. when Luther was alive, and testified the Clark in the life falshood of this Fiction under his owne hand. The like they of Luther, did by Calvin, and Beza.

2 Calvin, they were not behind hand with him, they accu- See Rivers. Ca- sed him of Ambition, Covetousnes, Incontinency, & c. that hol. Orthon- he was a branded Sodomite, consumed of Lice, and dyed def. Q. I. p. 12, blaspheming, all which calumnies are set off by the Writers of his life. His enemies finde it farre more easie to calumniate him, than to imitate him. Most of our Modern Writers doe licks, chap. 31, but descant upon Calvin's Plain-song; yea the Jesuits them- p. 189, & c. selves are very Plagiaries, who doe first rob him, and then rail at him.

3 Beza, They gave out that he was dead, and had recan- ted, and cursed Papists, when he was alive, and did confute the slander.
An Exposition

Chap. 7.

It were easy to tire the Reader with such instances, but these may suffice.
This may serve,

1 For Comfort.
2 For Caution.

1 For Comfort, if the like befall us, remember the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. Let us be patient till the coming of the Lord, for then there will be a Resurrection of Names, as well as of Bodies, and Christ himself will be our Compurgator.

2 For Caution, It must make us wary and cautious what reports we receive against the godly, and not to believe every Idolatrous blood-thirsty Amaziah, when they revile and calumniate Gods faithful Ministers and People; if bare accusations were sufficient to condemn men, Christ himself had not been innocent.

As for the godly, they are of those who are peaceable in Israel, they are ended with the wisdom which is from above, which is first Pure, and then Peaceable, Jam. 3. 17. they are peaceable in themselves, and are Peace-makers, and Peace-preservers; they are for Peace Ecclesiastical, Political, Domestic; they are for all manner of Peace, save peace with sin.

Peace and Piety, Peace and Truth is their hearts desire, Zach. 8. 19. Heb. 12. 14. the Gospel like a Sword divides between men and their sins, and so breaks worldly wicked peace, Mat. 10. 34, 35. but establishes it internal, real, solid peace; I came not to send Peace, but a Sword, Christ speaks not of the effect, but of the event of the Gospel; not what the Gospel procures properly Et per se, but Accidentally, when it meets with wicked mens corruptions; not what it works in the faithful, but in the unfaithful. The Gospel in itself brings that peace which passeth all understanding, to such as submit unto it, but wicked men opposing it make the tumult and division, and therefore it is they, and not the Gospel that must be blamed. Real godly men that walk up to their Principles and Privileages, are the Blessings of a Land, the Pillars of a Nation, the Beauty and Bulwarks of the places where they live. They keepe Islands from destruction, Job 22. wsc. and therefore they cannot truly be called the destroyers of them.
Ver. 10.

of the Prophecy of Amos.

As Sampson's strength lay in his hair, so the Gomorrians of the Nation shall say, that in the inhabitants of Jerusalem is our strength, Zach. 12. 5.

It is ignorance and prophaneness which makes a people rude and rebellious, but where Religion comes in the power of it, and men obey not for fear, but for conscience sake, there are no better Subjects and Subjects in the world; none more faithful to their trust, none pray more for their Governors, nor pay their dues more freely and fully to them. These are they that will venture their Lives and Estates for their honour, when such as serve them for their owne ends, will leave them and forfake them.

Yet let any should think me singular take the testimony of one (that as the times goe) my passe for many. Be tender over good men (saffth Doctor Gauden) these are those that shall see God's face in glory, and so are more fit to enjoy the favour of Kings on earth. These are they that best know the duty, honour, and fidelity they owe to Majesty, and make a conscience to pay it; because it is a point of holiness to men. These are the Propugnacula & munimenta regni & Ecclesie (as was said of St. Ambroche) the strength, honour, and security of Church and State under God, and his Majesties care and pious providence; these are in some sort the (Tutelares genii) Protectors of his Majesties Person, health, wealth, life, Queen, Crown, and Posterity; whilst they duly lift up pure hands, and holy hearts to the God of Heaven, for his Majesties safety and happiness. These are like Moses and Elias, the Chariots and Horse-men of Israel. These have power with God, by their Prayers, counsel, and good examples they lye in the gap, and hinder the inundation of Sin and Judgement. To these we owe; under God, the enjoyment of our peace, plenty, safety, and religion, and of the blessing of blessings temporal, a pious and gracious Prince. Thus fully and truly the Doctor:so that it appears on all hands that God's people are not the Troublers, but the Pillars and peaceable ones in Israel; this will yet further appear, if we consider these four things:

1. Their Principles.
2. Their Titles.
3. Their Prayers.
4. Their Practices.

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SSS
An Exposition

Chap. 7.

1 Sedition and conspiracy is against their Principles; they are taught to fear God first, and then to honour the King as his Vice-gerent on earth. They obey not for fear (as wicked men doe) but for confidence sake; as they give unto God what is Gods, so they give unto Caesar what is Cæsars. It is the want of good Preachers (such Bishop Latimer was) that is the cause of Rebellion; if there were good Bishops (such he) there would be no rebellion, it is ignorance that breeds rudeness and rebellion, as we have seen in the Welsh, Irish, &c. Light and Grace take away that ferity, cruelty, and turbulency that is in our natures, it makes the Lion and the Lamb to dwell together in peace, Isa. 11. 6, 7, 8. Inordinate love of the World is the great make-bare of the World; now Grace loosens mens hearts from the world, & makes Abraham to part with his owne right to Lot, though he were superior to him in age and place, yet he yields to him for peace sake, Gen. 13. 8, 9. and Christ himself left he should give offence to others, paid tribute to Cæsar, though he could have pleaded immunity, Mat. 22. 27. Besides, their God is the God of peace, Rom. 15. 33, 1 Thess. 3. 16. Christ their Saviour is the Prince of peace, Isa. 9. 6. the Spirit that dwells in them is a Dove, the emblem of peace; the Gospel which they believe is the Gospel of peace; they are endued with the wisdom which is from above; which is pure and peaceable; the peace of God rules in their hearts, and moderates their Passions, Col. 3. 15. to that we need not fear their offending, who are so strictly bound

2 The Titles which are given them in Scripture, shew that they are men of peace; David's Motto is theirs, I am for peace, Psal. 122. 7. hence they are called Doves, not Kites; Lambs, not Lions; Sheep, not Wolves; and the Church is compared to a Vine, not to a Thorn; to a Virgin, to a Widow, to a Virgin, to a Widow, Isa. 4. 14. all which are harmless, innocent, inoffensive creatures; subject to wrong, but doe none, and this the Churches enemies know right well, which makes them so ready to abuse them. The Crow will pull wool off a Sheeps back, it dares not be bold with a Wolf, or a Fox.

3 It is against their Prayers to be turbulent, they pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and for the peace of the places where they
Verse 11. of the Prophecy of Amos.

They dwell, Jer. 29. 7. whilst others are drinking Healths, and breaking the Kings Lawes by their debauchery, these are praying for Kings, and for all in authority under them, that by their means we may live in godliness and peace, yea so farre are they from creating troubles, that by their Prayers, counsel, and good example, they keep many troubles and disorders out of a Land.

4 It is against their Pratiques. Their pratiques is to bles them that curse them; to pray for them that persecute them; to doe good to them that hate them; and to preserve their lives, who seek their deaths, as Bradford did by Bourn. If their enemy be hungry, they feed him; if naked, they cloath him, and to heap coals of fire upon his head, Rom. 12. 20.

Besides, in the places where they dwell, they labour to suppress Sin, and to promote Piety, and this conduced very much to the peace and prosperity of a Nation. Where the salt of Grace is, there is peace, Mark 9. ult. It was Prophesied, that in Gospel-times they should not hurt in all Gods holy Mountain, and why so? for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and that will make men pious and peaceable, Isr. 11. 9. Ignorant men are brutish merciles men, the dark places of the earth are habitations of cruelty, None so bloody as blind Idolaters.

VERSE XI.

For thus saith Amos, Jeroboam shall dye by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their owne Land:

IN this Verse Amaziah the Priest labours to make good his Charge against Amos, to this end he produceth a double accusation against him.

1 He chargeth him as an enemy to the King, and that hee had conspired against him, saying, Jeroboam shall dye by the sword; this was a manifest untruth, for Amos never said, the King shall dye by the sword, but that God would rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword, ver. 9; and so he did; for though we do not read that Jeroboam himself dyed by the sword, yet Zachariah his Son was slaine by Shallum in the sight of
the people, which put an end to the Stock of Jehu, according to what the Lord had threatened against the house of Jehu, viz., that in the fourth generation his Stock should cease; so that Amaziah reports Amos his Doctrine to the King, not fully, but fraudulently, applying that to the Father, which Amos spake against the Posterity. Thus wicked men, like their Father the Devil, add and detract from God's Word, and men's words, so as may best suit with their own designs.

2 He chargeth him with disheartening the people, in saying, that Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own Land. This was true, but so farre from being a Crime, that it was Amos his glory, that he faithfully and freely delivered the Message that God commanded him to deliver to his people; and here we may observe, that when this false Prophet recites Amos his words to the King, there he alteris the words, and makes things worse; but when he comes to speak of the people, then he can speak truth.

He had used all his Oratory to persuade the King to punish Amos, but Jeroboam knew that he was a Man of God, and therefore durst not doe his Prophet any harm; and the rather, because he had observed that God had sharply punished Jeroboam the first with a withered arm, and Abab, and other his Predecessors that had opposed his Prophets; their harms made him wise. The context shewes that the King was cold in the cause, for we read of no answer that the King gave to Amaziah, peradventure he might discerne his falsity, and his flattery, and so slight him; this is very probable by that which followes in the next verse, where Amaziah falls to flattering Amos, since by force he could not hurt him.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 It is an old trick of the Devil and his agents, to wrest and mis-recite the words of God's servants. When they can finde nothing justly against them, then they fall to bellying them, and to devise devices against them. The Devil is termed Diabolus, he hath this name given him because he is a violent and virulent Calumniator, and belyer of the Saints, and so are his followers, and therefore
they also are called (νομολογοι, Calumniatores) by their Fathers name, false-accusers. So Joh 1. 9. Acts 6. 11, 13. Rom. 3. 8.  
2 It is the property of false Prophets to mingle some truth with their lies, the better to deceive the simple. So doth this Priest of Bethel here, and so doe Mass-Priests. As the Fowler mixeth some Wheat with his Chaff, and sticks some Corn upon his Lime-twiggs to catch the sooner; so Satan puts a fine gloss upon his false wares that they may sell the better. He and his can produce Scripture for a need, they can transforme themselves into Angels of Light, and can cite Scripture to draw you from Scripture, and tempt you to irreligion by religious Arguments mis-applied. Epicurus that was licentious in his Life, and lewed in his Opinions, holding that there were no Gods, or else that they were idle, and cared not for governing the World, yet sometimes he commends the pleasures of the mind, that so he might vend his Epicurean pleasures the better.

3 That Princes usually are more indulgent to Gods Prophets than Idolatrous Priests.

Amaziah the Priest would have Amos put to death for a Traitor, but the King spares him. It is observed, that the greatest hatred is usually amongst men of the same profession. It is not the King, but the Priest of Bethel that prosecutes Amos. Thus it was with Jeremi, when the Priests were enraged against him, and sought his life, then the Princes plead for him, and save him, Jer. 26. 8, 16. and after when the Princes cast him into the Dungeon, then the King released him, Jer. 38. 10. So our King Edward the Third preserved Wickliffe from the fury of Simon Sudbury Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, and after the Duke of Lancaster became his great Patron against the persecuting Prelates of those times.
Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou Seer, goe see thee away into the Land of Judah, and there eat bread, and Prophecy there;
But Prophezie not againe at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappel, and it is the Kings Court.

His false Propher seeing he could not remove Amos by force, sets upon him now by fraud; the King not being moved with his Message, and refusing to meddle with Amos, either for fear of the people, who knew Amos to be an holy and eminent Prophet, and so must needs have great influence upon them, or else for some other politick respects, the King spared him.

But since the Lions skin will not doe, this Promotor will try what the Fox can doe; to this end he gives Amos, 1. An honourable title. 2. Friendly counsel, one would think, persuading him by any means to leave Israel, and goe to Judah, where he might be safe and free.

q.d. I am the High Priest of Bethel, and have my preferment and profits in Israel; but thou art of Judah, and camest from Tekoa; presihe goe to thy Tekoits again, and trouble not my Bethelions; come not in my Dioces, I promise thee, I will not come in thine; hinder not my gains, and take thine and spare not.

In this Verse this subtle Sophister packs up much in a little room, and useth almost as many Arguments as words:

1. He gives him an honourable Compellation, O Seer, it is not, O unlearned Hardiman, or; O seditious Seedi-man, as before; but he gives him a title of honour, the better to hide his malicious deesignes, and to insinuate himself into Amos. See how quickly wicked men can change their Language, and bleffe those whom but lately they cursed; before it was Amos the Conspirator, but now it is Amos the Servant of God, and the Seer. The Prophers of old were called Seers, 1 Sam. 9:9. 1Kg. 36. 10. God inlightened them by his Spirit, and made known to them his secrets by Visions, hence they were called Seers.
Vers. 12, of the Prophecy of Amos.

Seers, Numb. 6. 12. 6. Ezek. 1. 1. Some make Amaziah here to call the Prophet Seer, ironically, by way of scorn and contempt, as if the Prophet had been some Fanatick, and his Visions vacaries. But the contexture of the Discourse is against this; for Amaziah gives the Prophet his due title, but in a flattering way, to better to effect his design upon him.

1. Left this Priest should seem to be mad without reason, he now produceth Arguments to perswade Amos to be gone. Man being a Rational Creature, may sooner be drawn by reason than driven by force; Amaziah will try what this will doe.

Goe, flee thee away into the Land of Judah, there eate bread, and Prophecy there.

9. d. Be gone with all speed, thou hast yet liberty so to doe, thou hast now an opportunity of escaping, and mayest freely passe without any stopping, let it not slip, lest it repent thee when it is too late. So that this is an Argument a facili.

2. Flee, with all speed be gone from amongst us, for there is no staying long in safety here; thou art encompassed here with snares and dangers, and therefore if thou lovest thy life, pack up and bee gone, Citio, cistius, cistissimo, left thou bee caught and killed. So that this was an Argument a nesciario.

3. Into the Land of Judah. The better to perswade him to flee, this Priest hath found out another Topick, viz. a convenient place to flee to, and that was his owne Country; thou camest from Tekoa, Amos 1. 1. and no man can blame thee for going home again, especially since thou art so hated here. There thou wilt dwell amongst thine owne kindred and acquaintance in peace and plenty, in love and safety; whereas here thou art a Stranger, and a blunt Prophet, and canst expect none of these things from us. As a friend therefore I counsel thee with all speed to be gone, for both King and Kingdom are resolved to keep their Calves; and if thou come any more to preach here against them, beware lest they catch thee, and kill thee. But Amos fears no such Scare-crows, God sent him not to Judah, but to Israel; and there he must and will abide. It was Jonas's sin to fly to Tarshish, when he should have gone to Nineveh. A Minister is not sui via-
An Exposition

4 Thee, but must preach when and where his Lord and Master commands him.

4 There ease bread; that is, Get thy living there, Gen. 3:19 for if thou stayest here thou mayest starve, here is nobody will succour or support thee; for thou art a burden both to Prince and people. Here is nothing for thee to ease, here is no profit to be had, and by thy preaching so openly at Bethel, against the Calves of Bethel, thou marrest our markets too. But go to Judah, there thou wilt be maintained like a Prophet indeed; there thou wilt live more securely, and be maintained more plentifully; there is King Uzziah, alias Azariah, that loves such precise ones as thou art, 2 Kings 15:13, and a people that prize men of thy straine, and will not suffer thee to want. Thus this mercenary false Prophet measures Amos by himself, thinking that gaine would incite him away, as if Amos had been one of those who prophesied for a little Lucre, for a handful of Barley, or a mouthful of Bread, Ezek. 13:19. Micha 3:11. So that this is an Argument ab utili.

3 Prophesie there. Here this subtile Priest Proleptically prevents an Objection; whereas Amos might have said, what would you have me idle, and leave that employment to which God so signally, and extraordinarily called me? Not so, (sayth Amaziah) I do not bid thee flee, that thou mayest be idle or silent (for if he had done so, his fraud had been too apparent) but I bid thee go to Judah, and Prophesie there, where thou wilt have double honours; that is, both countenance and maintenance, both which thou wantest here. Thou lovest to be plaine and free against sin, why get thee to Judah, there they will be glad of thee, and there thou mayest declaim freely against the sins of Israel, and threaten us without fear. Here thou art molested with Altars and Calves, with Idols and Images, Amos 3:14. but get thee to Jerusalem, and there thou wilt be free from these superstitious forgeries, and lying vanities. There exercise thy gift of preaching, and get thy living by it; as I doe by my Priesthood at Bethel, where I live peaceably, and plentifully with my Oblations and Sacrifices; I shall not envie thee; (get what thou canst at Judah) doe not thou envie me my Morsels at Bethel.

6 He argues adamen, and tells him that it was danger-
OBSERVATIONS.

1. That wicked men are very sedulous in opposing the faithful Ministers of God.

What industry and activity doth this Priest of Bethel use to root Amos out of Israel. He sends to the King, and accuseth Amos for a Traitor; and when force will not doe, he plays the Fox, and under pretence of friendship privates him to leave his station, and to flee the Land. So Pharaoh, how industrious was he to destroy Israel; how active was Haman to have the Jews destroyed, and what a great sum doth he promise to the King to effect it, no less than ten thousand talents of silver, Hez. 4. 9. So Nebuchad's enemies, what force and fraud did they use to hinder his repairing of the Temple, how saine would they have had him flee; as Amasiah would have had Amos here, that he might have reproached him for a Fugitive, and one that was conscious to himself of his own guilt, and therefore he fled for it.

Q. The Question then will be, whether it be lawful to flee in time of persecution?

A. In some Cases it may, as,

1. If a man be but a young beginner, and find not strength to bear the brunt and heat of the day, he may withdraw for a time.

2. If the Persecution be personal, against a particular man, or Minister, and not against the whole Church, he may use his liberty. So did Moses, Elijah, David, Christ, Paul.

But when God's time is come, that he calls us to seal to his truth even with our dearest lives, we must not love them to the death, Rev. 12. 11. but rejoice that we have any thing of worth to lay down for Christ; like the valiant Horfe, we must goe forth to meet the armed man, Job 39. 21. so did that accomplisher, courageous Martyr, Mr. Fryth, when some that loved him had contrived his escape, he told them it must not be; for (faith he) if you should leave me here and goe to Croydon, declaring to the Bishop that you had left Fryth, I would surely follow

Ggg
See Mr. Clark's Lives, 1 Vol., in the Life of Mr. Fryth.


2 Wicked men many times are Sublime men.

The Devil chuffeth Serpents for his Instruments, Cupis ab his ornari Diabolus, he thinks it an ornament to his Cause and Kingdom to get wits about him, how subtilly here doth this Priest act his part; his words are smoother than oyl, and yet are they very swords, Psalm 55. 23. Satan's Instruments (like their Father the Devil) can transform themselves into Angels of Light, 2 Cor. 11. 13, 14. when such speak fair, believe them not, for there are seven abominations in their hearts, Prov. 26. 25. we had need then to be wise as Serpents, and to watch not only against a raging, but against a fawning enemy; not only against the Lion Rampant, but also against the Lion Couchant. The world's flatterers are more to be feared than its frowns, its courtesies, than its injuries. Many that have stood it our manfully against open hostility, yet have been insnared by flattery. Take heed of those Joabs and Judases that kiss and kill, 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10. watch not only against open, but also against secret insinuating enemies, which under pretence of friendship seek thy ruine; the Devil gains thousands, and ten thousands this way. Wee should observe his depths, and not be ignorant of his methods and devices; but stop our ears against his Syrens, when they seek to undermine us.

3 That titles of honour may be given to Gods Ministers.

O thou Seer, it is not, O thou Lyar, thou Viper, thou Wolf, thou Robber, thou Murderer, thou Juggler, Devil, & c., as those black blasphemous Devils the Quakers call us. Amaziah (though an Idolatrous Priest) yet had learnt better language than so.

4 The Ministers of God should be Seers.

They must not be blind Guides, nor Seers that can see nothing but what tends to their owne gain; nor Seers of Lyes and Vanities, (as it is said of false Prophets) Ezek. 13. 7, 8.
Ver. 13.

of the Prophecy of Amos.

9, 23 & 22. 28. but they must be men of knowledge, Mat. 2. 7. and have the Tongue of the Learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary. Look what the eye is to the body, that are (or at least-wise that should be) Pastors to the Church, to watch over the Flock for good, and to direct it in paths of Piety. Hence Ministers are called the Eye, 1 Cor. 12. 17. Stars, and the Light of the World, Mat. 5. 14. burning and shining Lights, John 5. 35. which help to inlighten the World with the light of sound Doctrin. Hence it is that the Prophets of old were so oft called Seers, Sadoc, was called a Seer, 2 Sam. 15. 27. and Gad, 2 Sam. 24. 11. and Eze. 1 Chron. 25. 5. &c.

Ver. 13.

But Prophecy not againe any more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappel, and the Kings Court.

V E E have seen this Bethelian Priests counsel, Theologically and Positively set down. Ver. 12. In this verse we have his advice Antithetically set down, But Prophecy no more at Bethel, come not within my Diocess and Jurisdiction, where I and others are bound to attend, and officiate by the Kings Mandamus. In the words we have, 1 A Prohibition, Prophecy no more at Bethel, q. d. Thou hast preached six Sermons already against the State, the King hath pardoned thee for them all, and pass’d an Act of Oblivion, provided thou preach no more so; but if thou be like to new Wine, which must vent (for silence is painful to a real Prophet) yet come not to Bethel, but rather goe to Judah thine owne Country, for I am resolved to suspend and silence thee from preaching here, and that for two Reason.

1 Because it is the Kings Sanctuary, and the Courtiers will not beleev thee, nor abide thee.

2 The Kings Court is there, and they cannot have while to attend thee; it is in vain therefore for thee to abide in such a place, where thou canst have neither Credence, nor Audience.

G g g
An Exposition.  Chap. 7.

We may add a third Reason, which was the real ground of this High-Priests prohibition, and that was because Amazi-
abs gain lay there, q. d. Come not here with thy New-light,
declame not here against our Idolatry, left thou marre our
markets, and hinder the sale of our false wares. This was the
truth of the business, though somewhat else was pretended, and
the King and Kingdoms interest pleaded.

Bethel was a City in the Kingdom of Israel, though pro-
perly it belonged to the Tribe of Benjamin; but Jeroboam
the first setting up one of the golden Calves there, 1 King.
12. 29. turned this Bethel (which was sometimes the Houfe
of God) into Beth-aven, the house of vanity and iniquity; Sa-
maria was the more populous place, but the Calves were
in most request at Bethel, and therefore the Prophet testifies
against the Idolatry of that place especially.

It is the Kings Chappel, or as the word most genuinely signi-
fies, it is the Kings Sanctuary; i. e. it is a place consecrated
by the Kings Predecessors for the worship of the Calves, to the
which he bears a singular devotion, and where he often keeps
his Royal residence, and doth celebrate his solemn Worship,
and Divine Service. It is therefore dangerous for thee, O Amos,
to preach against the Kings religion in the Kings Chappel, in
the face of the Court, and the flower of the Land. To doe so in
any part of the Land is not tolerable, but to preach thus at
Bethel is most intolerable. Jeroboam the first set up a Calf at
Dan as well as at Bethel; but this at Bethel was most frequented
both by King and People. 1. Because it was nearer to
Samaria than Dan, which was situate in the North part of the
Land. 2. For its Antiquity, because it was the place where
Jacob of old did Worship God. It was of greater Anti-
quity than the Temple at Jerusalem, yet for all these specious
reasons they sinned in forsaking the Rule, and not Wor-
shipping at Jerusalem as God had appointed. So that whereas
this Priest cries out, this is Bethel the Kings Chappel, we lay
so too, yet that is no prejudice to Gods Prerogative.

It is the Kings Court, or, it is the Kings House, for his Pa-
lace was there. Though the Kings prime Palace was in Sam-
maria, yet he had other Palaces in other places, as at Jerusal
and Bethel, where he used to reside for a time, that he might
be a Pattern of Worship to the people. Or, it is the House of
Verse 13.

The prophecy of Amos.

The Kingdome (as it is in the Fountain) that is, the Royal Court, or the Sovereign Court of Judicature for the Kingdom is at Bethel, whither come a great confluence of people, and where Civil affairs, and matters of State are debated, and therefore it is not safe nor seemly for thy rude rusticity, which knowes no Royalty, to abide there. The King hath Chaplaines enough of his owne (that are compleat Courtiers) to preach before him; he needs no such rusticall Prophets, and blunt Anti-Courtiers as thou art; he hath Natives enough, but thou art a Stranger, and comest from another Country: Hee hath Prelates and Priests of eminent parts, every way accomplisht for the work; whereas thou art a poor obscure Prophet, that camest ab harena, non ab ara, from the Herds, not from the Schools, and so art altogether unfit for the Court. Wouldst thou but Prophecy smooth and pleasant things, thou mightest abide here still, but thou art so rough and rugged, so plain and down-right, that our Courtiers ears cannot abide thy words; so that there is no staying for thee here but with abundance of danger. Thus this grand Impostor would have frightted the true Prophet from his duty, that so hee might keep up the reputation of his Idolatrous Priests at Bethel, who for filthy Lucre, that they might rob the true Prophets of their Tythes and Offerings, did by their preaching foment both Rebellion in the State, and Schism in the Church, for the Sanctuary at Bethel robbed the Temple at Jerusalem.

Observations.

1 Wicked men doe their utmost to silence faithful Ministers.

They prohibit them Preaching, Prophecy not. The like complaint we have, Amos 2, 12, Micah 2, 6. they say to the Prophets, Prophecy not; they silence them that they may sin without controul, and goe to Hell without any hindrance. Thus the Rulers of the Jews forbid Peter and John to preach any more in the name of Jesus, Acts 4, 17, 18, & 5, 40. what is this but to fight against God, and to countermand his commands? he bids his Amos preach, the Amaziah of the World say no. Did ever any man thus harden himself against God, and prosper? if he that with-holds Corn from the people, him shall the people curse, Prov. 11, 26. what a sad curse.
An Exposition

will light upon those that with-hold Spiritual corn from them, and deprive them of their faithful Pastors which are the light of the World, the Guides, the Fathers, the Physicians, the Pillars of the Church; such as forbid men to Preach, please neither God nor man. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. Herod was a wicked man, yet this was his sinning sin, and is said to surmount all the rest, that he put John in Prison. Luke 3. 20. be added this above all, that he put up John in prison; and see what befell Amaziah here for opposing Amos, ver. ult.

Obj. But the Minister denounceth Judgments against u, which we cannot bear.

A. Let him preach Mercies or Menaces, if God have sent him we may not silence him, but must thankfully receive Threatenings as well as Promises, Judgments as well as Mercies; they are both necessary for u.

2. The great ones of the world cannot brook plain Preachers.

These Gallants look upon such blunt and bold Amos as a pack of Fanatics, a company of rude, indiscreet Persons, that dare venture to reprove such as them for their sins. God calls his Ministers Salt, Matt. 5. 13, but these would have them Honey, to preach only pleasing and humorous things unto them. Such were those, Isa. 30. 10. They say to the Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, Prophezie not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, Prophezie deceits. Great men many times have great corruptions, which they cannot endure should be conched, their tender ears cannot away with sound Doctrine, they must have smooth and pleasant things, or nothing, Couriers love Verba byssina, soft and silken words. Though we approve of Prudence in Preaching before great ones, yet flattery we abhor. We may not betray the truth to please men; we are sent to profit, not to please; to edifie the heart, not to gratifie the ear. Had Amos preached high-flowen Notions, or Doctrine without application, he might have been a Priest for Bethel; he might preach in generals, but he must not Prophezie of Gods Judgments against them, Prophezie not. Men can bear with Physicians, and suffer them to tell them of the Diseases of their Bodies; and the Lawyer, to sell them of the flaws in their estates; only the Minister, who is for the Soul, he must not speak a word. Prophezie not, whereas great men have most need of faithful Prophets, be-
Ver. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos.

cause they are encompassed with so many flatterers.

3 Wicked men put fair names upon foul places and practices.

Bethel here was become Beth-aen, yet they call it a Sanctuary; when indeed it was the Devils Brothele-house, polluted with vile Idolatry and iniquity. So Papists put fine titles upon their foul wares, to vent them the better. The Pope calls himself the Servant of the Servants of God, yet makes himself King of Kings, and is a profest enemy to Gods Servants. The Quakers call themselves the Saints of the most high, when they are profest enemies to God, his Worship, ways, &c. The Arminians seem to magnifie Free-grace as much as any of the Orthodox, but descend to particulars and their errors will soon appear. It is often professed by Arminius (an a Reverend Divine) that he attributes as much to Grace as any other; that there is nothing said by others concerning the efficacy of Grace, which is not also affirmed by himself, yea that he acknowledgeth whatsoever may be thought or imagined for the opening and setting forth of the power of grace, and that he is mis-reported by those that render him injurious to the grace of God, and one that attributes too much to Free-will. We find in Augustine, that Pelagius professeth as much concerning himself, and yet in the mean time this is true, that if Arminius his Opinion stand good, all this efficacy of grace which he so magnifies, and amplifies in words, depends on the will of man, in regard that by vertue of its native liberty, it may receive or reject this grace; use it or not use it; render it effectual or vain, &c. Thus he.

Ver. 14, 15.

Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets Son, but I was an Herd-man, and a gatherer of Sycome fruit.

And the Lord took mee as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go prophesi unto my people Israel.

We have seen Amaziah’s design, by force and fraud to suppress Amos; we are now come to Amos his Answer, which consists of two parts; 1 An Apology for
what he did, grounded upon God's extraordinary calling him to the work. 2. His Prophesie, which is two-fold.

1. Particular, containing those particular Judgements which should befall Amaziah.

His Wife.

His Children.

2. General, containing the utter destruction of Israel, ver. ult.

In these two Verses we have Amos his answer, wherein he constantly and courageously maintaines what he had done; and is so farre from desisting or forsaking of his Station, that by an holy Anticipitations he growes more bold and resolute, confirming what he had spoken against Israel, and adding moreover a dreadful Commination against this Arch-Priest for opposing him in the Work of the Lord. He feared not his imperious Injunctions, and Lordly Prohibition, but boldly afferts his Calling, and goes on in the exercise of it, maugre the malice of all opposition whatsoever.

So that here we have an Implicit reason, why Amos durst not desist from Prophecying to Israel, viz. because he was called extraordinarily by God to Prophecy unto them. He was no intruder, but a truly called and qualified Officer; he did nothing rashly or seditiously, but he seriously and soberly discharged the duties of that place to which God had so signally called him.

Now the better to clear his Call (which was the foundation of his comfort and confidence) he first tells us Negatively, what he was not. I was no Prophet, nor Prophets Son, &c. I was no Prophet either by birth or breeding, either by Original or Succession. Some were chosen to be Prophets before they were bred or born, as Jer. 1. 5. others among the Israelites were Prophets by succession; others by preparation, were trained up times in the knowledge and study of the Scripture; in Colledges and Seminaries of Learning, to supply the wants of the Church. The Prophets that taught them, were called their Fathers, and the Scholars were called, the Sons of the Prophets, 2 King. 2. 3. 7. 15. & 4. 38. & 6. 1. Mar. 10. 24. Amos ingenuously confesseth, that he was none of these; hee was
was neither Nabi, nor Ben Nabi, neither Prophet, nor Prophets Son; he was not brought up at Bethel, 2 King. 2. 3. or Jericho, ver. 5. or Gilgal, 2 King. 4. 38. nor at the feet of any learned Gamaliel.

2 Positively, he tells us plainly what he was, viz. an illiterate Herdman of the Tribe of Judah, dwelling at Tekoa, a City in Judah, but extraordinarily called by God, from his Country-calling, of feeding Cattel, to feed his people Israel with the Bread of Life, Amos 1. 1.

This he mentions not to make his Message contemptible, but to procure the more respect and authority to his Prophecy, since he was not called and qualified in an ordinary way, but immediately, and extraordinarily by God himself.

I was an Herdman; Such were useful in their kind, they had many of them in those days, because their riches lay much in cattel. Their lesser cattel were tended by Shepherds, and their greater by Herdmen, Gen. 13. 5. & 24. 35. & 26. Boker, habulcus, Job. 1. 3. Saul himself before he was made King, was an Herdman, 1 Sam. 11. 5. q. d. Behold the wonderful Works of God, that I who was never bred to this employment should yet bee able to Prophecy, and so confound such learned Rabbies as you take your selves to be.

And a gasterer of Sycamore Fruit.

Yet more to magnifie Gods Free-grace, he sets forth his mean condition from which the Lord had called him. He lived a solitary, country life, he was not bred up in Cities, or Academies, but amongst Herds and Stalls, contenting himself with such wild dyet, as the Sycamores did afford. Most take the word Sycamore strictly, for a kind of wild Figg, called arbor media intersicam & morum, had nomen eius, & suk, focus; & Sycamore fruit; that is, I was a poor man, of a low condition, even of the same rank with those that use to feed upon wild Figgs; I did not then turn Prophet for my belly, for I had learned to fare hardly, which thou O Amaziah, and thy Court-Priests can hardly doe, and therefore you tooth up the Rulers in their Idolatry, that you may serve your owne turns, but Sycamore fruit will serve my turn.
An Exposition

chap. 7.

Of Sycamore-trees there were great abundance in the Land of Canaan, as appears, 1 Kings. 10. 27. Isa. 9. 10. Ps. 19. 4. and in Egypt, Psal. 78. 47. they were very fruitful, they bare fruit three or four times in the year, faith Dioscorides, lib. 1. c. 143. This fruit Amos might gather for himself, or for his family, or for to sell.

Observations.

1. As the Devil hath his Amazias to oppose the truth, so God has his Amos to defend it.

The same day that Pelagius was born in Britain, the same day was Saint Austin born in Africa to oppose him, as I have shewed elsewhere.

Ob. 2. p. 155.

2. God often chuseth the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the things that are not (of any esteem in the world) to confound the things that are of great esteem amongst them, 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28.

He usually hangs the greatest weights upon the weakest wyres, that so his name may have all the praise; if the Lord should alwayes work by excellent Instrument, we should Idolize the Instruments and forget God. Hence the Lord often passeth by the eloquent Orator, and the learned Scribe, and chuseth an illiterate Amos, sending him from the Crib to the Court, to witness against the Idolatry of Princes, Priests, and People.

Thus in the Civil State he oft chuseth persons of low degree to rule his people, as Moses, Saul, David, all three called from their Flocks and Herds to rule his people, Exo. 3. 1. 1 Sam. 9. 21. & 2 Sam. 7. 8. Psal. 113. 7. 8. Thus in the Ecclesiastical estate he called Eliab from the Plow, 1 Kings. 19. 19. Mathew from the receipt of Custom; all the Apostles were illiterate men till Christ gifted them extraordinarily, and fitted them for their work, 1 Tim. 4. 13. God loves to shew his power in weakness, that the glory may be his, 2 Cor. 12. 9. Psal. 8. 3. we have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may bee of God, and not of us, 2 Cor. 4. 7.

Ob. From hence the Anabaptists would dry down Universities, and Schools of Learning, the Lord took Amos from the Sals, and
and Elisha from the Plain, and qualified them without study, what need then this studying and Schooling? So.

Anf. These were called extraordinarily, as appears by their extraordinary gifts; now extraordinary Cases cannot make an ordinary rule; because the Lord fed the Israelites with Manna, it doth not therefore follow that we must sit still, and think to be so fed.

It is true, the Anabaptists, and fanatick frantick Quakers, doe all pretend to an extraordinary and immediate Call; when upon trial they are found not to have ordinary gifts, they can hardly write or read.

Examples in Scripture are not always Argumentative, neither are we bound to follow them unless there be a like call, causes, and other concurrent circumstances, as I have shewed elsewhere.

Grace makes men confident and courageous.

How roundly and undauntedly doth Amos here deal with Amaziah, notwithstanding all his threats and flatteries, yet he stands like a Rock, justifies his Calling, and denounceth Judgements against the false Prophet himself; and confirms what he had spoken before against Israel. Thus the righteous are an everlasting foundation, Prov. 10. 25. The wicked fear where there is no ground of fear, and fly when none pursues them, but the righteous are bold as Lions, Prov. 28. 1. Mark 6. 18. Acts 23. 10.

Verse 15.

And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, Prophesie unto my people Israel.

Amaziah counselleth Amos to goe back to Jadan from whence he came; to this Amos replies, I cannot, I dare not; for as I came from thence by Divine command, so till I have the like command from him that sent me, I dare not return.

Amos comforts himself much with the sweet rest of that Call which he had from God, and therefore he tells us, how
An Exposition

Because Amos speaks of a flock here, therefore some would gather that Amos was a Shepherd, but the word Hattath is general, and relates to a flock of great Cattels, as well as small.

Observations.

1. We must obey God rather than men, Acts 4:19 & 5:29.
   Amaziah bids Amos be gone, but Amos saies, the Lord sent him to Israel and he will not hire. Thus he opposed God's Commandment to Amaziah's prohibition. We must obey no man but in and for the Lord, Ephes. 6:1. Hence the Midwives are commended for disobeying the wicked commands of Pharaoh, who would have had all the male Children killed, Exod. 1:17.

2. God loves to appear to us when we are in our Callings.
   Thus God appeared to Moses when he was keeping Sheep, Exod. 3:1. to David, when he was following the Ewes; to Saul, when he was seeking Asses; to Amos here, when he was following the Herd; and to the Woman of Samaria, when she was drawing water, Job. 4:7.

3. When God calls us to forfake all we must readily doe it.
   God commands Amos to leave his Herds, the Apostles to forfake their Nets, Abraham to forfake his owne Country and Kindred, Zachenus to come down and follow Christ, and they immediately did so, Mat. 4:19, 26. Luke 19:6. Gen. 12:1, 4. True grace makes men willing to doe or suffer whatever God commands.

4. None may take upon them the Ministry without a Call.
   Amos saies, no man may assume this Office till he be called, Heb. 5:4. & Should an angel from Heaven come and preach, he must shew his Call, he may not violate the order which God hath set in his Church, Gal. 1:8. Hence the Lord do oft complaines of false Prophets, that they ran and he sent them not, Jer. 14:14. Many run from their Callings without a Call, Zach. 13:5. Let such never look either
Ver. 16. of the Prophecy of Amos.

ther for protection or success; let them preach never so loud, or so long, they shall never profit people because God is against them, Jer. 23. 32. I am against them that prophesie false dreams, and cause my people to err by their lies and lightness, yet I sent them not, mark what follows, therefore they shall not profit this people; that is, they shall doe them much hurt and mischief, it is a Meiosis.

Be sure then to have a Call for what you doe, this will support you under your burdens, and comfort you in the midst of all temptations and trials, Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18. Acts 4, 19, 20. If the Lord have called us he will keep us, Isa. 42. 6. this is as a brazen wall to secure us; this made Amos so resolute and confident against Amaziah, and Nathan so free with David, Elijah with Ahab, John Baptist with Herod, and the Apostles with the world; it was the warrant of their Calling, that they had it from God, and not from man.

This will make our Ministry successful, one Elijah sent by God, shall be too hard for two hundred and fifty false Prophets, though King Ahab and Queen Jezebel join with them, and ovnve them.

Ver. 16.

Now therefore hear the Word of the Lord, thou sayest, Prophecie not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isae.

Amos comes now to direct his speech to Amaziah, who had forbidden him to Prophecie, Thou sayest, Prophecie not against Israel. To this Prohibition Amos opposeth Gods Injunction, and is so farre from desisting, that he denounceth Gods Judgements against him, and bids him attend to what he had to say from the Lord against him. Q. d. Who art thou O vain man, that dares thus affront and contradict the Almighty; So that he saith, Go, Prophecie to Israel, yet thou sayest, Go not to Israel, neither Prophecie there, but goe to Judah, and prophesie there. Hear therefore what the Lord hath determined against thee, Thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City, thy Children shall fall by the sword, &c.

In these two last Veres we have a four-fold Judgement denounced against this Persecuting Priest, ver. 17.
An Exposition

2 Here is the Procataphetical cause of these Judgements, that was his opposing Amos in the Work of the Lord, using all means to silence him.

3 Here is a confirmation of the former Commination against Israel, ver. 11. Hear the Word of the Lord. We have heard thee speak, now doest thou hear God speak: for his Word is not like thine, a vain, empty, ineffectual word; but a mighty, powerful, efficacious word, bringing down dreadful things upon the heads of malicious Persecutors, 2 Cor. 10. 6. God is ready to revenge the disobedience done to his commands. Gods Word lays hold on wicked men, Zach. 1. 6. and that which they accounted wind, becomes like fire to devour them, Jer. 5. 13, 14.

Thus saith, Prophefsie not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac; that is, Prophefsie not of Gods Judgements against the ten Tribes, who were descended from Abraham by Isaac the Son of the Promise, Gen. 21. 12, see before ver. 9.

This dropping here is Metaphorical, and denotes those dreadful Judgements which should fall upon the heads of wicked men like a storm of rain, Ezek. 20. 46. &c. 21. 2, 3.

2 Dropping in Scripture is frequently taken in the sweetest sense, for gentle and sweet speaking, Deut. 32. 2. Job 29. 22. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and distill as the dew; that is, it shall bee as useful and refreshing to men, as the dew and rain is to the grass; as these soften the ground, and so make the fruits to grow up sweetly and abundantly; so the Word of God falling into an honest and good heart becomes effectual, making it more soft and fruitful in every good work, Isa. 55. 10. Luke 8. 15.

Observations.

1 Wicked men are Antipodes to God.

They goe directly contrary to his commands. God bids Amos Prophefsie against Israel, Amaziah forbids him. God bids Amos drop and denounce Judgements against Israel; so he bids, Amaziah, if thou wilt drop, goe drop at Judah, for we will none of thy dropping here. So true is that of Luc. 6. Homo est inversus decalogus, Man is a cross-grained-Peace.
Ver. 17. of the Prophecy of Amos.

directly opposite to all God's commands. There is in our Nature a deadly enmity to God, his Ways, his Worship, his Word, his Ordinances, his Prophets, his People, and to all that is good, Rom. 8. 7. Col. 1. 21.

Ver. 17.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City, and thy Sons and Daughters shall fall by the Sword, and thy Land shall be divided by Line, and thou shalt die in a polluted Land, and Israel shall surely go into Captivity from of his owne Land.

In this Verse we have a dreadful Judgement denounced against this High-Priest of Bethel, consisting of many Branches,

1. Confutation of his Wife, and that openly.
2. Loss of his Children.
3. Loss of his Lands.
4. Loss of his Liberty, and
5. Loss of Israel.

Loe, this is the fruit of silencing Preachers, and forbidding Gods Ministers to Prophesi.

2. Here is the confirmation, or ratification of all this, Dixit Dominus, the Lord hath said it, who will certainly doe it.

Thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City.

Interpreters are divided about the meaning of these words; some take them Actively, and the Original seems to favour it; viz. that his Wife should be an open Harlot, and a common Scourger, not so much forced, by Souldiers, as voluntarily addicted to it.

Others take the words Passively, that she should be violently forced and ravished by the Assyrians when they should take the City, according to that threatening against disobedient ones, Daunc. 28. 30. So Job. 31. 10. Isa 13. 16. La-

But if it were violent and involuntary, where were the Harlotry? Thy Wife shall be an Harlot, and to show her
An Exposition

Græcis dolor incredibili ignominia quam do maritus in media civitate uxoris injuriis prohibere non potest; non est tantum dolor in sin confrigurate, quantus in uxoru pollute; maritus enim liberrius audit uxorem interfici quam pollut. Hieron.

This is the first Punishment, the second follows.

2 Thy Sons and thy Daughters shall fall by the sword.

Wicked Parents bring a Curse upon their Children, not only their Cartel, but all their Relations fare the worse for them.

3 Yet this is not all, Thy Land shall be divided by Line.

Conquerours were wont to divide every one his Lot and portion by Lines and Cords; for of old they used Cords instead of Measuring-Rods, to divide their Land. Hence the Lines in Scripture are put for the Inheritance, or portion allotted to every one by Line, Deut. 32. 9. 2 Sam. 8. 2. Psal. 16. 6. Mich. 2. 5. Thus he should not only lose his Heires, but his Inheritance also.

And thou shalt dye in a polluted Land.

This is the fourth Punishment, Thou shalt dye a Captive in Assyria, which was polluted with Heathenism and Idolatry.

This is reckoned as a Judgement, Levit. 26. 38. against Paschur, Jer. 20. 6. and Coniah, Jer. 22. 15, 26. The Land of Promise was called the Holy Land, and in comparison of it all other Nations were called and counted unclean, and they looked upon it as a misery to be buried in a strange Land, and not in Canaan.

And Israel shall go into Captivity.

Not only thou, but all Israel whom thou hast helped to deceive, and hast hardened in their Idolatry and Sin, shall go into Captivity with thee; and this men get by following Idolaters and Impostors, when the blind lead the blind both fall into the ditch.

Israel shall surely go into captivity. God will no longer bear with them, since King and Kingdom are settled upon their Lees, and had so long sinned together, now the Lord tells them that they should suffer together, and goe Captives into Assyria.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

As we see 2 Kings, 15, 29, &c. 17, 6. 18, 23, 24 & 18; 11. since they had abused that good land which the Lord had given them, now it should spew them out for their Idolatry.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. God useth to regenerate Sinners, and to pay them in their own coin.

This we see here excellently exemplified in Amaziah.

1. He inticed Israel to Idolatry, which is Spiritual Harlotry, therefore his Wife shall be an Harlot.

2. He had destroyed those that were Gods Children by external profession, therefore his Children were destroyed.

3. He made his Gods his God, and was all for gain, therefore now he shall lose all.

4. He that had polluted Gods People, shall now dye in a polluted Land. He that would not follow the true God to his Salvation, shall follow false ones to his own destruction.

2. Silencing and persecuting of Gods faithful Ministers is a God-provoking Sin.

Thou sayest, Prophesie not, what follows? therefore thy Wife, thy Children, thy Stare, thy Self, and the Land of thy Nativity shall smart for it. Now, if Amaziah paid so dear for endeavouring to silence one faithful Amos, what may they expect who do actually blow out many burning and shining Lights? &c.; let such remember Psalms, Jer. 20, 2, 3, 4. and the men of Anathoth, Jer. 11, 21, 22, 23. and Jeroboam the first with his withered hand, which was smitten for stretching it forth against the Prophet, 1 King. 13. and Elias the Sorcerer, who was smitten blind for opposing the truth, Acts 13. 10, 11. never any man hardened himself against God, especially in this kind that ever prospered, Job 9, 4. Amaziah had many other sins, as Idolatry, Superstition, Covetousness, &c. but this Persecuting of Amos was his fatal sin, and ruined both him and his.

3. Wicked Parents bring a Curse upon their Posterity.

God oft punisheth the sins of the Fathers upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, Exodus 20, 5, &c. 34, 7. Deut. 28, 18, 32, 41. Jer. 29, 32. See more in a Table on Job.

Hieron, as Exodus 34, 7. &c. in my Com, on Hol. 13, 14, p. 80, and Dr. Gurnes on Heb. 11.
4 Goods ill gotten seldome prosper.
Treasures of wickednesse profit not, Prov. 10. 2. Amaziah had scraped much wealth together, but his enemies became his heirs. And so it is with many Usurers, and oppressing Cormorants, who treasure up riches for their enemies.

5 Marriage is lawful in Ministers as well as others.
The Apostle tells us, that Marriage is honourable not only in some, but in all sorts and degrees of men, Heb. 13. 4. Marriage is honourable to wives in all men, and God himself hath appointed it: for the comfort of all degrees, Gen. 1. 28. & 2. 18. and bids him that cannot contain, marry, 1 Cor. 7. 2. none can vow that which is not in his owne power; but continency is the gift of God, Matt. 19. 11. all cannot receive this saying, and therefore not only Amaziah here, but the Priests and Prophets in the Old Testament had Wives; Zachariah the Priest hath an Elizabeth to his Wife, and thee descended of the Daughters of Aaron, Luke 1. 5. Jeremiah was the Son of a Priest, Jer. 1. 1. and Hophni and Phineas the Sons of Eli, the Priest, 1 Sam. 1. 3. and John Baptist the Son of Zachariah the Priest; yea many of the Apostles had Wives, as Peter, Philip, James, and Barnabas, Mar. 8. 14. Acts 13. 2. Saint Ambrose affirms, that all the Apostles were married save John and Paul, and the Apostle expressly faith, that he had power to marry as well as Cephas, 1 Cor. 9. 5. and he allows a Bishop to have one wife, Titus 1. 6. It is one mark of Antichrist to maintaine that Doctrine of Devils, in forbidding the marriage of Ministers, 1 Tim. 4. 1. 3.

This Prohibition of Marriage hath filled the World with VVhoredome, Sodomy, Bestiality and Incest, and therefore Papbstinns a famous Primitive Confeffor, though himself were unmarried, yet mightily perswaded and prevailed with the Nicene Council, that they should not decree any thing against Priests Marriage.
The moderate sort of Papists have allowed of Priests Marriages,
Marriages, as Gratian, Panormian, and others, even Beller- 
mine himself confesseth, that there is no Precept in the Old 
or New Testament against Ministers marriage; and we in Eng- 
Ines Evangelical 
land are bound to bless God for the married Clergy. How many 
other eminent Lights is this Church furnisheth withall, from the 
pious and reverend Clergy-men of this Land. It is a choicer 
Mercy to a Land, when the Lord shall raise up from amongst 
ourselves Nazarites to serve in the Sanctuary, Amos 2. 11. See Mr. Charsy

Cant. Yet as all persons, so young Ministers especially 
should not be rash and hasty in their Marriages, but should 
get a competent Library first, and some gravity and soli-
dary, that they may be able to walk exemplarily before their 
Flocks, and that they may not dishonour this honourable Or-
dinance of God, with any levity or vanity.

[ For the lawfulness of Ministers Marriage, see B. Hall, E-
piii. 3, Dec. 2, and his Treatise tyled, The Honour of the Mar-
Quest. 43. Perkins 2, Vol. Demonstr. of the Problem, p. 574. 
Mornay de Miss. l. c. 8. Erasmus Tom. 5, p. 513. D. Wilt-
let. Synopsis Pap. Error 83, p. 391, &c. and Mr. Fox 
Martyrolog. Vol. 2, p. 464, &c. See more in the Index of the 
Book of Martyrs, in the word Marriage. B. Morton Protet. 
contra Pap. Q. 21, p. 417, ad 456. Paresus in 1 Cor. 7, Q. 3, 

CORONIS.

Hic praestis Historias, ut Amasias, qui sibi in 
Ecclesia dominium vendidit, caveamus, & constanter retinie-
mus vera fidei confessionem, quam ex Dei verbo didicimus. 
Guatet.

The end of the Seventh Chapter.
were coming upon this people, by three Types and Visions, 
1. By the Type of Grasshoppers and Locusts, who did shadow out the famine, chap. 7. 2. By fire, devouring the great deep, is set forth War, chap. 7, 4, 5, 6. 3. By a Plumbline, is set forth the overthrow of the Kingdom, and the Kings house, chap. 7, 7. 4. We have here a fourth Vision, where by a basket of Summer fruit, is set forth the final destruction of the ten Tribes. So that in this chapter we have the somme of Amos his sixth Sermon, wherein is a Type propounded and expounded. Or 1. A Commination of the total overthrow of the Kingdom of Israel, set forth under the type of a basket of Summer fruit, vers. 1, 2, 3.

2. Here is an Amplification of this Commination, the better to awaken these secure sinners, set forth by a particular enumeration of those dreadful Judgments, both corporal and spiritual, which were coming on them, and that in so dreadful a manner, that the Sun should be darkened, and no light of consolation appear. The Land should tremble, and every one mourn bitterly, as for the loss of an only Son, vers. 7. Desolation like an overflowing flood should run over all. Vers. 3.

Their feasting should be turned into fasting, and their prosperity into deplorable misery. This is set forth, 1. Metaphorically, vers. 9. I will cause the Sun to go down at noon.

2. Plainly, vers. 3, to 13. I will turn your feasts into weeping, and your beautiful Virgins and strong young men shall perish.

3. Their Pastors should be taken from them, and they should have a spiritual famine of the preaching of the Word, it should be so scarce, that it was not to be found, vers. 11, 12. They had loathed this Manna, and now they should be made to know the worth of it, by the wanting of it.

4. Utter destruction, vers. 14. They shall fall and never rise up again.

3. Here is the ground of this Commination, of the impious and meritorious cause of all this sorrow, viz. the sins of Israel, as 1. Their oppression of the poor, vers. 4.

2. Their covetousness and greediness after gain, requiring all time lost that was spent in the service of God, because it brought no present profit, therefore they say, when will the Now-Moon begin to rise.
AN EXPOSITION,
WITH
Practical OBSERVATIONS
UPON
The Eighth Chapter of Amos.

VERSE 1, 2, 3.
Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold a basket of Summer fruit.
And he said, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, a basket of Summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.
And the Songs of the Temples shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God; there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence.

The Lord having tried many conclusions upon this people, and used all means to reclaim them, but in vain; he therefore sends the Prophet to them, to declare their final ruine, which he doth in this Chapter by the vision of a basket of Summer fruit, noting thereby the ripeness of their sins, and their neeriness to ruine.
The Prophet had before set forth the Judgments which were
An Exposition

Chap. 8.

were coming upon this people, by three Types and Visions.
1. By the Type of Grasshoppers and Locusts, who did shad out the famine, chap. 7. 2. By fire, devouring the great deep, is set forth War, chap. 7. 4, 5, 6. 3. By a Plumb line, is set forth the overthrow of the Kingdom, and the Kings house, chap. 7. 7. 4. We have here a fourth Vision, where by a basket of Summer fruit, is set forth the final destruction of the Tribes. So that in this chapter we have the summe of Ams.

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3. The ground of this Conmimation, of this impulsive and meritorious cause of all this sorrow; viz. the sins of Israel, as 1. Their oppression of the poor, vers. 4.

2. Their covetousness and greediness after gain, ceasing all time lost that was spent in the service of God, because it brought no present profit; therefore they say, when will the New-Moon begin? vers. 5.
3. Their deceitful dealing, in satisfying weights and measures, ver. 3.

Verse 8.
Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold a basket of Summer fruit.

The Prophet begins with a Vision or Parable, which contains the substance of the whole Sermon, by a lively type before forth Israel utter ruine, and to procure the more authority to what he spake, he begins with his usual preface, which he prefixt before his former Visions, chap. 7. 1. 4. 7. Then backe the Lord shewed me. The Lord the God of Israel, whose name is Jehovah, the onely true God, who cannot deceive, nor be deceived; he is the Author of this Vision, I am but the Penman and sufficke Instrument to declare it to you, 2 Pet. 1. 21.

In the Verse itself, we have, 1. An Exordium or Preface, Thus hath the Lord shewed me, q. d. I bring you no Vision of mine own brain, but what I tell you I have received from the Lord, the Vision I had from him, and therefore in his name do I require attention.

2. Here is a note of Attention, Behold, which is here an Eye-Eye, though oft in Scripture it be an Ear-Ear, calling upon men to hearken; yet here 'tis an Eye-Eye, and calls upon them to see a Vision, so it is used, John 2. 29, 47. This word Behold, like the hand in the Margin of a Book, points to some notable thing, and is like the sounding of a Trumpet before some famous proclamation, or the ringing of a Bell before an excellent Sermon.

3. Here is the Vision to be amended and observed, and that is, A basket of Summer fruit. Amos saw a basket of Summer fruit. After all the Visions means and menaces which the Lord had given them, he adds yet this, Of a basket of Summer fruit, it is at last he might work upon their hard hearts. By this fittered Hieroglyphick, the Lord typified the manner of Israel's end, and Thence it to the Prophet in Vision, the better to affect both Prophet and People.
And he said, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, A boil of summer fruit; then said the Lord unto me, The end is come upon my people Israel, I will not again smite them any more.

In the precedent Verse we had the Type propounded, in this Verse it is expounded.

The better to awaken both Prophet and People, and to quicken their attention,

1 The Lord questions with the Prophet, Amos, what seest thou? Questions and Colloquies are more forcibly, and make a deeper impression than plain positive assertions; hence the Lord to obtrude them, Amos 7. 8. Zach. 4. 1. 6. 1.

2. Here is the Prophets answer, And I said, A boil of summer fruit. This was the Vision which the Lord shewed him, what these ripe fruits were, whether Cherries, as some affirm, or Figs, as others; or Pears, Plumbs, Grapes, others; or Apples, as A Lapide labours more minutely, than licidly to prove by eight Analogies, it is not material for us to know; it is sufficient that they were summer fruits, gathered towards the end of summer, when fruits ripen, and even fall into the hands of the gatherer.

3. Here is the Lords explanation of this Vision, Then said the Lord unto me, the end is come upon my people of Israel. There is an elegant Paronomasy between the two Hebrew words, viz. that which signifies summer fruits, and that which signifies an end; they both sound much alike, so that the one may easily put us in mind of the other; the ripeness of their fins, of the nearer is often ruin.

The Lord had tried all means and medicines, both as a Father, and a Physician to cure this people, but since they were incorrigible and incurable, he now resolves to trouble himself and his Prophets no more with them, for now he intends utterly to destroy them, The end is come. Hypocrites and presumptuous sinners are wont to promise themselves a longer time still, No (saith the Lord) you are ripe for ruin, and therefore now you shall reap the fruit of your own ways. I
will bear no longer with you; but as ripe fruit falls of its
own kind with ease, so shall this people drop into the mouth
of the Assyrian, now that the term and time decreed by God
for their final overthrow is come. As men gather ripe fruits
into their baskets, and then eat them, so shall the cruel and
greedy Assyrian devour and destroy those rebellious Sinners
who are ripe and ready for destruction, and therefore the
Lord adds,

I will not again pass by them any more.

The like expression we have, Amos 7. 8. 9. d. I will not
spare them, nor pass by their sins any more, as I have done;
No ad terram impunes ut. So Micah 7. 18. the Lord is said to pardon and pass by the sins of his people; but these had so provoked him, that he would no longer defer the punishment of their iniquity. They had enjoyed a long summer of peace and prosperity; which instead
of ripening their graces, had ripened their vices, and therefore now the Lord resolves to make a final end with them, and utterly to consume them from the face of the earth.

As if the Lord had said, The cry of their sins is so great, that I cannot longer forbear them, but I will execute my justice upon them without any inclination to mercy, which they have so greatly abused; it is true, I have formerly planted some of their fruits, and have destroyed some of their people; but now I will come with a basket, and gather all that grows upon Israel; and will make such an end of this gathering, that there shall be no more of this kind left for hereafter.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Sacred and majestic rhetoric becomes the ministers
of Christ.

A vain, light, frothy, flourish of words is below the mi-
isters of Christ, but a grave, solid, serious finding out of
acceptable words, the better to work upon the affections
of people, becomes our calling. Hence the Lord himself here
uses an Euphemism, a Patronymic. &c. Metonyms, &c.,

2. When the sins of a people are ripe and full, God will no
longer spare them.

He lets the wicked fill up the measure of their iniquity be-
Revel.
Revel. 14. 18. Though he be long yet he will not always bear, but when sin is come to maturity, he will cut it down with the sickle of his wrath, and will recompense his patience with the fierceness of his fury; and then though Noah, Job, and Daniel should stand before him for such a people, yet they could not prevail, Ezek. 14. 14, 20. nor preserve them from ruine, Jer. 16. 5. Lam. 4. 18. Ezek. 5. 11. & 7. 5, 6. Nah. 1. 8, 9.

Q. But when are a people ripe for ruine?

A. I have shewed at large elsewhere, viz. when the multitude, magnitude, strength, growth, impudence, and obstinacy of people's sins are come to the height, then is a people's downfall near; when no Preaching, no Praying, no Judgements, no Mercies can better a People, but they fall away more and more, and grow worse and worse, it is a most certain sign that sin is ripe, and that people nigh to ruine.

B. God will not spare his own people when they rebel against him.

Though Israel be his People, and in Covenant with him, yet if they walk not up to the terms of the Covenant, God will cast them off, and bring an end upon Israel, for so saith the text; The end is come upon my people of Israel. People are apt to boast themselves up in their Priviledges, and to think that their Pserogatives should save them from wrath, but in vain, as I have shewed elsewithe.

Verse 3.

And the Songs of the Temples shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God, there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence.

The Prophet goes on to amplify the greatness of the approaching Judgements, the better to awaken them; to this end he tells them, 1. That the Songs of the Temples should cease, and be turned to howling and lamentation for the miseries that should come upon them. This Howling notes the greatness of the grief, and the height of horror which should surprize them; they should not only weep for the calamities which should come upon them, but they should weep till they howl again.
of the Prophecy of Amos.


Q. But what is meant by the Temple here?

A. The word signifieth both a Palace, and a Temple; and therefore some render it, The Songs of the Palace shall be howlings, &c. those Palaces and great Houses of the great ones, which have been hitherto filled with Mirth and Musick, shall be now filled with weeping and howling. The Sepulchres and the Vulgar mistaking the word Seir, cantica, render it, Cardines & laquearia Templo stribant, but the word signifieth a Temple, as well as a Palace; and by it here is meant not so much the Temple at Jerusalem, (which was not destroyed till a considerable time after) but the Idolatrous Temple of Bethel, where the golden Calves were, and other high places where they had set up Idols; for though this Prophet doth sometimes glance at Judah and Jerusalem, yet the primary bent of his Prophecy is against Samaria, and the ten Tribes, as appears, ver. 14. I will punish those that swear by the sun of Samaria, which was not farre from Bethel, against whose Idolatry Amos so much inveighed, Amos 7. 13.

2. There should be so great a Mortality of all sorts and Sexes, that many should dye by the Sword, Plague, Famine, Captivity, and other Judgements, every word hath its weight. There shall be dead Bodies, many dead Bodies, many dead Bodies in all places, and these shall be cast out with silence, i.e. they shall cast them into common pits, and bury them without lamentation, or any funeral solemnity. The word Has, Tace, Sile, is the same with Amos 6. 10. Be silent. Some give the same sense of the word as they do, Amos 6. 10. he that buries the dead shall say to him that helps him, BE SILENT, not a word, for God is just in all that he hath brought upon us for our Apostasie and Idolatry. So the word is used, Amos 5. 13. & 6. 10. Hab. 2. 20. Zeph. 2. 17. Zech. 2. 13. or else thus, Throw these dead bodies into pits and say nothing, lest we be requested as unclean by the Law.
3 Here is the time when all this misery should fall upon them, viz. In that day, i.e. in the day of Israel’s final overthrow.

4 Here is the certainty of all this, Dixit Dominus, The Lord, who cannot lie, hath spoken it.

Observations.

1 The joy of Idolatrous worshippers shall end in sorrow. They may feast, and fiddle, and sing for a time, and walk in the light of those sparks with themselves have kindled, but this they shall have at God’s hands, they shall lie down in sorrow. Isa. 50. wli. God hates both them and their singing, and will turn their songs into howling, Amos 5. 23. Superstitious persons are apt to think that God is delighted as they are, with Music, Singing, and a little formal sacrificing in the Temple, but the Prophet tells them, such carnal joy shall end in howling. The Lord had given them a little success, and they conceived presently that they were highly in God’s favour (for wicked men are apt to measure God’s favour to them by present enjoyments and outward prosperity) and therefore they go to singing (as Papists now use to do) in their Temples, yet with self-respects; hence the Prophet thunders out wrath and Judgement against them; for those that will not sincerely sing to God in a time of grace, shall be forced to howl in a time of wrath. Those that will not serve God with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, shall serve him in sadness of heart in the want of all things, Dem. 28. 47, 48. In Neh. 9. 32, 35, 36, 37. So Psal. 106. 39, 40, 41, 42. when they fell from God to Idols, he sold them into their enemies hands for a prey. When the Gospel comes with tenders of grace to a people, and they reject them, such shall be slain, Luke 19. 14, 27.

2 Sin brings God’s sore Judgements upon a people.

It brings Sword, Plague, Famine, Ezek. 14. 21. which lay heaps upon heaps, and sweep away thousands in a short space; so that there are many dead bodies in all places. Sin makes men fall and fly before God’s Judgements, as leaves before a mighty
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Ver. 4.


3. Want of decent burial is reckoned as a temporal judgement upon the wicked.

They shall cast them out with silence, and none shall make lamentation for them, as they usually did in those days. But of this at large, on Amos 6: 10.

Verse 4, 5.

Hear this ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the Land to fail;

Saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? &c.

The Prophet having set forth the calamities which were coming upon Israel, hee now comes to set forth the ground and cause of these calamities, and that was,

1. Their oppression, cruelty, covetousness, and unrighteousness towards men, ver. 4, 5, 6.

2. Irreligion and Idolatry towards God, ver. 5, v. 4. They had broken both Tables, both high and low, and that with an high hand, against great light and love, and therefore the Lord resolves now to root them out. And because secure sinners, (especially great men) are apt to flatter themselves, and to think themselves privileged, and that God loves them because he doth not presently punish them, therefore the Prophet by an Apostrophe turns his speech unto them, and that he might the better awaken them, he begins, as oft before, with an Audite hoc, Hear this, O ye brutish men that swallow up the poor and needy. Hear and fear those sheenings which I denounce against you from the Lord, ver. 2, 3. Awaken at last, and see what dreadful destruction is at your doors, that by unfained repentance ye may prevent it.

In this Verse we have 1. The Prophets Alarum to drowsie sinners, Hear this.

2. Here are the parties alarumed, and these are primarily, the tyrannical, oppressing Rulers of Israel. 2. The inferior sort, who sinned in their degree, and had their peculiar sins as well as others; These covetous Cormorants are here set forth

N n 3

Para-
Paraphrastically, by their greedy devouring of the poor. O ye that swallow up the needy, that pant and gape as almost windless after them, Amos 2. 7. getting their goods, eating their flesh, drinking their blood, and making them live so flaviishly, that their life was but a lingering death; and this they did by laying heavy burdens upon them, partly by Bribery and Usury, partly by racking their Rents, and by inhauncing the rate of food and other necessarie things which they had ingrossed into their own hands; and so made the poor to spend what they had, and for more necessity to become their slaves.

The word in the fountain signifies to loop up, to devour, and earnestly to pant after a thing; As a thirsty man swallows down drink with abundance of eagerness and delight; or as the Whale and great beasts swallow the little ones up at a bit, Gen. 37. 20. & 41. 21. So did these cruel, covetous Harpies devour the poor without any pity or compassion, Job 5. 5. & 7. 2. Psal. 56. 2. & 57. 4. The participle of the Present Tense, notes the constancy of their cruelty, they were always devouring, it was their very Trade to press upon the poor.

3. Here is the height of their cruelty, they do oppress the poor, that they were not able to submit. They make the poor of the Land to fail. They used all means to dispatch and destroy them out of the Land, that so they might live alone in the Earth.

Object. But since they were some wicked men whom they used thus.

Answ. No, they were the afflicted, meek and lowly of the Land. The meek and modest poor are exposed to many miseries and injuries of mighty men, these cannot resist, and so become a prey to them, James 2. 6. & 5. 6. as little fih do to the great ones. Unreasonable creatures know whom they may be bold withall, and so do oppressors; A Crow will stand on a Sheeps back, and pull off wooll, they durst not be so bold with a Woolf or Mastiff.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Men are very deaf and hard of hearing, especially when they are told of their sins.

And therefore the Prophet begins with an Emphatical Hear
of the Prophecy of Amos.

ye do this. They were deaf, and loath to attend, because they had no desire to amend. Sinners have so many shifts, and their deceitful hearts find out so many evasions, that the Lord is fain to bid his Prophet cry, and cry aloud, that all may hear and be awakened out of their deep sleep. So Isa. 58. 1.

Micah 6. 9.

2. Ministers must not stick to reprove great men when they are great sinners.

They must cry with the Prophet. Hear this O ye Rulers. They do more mischief by their evil example, and therefore the Prophet begins with them; besides, they set their hearts on Amos, the heart of God, Ezek. 28. 6. and think themselves above re-proof, and above control, and therefore the Lord will have his Prophets reprove them, that they may know they be but men.

3. Oppressing of the poor is a crying sin.

It provokes the Lord to a controversy with a Land, Hos. 4. 1, 2, 3. and makes him swear their ruin, as here, ver. 14. 'Tis an eating up and devouring of men, Psal. 14. 4. Micah 3. 2, 3. and therefore oppressors are called, Dogs, Wolves, Bears, Lions; &c. (as I have shewed elsewhere) 'Tis a death far more merciful than present slaying, as hanging in chains alive is worse than beheading.

4. Wicked men are all for themselves.

They devour the poor, they swallow up the needy, they destroy their habitations, they inclose all, that they may dwell alone in the earth. A woe is set upon the head of such, Isa. 5. 8. such covetous Cormorants destroy all; In the body natural, if some members should draw all the nourishment to themselves, the whole body must needs perish. Piety makes men publick-spirited, and to seek the good of others as well as of themselves, Acts. 13. 36. Phil. 2. 4, 29, 30. but Impiety is all for self, Phil. 2. 21.

5. Poor men many times are meek and humble men.

The word Gnani, which we render afflicted and poor, signifies also humble and meek, Zach. 9. 9. As riches usually make men cruel and proud, so afflictions make men humble and meek. 'Tis not sufficient that men are humbled passively, against their wills, but they must be humble, actively; nor low, but lowly. Our poverty, and affliction should drive us.
An Exposition

Chap. 9.

out of our selves to God, Psal. 12. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 23. Happy are
those that are not only corrected, but thus taught by them,
Psal. 94. 12.

Verse 5.

Saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may
sell Corn; and the Sabbath, that we may set forth
Wheat, making the Ephah small, and the Shekel
great, and falsifying the ballances by deceit:

In the two subsequent verses the Prophet shews how they
devoured the poor, viz. by their unrighteousness and covet-
ousness, which appeared in that they were so greedy of gain,
that they thought all time lost which was spent in Gods wor-
ship, because it brought no present, visible profit with it; and
therefore they angrily cry, When will the New-Moon be gone,
that we may sell Corn? &c. God had set apart many festivals
in the time of the Law for his own worship, but especially the
weekly Sabbath, and the New-Moons; hence we finde them
to often joyned together in Scripture, Isa. 1. 13. & 66. 23.
Hos. 2. 11. Col. 2. 16. Though they had many other solemn-
ities, yet those came about but seldom, as once a year, or
the like, and therefore they did not so oft molest them as these
did; hence they exclain principally, and by name against
these frequent feasts. The New-Moon was the Calends or first
day, and beginning of every month, and was consecrated to
the Lord. It signified that all the seasons and months of the
year are made holy and good unto us. On these New-Moons
the Priests called the people together by sound of Trumpet to
the holy Assemblies, Numb. 10. 10. Psal. 81. 4. and spent
the time religiously in Prayer, Hearing Gods Word, and other
holy exercises, 2 King. 4. 23. 2 Chron. 2. 4. 8. 22. 13. Nah.
10. 33. Ezech. 36. 5. Ezech. 45. 17. At this solemnity was of-
erred in sacrifice, two young Bullocks, one Ramme, seven
Lambs, three tenth of flour, Numb. 28. 11. to 16.

In this verse we have the covetous mans character set forth
to the life, where we may see 1. His Inreligion towards God;
He is a violator of Gods Sabbaths, at least in his affection,
which denominates the man. The duties of Gods Sabbath
are a burden to him, he longs to have them over, he thinks such daies come too thick, and that they hinder his profit; and therefore he prophane ly cryes, *When will they be gone?*

1. Here is their oppression and unrighteousness set forth four waies: 1. They corrupted the measures, they sold by a small measure, yet made the price great. *They diminish the Ephah, and made it small, contrary to the Law,* Levit. 19. 35, 36. It should have been a just measure, neither too big, nor too small, Ezek. 45. 10. The Ephah was the tenth part of an Homer, containing about an English Bushel, Levit. 5. 11. & 19. 36. 1 Sam. 1. 24. & 17. 17. Isra. 5. 20. Ezek. 45. 10. 11. *Twas an usual-known measure of dry things amongst the Jews; as the Bath was of liquid things, under it by a Synecdoche all other measures are comprehended; for as St. James faith of the Commandements, he that breaks one, breaks all habitually and dispositionally. So he that makes no conscience of corrupting one measure, will make no conscience of corrupting them all when a temptation comes. He that will falsifie an Ephah, I will not trust him with an Homer, which was the greatest measure of dry things, which the Jews had, containing about ten Bushels, Ezek. 45. 11.

2. A second branch of their Oppression was, *Their marking of the Shekel: great,* before they curtailed the measure, and now they heighten the price; thus they ground the Poor as it were between millstones, the upper was the small Ephah, and the lower was the great Shekel; they used great weights, to weigh the mony which they received for payment; for the Shekel was partly a piece of money, and partly a weight. *By the Shekel here is meant the weight of the Shekel,* the common; ordinary Shekel was in value about fifteen pence, and the Shekel of the Sanctuary twoshillings six pence, as you may see, Gen. 23. 15. Josh. 7. 21. 1 Sam. 17. 5, 7. ut plur. & 2 Sam. 21. 16. 2 Chrom. 3. 9. As under the Ephah was comprehended all kinde of measures, so under the Shekel was comprehended all kind of weights by the like Synecdoche; for he that is unfaithful in that which is little, will be unfaithful in that which is much. In those daies they did not count their mony, but they weighed it. Now, all them; See weemse *Siclus asmod Hebrasse fuit genus nummi simula ponderis, Ravanel. in V. Specius, as you may see,* Gen. 23. 15. Josh. 7. 21. 1 Sam. 17. 5, 7. ut plur. & 2 Sam. 21. 16. 2 Chrom. 3. 9. As under the Ephah was comprehended all kinde of measures, so under the Shekel was comprehended all kind of weights by the like Synecdoche; for he that is unfaithful in that which is little, will be unfaithful in that which is much. In those daies they did not count their mony, but they weighed it. Now, all them; See weemse
though the measure was little, yet the price of the Corn was great; they gave light measure, but heavy weights, when they came to pay their mony, contrary to God's express commandement, *Deut. 25. 13, 14, 15.* Then shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small, &c.

3. Yet more, they falsifie the ballances by deceit. Either in weighing mony, or other commodities, or as the Original runs, they pervert the ballances of deceit, viz. by making those which were right deceitful. They falsified the weights, the better to defraud others. They raised themselves out of other men's ruins, and got profit by their disprofit. Thus they gained, whether by right or by wrong, they cared not. *Rom. 6, Rom. 7. quaecunque modo rem. They must have mony, 'tis no matter how.

4. They were not only deceitful, but cruel too, vers. 6. they bought the poor for things of nought, and made slaves of them; before they got their mony, lands and estates (for in time of famine men will part with all for bread) and now they get the men too; and (which aggravates their sin to the height) they did not only corrupt their measures, and falsifie their weights, but their wares too. They sold the refuse of the wheat; they sold the chaff, refuse and base commodities, yet made them pay for good ones. No wonder if the Lord swear their destruction, vers. 7.

The summe of all is this, when shall we have done with these solemn feasts, and times allotted for publick worship, wherein we are forbidden to buy or sell? would to God these new-moons and sabbaths were once over, that we might sell our corn, as an high rate, making the measure of the wheat small, and the weight (wherein the silver is weighed) great and heavy, thus falsifying the sale by deceitful weights.

**Observations.**

1. *Worldly men are weary of God's worship.*

They think every hour ten, and every day a year, which hinders them in the pursuit of their worldly profits and pleasures. Their wealth is their treasure, and their money their god; and therefore sabbaths to them are tiresome, tedious things, because they favour not the things of God, but th
things of the world. These snuff at God's service, and cry, What a wearinesse is this? Mal. 1. 13. Their bodies may be in the Temple, but their souls be in the Stable, or Barn, plodding on their gain and increas. They are somewhat akin to that Heathens, which complained of the Christians for losing a sevens part of their time in keeping God's Sabbath. This shews the woful depravation of our natures, that can sit at a Play, or the like profane meeting, a whole day, without weariness; when God's worship, which should be our joy, is tedious and irkome, and we can hardly sit out an hour without sleeping; which shews our grosse insensiblenessee of those Spiritual blessings revealed in the Gospel. But a gracious soul, who knows what it is to enjoy communion with God in his Ordinances, calls the Sabbath his delight, and looks upon it as the best day in the week, and esteems it an honourable day, Isa. 58. 13., because it brings him in great treasure. Those times which bring a man in great profit, are valued most. Rich men think not the time lost in which they are counting money; so a gracious soul so long as it hath incomes from God is greatly delighted, and longs to meet with God again, and therefore cries with David, Oh when shall I come and appear before the Lord in Zion? Psal. 42. 8. 84.

2. Greedy worldlings are never at rest.

These Muck-worms are alwaies seeking after gain, Amos 2. 7. Hab. 2. 13. So eagerly are they set upon it, that if they lose but an hour they think it ten. They are never well but when they are fingering of money, serving Mammon, and laying up Treasure, Luke 12. 17, 18, 19. and this brings them into tempations and snares, and many hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Lust is a furious thing, like Jael, it drives fiercely and furiously, Jer. 2. 23, 24, 25. 1 Cor. 13. 2. It will not let men rest worke-day nor Holy-day; all is one with these greedy Mammonists, their money is their god, and whatever hinders them in the pursuit of it, is a great burden to them. This makes them cry here, when will the New moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and this greedy lust puts them likewise upon Lying, Swearing, Usury, Bribery, Perjury, Forgery, and what not? so sad it is to be in thrall-dome to a lust; there is no rest nor peace to such wicked ones, faith the Lord.
An Exposition

Chap. 8

3. We must not confound the Worship of God only with the Sabbath-Day.

God enjoined the Jews New-Moons, and other Festivals, wherein to Worship him, as well as on the Sabbath. At those seasons they referred to the Prophets to be instructed in the ways of God, 2 King. 4. 23. Ezek. 46. It is especially when the Priests were dumb, and idle. The Sabbath-Day is the chief time to seek after knowledge, yet he appoints other seasons also; and if Ministers must preach in season and out of season on the Lords Day, and the Week-day, as occasion requires; then surely people ought to hear at such seasons: and therefore it was Prophesied of Gospel-times, that God's people should then be willing in that day of Christ's power, Psal. 110. 3. and shall be constant and frequent in his Worship, Isa. 66. 23.

4. Unrighteous dealing in our civil Commerce is very displeasing unto God.

He loves righteousness, but hates unrighteousness, Psal. 11. 7. and therefore so oft forbids it, Lev. 19. 13. 35. 36. Deut. 23. 13. 14. 15. 16. Ezek. 45. 10. 11. and tells us, that false weights and false balances are an abomination to him, Prov. 11. 17. 20. 10. 11. Amos. 8. 7. Hose. 12. 7. and that he will be avenged on such as defraud others, Zech. 2. 2. 3. They shall not reign long here, Ezek. 22. 27. 32. Micah 2. 2. nor come into God's kingdom hereafter, Psal. 15. 1.

Verses 6.

That ye may buy the poor for Silver, and the needy for a pair of Shoes, and sell the refuse of the wheat;

The Prophet goes on, and sets forth another kind of cruelty, used by these deceitful men; and that was, buying of the poor. This was the end of their foregoing fraud and unrighteous practices, viz. that they might drive the poor into those straits, that they should be forced to sell themselves as slaves and Bond-men for a little silver and support. Those greedy ones had got their Parties before, and now have at their Persons, they will make Drudges of them.

In this Verse we have, 1. The object of these Comman-
1. It is not simply the Poor, but the Righteous, humble, honest, innocent poor which they thus oppress. *Amos 2:6.*

They sell the righteous for silver.

2. Here is the price which they give for these poor, and that is base and contemptible, it is a little Silver, or a pair of shoes. So *Amos 2:6,* these they sold the righteous (as here they bought them) and his righteous cause for money, and the poor that could not bribe them, for a pair of shoes. The Lord permitted the Jones in some cases of casual poverty to buy their poor brethren, but they most cruelly abused the Law, to the oppressing and grinding of the poor and needy. *Lev. 25:39, 40.*

whereas the Lord commanded, that though their poor brethren were sold to them, or had sold themselves, yet they should not deal harshly or rigorously with them, as they did with Slaves, but civilly and tenderly as with brethren. This buying and selling of the poor for a pair of shoes, notes the base estimation that worldlings have of poor righteous men, in that they buy and sell them at such mean, low, and sordid rates, even for the basest necessaries, for worthless things of little price.

3. To their former fraud they now add another, that so they might fill up the measure of their sin. They sell the refuse of the Wheat. Before they corrupted and falsified their Weights, and now they corrupt their Wares. They sell the Chaff or falling off of the Wheat (as it is in the fountain) that is, they fell to the poor in their great necessity, which is Horse-meat, and Hog's-meat, rather than Man's meat, even dum concitum, the refuse, offal, and tail-end (as we say) which is mixed with Chaff, Coals, light-corn, little-roots, and dust. *This*
An Exposition

Chap. 3.

This refuse which is not marketable, and is seldom sold, but is usually given to Beasts or Birds, yet these Musskwater sell this Muss for pure Grain to the Poor, who were necessitated to buy this, or starve, and make them pay as if it was good corn.

This accumulated cruelty, makes the Lord to swear their ruin in the next verse.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Worldly men are very industrious for Mansions, and riches.

They move every stone for the attaining of it, and care not how they come by it, whether by right or by wrong; on the Lords Day (though their hands be tied; yet) their hearts are on it, and on the week-days: 2. They get false Weight.

2. False Wares.

3. They enhance the price of these Wares.

4. They get not only the poor mans Purse, but his Person too. Thus they that will be rich fall into many snares and temptations of the Devil, which drown men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6, 9, 10. and if men be so violent for earth, what should we be for Heaven?

2. Life is a precious thing.

Men will sell their Carret, their Cloathes, their Children, yea themselves for food to preserve life, Gen. 47, 20, 23, 25. Neh. 5, 2, 3, 9. So true is that, Job 2, 4: Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will be given for his life. It is a Proverbial speech, some by skin understand a mans clothing, which at first was made of Skins, Gen. 3, 21, 9. d: a man will part with his Cloathes rather than with his Life, for the body is more than raiment, Matt. 6, 26. 2. Others by Skin, for skin, understand riches, goods, and all the outward Clara, which are like a Skin to cover and fence us from poverty and misery; but Life is better than all these, and hath been greatly prized by good men, Gen. 32, 11. Hebt. 7, 3. and bad men, Gen. 25, 32. Hebt. 7, 7. Eccles. 9, 4.

3. Cowardly men are cruel men:

They buy and sell not only Carret, but men, Neb. 9, 37. yea righteous men, they sell the righteous for slain, and condemn the just for a reward, Jam. 5, 6, anything for money. Sell a
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Boy for a Luft, and a Girl for a cup of Wine, Joel 3. 3. Some men will trespass for a handful of Barley, or a morsel of Bread, Ezek. 13. 19. Thus the poor always pay for it, especially the meek and modest poor; men are apt to goe over the Hedge where it is lowest, and to catch the poor by drawing them into their Nets, Psal. 10. 9. that is, into their Debt-books, that they may mortgage all unto them, and at last become their slaves and bond-men. As the good man considers the case of the poor and needy that he may be the fitter to relieve him, Psal. 41. 1. so these mercifull men consider the poor, that they may devour him.

4. Men may not debase a Commodity, depriving it of its primitive goodness, and then sell it for the best, at a full value. Corn-maaters may not cull out the best Grain, nor mingle their Grain with refuse, and then sell it (as they did here) for the best. We may not mingle Wine with Water, nor Dross with Silver, but whatever we would that men should doe to us (in equity and justice) even so must we doe unto them.

5. The world hath a very mean esteem of the godly. They value them no more than their old Shooses, and therefore they sell the righteous for a pair of Shooses; as if any contemptible rate were good enough for them. See how different the judgement of this wicked world is from the Judgement of God. The world esteeme the godly as the dross and dung, the filth and off-scouring of the world, 1 Cor. 4. 13. but God esteemes them as the glory of the world, Isa. 4. 5. the only excellent ones of the earth, Psal. 16. 3. he thinkest them too good to live in this wicked ungrateful world, Heb. 11. 38.


God threatens these Men-sellers, and Men-devourers with dreadful Judgements, Amos 2. 6. & 8. 7. Luke 16. 24. See more be- James 2. 13. Though the poor bear it, yet God will not al-ways bear it and their hands, but swears he will be avenged on Obi. 3. them, for so it follows.
Verse 7.

The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, and I will never forget any of their works.

We are now come to the Third Part of this Chapter, where the Judgments of God both Corporal and Spiritual are more fully set forth unto us.

1. The Prophet sheweth the certainty of these Judgments, in that the Lord doth not only say, but swear that he will be avenged on them.

2. As they had been great Sinners, so he sets forth the greatness of their Punishment. It shall overflow the land by an mighty flood, ver. 8.

3. As he had shewed the certainty, so he shews forth the hardness of their Sorrow. Their light shall be turned into darkness, and that at noon-day; their mirth into mourning, and their high prosperity into the lowest misery, ver. 9, 10.

4. As if all this were not sufficient, he yet goeth higher, and threatens them with a Famine; not of Bread, but which is worse, of the Word of God. As Spiritual Mercies are the choicest Mercies, so Spiritual Judgments are the lowest Judgments.

5. Which strikes all dead, He tells them that this their loss should be irreparable. They shall fall, and shall never rise any more, ver. 14. We have heard of Israel's Sorrow, now follows his Suffering; and lest any should flatter themselves, and think that these Threatenings were but Scare-crows, therefore the Prophet the better to awaken these secure Sinners, brings in the Lord swearing their destruction, q. d. So shall you die, (faith the Lord) so sure shall you die. This Oath of God marks both the certainty and immutability of God's Oath; and Decree to punish Israel; where we have, 2.

1. The certainty of Israel's Ruine, The Lord hath not only said, but sworn it; that is, he hath most certainly decreed it, for God's Oath is nothing else but God's immutable Decree, severely to punish these cruel Capriffs, and Oppressors of the poor.

2. By whom doth the Lord swear? why it is by the excellency...
of the Prophecy of Amos.

and eminency of Jacob, that is, by himself, who is the glory and excellency of Israel; and by whose favour and free-election they exceeded all the Nations of the world. Other Nations had their Idols, but it was Israel's glory above all the Nations of the world, that they had the Lord for their God, and were in Covenant with him. The Lord hereby righteous upbraids them for their ingratitude, that having such glorious privileges from him, they should yet rebel against him.

Some by the excellency of Jacob, understand the Ark, and others the Temple; it is true, these are called, The glory of Israel; but since the Lord hath no greater to swear by, therefore he swears by himself, who is here called, The Excellency of Jacob, i.e., of his people Israel.

The Vulgar leaving the Fountain, and following the corrupt streams of the Sepulchre, render it thus, The Lord hath sworn against the pride of Jacob. But the Original is express against it; for though the word Gaon signifies Pride, as well as Excellency, yet the prefix Beth, notes that form of swearing which is usual with the Hebrews, as appears Amos 4. 2. & 6. 8. Bigeon, per excellentiam, cella: dinem, gloria: P. Leib Crit. Hebr. p. 33. ubi plurida. Sin, est nota jurantis, or sigillum juramenti: excorsae aequaliter Hebrews.

What doth the Lord swear? why he swears be will forego none of their wicked works; the words in the Original run thus, If I forget any of their works for ever, q.d. let me not live, or let me not be God, or let me not be accounted true, but repute me for a Liar; if ever I forget to punish this great wickedness of Israel, they shall surely pay for it according to their demerits. See the like expression, Deut. ii. 35. 1 Sam. 3. 14. & 14. 45. Psal. 89. 36. Isa. 14. 24. & 62. 8. Ezek. 34. 8. The Prophet by an Euphemismus omits that open form of swearing, As I live, or as sure as I am God, &c. because of the horror and dreadfulness of it, and to make us render off-fing Imprecations, therefore the Holy Ghost oft times conceals the Imprecation in swearing.

This abrupt manner of speaking is usual in Oathes; it is a kind of Apotheosis usual in Scripture, when we cut off some word, or part of a sentence which yet is understood; such Oathes cum reticentia are very dreadful, and yet forth God's greatest...
An Exposition

Greatest Wrath against a People; as Psal. 68: 11. To whom
swear in my wrath, if they enter into my rest: Go to. They shall
never enter into my rest ; if ever they come there, let me not
be God, or let me not be true. It is a very strong Negation;
stronger cannot be expressed. I will never forget any of the
works. It is an Anthropomathy: God speaks to men after the
manner of men ; he is said to remember those sins which he
punisheth, and to forget those sins which he pardoneth.

Any of their works; i.e. None of their works, not one that
be forgotten by me to all eternity, but they shall certainly
and suddenly pay for all their crying Crimes committed
against me.

Observations.

1 Sin and sorrow are inseparable companions.

Flagellation is like the Needle and the Threat
the one goes before, and the other follows. Is. 63. 10.
1 Cor. 10. 8. 9. 10. We read before of Israel's Sin, and not
we read of his Suffering; and to assure them of it, The Lord
swears it. If men will sin against the Lord, let them be hit
at first or last their sin will finde them out. Numb. 32. 2.
God's Word had been sufficient to assure us of this, but
cause we are incredulous, he confirms it with an Oath, th
none might doubt of it. Ask Men and Angels, Houses, Cities,
Kingdoms, and they will all tell you, that it was sin that la
them in the dust.

2 A People may so far incense the Lord to wrath by their sin
that he may swear their ruin.

When Israel had long hardened their hearts against God,
last they swear they should never enter into his rest. Psal. 9
11. Patience abused turns into fury, and makes the Lord
swear men utter rejection, 1 Sam. 15. 28. 29. this peo
had highly provoked the Lord, and therefore this is the th
time which the Lord swears against them, Amos 4. 2.
6. 8.

3 The favour and presence of God with a People, is the gl
and excellency of a People.

It is not Com., Wine, Women, Health, Wealth, or mu
tudes of people that make a Nation happy, for then They
and Tartars, Barbarians, and Indians should excel Gods people, for they abound with these external comforts; but happy is that people whose God is the Lord, Psal. 144. ult. Hence the See my Com. Lord is called, The excellency of Jacob, and the Glory of on Psal. 73.25. Israel. He was their inestimable Treasure, and true Honour, who made them truly glorious, Psal. 106. 20. & 148. 14. Jer. 2. 11. Luke 2. 32. Hence Moses glories in this above all other Priviledges, That there was no people that had the Lord their God so nigh unto them in all that they called upon him for, as the Lord our God hath been to them, Deut. 4. 7, 8. The Wife shines with the rays of her Husband, Ezek. 16. 14. the fruition and enjoyment of Gods favour is the life of our lives, and the honour of our honours, without this we may write I-ebabed upon all that we have, There is no glory. The greater is their sin then who dishonour him by their sin, who is their real excellency, and turn the glory which he hath put upon them into shame. This makes the Lord to swear that he will rip them of their Priviledges, and make them naked, as in the day when they were born. He will take away not only his Corn and Wine, but his Sabbaths, and Sacraments, which are the real glory of a people, and give them to a people which shall yeeld him better obedience.

4. Oathes are tremendous and dreadful things. They must be taken with abundance of fear and reverence. Hence it is that the Holy Ghost here conceals the Imprecation, implying thereby, that men should tremble at the very thoughts of what will follow if they swear falsely.

5. God records and remembers all the wickedness of the wicked. He forgets none, no not one of their works, though they themselves do. As hee hath a book of remembrance for all the good which his people have done, which shall at the last Day be publishit to their everlasting praise, Mal. 3. 16. Mat. 25. 34, 35. so he hath a book of remembrance for all the wicked works of the ungodly, which shall be openet at the last Day, and set in order before them to their everlasting shame, Psal. 50. 21. Mat. 25. 41, 42. then shall they give an account of their Stewardship, and must be no longer Stewards, Luke 16. 2. nothing can pass his All-seeing-Eye; hee records not some, but All their works; and though he may seem
An Exposition

Verse 8.
Shall not the Land tremble for this, and every one man that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly a flood, and it shall be cast out, and drowned as by a flood of Egypt.

The Prophet having in the precedent Verse showed the certainty of Israels punishment, in this Verse he comes nearer the greatness and grievousness of that misery which the flood was rushing in upon them. They had been extraordinary sinners, and now he tells them of extraordinary suffering. They had their floods of sin, and now follow floods of sorrow. The Prophet the better to awaken them begins, 8. With Emphatical Interrogation, which is equivalent to a flat Affirmation, as Amos 5. 20. Shall not the Land tremble, this is: viz. for this cruelty, coveting, Idolatry, and Apostasy. q. d. I appeal to your Consciences, how can it be otherwise it is impossible that such men as have thus perverted all order, have brought in confusion, and exercised all manner of Tyranny and cruelty upon the poor, should ever escape unpunished; when the very earth trembles and groans under such lewd and rebellious inhabitants.

1. Some make it a Prophoppeical speech, thus, so great is sin, and so great shall be the sorrow of Israel, that the insensitive earth cannot but tremble and be moved at it; for Creatures by a Natural instinct are sensible of the Voice and beck of their Creator, how much more of his anger.

2. Here is an Exegeesis, or explanation of the precedent Clause, the earth should so tremble, and there should be trouble and fears there, that every one that dwells in it should mourn. As all had sinned, so all without exception should suffer for sin.

3. He illustrates their Calamity yet further, by the similitude of an over-flowing flood, which carries down all before.
and it shall rise up wholly as a flood. The earth shall rise up as a flood, for, the flood should rise up over it; it is an Hypallage frequent in Scripture, 9. d. As waters rise up and cover the land that it doth not appear; so shall the Assyrians arise and overspread the whole land of Israel, and carry away both them and their riches.

And it shall be east over, as the sea and floods do cast out quire and dire, which they raise, Isa. 57. 20. so should the land spue out these; yet more, and be drowned as by the flood of Egypt; that is, by the River Nile, which by way of eminency is called, The River, i. e. that noted and famous River which watered the Land of Egypt, making it fat and fruitful.

Israel's Captivity is here compared to an over-flowing River, which no banks nor bounds can hold. It is usual in Scripture to set forth great Calamities by the name of great Waters; so Psal. xx. 16. & 32. 6. & 69. 2. 15. & 124. 4. 5. & 144. 7. Jer. 46. 7. 8. Amos 9. 5. So the Lord here, the better to express the great Calamities which were coming upon Israel, fetcheth a Similitude from the River Nile, which was wont yearly to over-flow the Plains of Egypt; there was no raine ordinarily in Egypt, but the over-flowing of Nile supplied that want, and covered the Plains for about two months space. Now as the River Nile over-flowed all the Land of Egypt, and made it like a Sea, so the Land of Israel should be swiftly and suddenly over-run with the Army of the Assyrians, which like a sweeping flood should carry away all before them; as they did in the reign of Hosea, the last King of Israel, when they were carried into Captivity out of their owne Land, 2 King. 17.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The very earth trembles and groans under the sins of wicked men.

Wicked men are a burden to the whole Creation, Psal. 60. V. Fenners Ser. 1, 2. Rom. 8. 22. and could they speak (as they doe tacitly, on Rom. 8. 22. and in their kind) they would say; Lord let us not be Servants to those that will not be Servants to thee. The earth cries, let me devour them, as I did Corah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Pp. 2

Numb.
Numb. 16. 31, 32. The Sea cries, Let me drown them, the Air, faith, Let me choke them, &c. This all creatures are ready to testify their indignation against sin and sinners, and therefore the Lord calls to oft upon the inanimate creatures to be ashamed and astonished at the rebellion of his people, Hos. 1. 2. Jer. 2. 12. As a man, whose stomach is surcharged, is sick till he hath vomited up that which burdens his stomach, so the creature is even sick again till it have spewed out those wicked inhabitants that burden it, Lev. 18. 25. &c. 20. 23. Now, shall the insensible creatures groan for our sin, and shall we not groan for our selves? shall they be affected with our wickedness, and we be insensible? God forbid.

2. Wicked men are the troublest of Israel.

The world is apt to charge God's people with rebellion and troubling of Israel. As Abab did Eliah, and Amaziah the Priest did Amos, chap. 7. 10. and the Jews the Apostles, Acts 17. 6. But is the wicked that are the true Rethomains and troublest of the places where they dwell, Jer. 4. 28. &c. 9. 13. Hos. 4. 3. 'Tis the Idolater, the Oppressor, the Cheater, &c. that are the true troublest of Israel, and make the Land to tremble under them.

3. Floods of sin bring floods of sorrow.

Where floods of Idolatry, Atheism, Security, and Unrighteousness go before, there floods of misery ever follow. In the old world there was a deluge of sin, which brought upon them a deluge of water, which swept them all away. God hath variety of floods to sweep away impenitent sinners from the earth.

4. When Judgements come, they seize on rich men as well as on others.

When the flood of God's judgements comes, every man shall mourn, without exception. Not one of these covetous Cormorants shall escape; their silver and their gold shall not avail them in the day of God's wrath, Prov. 11. 4. Ezek. 7. 19, 27. Zeph. 1. ult. The sin of such Oppressors, cries, and rests not till it hath brought plagues upon the heads of such sinners, Ezek. 16. 49. & 22. 7, 13. James 5. 4. Thus as they had sinned universally, so now God brings upon them universal destruction.
And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.

We have seen Israel's sin and sorrow in part, here we have it more fully amplified. 1. Their prosperity shall be turned into misery, and their mirth into mourning, ver. 9, 10.

2. They shall lose their Pastors and their Preaching and shall have a famine of spiritual food sent amongst them, ver. 11, 12.

3. Then follows utter destruction, ver. 13, 14.

The Prophet allegorically sets forth under elegant Metaphors, the greatness of that sorrow which was falling upon Israel; Their light should be turned into darkness, their joy into sorrow, their prosperity into adversity, their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation, as for an only Son.

Israel had enjoyed a little gleam of prosperity which they thought would always last; they thought this Sun would never set, nor this light ever be darkened, but the Lord tells them, he would suddenly send the Army of the Assyrians upon them, when they little dreamed of it, so that their Sun should set at noon, and the light be turned into sudden darkness.

Some take the words literally, that the natural Sun should set at noon, but the Prophet speaks not of natural, but metaphorical darkness, viz. of the night of adversity, as appears by that which follows, I will darken the earth in the clear day, what's that? why I will turn your feasts into mourning, &c.

Others apply this Text to the Passion of Christ, when the Sun was eclipsed, and darkness covered the face of the whole earth. But this is quite against the Text and Context, which speaks of the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel, and not of the sufferings of Christ.

In the verse itself we have 1. A dreadful judgement threatened in metaphorical terms, I will cause your Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.
thing is set forth in various terms, the better to affect them. By Light and the Sun at noon, is meant great prosperity and gladness, as in 1 Sam. 23. 4. Heb. 8. 16. Job 18. 5, 6, 8, and 11. Psal. 97. 11. & 112. 4. By darkness is meant great sorrow, terror, captivity, and fear. So Job 12. 10, 11. Isa. 39. 9, 10. Jer. 15. 9. Amos 5. 18. Micah 3. 6. Psal. 107. 10. Lam. 3. 2. Hence the doleful condition of the damned in Hell is called by the name of darkness, Matt. 22. 13.

2. Here is the time when this shall be, and that is, in the day, when the Lord shall come to execute judgement upon Israel, for all their provocations, and bring the Army of their enemies upon them.

Here is the certainty of all this misery, Dixit Dominus. The Lord, who cannot lie, hath spoken it. Let the wicked have never so much light of prosperity, let him shine as bright as Lucifer, yet as the sun is set, which is the fountain of light, yet his light shall be put out in obscurity, and down he shall, Jer. 14. 13. The higher men are in their own conceits without God, the more suddenly and surely shall they fall.

The summe of all is this, q. d. 'Tis true O ye people of Israel, that ye are now at the height of your peace, and at the high-noon of your prosperity, now you are secure and flourishing by reason of those victories which you obtained under Jeroboam the second, who restored what was left to Israel; now ye trust in your Riches, Success, and Armies, and never once think of a fall, or that your Sun will set; but since I have spared you for a time, therefore you conclude that your judgements will never come, but I will bring sudden calamities upon you (saith the Lord) and such as you looked not for, so that your mid-day of prosperity shall be turned into the midnights of adversity; your peace into war, your plenty into poverty, and your liberty into restraint: you shall be stripped of all by the merciless Assyrian; and you that were but now the head, shall suddenly be made the heel. The Sun of your prosperity shall set in obscurity, without the least glimmering of light, or hope of deliverance.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. All our afflictions come from God.

'Tis he that makes our Sun to set at noon, when we are
most careless and secure, and little think of night. "Tis I, I, I, that create light and darkness, Isa. 45. 7. There is no evil of affliction in the City but the Lord doth it, Amos 3. 6. Hence they are called His Judgements by a special propriety, Isa. in his Treatise 26. 8, 9, and he is said to bring spoilders and sudden terrors of Passive Obedience upon his people at noon-day, Jer. 15, 8, 9.

2. The wicked may enjoy for a time a great light of prosperity.

It may be noon and clear day with them; They may prosper; See my Com. even to envy, Psal. 73. 2, 3, 4. Jer. 12. 1. But of this at large elsewhere.

3. When the wicked are in highest prosperity, the Lord can suddenly bring upon them a night of adversity.

When people are drunk with prosperity, and think their mountain so strong, that it can never be moved, then God usually hides his face, and we are presently in trouble, Psal. 30. 7. In our own days we have seen those that have been upon the highest pinnacle of temporal felicity, suddenly brought into the Abyss of misery. Before the day of judgement, when men are most secure, crying, Peace, Peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction. Be not then put up with success of prosperity; nor yet envy the triumphs of the wicked; For they shall soon come down; and wither as the grass, Psal. 37. 1, 2. Rev. 28. 7, 8. Walk humbly and thankfully in the midst of all enjoyments, do not fight against God with his own favours, nor abuse his blessings to his dishonour; if you do, you must know, that he who raised you, can as easily ruin you; and he that makes it soon with you, can as easily make it wither. Let us therefore with holy Job, cap. 3. 25. in our highest prosperity, fear and fore-see a day of adversity. Let us become as an obedient people, and then our Sun shall never set, but we shall enjoy God's favour without interruption, Isa. 60. 20.

Verse 2
An Exposition

VERSE 20.
And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation, and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.

What the Prophet had spoken metaphorically and darkly in the precedent verse, he comes and explains it in this. He had told them before that their Sun should set at noon; what's that, may some one say? why in plain English, your feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation.

The Prophet goes on still in setting forth that sudden and sad distress which should surprise Israel, and because wicked men are flow of heart to believe Gods threatnings, therefore he multiplies words, and expresseth the same thing in various terms, the better to awaken them, and work upon them.

In the two foregoing verses we had six Amos, and in this verse we have six more, which serve as so many links to fasten the chain of Gods judgements together. Wheresoeve have

A further explication of the judgement threatened, viz. a turning of their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation.

Ques. But the Question will be, what songs and feasts did the Prophet here speak of, whether be they sacred or profane?

Ans. Both, 1. The Lord would turn their common feasts where they had prophaned singing and musick, into weeping and wailing, Amos 6. 5, 6. 7.

2. Their holy Feasts and Temple Songs, and Musick, in which they so much delighted, and thought that with such Ceremonious, external worship God was well pleased, these did but increase Gods wrath, and blow up the fire of his displeasure against them, and therefore the Lord threatens that these songs especially should be turned into howling, vers. 3.

The Jews had many festivals, and in them God commanded them to rejoice, Deut. 12. 18. They had also holy Musick, and holy songs at those festivals appoused by David, for the prais-
Ver. 10. of the Prophecy of Amos.  

18. But they being Idolaters, Superstitious, and hypocritical, resting in a bare external performance of these Ceremonial Rites, and placing all holiness in them, though themselves lived lewdly and licentiously, Jer. 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. Sacrificing to the Calves, and not to God, therefore the Lord threatens to turn even these religious feasts and songs (for of these the Prophet seems more especially to speak) into mourning and lamentation, &c. Thus to you have lived secure and careless, feasting and singing without any fear of God, or thoughts of his judgments; but now (saith the Lord) I will turn your feasting into fasting, and your songs into lamentation.

2. Here is the greatness of their sorrow, set forth by two Ceremonial Rites, which were used in those Eastern Countries, viz. Sackcloth and Baldness.

1. Sackcloth was a coarse mourning garment, made of black Goats hair, bound with a girdle about their loins. 'Twas a sign and symbole of misery and mourning, as appears, Gen. 37. 34. 2 Kings. 6. 30. Psal. 30. 11. Isa. 3. 24. &c. 25. 3. &c. 22. 12. Jer. 4. 8. &c. 48. 37. Lam. 2. 10. Ezek. 7. 18. Joel. 1. 8. At Absor's funeral David commanded them to put on Sackcloth and weep, 2 Sam. 3. 11. And Abijah hearing of God's judgments coming on him, he humbled himself in Sackcloth, 1 Kings. 21. 17. The two witnesses were cloathed in Sackcloth, mourning to see so many fall away to Popery, Rev. 11. 3. The Lord threatens to make them put off their ornaments and gorgeous attire, Exod. 33. 4, 5. and put on sackcloth and mourning weeds, as most suitable to such mournful times. They would not humble themselves nor mourn in their prosperity, now they should be humbled, and made to mourn in their adversity.

2. Baldness also was a sign of the greatest mourning among the Jews, and therefore the Lord threatens here that he would bring baldness upon every head, that is, their miseries should be so great, that they should pluck off the very hair of their heads for anguish and sorrow: for the Jews, when they were in deep distress, did testify their sorrow, as by Sackcloth and rending their garments; so by Baldness also, either pulling the hair off their heads for very anguish and indignation, as Ezra did Ezra 9. 3. or else shaving their heads and beards.
An Exposition

Chap. 3.

as Jēh did when he heard that his children were ready, this he did, not out of impatience, but according to the custom of those times and countries, to express the greatness of his sorrow, Jer. 16. 1. 
So Is. 3. 24. & 25. 2. Jer. 7. 29. & 32. 16. 
& 47. 5. and 48. 37. 
Ezek. 7. 18. and 27. 31. 
Mich. 5. 16. 
The hair of the head and beard is compared an Ornament, and the cutting it off was a debasement, and therefore it was used only in cases of very great sorrow. Though they might not conform themselves to the Heathens, who shaven their heads, and then dedicated their locks to Idols, Lev. 19. 27. 28. 

3. Here is the universality of this calamity, for he shall reize upon all Jews and every head, none shall escape, but as all had sinned, so all should now suffer for sin.

4. Here is a further Amplification of their sorrow, drawn from the Example of one that mourns for the death of an only Son, which is worse some very bitter and great. The Prophet seems to be at a stand, as here, whence he borrow-comparison, to see forth the greatness of their sorrow. A Father which hath many children, disperseth his love among them all, but he that hath but one only Son, his love is united, and is more vehemently set upon him: hence 

Hein. 11. 12. 
Vehement mourner; and the Philosopher saith, the strongest love is between two, not twenty; for if it be divided amongst many, tis lessened and weakened; as a River that is out into many channels. When Parents lose one of many, it troubles them, but yet they comfort themselves that they have others left still; but if they have but one only Son, and he dye, to bury all their hopes in one only hopefull childe, is very bitter, and causeth great lamentation. Hence great sorrow in Scripture is twice compared to the sorrowing for an only Son.

so Zech. 12. 10. 
When the Jews shall be converted and called, 'tis said, 

Then shall they look upon him whom they have pierced, by sorwe of Faith, and they shall mourne for him as for an only Son, that is, in an high degree and measure.'

Tis a kindle
of the Prophecy of Amos.

of Proverbial Speech used by the Hebræans. Hence that of Titus, and (said he) for the misery of the Commonwealth, a Mother saith for her only Son.

4. Here is the duration of this misery, it shall endure to the end of the Kingdom of Israel, and extend itself to their posterity. The end thereof, viz. of the Land, which is put for the inhabitants of the Land, by a frequent Metonymy, shall be as a bitter day; that is, as a funeral, mournful day, because they shall be destitute of all true comfort from the Word of God, which alone can keep us from perishing in our troubles, Psalm 119. 92.

The Prophet seems to prevent an evasion, and drop a gap at which impatient sammers are wont to creep out; oh (say they) though these troubles be sharp, yet they will be but short, they are clouds that will soon vanish; but deceive not your selves (saith the Prophet) for the Wrath of God shall abide upon you, and upon your Posterity even to the end; and when one wave is over, another shall come, till it have swept you all out of your owne Land.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Plain preaching is the best teaching.

The Prophet in this Verse expounds his Metaphors and allusions, and makes them plain for the meanest capacity. But of this elsewhere.

2. What is dark in one place, the Scripture makes plain in another.

What was spoken mystically, ver. 9. is explained ver. 10. See my Com. on Hos. 13. 15. Ob. 2.

3. Carnal joy ends in sorrow.

As they that sow in Godly sorrow shall reap in joy; so they that sow in carnal joy shall reap in sorrow. When men abuse their feasts and lawful liberties, God will turn them into fasts and mourning, Hos. 2. 17. Amos 5. 16, 17. vi. 5, 6, 7. & 8. 3.

4. How far then is our condition, for if the Lord turn the feasts of his owne appointment into lamentation to a backsliding people, what may we expect who are dead upon the Summerlie Sabbath, & Fasts of the Headen, Festivals which God .
An Exposition. Chap. 8.

never once instituted or ordained, wherein men drink, dance, dally, and give themselves up to all manner of debauchery and prophaneness, and that in days of such glorious light, as the Nation never enjoyed the like since: it was a Nation; shall not the Lord visit for these things? he will suddenly, and certainly send some Affrian or other to avenge the dishonours done to his name. If the Lord will turn holy Feasts and Songs into Lamentation, what will he do to those that use profane and filthy Songs, to the corrupting both of themselves and others?

4 When all sin, all must look to suffer for sin.

When all sin, then all loyyns, and all heads must be made bald; National Sins bring National Judgements. V. When All the Old; V. World, All Sodom, All Jerusalem had corrupted their ways, then All must perish. But of this before.

3 In calamitous times we may and must express our inward sorrow by outward Vestures and Gestures.

When God's hand lies heavy upon a people, they must not be stupid and stoical, but they must hear the Rod, and what hath appointed it, Micah 6. 9. They must humble themselves under God's mighty hand, laying aside their costly attire, and put themselves in mourning weeds. It is not sufficient that we grieve inwardly for our sins, and God's Juges: men use for sin; but we must also express our sorrow by external signs. David wept and put on Sackcloth, Psal. 38. 11. and so did, Jer. ch. 9. 1. and Nebuch. ch. 1. 4. Job abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes, Job 42. 6.

Caut. Yet a Caveat must be here entred, we must not rest in bare external weeping, or wearing of mournful Vestures; but our outward humiliation must express our inward humiliation of the heart, else hypocritical out-side service is odious to God, Isa. 1. 12, 13, 66. 3. Matthew 6. 2. Luke 16. 15.

6 Sin is a bitter thing.

It is bitter in itself, and brings forth bitter effects. It brings bitter days, and bitter calamities upon a people; Sin, like Satan his Father makes large promises, but foxy performances. It promises pleasure, but yeelds pain; it promises liberty, but brings men into prisons; it promises peace, but brings warre. Take heed then of the deceitfulness of sin.

7 When...
Ver. 18. of the Prophecy of Amos.

7 When a Nation is ripe for ruin, God will utterly destroy them.

His patience will no longer wait upon them, but they and their heirs shall perish in their iniquity, and the end shall be a bitter day. The wicked use to promote themselves light, but they shall finde darkness; they promise themselves deliverance and joy, but they shall finde bitterness and sorrow even to the end of their days.

Verse 11, 12.

Behold, the days come saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of bearing the words of the Lord.

And they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not finde it.

The Prophet had before set forth those sad Calamities, and external Miseries which should seize upon the ten Tribes; he now proceeds, and fore-tells them of farre greater evils which should come upon them, viz. not a famine of bodily bread (for of that he had spoken before, Amos 4. 6.) but a Spiritual famine of the Word of God, which should feast their souls to eternal life. This is the Judgement of Judgements, usually the last and worst. As the giving of Gods VVord to a People is the choicest Blessing, so the taking of it away is the heaviest Curse; as having all other Curves attending it. It is a sign of Gods rejecting and reproving of a people, when he will not vouchsafe to speak unto them by his Ministers. As it is a sign that God hath some people in that place to which he sends his Messengers, Acts 18. 9, 10, 11. So their departure from a place and people is an evident sign of his displeasure against them, Acts 13. 46. Matt. 10. 14, 15.

In this Verse we have, 1. A note of Attention, Behold;

q. d. I shall now tell you of a more direful and dreadful Judgement than ever, and therefore it concerns you diligently to attend.

2. Here is the Judgement threatened, and that is a Famine, which is amplified and illustrated by an Antithesis, it is not wa
external, corporall Famin, is not a Famin of spiritual food, but which is far worse, is a spiritual Famin, a loss of spiritual food, a want of the bread of life; this famine should be so great, that they should run from side to side, and from part of the land to another, and yet should not enjoy it. The Lord in great mercy had sent his Prophets amongst them, to call them to repentance; but they were unwilling and rebellious sinners condemned God's Ordinances, profaned his holy things, and persecuted his Messengers, till the wrath of the Lord broke forth, and there was no remedy.

They loathed God's Manah, and longed to be at their Garlick and Onions in Egypt again. They were dead under lively Oracles, and barren under fruitful means of grace, and therefore the Lord was now resolved no longer to plow such Rocks, nor sow such sands; but since they would not serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, therefore they should now be made to serve their enemies in the want of all things. They that would not hear and obey the Prophets of God in their own Land, should now be cast out of all, and be made to serve strange gods in a strange Land. As God had before exalted them to heaven, and given them many excellent Prophets that did fully and faithfully dispense his Word unto them; so now, their Prophets should be taken from them, and they should have a spiritual famine, and be made to know the price of God's mercy by the wanting of them. The word Famin implies two things, 1. It sets forth the nature of God's Word, it is the Food of the soul. Look what bread and want it to the body, that, and much more is the Word of God unto the soul.

2. It imports the greatness of the judgement, it should be a Famin, not a famine of bread, that is but a petty-judgement, a flea-bitten, as nothing comparatively to this; though the bodily famine simply considered in itself, be one of God's sore judgements, as I have shewed before, an hungry or as yet that pincheth but the out-side, the carcass, and may be cast into mercy to the soul; but this famine of the Word is a spiritual judgement that destroes the soul, and is a light of God's greatest wrath against a people, and is usually accompanied with many other judgements.
Verse 11. Of the Prophecy of Amos.

will send, as I will let it loose, I have hitherto chained it up. Shalach, nifist. like a wild beast that it might not hurt you, but now it shall eat amongst you and destroy you.

4. Here is the time when this should be, and that is suddenly. The days come, g. d. The time will come, and is now at hand, when your Sun shall set at noon, and a spiritual famine shall surprise you.

5. Here is the certainty of all this, 'Tis not man, but the Lord that saith it, who will fulfill every threatening upon the heads of these sinners.

Observations.

1. The preaching of the Word is the spiritual food of the soul, and therefore the name of it is here rightly stiled a famine.

Man consists of two parts, of Soul and Body, and both these must be fed; the body which hath its Original from the earth, The body hath is maintained by earthly nourishment; but the soul which is its alimentum spiritual, must be fed with the spiritual food of God's Word; for as bread is the staff of man's body, and the body cannot live without it, so God's Word is the support of the soul, and it cannot live without that, hence it is called Food, Jer. See Mr. Will. 3:15, 6:15. 16. Job 21. 15, 17. 35:26. 28. 'Tis here, and here only, that Christ the bread of life is revealed unto us, John 6:35. Prov. 9:1, 2. 'Tis in the Gospel that we have a feast full fraught with spiritual delicacies, Psal. 65:4. Isa. 43:6. 8. 57:1. 2. Hence David makes such bitter lamentation for want of it, Psal. 42:2. 3. and 84. and 'tis made one more of God's people, that they mourn for want of the holy Assemblies, Zeph. 3:18. Lam. 1:4. 7. and 2:6, 7, and 4:1, and 5:18. Job esteemed the word of the Lord above his necessary food, Job 23:12. 'He did not only esteem it above lands and living, above gold and silver, but even above his appointed food, without which he could not live. He did more earnestly desire it, more heartily delight in it, and more highly prize it, than he did his necessary food, without which he could not subsist. He had rather lose his usual meals than lose his opportunities of meditation on the Word of God. Hence it is that God's Ministers are called Stewards,
An Exposition

Tit. 2. 7. which must dispense this Bread of Life according to the capacity of their Hearers. They must give Milk to babes, and strong meat to strong men; for God's Word is both men and Fables; it is the seed by which we are new-born. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23. and the food by which we are right after, 1 Pet. 2. 2. by this the dead are enlivened. 1 Thess. 2. 25. the dark enlightened, Psal. 19. 8. and the sorrowful comforted, Isa. 40. 1, 2. This shews the great necessity and profit of the preaching of God's Word, and should make us prefer it unto our chiefest joy. But to this point I have been at large in a ser. Treatise.

2. Contempt of God's Word brings a famine of the Word.

The Lord here suits his Judgments to his Peoples. He had in great mercy raised up for this people of their Sons for Prophets, and taught them (not by strangers) by Children that came from their own loyns, yet they gratefully said to the Prophets, Prophecies nor, Amos 3. 15. and commanded thus our plain-dealing Prophet; to press more at Bethel, but to go see some other Countries, Amos 12, 13, 16.

Hinc ille Lachryma! This brought the famine among them. When God shall bestow the preaching of the Word upon a people, which is the choicest gift which he can give on the Sons of men, and they shall loathe this Manna, vilifie those that bring it; it is time the Lord should cease giving when such gifts are scorned, and cease loving, when love is contemned. The Jews that stoned the Prophet, led the Apostles, and crucified Christ; for this great cause they have been a people of God's Curse this sixteen hundred years. When men grow weary of truth, it is just with them that they should be left to error, and when they are weary of the faithful Amos, that they should have a flattering Amos. When men will not receive the truth in love, God will give over to strong delusions, that they shall believe lies. And Curse! 2 Thess. 2. 3. Since I have given them and showed them my Truth, and the way to Heaven, but have rejected it; therefore there shall come false Pro and shall cry down Ordinances, Sabbaths, &c. and you believe them that shall set up humane inventions, and shall follow them. When Children abuse their Bre
Ver. 11. of the Prophecy of Amos.

play with it, and trample it under feet; it is time for Parents to take it from them. To bring these things 4 Themsad Hypothesis, apply this contempt of the Word to ourselves, it may make us tremble to think whether we are fallen; Since the Apostles times the Gospel never shone so brightly as it doth at this day, and never was it and the Ministers of it more openly vilified, and that by many old Professors (who are turned blasphemers) than at this day; and therefore we may justly fear that the Lord will punish our abuse of Light with the darkness of Popery; and take his Gospel from us, and give it to a people that shall yield him better fruits of it than we have done. Sad tidings always follow the contempt of the glad tidings of the Gospel; and they that think they have too much Preaching, shall at last have none at all. When Jeru-salem began to abuse the Prophets, they were quickly made a defolation.

3. The loss of the Word of God is the worst loss.

No famine like this famine, no judgement like this judgment, Lam. 1. 4. it is the heaviest that can befall a people on this side Hell; which made Luther say, I would not live in Paradise without the Word, but with it I could make a shift in Hell it self. David knew this full well, and therefore in the midst of all his wants, he was most sensible of this, and begs it at that one thing necessary, that he might dwell in the House of the Lord, Psal. 27. 4. It is true, Corporal famine is very terrible, and brings people into sad perplexities, and extremities, see, on Amos as you may see, Lam. 1. 11. 19 & 2. 11, 20. & 4. 4. 9. & 5. 4. 6.

16. but this Spiritual famine is farre worse. For,

1 That and other Judgements pinch but the body, but this pines the soul; now as the soul is more noble and excellent than the body, so its Judgements are farre more dreadful, because Spiritual. It is sad when men shall cry for bread, and they have a Stone given them; for meat, and they have a Serpent; for drink, and their Pastors (or Impostors rather) give them Merdir.

Poyton.

2 That may be a means to bring a man home to God, but this increaseth, and confirms the separation between God and the soul.

3 That kills but the body at worst, but this destroys both body and soul. So that as our Saviour said in another case, 

R r r
An Exposition

Chap.8.

about fearing of men, so may I say, about fearing of famines; fear not that famine which can but kill the body, but he will foretell you what you should fear; Fear that Famine which can destroy both body and soul, yea I say unto you, fear that.

4. Here is a Thirst added to the famine, a thirst of water. Though God sometimes punisht Cites with famine, yet they may have water to drink; but if they want both bread, and especially water, the distress is very heavy; for Thirst if he be in extremity is one of the most painful and intolerable Passions that is in this life; now the Prophet applieth this to the Spiritual famine and want of Gods Word, g. d. if it be a great Judgement to be tormented with bodily famine and thirst; how great is the Judgement then that I denounce against you, who shall have both famine and thirst, and that not of bodily bread or water, but of the Word of God, which is the Bread and Water of Life, and as farre excells all Corporal bread, as the Soul excells the body? And as it is said to have children cry for bodily bread, and there is none to give them; so it is much more sad when men shall cry for Spiritual bread, and there is none that can or will give it them.

2. As the giving of Preachers to dispense the Word unto us is reckoned as the choicest mercy, Job 33. 23, 24. Isa. 30. 20, 21. Jer. 3. 15. Ephes. 4. 11. because it brings light in darkness, joy in sorrow, life in death, health in sickness, strength in weakness, and brings us to an interest in God, and having him we have the Mine, the Fountain, All. So on the contrary, the removal of the Word from a people, is reckoned amongst the worst Judgements, 1 Sam. 28. 6. Psal. 74. 9. Prov. 19. 18. Lam. 3. 9. Ezek. 3. 25. Hos. 4. 17. Micah 2. 6. Mat. 13. 14. dry Breasts are reckoned as a Curse, Hos. 9. 14. for when the Word goes, the greatest Mercies and Priviledges of a People goe with it, Rev. 2. 5.

That Gods presence in his Ordinances is a great glory. See Mr. Maithale Fasts Sermon on 1. Chron 15. 2. 1642. printed.

4. and woe to a people when God goes, Hos. 9. 12. then men may persecute us, and there is none to deliver us, Psal. 71. 11. when he is gone, the glory of a People is gone, Isa. 4. 5. As the Ark, that was a Symbol and sign of Gods presence amongst his People, was called the Glory of Israel, 1 Sam. 4. 11. So the Preaching of the Gospel amongst us is our glory, Matt. 2. 9. and if it depart, we may write, Ithabod upon all our...
there enjoyment, that is, There is no glory; for the glory is departed from Israel since the Ark of God is taken. It is said of Constantinople, that it is fortified with three bulwarks. 1. With Wood, i.e. with Shipping. 2. With Stones, i.e. with high Walls. 3. With Bones, i.e. with valiant men. But it wants a fourth, viz. the presence of God in his Ordinances, without which all other Fortifications are but vain, Isa. 22. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Nahum 3. 12, 13. Christ is called a King, Psal. 2. 6, & 110. 3. Zach. 9. 9. now the presence of a King is the glory of a place; and where he is truly preached, there he is truly present; though the place and people be never so mean. Vixissimum plagae est omnium Patrum, ubi est sincerus Pastor, & fideis aliqui. Luther.

2. The Providence of a people goes, Where there is no Vision, there is a people tyed naked, and exposed to Divine displeasure, and all Gods fore Judgement break in upon them Prov. 29. 18. the contempt of the Word laid this potent and flourishing Kingdom of Israel in the dust.

3. Peace, Plenty, Content, Riches, all go when the Gospel goes. As the Gospel comes not empty handed to a People, but brings Peace, Plenty, Renown, and Glory with it, Exod. 20. 24. (Isa. 60. that whole Chapter) so when ever the Gospel goes, these concomitants go along with it. As we see in Jerusalem which lies in now in the dust, and the seven Churches of Asia.

4. Salvation goes; for the Preaching of the Word is the ordinary means of Salvation. Those that sin away the ordinary means must never look for extraordinary; whom God saves now, he saves by Preaching, Rom. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

5. Without the Word we cannot grow in Grace, it is not sufficient that we have the truth of Grace, but God looks that we should show it by our growth in grace, 2 Pet. 3. 18. & 1 Pet. 2. 3.

6. Without the Word no comfort, we shall perish in our afflictions unless Gods Law be our delight, Psal. 119. 92. It is through comfort of the Scriptures that we have hope, Rom. 15. 4.

7. Without the Word we are naked, and cannot defend ourselves; it is with this sword of the Spirit that we defend ourselves against the assaults of our Spiritual Adversaries, Ephes. 6. 17.
8. If the Word be gone, we have no Rule to walk by, nor Star to direct us, and shall run into the boggs of unwritten Traditions, Revelations, New-lights, and a thousand old errors. If once we forfake the Law and the Testimony, to walk in the light of our own fires, following our own corrupt reason, we are sure at last to dye down in sorrow, 

9. When the Word departs and goes out, then all miseries cloud in. Non datur vacuum, holds true in Divinity, as well as in Philosophy.

1. Then the Devil sets up his Throne, Rev. 2. 13; and wickedness abounds. When Christ's Kingdom goes down, then Sarans comes up; when the Sun sets, night follows.

2. Your children will be idolaters, and you will bring forth children to the murderer, when people have not the true God, they will have a false one.

3. Many temporal plagues will follow, as appears by the two following verses, ver. 13, 14. Where the famine of the Word goes before, there Sword, Plague, Famine, and other Judgements usually follow. In Queen Marie's time, when we lost the Word, we had losses by Sea, and losses by Land, and had such a terrible famine, that the people were forced to make bread of Acorns. When Truth and God's Ordinances are gone, Vines and Fig-trees will not be long after, Hos. 2. 11, 12. When the Lord would make way for his extreamest wrath, to come upon a people, he first takes away his faithful Ministers, that should lye in the breach to intercede for them, that so his wrath may come upon them to the utmost, Psal. 4. 8, 9.

Lam. 2. 7, 8.

Let us then use all means to prevent this land-destroying Judgement; to this end, 1. Be humbled for the sins of the times, which call for the removing of our Candlestick out of its place. 2. Besiege Heaven with your prayers, Mat. 9. 36. this is an Omnipotent Engine, whereby we conquer God. To quicken your prayers, consider what a sad losse the losse of the Word is, as you have seen in nine particulars before. 3. Walk as becomes the Gospel, if anything remove the Gospel from amongst us, 'tis our prophane, impure, ungospel-like, loose conversation that will do it.

See twelve fins that help to remove the Gospel Scanger, More. 7, p. 13, 24.

4. As corporal, so spiritual famine comes from God.
Vers. 11. of the Prophecy of Amos.

As all evils of affliction, so this amongst the rest comes from him.

1. He sometimes sends it immediately, when he chargeth the Prophets to prophesie no more in his name. As he commands the clouds to with-hold their Rain, and so brings a corporal famine; so when sinners grow obtinate, he commands his Ministers to with-hold their spiritual showers, and to let them alone, that they may perish in their iniquity. 

4. 17. Mat. 15. 14.

2. When by death he takes away his Ministers, when people cast dirt upon them, the Lord casts dust upon them, and hides them in their graves from the revilings of men.

3. Mediately, 1. By a corrupt Magistracy. Thus Ahab and Jezebel persecuted the true Prophets, and made them hide themselves in caves. So Herod that Tyrant cut off John Baptist's head.

2. By a corrupt Ministry; false Prophets in all ages have been the greatest persecutors of the true. Thus Amos here hath Amasiah the high Priest of Bethel against him, Amos 7. 10. His punishment you may read, vers. 17. Thus Pashur the Priest smote Jeremiah, and put him in the stocks, Jer. 20. 7. My Lord Amen and Caiaphas the High Priest, with the Scribes and Pharisees were the greatest enemies to Christ and his Apostles.

3. When men are given up in judgement to their own hearts lusts, so that they stop their ears against the Word, and will not hear, Zach. 7. 12.

4. When men muzzle the mouths of these laborious Oxen, V. Salltoma. and ungratefully change their wages, and withdraw the Oyl from the Lamp, and pick the tallow from the weal. ’Tis just with God to starve such souls, as would starve his Ministers bodies; you must therefore buy the Truth; and with the wise men, part with your gold and silver for Christ, Mat. 2. 11. You may buy gold too dear; but you cannot buy Christ and his Truth too dear; though you part with all your temporals for the Gospel, you have made a wise bargain, Mat. 13. 44.

9. Spiritual curiosity and niceness, when men have itching ears, so that they cannot endure sound Doctrine ; 2 Tim. 4. 4. When nothing will down but quails, and picking-meal, they are all for flourishies, and Rhetorical strains, and smooth
things, Isa. 30. 10. The doctrine of Mortification and Self-denial will not down with them.

6. Barrenness under the means of grace, when we do not answer God's cost and care, then he pull up the hedge, and lays all waste; Isa. 5. 6. 2. 5. Mat. 21. 43. Rev. 2. 3. They that will not work in the day, shall lament their folly in the night; they that will not serve God in the enjoyment of Ordinances, shall serve their lusts in the want of them. Let us therefore walk in the light, whilst we have the light, when the night comes no man can work.

Verse 12.

And they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not finde it.

In this verse we have a further aggravation of this people's misery, viz. that they should seek what they had despised, and with all they should have a frustration of their expectation. They had condemned the Word of the Lord, and now God in his just judgement will make them know the worth of his Word by the wanting of it. They shall wander from Sea to Sea. They shall trouble themselves without any profit. They bared the light, and therefore now they shall sit in darkness; they condemned God and his Prophets, and now they shall not be troubled with them; formerly God sent his Prophets, rising early to seek them, but now since by their sins they had driven both God and his Prophets from them, they should run from Sea to Sea, that is, from the Red Sea Southward, to the Mediteranean Sea: Westward (which were the bounds of the Land of Canaan, Num. 34. 3. Jer. 1. 46. Joel 2. 30. Ezek. 9. 10.) Yea they should run from North across unto the East, that is, in plain English, they should run all the Land over, and seek the Word of the Lord in every corner and quarter of it, and yet they should abide of it. If the famine be but in one part of a Land, a man may run to another part of it for aid, but when they shall cry for bread in all the parts of the land, and there is none to give them, that is doleful indeed.
Vert. 13. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Q. Here a Question will arise, Hath not the Lord promised, that those that ask shall have, and they that seek shall find; and such as hunger and thirst shall be blessed, how comes it then to pase, that this people seek the Word of the Lord, and yet cannot find it?

A. The Answer is easy, there is two-fold seeking and thirsting.

1. A reasonable, serious, and sincere seeking after God in his Worship, and to such the Promise runs, that they shall find, Prov. 8. 17. God never faileth to the genuine seed of Jacob, seek my face in vain, Isa. 45. 19. This Spiritual hungering and thirsting after the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby, is an infallible evidence of grace.

2. There is a formal, feigned, fare seeking of God's Word, Luke 13. 24. only in the time of trouble, when pain oppre-seth them; such may seek, but they shall never find: and thus it was with Israel here; they sought not the Word out of any love to it, nor yet to be converted by it, but being in trouble, and feeling (when it was too late) what a blessing they had lost, they now howl after it, as those did for bodily food, Hos. 7. 14. and as Esau did for the Birth-right, when it was too late, Heb. 11. 17. So these in a blind, erroneous, distracted manner desired to hear the Word of the Lord from the mouth of the Prophets, not to be instructed by it (for they hated to be reformed) but to get some ease and comfort from them in their distress; for the Prophets were wont to mingle comfort with their Threatenings, and to tell the people of God how long their troubles should endure, and when they should end, Psal. 74. 9. But since the Lord spake to them by his Prophets in their prosperity, and they would not believe, that so they might fly from the wrath to come; now they should sink under their burden, and run to and fro for a Prophet of the Lord to comfort them, but they should not have it; for as the Lord called and they would not answer, so they should now cry, and should not be heard, Prov. 1. 24. 25, 26, 27. So that it is a fallacy to argue thus, All that seek shall find, and all that hunger and thirst are blest.

But these did seek, therefore they shall find; and these did hunger and thirst after the word, therefore they shall be blest.
An Exposition

Chap. 8.

The Major must be limited, thus:

All that seek aright, and all that do truly hunger and thirst after the Word shall be blessed. But these did seek aright, and did truly hunger and thirst after the Word.

That is false, for by hunger and thirst here is not meant their hungerring after the Word, but it implies a want of the Word; as a man that is pined wants food, so in Israel there should be a great want of the Prophets to preach the Word unto them.

Some take the words in an Allegorical, Mystical sense, and apply it to the Jews after they had Crucified Christ, and fled the Prophets, they should run from place to place to seek the Word of the Lord, and should not find it. But this is too lax and general, and is against the context, which applies it to the ten Tribes, ver. 14.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Those that will find the Lord when they seek him, must seek him whilst be may be found, Isa. 55. 6. Psal. 32. 6. 2 Cor 6. 2.

We must walk in the light whilst we have the light, the night comes when no man can work, Job. 12. 25. 36. This people here lost all for want of seeking in a right manner and season; they sought the Word, but it was when it was too late.

2. The scarcity of the Word (many times) makes it to be more highly prized by us.

When this Manah fell thick about this people they regarded it not, but now they have left their Prophets they can run from Sea to Sea to seek them. Those Sermons and Ordinances which people vilify now, when God removes them, they will magnifie and praise them. It is with those good ways of God, as it is with good men, whilst they be alive amongst us we are ready to stone them, but when they are dead we are ready to Idolize them. Usually Gods blessings are more esteemed and valued by us when they are Rare, and we want them, than when we surfeit and abound with them. Things that are very rare are very precious, Isa. 4. 1. & 13. 12. Hence we read of days wherein the Word of the Lord was...
Ver. 13. of the Prophecy of Amos. was rare, and then it was precious in those days, and why? because there was no open Vision; there was not a known Prophet in those days to teach the people, and this made the Ordinances so precious then, 1 Sam. 3. 3.

The Commonness of the Sun, of Water, Food, Yarmen, Health, Wealth, Peace, Liberty, Sleep, Senses, &c. make them little esteemed; whereas if the Lord should deprive us of any one of them, we should quickly know the worth of them.

Lament this thy folly, and beseech the Lord to make thee know the worth of his blessings by the enjoying, rather than by the waning of them.

3 When people want the Word of God they should goe from place to place, yea from Land to Land, rather than pine and perish for want of instruction.

In times of Dearth we see how farre people will travel for food for their Bodies (as Jacobs Sons did from Canaan to Egypt) and shall not we take more pains for our immortal Souls? If the Queen of Sheba (a person of great wealth and worth) went above a thousand miles to hear the Wisdom of Solomon, how farre should we goe to hear a greater than Solomon? Luke 11. 31. How farre will men ride and run for the profits and pleasures of their bodies, and shall not we be at more pains to save our Souls? In the days of Christ the people followed him from City to City on the Week-days to p. 326. hear him, and he never reproved them for it, but fed their souls and bodies, Luke 6. 17.

Ver. 13. In that day shall the fair Virgins, and the young men, faint for thirst.

In the two precedent Verses the Prophet threatens a Spiritual famine, now follows a Corporal famine and destruction, from which none should escape; neither the Young mans strength, nor the Virgins Beauty should any whit avay them in that day.

In this Verse we have, 1 A Judgement threatned, and that is Thirst; they should faint for thirst. The question will be,
An Exposition

Chap. 8.

what is meant by Thirst here? 1. Some take it literally for corporal thirst, which in those hot Countries, where they want ed water, was a very grievous thing. Poor that want bread, yet have water many times to refresh them; but when a people have neither bread nor water, it must needs go hard with them.

2. This Thirst sets forth the great poverty, and extrem want of all things which this people should be brought into, (as the word is used, Deut. 28. 48. Isa. 44. 3. for great afflictions) and the terror of that final judgement which was coming upon them. They should not have so much as a little water to quench their thirst, but they should faint for thirst, (as men use to do in such cases) Psa. 107. 5. Isa. 51. 19. 20.

This sense I take to be the most genuine.

3. Yet others take Thirst Metaphorically; for Spiritual Thirst, God's wrath should burn them, and burden them, and yet they should have none to refresh and comfort them in their trouble. We have a Comment on this Text, in Hos. 1. 3. 4. where the Lord threatens to strip these Idolizers. Israelites naked, as in the day when they were born, and to make them a wilderness, and set them in a dry Land, and slay them with thirst; that is, he would destroy them with the scorching heat of his wrath, not tempered with any grace or comfort. So great should their misery be, that they should want both corporal and spiritual refreshing.

2. Here are the persons which should perish, and those are the prime and flower of the Land, the very hope of posterity. The beautiful Virgins, and the Young Men. These usually sin with an high hand, in open contempt of God and his word, they sin with more height and violence of affection, than elder persons use to do, and therefore the Lord threatens them especially.

Virgins use to be spared by men for their tenderness and beauty, but God is no respecter of persons; and young men are strong, and can better shift for themselves, yet these, even these, for all their beauty, vigour and strength, shall faint and dye, sorrow and perplexity shall cover and overwhelm them, as the word signifies; and if these cannot hold out, what shall become of children and old persons? This shews the generality of the Judgement, and that none shall escape.
3. Here is the time when all this shall come upon them. 
'Tis in that day, viz. when Israel shall go into captivity, and God shall carry them out of his own land by the cruel Assyrians; when Samaria should be taken, and God's prophets scattered, then shall they faint for thirst.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Where spiritual judgments go before, there corporal judgments follow after. 
Such as condemn spiritual bread, shall want corporal. Before we read of a spiritual famine, now follows corporal distresses of the choicest and fairest of both sexes. So true is that of Solomon, Prov. 13. 13, 18. Whoso despiseth the Word, shall be destroyed, yea poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction.

2. Beauty is vanity, Prov. 31. 30, Isa. 3. 24. & 40. 6, 7. 
'Tis a brittle thing, what disease almost doth not make it fade and wither? however it may take with vain man, yet it moves not God. If beautiful virgins will sin against God, even the fair virgins shall faint. Many have beauty that have not piety, Prov. 6. 25. & 11. 22. Saul and Absalom were goodly personages, yet wicked men. Of the two, better have piety without beauty, than beauty without piety. An upright, pure soul, in a black decrepit body, is excellent. God many times makes up outward deformities with inward excellencies. Socrates and Epip were deformed in body, yet who was more wise and witty?

Felix nigredo 
qua mentis 
candorem habet. 
V. A. La. 
Pride in Eccles. 
11. 2. & Sphinx 
Theol. cap. 15. 

Ingenio pollet, cui vindicta negavit. Cato.

3. Sin sweeps all before it. 
It deprives us not onely of bread, but also of water too, yea it deprives us not onely of corporal, but also of spiritual bread. It robs us of all our comforts, great reason then we have to hate it. 'Tis like that weed which we call Bishopsweed, which frets away all the corn and good grain that grows near it.

4. The sins of young persons provoke the Lord to cut them off. 
Their sins are committed with more willfulness, heat and violence, and so are more displeasing unto God, as I 

$112$ have
An Exposition

Have shewed before, on Amos 4. 10. Obst. 6.

5. 'Tis the great misery of wicked men, that they have no comfort in their misery.

When they be scorched with the wrath of God, yet they faint for thirst. The godly that thirst in a right spiritual manner, have God's Spirit and Ministers to comfort them, and pronounce them blessed, Mat. 5. 6. But the wicked faint and sink under their burdens, and have not so much as one shower of Rain from Heaven, to quench and allay the flaming fire of God's indignation, Ezek. 22. 24.

Verse 14:

They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy God; O Dan, liveth, and the manner of Beersheba liveth, even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

The Prophet having reproved them before for their oppression and unrighteousness towards men, comes now to denounce God's Judgments against them, for their Superstition and Idolatry towards God.

In the words we have 1. A Commination, or a Judgement threatened, and that is, the irreparable ruine of the Ten Tribes, They shall fall, and never rise up again. They shall fall (for their cruelty and Idolatry) that they shall rise no more. If a man fall, and yet hath hope of rising again, it upholds and comforts him; but these Israelites fell into captivity, and never were restored. Judah, which was the better of the two, after the seventy years captivity, returned again into their own land; but the Ten Tribes were carried out of their own land by Salmaneser King of Assyria, and never returned any more, Amos 5. 2. The Lord had tried all gentle means to cure them, but all in vain, and therefore now he resolves to make a final end with them, and to embrace them so as they shall fall irrecoverably, and never rise up again, nor return more to their own land, as appears, 2 Kings 17. To fall, and never rise, to dye, and not live, to be set below, and not above, to sit in darkness, and have no light; such amplifications in Scripture are vehement asseverations, and are not used in vain by God.

2 Hear
Ver. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos.

2. Here is the ground or reason of this Commination, and that is, their Superstition and Idolatry,

§ 1. By the sin of Samaria.
They swore § 2. By the God of Dan.
§ 3. By the manner of Beersheba.

That is, They swore by the Molten Images, and Golden Calves, which Jeroboam the King of Samaria had set up at Dan and Bethel. These Idols are called, The sin of Samaria, because Samaria was the Metropolis, and chief seat of their Kings, and they setting up Idolatry at Bethel, which was not far from Samaria, drew Samaria and all the people of the Land with them, and therefore this sin is properly laid at their doors. When the people of Israel in Moses his time did worship the golden Calf, it is called their Sin, Deut. 9.

21. I took your Sin, that is, I took the Molten Calf, where-with you had committed that abominable sin of Idolatry, and burnt it with fire, and the Scripture frequently calls Idols by the name of Sin, 1 King. 12. 29, 30. Isa. 27. 9 & 31. 7. Hose. 10. 8. Zach. 5. 8: They thought they had done God an high peace of service, in sacrificing and swearing by the Calves, but the Lord plainly tells them, that 'twas their great sin so to do.

3. He goes on to prove their Idolatry, by their forms of swearing then in use, for our oaths are a kind of confession of our Faith, whereby we testify, that he whom we swear by knows our hearts, and is able to punish us if we swear falsely; hence swearing is frequently put for religious worship. This swearing by Idols, and fictitious Gods (as Idolaters use to do) as if they had no other God to swear by, could not but highly provoke the Lord to cast them off, who thus ungratefully and dis-ingenuously forsook him, the fountain of all their happiness.

They say, Thy God o Dan lives; or they swear by the life of Dan, which yet was a dead Idol, and had no life in it. This was the usual form of swearing in those days, as you may see, Gen. 42. 15. Judg. 8. 19. Ruth 3. 13. Jer. 12. 16. They used the same form of swearing by their Idols, as the godly did.
by the true God. Thy God O Dan lives, (i.e.) Let thy Calf live O Dan, or as sure as thy Calf lives, O Dan. They swore by this Idol, as if there were some Deity and Divinity in it, when 'twas a mere abomination, and Idol of their own inventing, Hos. 8. 5, 6. Jeroboam when he came first to the Crown, set up two Golden Calves, as turelar Gods, the one at Bethel, not far from Sarah, the other in Dan, which was in the North part of Canaan, it being one of the utmost coasts there- of, 1 King. 12. 29, 30. Jer. 4. 15.

4. Yet more, They swear by the manner of Beersheba. Beersheba was a City of Canaan, Josh. 19. 2. being the utmost bound of the holy Land toward the South, as Dan was to- ward the North; hence from Dan to Beersheba are often put for the whole Land of Israel, from one end to the other, they being the utmost borders of the whole Land, Judg. 20. 1. I Sam. 3. 20. 2 Sam. 3. 10. 1 Chron. 8. 2. 'Twas a fa- mous City, where the Judges used to sit, 1 Sam. 8. 2. yet this place was infested with Idolatry, as well as Bethel and Gilgal, and therefore they are commanded to pass by it, Amos 5. 5. and yet they swear, that the manner of Beersheba lives. Or the way of Beersheba lives (as 'tis in the fountain) that is, they swear by a strange God, whose way, Rites, Ceremonies, and manner of Worship they had set up at Beersheba: for by way in Scripture is meant the manner of divine worship and serving of God. 'Tis here taken in a bad sense. See Jer. 32. 39. Acts. 9. 2. & 18. 25. & 24. 14. Thus we see how the whole Land was infested with Idolatry, from one side to another, there was no sound part in it, which serves to justify Gods Justice in their universal ruine.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Idolatry, it is a sinning sin.

It is the Sin with an Emphasis, and by way of eminency, which destroys a Land, Deut. 9. 21. it is a great sin in it self, and the root of many other abominations; whatever Sin God bears withall, yet he cannot, he will not bear with this (as I have shewed at large elsewhere) other sins were Cause adajvantos, they helpt to ruine Israel, but their Idolatry was
Ver. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos.

the primary cause of that fatal blow, and of their final overthrow.

2. The Judgement of men, and the Judgement of God differ much.

That which man calls here by way of honour, is God, that God calls by way of dishonour and detestation, is Sin, and abominable, Jer. 16. 18. & 44. 4. Thus the world calls Riches, Substance, Goods, Happiness, Psal. 4. 6. but the Holy Ghost calls them Vanities, Thorns, Husks, unrighteous Mammon: the world calls Pride, Decency, but God calls it an abomination. The world calls Covetousness, Good-husbandry, but God calls it the root of all evil. The Maffe, with all its Superstitious rites, Antichrist calls it Divine Service, but God saith, In vain do ye worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Precepts of men. Satan loves not to have Sin goe bare-faced, and therefore he usually puts a fair Glove upon a foul remedies against hand, and calls Vice by the name of Virtue. But God hath Sat. Dev. P. 18. cursed those that call evil good, Isa. 5. 20. many think they highly please God, and doe him abundance of service by their Superstitious, Self-conceited worship, but he tells them here, it is their sin and shame so to doe; So true is that of our Saviour, Luke 16. 15. That which is highly esteemed in the sight of carnal, superstitious men, is an abomination in the sight of God.

3. Mixture in God's Worship is a God-provoking Sin.

When we are partly for God, and partly for Baal, partly for Christ, and partly for Calves at Dan and Bethsheba, this mingling Hypo-gle-mangle, and Linse-woolse-religion is very displeasing unto God, and ruined Israel here. They pretended that they Wor-shipped the true God, in and by those Idols which they swore by, but because God had commanded them no such way of Worship, he utterly disclaims it, and severely punisheth them for their pains, 2 King. 17. 33, 34. those that are said to fear the Lord, and yet serve their owne gods, in the very next verse are said, Not to fear the Lord.

4. We may not swear by Idols.

It is a Deifying of them; hence the Lord threatens to pur-\textit{V. Danai Ethie.} nish those that swear by them that are no gods, Jer. 5. 7. Zeph. chri. 1. 2. cap. 1. 5. we may not swear by Creatures, Math. 5. 34, 35, 36. 9. P. 113. folio. Fam. 5. 12. nor by any fictitious gods at Dan and Beerel, as
An Exposition

many Popish, ignorant persons amongst us doe; when they swear Bev Lady, Bev Lakinis, by St. Anhony, by S Gys, by the Masle, by Cock, by my Fay, by my Feiks, by my Feikins, by my. Truly, &c. All these are Oathes, by Idols and by Creatures, which our jealous God will not brook at our hands; you may mock men with them, but God will not be mocked; his Curse will seize upon the houses where such swearers dwell, Zach. 5. 3.

We all profess ourselves to be worshippers of the true God, yet our swearing by them that are no gods is a kind of renouncing the true God, by whom only we should swear, as him only we should serve. God is very tender of his own Glory, and will not suffer it to be given to others. Hence wee are to oft commanded when we swear, to swear only by the name of the true and living God, Deut. 9. 13. & 10. 20. Psa. 63. ult. Isa. 45. 23. & 65. 16. Jer. 12. 16.

Oathes are one special part of Divine Worship, wherein God is glorified in his Attributes of Omnisciency, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, &c. We believe that he knowes our hearts, and is able to punish us if we perform not our Oathes, or swear falsely; and to this end we call upon him when we swear. Hence Isaiah Prophesying of the calling of the Egyptians to the faith, tells us, that in that day five Cities in Egypt shall speak the Language of Canaan, and shall swear by the Lord of Hosts; that is, they shall shew that he is their God, by their swearing by his name, Isa. 19. 18.

5 Superstition is a toysome thing.

They goe here to Dan and Beersheba, from the North to the South, all the Land over after Idols, 1 King. 12. 30. what pains and Peregrinations doe the Papists take in Journies, Whippings, and other kinds of Will-worship, yet many amongst us will scarce goe out of their doors to hear the Gospel of Salvation. Blind Idolaters shall rise in Judgment against the men of this Generation, who take more pains in going to Hell, than many doe for Heaven.

6 Great Cities many times are the Seminaries of great Sins.

The Idolatry which over-spread all Israel is laid here at Samarias door, which was the chief City of the Land, and the place of the Kings residence, from hence as from a fountain all the streams of Prophaneness, Superstition, and Idola-
For the Prophecy of Amos.

The prophecy of Amos is a foretelling of future events, as described in the Bible. It is often used as a source of guidance and inspiration, offering insights into the nature of God and the world. The text is rich in metaphor and imagery, reflecting the cultural and religious context of the time.

Verse 9: They shall be at last so broken, that they shall never rise more. A good man may fall into afflictions and trouble, seven times in a day, yet he riseth again, but the wicked shall fall into mischief irrecoverably, and never rise more, as the Apostle implies, Prov. 4:16. Job fell into deep distress, yet at last he rose again, and his latter end was better than his beginning, Job 42:12. But the wicked are broken as with an iron rod, and dashed in pieces like a Potter's vessel, which can never be mended together again, Psal. 2, 9. God strikes them through the gall, so that all the physicians in the world cannot heal them, Job 30:23.
AN EXPOSITION,
WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS
UPON THE NINTH CHAPTER OF AMOS.

VERSE 1.

I saw the Lord standing upon the Altar, and he said,
Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake:
and cut them in the head all of them, and I will slay
the last of them with the sword: be that fleeth of them
shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them, shall
not be delivered.

In this last Chapter, which contains the last Vision
and Prophecy of the destruction of Judah and Jer-
usalem, wee have the summe and substance of the
seventh Sermon of the Prophet Amos, which con-
sists of three parts.

1. A COMMINATION.
2. A CONFIRMATION OF THAT COMMINATION.
3. A MITIGATION OR QUALIFICATION OF THIS COMMINATION WITH
Evangeliical promises of consolation and restauration. So that
this Chapter consists both of Law and Gospel, of judgement
and mercy; which is the best mixture that a Prophet of God
can...
of the Prophecy of Amos.

can use, because all ingenious natures are wrought upon, either by judgements or mercies, and those that neither of these can work upon, are desperate.

1. Here is a continuation of God's Commination by way of Type or Vision, wherein we have: 1. The Vision propounded, viz. the pointing of the lintel of the Temple door, that the people might see. Denoting thereby the certainty of their ruin and transportation, without any possibility of escaping.

2. The Vision is expounded, vers. 3. where we have: 1. The persons that shall be cut off, and those are the body of the people, the generality of the land, both great and small; as all had sinned, so all must now suffer for sin. 2. He commands, Smite them in the head, that is, cut off kings, princes, and priests, both in Israel and Judah. 3. Rest not there, but slay the rest of them with the sword, that is, cut off the inferior forts.

3. Here is the certainty and inevitable necessity of their suffering confirmed by Arguments drawn, first from the Omniscience of God, no place what ever can escape a sinful people from his revenging hand, and this is set forth: 1. Generally, vers. 3. He that pleaseth, shall not flee away, and he that escapeth, shall not be delivered. There is no escaping when God purifies.

2. By a notable enumeration of some particular places, shewing that they should not escape: 1. In hell, vers. 4. though they hid themselves. 2. In Heaven. 3. In the tops of inaccessible mountains, vers. 3. 4. In the bottom of the sea. 5. In Captivity. Though they went into banishment out of their own lands, yet, there the Lord would command the sword, and it should slay them, vers. 4. So that they were safe neither at home nor abroad, neither in their own land, nor in strange Countries.

4. Their total overthrow is further confirmed by Arguments drawn: 1. From the anger of God, vers. 4, 5. I will set mine eyes upon them for evil. This is a Metaphor from men in whom the anger of the heart discovers itself in the eyes and face.

2. From the might and majesty of God, who hath power to punish them, and this power is set forth, vers. 6. By his Fingers,
An Exposition

Chap. 9.

Here is the Lord God of hosts, ver. 5. 6. By the effects of his power.

7. If he but touch the Land, it shall wither, ver. 5. With a touch he can destroy a Land, and turn it into his first Chaos.

8. He can bring an overflowing flood upon it, that shall quickly over-run all, ver. 5.

9. By his word of Creation, 1. In minutes, ver. 6. He builds the firmament of Heaven. By his power and wisdom he created the Heavens, and the several spheres and regions of the Air, as so many stories one above another, ver. 6.

10. In the earth, he hath founded his Troops in the earth, ver. 6. He hath variety of creatures, as so many Troops in earth ready to serve him, and execute his commands, they are all his servants, Psal. 104.

11. In the Sun. He calleth for the waters of the Sea, and they presently cover the face of the earth, ver. 6. By all which he proves himself to be, The Great Jehovah of all the world.

12. He confirms the certainty of their destruction from the hardness of their condition. As first, they were disingenious and ungrateful, whereas he had brought them up out of the Land of Egypt, and made them his people; yet they behaved themselves more like Egyptians than Israelites; and therefore as they had been like to Heidens in suffering, so now they should be like them in suffering, ver. 7.

13. They were very secure and regardless of God's threatenings, concerning the warnings of God's Prophets, and therefore the Lord threatens, that they should fall by the sword, ver. 10.

14. The Prophet having before used Driving-Motives, drawn from God's judgements of God's promises, taken from the mercies and comfortable promises of God. Before he had brought them to Mount Zion, the Mount of Covenant; but now he brings them to Mount Gerizim, the Mount of Blessing: Before he had given them with legal menaces, and dreadful Condemnations, now he clothed his Prophecy with Gospel-mercies, and Evangelical consolations.

15. He tells them that an elect remnant should be saved in the midst of their calamities, till better days should come under the Gospel. Though the Lord were resolved to punish the
body of that rebellious Nation, yet he would not utterly destroy them all, but would preserve some because of his Covenant, and though they might be lifted, tossed and tried with many afflictions, and go into captivity as well as others; yet not one grain should fall to the ground, nor any one of God's elect perish entirely, ver. 8, 9.

2. Here is the happy Restoration of the Church in Gospel-times set forth; under the type of rising up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen, ver. 11. Though the house of David, and the men of Judah and Israel, were sorely shattered, and sunk very low by reason of their captivity, and other calamities which lay upon them; so that they were like a Tabernacle fallen down, or a Garden laid upon, the fence being broken down; yet in Christ the true heir of David, it should in Gospel-times be restored and repaired.

3. According to the substance of the Prophecies in Old-Testament times, he prophesies of the glory and happiness of the Church which shall set forth by the manifestation and influence of outward blessings, typifying thereby those spiritual mercies which God would give to the elect remnant after their sufferings.

1. He promises that the Nations should be tributed under them, and their bounds should be enlarged by taking in the Gentiles in these Gospel-times into communion with them, ver. 12.

2. Great plenty in their fields and vineyards, ver. 13, 14.


4. Returning from captivity and bondage, and re-establishment in their own land, in despite of all their enemies, ver. 15.

Obje. But 'tis impossible, that ever such things should befall.

Ans. To men who are led by sense and carnal reason, these things may seem impossible; but to the Almighty all things are possible. Now it is he that undertakes the work, and it is he that will effect it in his due time; 'Tis I that will bring them again, and I will plant them in the Land that I have given them, even I will do this, saith the Lord Almighty, who am Thy God in covenant with thee.
Verse 1.

I saw the Lord standing upon the Altar, &c.

The destruction of this people was shadowed out before, by four visions; this is the fifth and last by which the Prophet confirms that Conmimation which he had published in the precedent chapters.

The better to confirm the truth and authority of what he should speak, he begins first with his usual Preface, Amos 1. 1 & 8. 1. I saw the Lord, the King of Kings, and Supreme Monarch of all the world, whom Israel and Judah have provoked to wrath with their Idolatry; him, I say, I saw in a trance or Prophetical vision, standing, which implies two things. 1. That he was ready to depart from this rebellious people, his gracious presence should no longer abide among them. 2. Sit us vindex, he stands ready to pronounce the final sentence against them, and to execute his righteous judgement on them, so Amos 7. 7. So that here is the Lord's posture. He stands.

2. Here is the place where he stands, viz. upon the Altar. Here two great Questions will arise. 1. How could Amos see God, when 'tis said, No man hath seen God at any time, and none can see him and live, Exod. 33. 20. John 1. 18. Yet Amos is said to see God and live?

Answ. The Answer is easy. There is a twofold seeing of God. 1. As he is in himself in his transcendent glory and essence, and thus no mortal man cloathed with flesh and blood, and clogged with humane infirmities, can see God and live; it would overwhelm him; and he could not bear it. 1 Tim. 6. 16. 1 Tim. 4. 12. But in the life to come we shall see him clearly as he is. 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 John 3. 2.

2. There is a seeing of him in this life darkly, in his word and works, and visionary or, by visions, by apparitions, signs and sights; such as our infirmities will bear, and thus he appeared to Amos, to Abraham, to Isaiah, chap. 6. 1. Ezek. 1. & 43. 3. 4. Daniel and others. These saw the Lord in visions, but not in his Essence.

A second Quere is, What is meant by the Altar here?

Answ.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Ans. Here Interpreters are divided. Some conceive that Amos living at Bethel, and being lent to preach principally to the ten Tribes, saw the Lord standing upon some Idolatrous Altar, at Dan or Bethel (not by way of approbation, but intending its destruction) as ready to do execution there, throwing down the Altar; and its worshippers. But 'tis probable, that the Lord would not so far countenance those Idolatrous places, as to shew any vision, or utter any Oracle there, where the Devil was worshipped, 2 Chron. 11. 15.

Others upon better grounds, do interpret it of Gods standing on the Brazen Altar, which was in Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, which being without the Temple in the Inner Court, may intimate Gods beginning to forsake his Temple and people; and that there was no hope of pardon left, seeing the place of propitiation was by God converted into a seat of Justice, he standing upon the Altar of burnt-offerings, as it were to slay the men of those times, whose provocations he could no longer bear; and albeit the Prophet was principally sent to Israel, yet he many times takes in Judah with them (as I have showed on Amos 6. 1.) As both had sinned, so both must suffer, and be laid in the dust, neither should their Temple in which Judah so much gloried, any whit avail them in the day of Gods wrath; much less should those Idol and profane Temples of Dan and Bethel any whit avail Israel, which God never commanded to be built, but alwayes abhorred as dens of Devils, 2 Chron. 11. 15.

4. Here is the Vision itself, viz. the destruction of Judah and Israel forthby the smiting of the Lintel of the door, that the pots might shake. And he said, Smite the lintel of the door, &c. The question will be, whom doth the Lord here speak to, when he says, smite?

Ans. Some conceive that he speaks to the Prophet, who was commanded to denounce judgments against them, that all might quake for fear. Others conceive that he means Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, who burnt the Temple, and smote the Altar. Others apply it to Sennacherib the King of Assyria, who executed Gods wrath upon Israel, carried them into captivity, and destroyed their Idol Temples. These are but conjectures.

Most conceive that it was some Angel which the Lord had appointed.
appointed as the executioner of this judgments upon this people; hence we so often read in Scripture that God made use of Angels for such ends.

3. Here is the work that this Angel must do. He must smite the lintel of the door of the Temple; the gate of the Temple had a threshold and posts, and over the threshold in the frontispiece was elegant work, 1 Kings 6. 33, 34, &c.

By the lintel here is meant the Transom, or Head-post over the door, Exod. 12. 22. The word also signifies an Apple or Pomegranate, that stood peradventure on the top of the Temple or Porch, as is usual in magnificent Structures, where they set knobs or balls on the frontispiece, and upper lintel of the doors, adorned with artificial Flowers, Apples, Pomegranates, &c.

6. Here is the manner, how the Angel must smite the lintel, not faintly and feebly, but with vehemency and courage, so that the posts and pillars may shake again. By the lintel is meant the Superiors, and by the posts which supported it, the Inferiors; all should be smitten, and made to quake again for fear; for so it follows, Cut them in the head all of them where we have the Persons which the Angel must smite, and those are, 1. The Heads of Israel, that is, the Rulers both Ecclesiastical and Civil. Cut them in the head, or cut them which are the head of all, viz. the chief and principal men in Church and State, both Princes and Priests. A cut in the body may be cured, but a cut in the head is dangerous and deadly, Psal. 68. 20. The Vulgar Latin muddling the Original word, render it thus, Smite, for Commasfafa, the head of them all. But the word Betzam, coming from Bata, properly signifies to wound or cut, and metaphorically to be covetous.

2. The Peasants and the Poor. I will lay the last of them. By the last or himmolt here is meant the inferiour sort or common people, who are the last and lowest of the people. Before he threatened the Head, and now he comes to the Head. Before he threatened the Head, and now he comes to the Head. The Portal with the Pavement, all must be smitten. Cut them down (that is, God, to the Angel) cleave them, from top to bottom, from head to tail, from first to last, let none escape.

Some render it thus, I will lay the residue or remainder. Indeed the word is homonymous, and admit of diverse significations.
Ver. 1. of the Prophecy of Amos.

...lations, sometimes signifies the last, or that which follows; and sometimes 'tis put for posterity and children; and though it be true that God did destroy these wicked ones with their posterity; yet in fact genuinely the word is rendered by our Translators here, The left of them, as relating to the inferior sort, and then the sense runs clear, I will slay both high and low, both head and heel.

3. Here is the means by which God will destroy them; and that is, by the left and forest of his judgements, 'tis by the sword. Israel shall fall by the sword of the Assyrian, and Judah by the sword of the Babylonian.

Quest. But how are all said to be slain, when 'tis manifest that many escaped, and went singly into captivity into Assyria and Chaldea?

Answ. The word All, in Scripture, is taken two ways; 1. Collectively, for all the body of a people. 2. Distributively, for some of all sorts; some rich, some poor; some high, and some low; and so the word is taken here for many, very many both in Samaria and Jerusalem shall dye for it. So that when he saith All, hee speaketh Hyperbolically, and means all comparatively, that is, those that escape shall be but few in comparison of those that dye. See note. 2. 21. All men seek their own, that is, the greatest part do so.

2. We must distinguish of slaying. 1. There is an actual slaying and killing our-near, and so all were not slain. 2. There is a slaying in a Civil Sense, when a man goes into captivity, and is banished from house and harbour, being brought very low by affliction, and this is called slaying in Scripture, Psal. 78. 34. and thus all Israel and Judah were slain; that is, they were carried into captivity, the one by the Assyrian, and the other by the Babylonian.

Obj. But what do you tell us of slaying, we will hide our selves, and flee for it?

Answ. The Prophet by a Prolepsis sides this gap, and tells them that the judgement is inevitable, slaying will not avail; for he that fleeth shall not flee away but shall be overtaken; and he that escapeth of them, shall not be delivered. They may attempt and endeavour an escape, but it shall be in vain; for God's Justice shall quickly overtake them, and his sentence be executed on them. This doubling of the words is very emphatical, 

Vv v
An Exposition Chap. 9.

tical, and is more than if he had simply said, They shall finde
no hiding-place.

It aggravates a man's miserie, to fly, and then be taken,
and when he thinks he had escaped the danger, then to fall
into it, or a worse, is very bad; yet so 'twas here, they thought
to shift for themselves, as formerly they had done, and to save
themselves by flight, but now the day of their calamity was
come, and they should not escape; they were ripe for ruine,
and therefore the Lord tells them, that there was now no way
nor hope of escaping, but they must into their enemies hands;
and if any should escape one trouble, yet he should fall into
another; though he escape one stroke at one time, yet he shall
not be delievered from another stroke at another time; but
shall be like one that fleeth from a Lion, and a Bear should
meet him, Amos 5. 19.

The summe of all is this. In a Vision I Amos saw the Lord
(having left the Temple) to stand upon the Altar wisboum, and
be commanded his Angel to smite the Lintel, or Head-piece o-
over the door of the Temple, so vehemently, that the posts thereof
may shake; to signifie, that fatal stroke which I will give the Ru-
ters, both Civit and Ecclesiastical in Israel and Judah: for I
have decreed in cleave them down the middles, and to smite them
from top to toe, both Lintel and Threshold: both Superiores and
Inferiores, all have sinned, and all shall suffer. Israel shall sud-
ddenly fall by the hand of the Assyrian, and Judah not long after
shall go captive into Babylon. They are incorrigible, and there-
fore I am become inexorable, and their judgements are inescapable;
though they fly, yet they cannot escape, no power, nor policy shall
be able to deliver them from my revenging hand.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. God formerly revealed his mind to his Prophets by Types
and Visions.

I saw in a Vision (saies Amos) but in the last clauses he
hath spoken to us more plainly and fully by his Son, Heb. 1,
1, 2. but of this before, on chap. 8. Ver. 1. Obs. 3.

2. God will depart from those that depart from him.

He will forsake those that forsake him, 2 Chron. 15. 2.
When Jerusalem forsakes God, then God forsakes Jerusalem.

Salem
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Sel., 2 Kings. 51. 13, 14. These people had forsaken God, and followed Idols, and now God stands upon the Altar ready to depart from them, and leave them in the hands of their enemies. 'Tis true, the Lord is loath to leave his people, and therefore he removes gradually, and by degrees from them. When he departed from Jerusalem, he did it not in a moment, but first he warns them by his Prophets; then he removes from the Cherub to the Threshold, Ezek. 9. 3, and 10. 3. Such is God's goodness and bowels of pity to his people, that he is very unwilling to tell them into his enemies' hands; if any means might prevent it. Psal. 81. 14; 84. 14. 23. Jer. 18. 20. Ezek. 18. 30. 31. 33. 9. Hos. 6. 4. 5. 11. 8, 9. But when a people are so desperately set that they will none of God, then he swears their ruin, Psal. 95. 11. This forsaking him is a great evil, and a God-provoking sin, Jer. 7. 14, 15. Hence old David counsellings young Solomon to know and serve the Lord, utter this motion amongst the people; if they seek him, he will be found of thee, but if they forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever, 1 Chron. 28. 9.

Judgement usually begins at the house of God. It begins at the Sanctuary, Ezek. 9. 6. 1 Pet. 4. 17. the highest in privileges, the nearest to judgement, Dan. 9. 12. Amos 3. 12. Matt. 21. 23. The nearer to God, the more do our sins dishonour him, and therefore he begins with such, 2 Sam. 22. 7, 8. though he ends not with them. The famine began at Jacob's house, and then to Egypt. The brethren went first into captivity, and after the Assyrians were destroyed by the Medes and Persians, so Jer. 46. 17, 18. 28, 29. The Lord gives the cup, first to Jerusalem, and then to Egypt, &c. Ekron, Edom, Moab. The Pots and Pillars of the Temple door must first be smitten; and if this be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? Is this be done to God's own Temple? what shall become of Idol-Temples? If the Lord see more in my spare not Jerusalem, but shew his impartial justice in punishing them for their sins, what shall be done to Babylon?

4. Political Rulers are the Heads of a people.

Curse them in the Head. They are not called so in Scripture, Exod. 6. 14. & 18. 25. Num. 1. 16. & 23. 5. Deut. 12. 12, 13. 18. 8, 9. 31. 15. 16. & 17. 17. Look what the Head is to the Body natural, what Rulers are, ought to be to the body Political.
As the head is placed highest in the body, and sees, contemplates and reasons for the preservation of the body, so this word implies both dignity and duty, and should teach those who are set in place of preeminence above others, to consult for the good of their people, that they may live peaceably and piously under them; 3 Tim. 2. 2. Many cry up the dignity of princes, but they should tell them of their duty also, and some cry them up as Head of the Church, as well as of the State; Mr. Hare a Popish Priest upbraids us with it, That we take the Supremacy from the Pope, and give it to the Prince, who is less capable of it. But the learned Dr. replies well. The Supremacy (faith he) which we take from the Pope, we give it to no mortal creature, Prince or other. But the Pope having seized on part of Christ's right, and part of the Princes, &c. we have taken the Prince's power from him, and given it to him to whom it was due, according to that of our Saviour: Give to Cæsar what is Cæsar, and to God what is God, &c. The Supremacy therefore which we give our Prince in things ecclesiastic, is to deal therein as Hesekiah did, and not as Hezekiah, no; to preach, administer Sacraments, or practice the Discipline of the Church, but to provide that these things be done as they ought, by them whom God hath called thereunto. We give to Cæsar no more than is Cæsar. Thus he. Hence 'tis that our Princes do abstain from the title of being called Heads of the Church, which is proper only to Christ, and content themselves with the title of Supreme Governors. As for the Pope, he is so far from being Head of the Church, that he is rather the Tail, being indeed not so much as a sound member of it; but the Head of that Apostate from the Faith, which was foretold, 2 Thes. 2. 3. I would be sad with the Church if it had no better a Head than the Popes have been, some of which have been Sodomites, Magicians, Adulterers, and gave their souls to the Devil to get the Popedome; what are the Members when the Heads are such?

5. These Heads of the people when they sin against God, shall be punished as well as others.

Cut them in the Head, or cut them which are the Head of all. God is no respecter of persons, but be they Head or Heel,
Verse 1 of the Prophecy of Amos:

If they sin against him, they cannot escape. Tophet is prepared of old even for the King. If the proud King of Assyria will oppress and oppose the people of God, he must know that God hath prepared a place of punishment for such cruel Tyrants, See more in my Isa. 30. 33. God is terrible to the Kings of the earth; Psal. Com. on Psal. 76. 81. x. p. 45.

6. Universality in sin, brings universality in suffering.

When the head and the feet, the highest and the lowest sin together, then slay them all with the sword. But of this before, See my Com. on Hos. 13. 16. p. 109.

7. The Angels of God oftentimes are the executioners of his wrath upon wicked men.

An Angel here must smite them in the head. The Sodomites that vexed Lot were smitten blind by an Angel, Gen. 19. 11. The first-born of Egypt were slain by an Angel, Exod. 12. 23, 29. When Balaam was going to curse God's people, an Angel met him and stops him, Num. 22. 22. If God will send a Pestilence on Israel, he hath an Angel ready to do it, 2 Sam. 24. 16. If he will have the Army of the Assyrians destroyed, an Angel shall do it, Isa. 33. 36. Proud Herod was smitten by an Angel, Acts 12. 23; and at the last day they shall bring the wicked to Christ's bar, there to receive their final doom, Matt. 13. 41. Who would not then fear to offend this great and mighty God, who hath so many glorious Angels ready at the least beck of their Lord, to destroy both us and ours. As the Apostle would have women covered, and modest, because of the Angels 10. I would have men good and gracious, because of the Angels, (who are grieved to see the dishonours done to their Lord and Master,) that we may not provoke the Lord to send them against us for our destruction, but rather seek good offices which the Angels do for us, in Mr. Leight's Body of Divinity 1. 3. 4. p. 174. and Mr. Louis's Sermon on Heb. 1. 14.

8. The judgments that befall us, come from God.

I will slay them. I will bring them down. I will search them out. I will command the Serpent to bite them, ver. 7, 8, 9. Whatever he does instrument, yet God is the prime Agent. Though there may be many executioners, yet there is but one prime mover of them all. 'Tis he that kills, and he that makes alive.
6. Tis he that gives, and he that takes, soul 1. 27. and therefore they are called His Judgments, by a special propriety, as coming more immediately from him, Isa. 26. 8, 9. The consideration of this will keep us from amusing and impatience, as it did Job, and David, we shall be dumb and silent when we see 'tis the Lord that doth it, how great then is their sin, that ascribe their sicknesses, toiles, crosses, &c. to second causes, never looking at God's hand, he is not in any of their thoughts.


When troubles come they are all for flying, digging into Hell, climbing the tops of mountains, getting into the depths of the Sea, hiding themselves in chambers, 1. Kings. 22. 15. When troubles come, their spirit is gone, 'tis fallen from their hearts into their heels; and they are going, yet flying from it, which is the cowards pace. They fly as one fly when they are pursued, but when none pursues them, but their own fancy, Prov. 26. 2. they have guilty consciences, which make them fly at the shaking of a leaf, Lev. 26. 36. these who are most fearless in sinning, are most fearful of suffering, Prov. 4. 5, 6. whereas the righteous, like the valiant horse, that is prepared for the battle, rejoices and goeth forth to meet the armed man, Job 19. 19. he had rather die than run a duty bids him stay and stand. When troubles come upon the wicked, their great care is how to be shut of them; and how to get out of them, and run from them; not how to shrieve them exalted, or how to be bettered by them. But the good man desires rather to have the trouble removed, than removed, and if he fly, 'tis to God, not from him, he is his tower and his hiding-place, by Prayer and Faith he gets unto him, yes, into him, and so is safe, Prov. 18. 10.

10. All the shifts and evasions of wicked men, shall not avail them in the day of wrath.

Hee that fleeth, shall not flee away, viz. so as to escape by his flight, yet he shall be overtaken. Or if he do escape one danger, yet he shall not be delivered, but he shall fall into another, Amos 5. 19. Hee that flees from a Lion, shall fall into the mouth of a Bear, Isa. 30. 16, 17. whilst they flee from the noise of fear, they shall fall into a pit, and when they are in the pit striving to get out, and hoping to escape deliv-
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Though they dig into HELL, thence shall mine hand take them, though they climb up to Heaven, thence will I bring them down.

These Apostatizing Israelites being put up with their Priviledges, conceiving that God loved them, because he had given them some successes and victories; hereupon they grew secure and impenitent, promising themselves impunity in their sins, which makes the Prophet here to thunder out God's dreadful judgements against them with vehemency and variety of words, and to use very lofty and hyperbolical expressions, the better to awaken them, and drive them out of their vain conceits. In the end of the fore-going verse he had threatened them, that though they fled, yet they should not escape; and this he proves in the three following verses, by a notable enumeration of five particular places, thereby showing them that they should not escape.

1. In Hell.
2. In Heaven.
3. In the tops of inaccessible Mountains.
4. In the bottom of the Sea.
5. In captivity and banishment out of their own
own Land, yet there the Lord would command the sword, and it should slay them. They should be safe neither at home, nor abroad, neither in their own Country, nor yet in a strange Land: so bad it is for a people to have God for their enemy.

1. The first means whereby they thought to hide themselves from God's revenging hand, was by digging and taking great pains to hide themselves as low as Hell. We have the same word used, Jonah I. 3, where the Mariners are said to row hard, to save Jonah, the word is Sachem, they digged in the Sea by rowing, that is, they used the utmost means to save him.

**Quest. The Question will be, What is here meant by Hell and Heaven?**

**Answ. 1.** Some take the words literally, thus, If it were possible for these incorrigible sinners to descend into Hell, or ascend up into Heaven, yet God's hand of Justice should find them out in the one, and cast them out of the other.

2. Others take the words in an Hyperbolical sense, thus, By Hell, they understand the most abstruse, deep, secret places of the earth. The word Sheol, hath many significations.

1. Sometimes 'tis put for the grave, Gen. 37. 35. Psal. 16. 10.

2. Sometimes 'tis put for Hell itself, as Job 11. 8.

3. Here it signifies the lowest part of the earth, and nearest to the center.

4. And, though these wicked men should dig ditches or pits never so deep in the earth to hide themselves, so that they should get almost as low as Hell, yet this digging and delving should not avail them, nor be able to shelter them from God's wrath; for even thence would God take them, and deliver them into their enemies hands to be slain. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering, Job 26. 6. Prov. 15. 11. Let Adam hide himself amongst the trees, and Jonah lyed never so close to the sides of the ship, yet God Almighty had found out both the one and the other.

3. If this will not do, and Hell will afford no help, they climbe to Heaven, and try what that will do, but all in vain for thence will God cast them down, that the Assyrian may slay them. The like Hyperbolical speeches of mounting up to Heaven, we read of, Gen. 11. 4. Deut. 1. 28. Job 20. 6. Jer 49. 15. & 51. 53. Obad. 4.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Some by Heaven understand high and lofty Refuges and
Towers, whose tops seemd to touch the Heavens, q. d. Let
these wicked men seek for refuge in Heaven, or Hell, above or
beneath, in Sea or Land, yet they' shall not secure them in this
day of wrath; all their hearts, their holes, and hiding-places are
naked before the eyes of him with whom they have
to do.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. When God is against a people, no place can shelter them
from his wrath.

If men sin against the Lord, let them go whither they will,
the punishment of their sin will finde them out, Numb. 32.
23. Though insolent Edom make his nest in the Stars, and
think himself out of Gun shot, and free from danger, yet his
sins will bring him down, Obad. 4. God hath a sharp eye, and
a strong hand to pull men out of their strong holds, or to de-
stroy them in them. Bimor got into Tirzah a fortified City,
and then into the Kings Palace, and there he burnt himself to
death, 1 King. 16. 8. Had we all the power and policy of all
the Kingdomes of the Earth for us, yet if God be against us,
these cannot help us, Amos 2. 14, 15, 16. Though the wick-
ed mount on high, yet at last hee casts them down to the
ground, Psal. 147. 6. 'Tis not height nor depth, Sea or Land,
Heaven or Hell that can shelter us from Gods fury. If God
be against us, all the elements, and all the creatures are a-
against us. As when God is for us, all are for us, Rom. 8. 31.
and we need not fear. Psal. 27. 1. & 56. 4. Isa. 43. 1, 2.

There is no flying from Gods Arreits, if a man have done
wickedly in one place, he may escape the Law by flying to an-
other, he may get out of our bounds, and then he is safe; but
who can get out of Gods bounds? he hath power to arrest us
where ever he finds us, and he can finde us where ever we
are. He is higher than Heaven, and deeper than Hell, and
therefore David cries out, Whither shall I go from thy presence?
Surely no whither. Neither men nor Devils are able to go
from the common and general presence of God, for he fills
Heaven and Earth. Psal. 139. 7. to 13. is a kinde of Com-
ment on this Text, and therefore I shall briefly open it

XXX

Whither
An Exposition

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? what's that? why he tells you in the next clause, Whither shall I flee from thy presence? q. d. Thou art an infinite Spirit, and I can go no where to avoid or escape thee, Ver. 8. If I ascend into Heaven, thou art there; By Heaven is meant the upper Region of the world, and if I make my bed in Hell, and go down to the lowest parts of the earth, behold thou art there, q. d. Let mee go whither I will, thy presence will finde mee out.

Ver. 9. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the world, q. d. Should I fly never so early or swifly from East to West, as the light of the morning doth, vers. 10. Even there should thy hand lead mee, and thy right hand should hold mee, q. d. I should still ly under thy divine disposing and government, and finde thee efficaciously present with mee.

Ver. 11. If I say the darkness shall cover mee, viz. so as thou shalt not be able to finde mee out, then is the night light about mee, that is, I shall be as little hid from thine eyes, as if twere noon day; why so? vers. 12. For the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day, darkness and light are both alike to thee, Job 34. 11, 12.

Verse 30.

And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottome of the Sea, thence will I command the Serpents, and he shall bite them.

The men of Israel and Judah being forish and sensual, and drowned in deep security, resting upon their carnal confidences, and resoluing to fly to them instead of God: The holy Ghost (who knows our indurate frames better than we our selves) multiplies words, and as Fishers when they would catch Fish, drive them out of their holds; so the Lord here labours to drive them out of all their strong holds, to himself. Having therefore shewed them that Heaven and Hell could afford them no security; he comes now to stop a third gap, by which they might think to escape, viz. by flying to Rocks, and inaccessible Mountains. But, though they
Ver. 3. of the Prophecy of Amos.
themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them there, and deliver them into their enemies hands.

There were two Carmels. The one was in Judea, as appears, Jos. 15. 55. 1 Sam. 25. 2. the other in the Text was an high, pleasant, fruitful Mountain in Canaan, good for Pasturage, and therefore is used in Scripture sometimes Largely, for any fertile place; so Isa. 29. 17. Jer. 2. 7. Amos 1. 2. I brought you into a plentiful Country, or as it is in the fountain, I brought you into a Land of Carmel. So Sam. 7. 5.

2. 'Tis taken strictly, for that famous, fruitful Mountain, which is joined with Bashan another fruitful hill, Isa. 33. 9. This Carmel had a City on it, or joining to it, and was situate by the Sea, Jer. 46. 18. Here Elijah vanquished the worshippers of Baal, 1 King. 18. 19. and Elisha dwelt here, 2 King. 4. 35. By Carmel here is meant Synecdochically, very high hills, and inaccessible Rocks and Mountains, for in those times, and in those Countries, when they were in great danger, they went to run and hide themselves in Mountains, in Caves, in Rocks, in Pits, and high places, as appears, Judg. 6 2. 1 Sam. 13. 6. Isa. 2. 10, 19. Jer. 4. 29. But in vain do men run to these hills and holes for refuge, for if God be not our Strong hold, they are but miserable shelters, and we may say of them, as Job said of his friends, Miserable comforters are ye all. We read of five Kings that hid themselves in a cave, yet were they all taken and hanged, Jos. 10. 16, 23. Titus and Vespasian besieging Jerusalem, found many of the Jews hid in Vaults and Privy-houses, and other obscure places, where they were slain. Those that sin against the Lord, let them go to the very head and top of Carmel to hide themselves, yet there will the Lord search for them, and bring them forth to Judgement. Mountains are Gods servants as well as other creatures, yea they melt like wax at his presence, so that although wicked men should beg of them to fall upon them, and hide them, they cannot, they dare not do it, Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.

'Tis true, David oft made use of Mountains and Caves, but he never trusted in them, but made the Lord his Rock and Refuge, Psal. 18. 2. and the best of Saints have hid themselves as occasion required. But for impertinent sinners to think to hide themselves from Gods hand and eye, is gross Atheism and madness.
An Exposition

Chap. 9.

Obj. But if we cannot hide our sowers in Montana, would try what the deeps will do.

Ans. You may do so, but it shall be in vain; for though they hide themselves from my sight, in the bosom of the Sea, that is, though they think they have hid themselves from my sight, so that I cannot see nor find them; yet no man can actually hide himself from God, who is omnipresent, but only opinionably, and in his own conceit.

'Is an Hyperbole, q. d. If it were possible for those wicked men to go to the very bottom, and Pervasion of the Sea hid themselves from mine eye and Ie; yet there mine eye would see them, and my hand should reach them, for I have Serpents and Serjeants even there ready to arrest them, and fulfill my commands.

Therefore will I command the Serpent and he shall bite them.

By Serpent here is not meant a Land-Serpent, but a Sea-Serpent, as the Crocodile, or the Leviathan, that is, the Whale, or some such great Sea-monster, for so we finde the Whale in Job 26.13. called the crooked or piercing-Serpent. God hath many Serpents at command. He hath Serpents Natural, to bite and devour us, and Serpents Metaphorical, as the Devil and his Agents, he hath the Assyrian and Babylonian here to devour Israel and Judah.

q. d. Which may sever those wicked men go, death and destruction shall find them out, all shall make against them both by Sea and Land, and the Assyrian my Rod and Executioner shall finde and ferre them out in all places where ever they be.

Observations:

1. God hath variety of Servants and Serjeants to arrest his enemies where ever they be.

All the Elements, and all the Creatures are enemies to those that are enemies to God. He hath Armies at Sea and Land against them. He hath not only Serpents Metaphorical, the Devil and his Instruments, Rev. 12.9. but also natural Serpents, and Sea-monsters innumerable, ready to execute
his commands on his enemies. God is the best friend, and the
saddest foe. If he be against us, he is an Omnipresent ene-
emy, and can pursue us by Sea and Land, for he is every where
by his Essence, Presence and Power. He is God above all,
through all; and in us all, Job 11. 8, 9. Ephes. 4. 6. He is o-
to all by his Power, in all the Saints by his Spirit, and through
all the world by his providence. He is an Omnipresent Essence
and Being, Prov. 15. 3. There is no hiding ourselves in se-
cret from him, Jer. 23. 23, 24. He is in Heaven by his glory
and Majesty; in Hell by his justice, wrath and power; in Sea
and Land by his providence, Afl. 17. 27.

Take heed then of displeasing him, other enemies you may
flye from; but there is no flying from his presence. Walk
therefore sincerely as in his eye, as Enoch, Noah, and Aбра-
huma did. Seneca counselled his scholars to do all, sanctam
speciest Cato, as if some severe Cato did alwayes behold them.
But we should rather do all, sanctam speciest Deus, remembering
his All-seeing eye is still upon us. This is an excellent preser-
uation against sin. This kept Joseph chaste, Gen. 39. 9; and
Job and David, pure, Job 31. 4. Psal. 119, 136. I have kept
all thy precepts, why not? because all my ways are before thee.
Prel. 4. 13.

'Tis meet Atheism, and the want of consideration of that
All-seeing eye of God, which is the root of all the villany that
is acted in the world, Psal. 94. 5, 6, 8. Ezek. 9. 9. As Nimrod
was said to be a mighty hunter before the Lord; so many may
be said, to be mighty drunkards, mighty swearers, liars, chea-
ters, defamblers, &c. before the Lord. But let it alwayes be
our care to lead a life worthy of such a presence, passing the
time of our sojourning in God's fear. This may be 1. A spur to
duty, 2. A motive to Sincerity, 3. A corrosive to sin, 4. A
cordial in afflictions. Remember in all thy distresses, he is
an Omnipresent friend. He was with Joseph in the prison, with
Jeremy in the dungeon, with Jonah in the Whale's belly, with
Daniel in the Lion's den, with Israel in Egypt, Exod. 3. 9, and
with Paul before Nero, 2 Tim. 4. 17. He knows our Temta-
tions, our adversities, our abilities, and will not suffer us to be
scamped above our strength, Rev. 2. 3.
An Exposition

Verse 4.

And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them; and I will set mine eye upon them for evil, and not for good.

We are now come to the fifth and last Exposition, whereby these incorrigible sinners thought to escape God's hands, and that was by yeelding themselves up into their enemies hands upon quarter for their lives, and so to escape the edge of the sword.

To this the Lord answers by way of concession, though they should go into captivity before their enemies, or before the faces of their enemies (as 'tis in the Original) whose custom it was to drive their enemies like beasts before them; young and old, naked and barefoot, Isa. 20. 4. Lam. 1. 5. yet thence will I command and commission the sword of their enemies to slay them.

2. Here is an Aggravation of all this misery, viz. that it should fall upon them in wrath. God promised to send Judah into the Land of Chaldea for good, Jer. 24. 5, 6. but Israel being more grossly wicked, the Lord threatens here, To watch over them for evil, and not for good. The expression is emphatical, the denial of the contrary makes the speech more weighty, so Jer. 21. 10. & 39. 16. & 44. 27.; q.d. I will bring upon them all manner of evil, but no good. I will afflict them every where, but I will defend them nowhere, but will utterly consume them. This was true of Israel, who went into captivity, and never returned again; though many of Judah did return again, as we read in the book of Ezra.

As God's eye was formerly upon them for good, and hee had made them the head of the Nations, so now his eye should be upon them for evil, and he would make them the Tail of contemptible amongst all. He would now deal with them as he threatened to do with disobedient ones, Dem. 28. 44. 63. Before he had been their Guardian, and their Keeper, Psal. 122. 3, 4. He that keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps; but now he will be their Judge and Executioner. Though formerly
Ver. 4. of the Prophecy of Amos.

He seriously and intensively set himself to do them good, yet now with as much seriousness and resolvedness he will set his eyes upon them, or against them for evil.

By the Eye of God is meant the Providence of God, by an Anthropophathy frequent in Scripture, Job 34:21. Prov. 15:3. Psal. 33:18 & 34:15. 1 Pet. 3:12. which as it watcheth over the good in mercy, so it watcheth over the wicked in judgment, ver. 8.

I will set mine eye upon them for evil; that is, for punishment, and for destruction, and not for good; that is, not to do them any good at all, nor to bless them.

Observations.

1. Submission to men is but vain, unless we submit unto God.

To yeeld our selves captives to men, and make peace with them, and yet to rebel against God, is to see the Serjeant, and to lye open to the fury of the Creditor. Wicked men begin at the wrong end, they should first begin with God, and humble themselves before him, and make peace with him and then all would be at peace with them, Job 5:23. Hos. 2:18. When once our ways please God, he makes our enemies to be at peace with us, Prov. 16:7. He can over-rule their hearts, so that although they hate us, yet they shall not hurt us; yea with Ezech, they shall kiss us, instead of killing us, Gen. 33:4.

2. The sword hath its command and commission from God, Jer. 47:6. Ezek. 14:17. I will command the sword, and it shall slay them.

War is one of Gods fore Judgements, it is the Arrow which he shoots at a rebellious people. But of this at large before on Amos 4:10.

3. The Providence of God watcheth over the wicked for their hurt.

As the eyes of his Providence run to and fro through the whole world for the good of his people (2 Chron. 16:9. Psal. 33:18. and 34:15. 1 Pet. 3:12.) so where ever the wicked go, his eye and his hand follow them for evil, Jer. 44:16,17,18,19. and 24:9. As all works together for good to good men, so all works for evil to evil men. The Lord doth
An Exposition

even study their ruins, and purposely watch them to do mischief.

As men do obstinately set their faces against God's Commandments in a way of rebellion, so he will set his face against them for evil in a way of destruction, Jer. 44. 11. Hence we read so oft of God setting his face against wicked men, Lev. 20. 3. and 26. 17. Ezek. 14. 8. I will set my face against them, that is, I am highly offended with them, and I will make it my work to execute my vengeance on them.

Ver. 5.

And the Lord God of Hosts is he that toucheth the Land and it shall melt, and all that dwelleth therein shall mourn, and it shall rise up wholly like a flood, and shall be drowned as by the flood of Egypt.

We have done with the Commination, we are now come to the second general part of the Chapter, and that is the confirmation of the Commination, which is drawn from the Omnipotent Majesty and Power of God, who is Lord Paramount of all the world, the glorious Creator and Governour of all. All depend upon him, and observe his beck, what he saith it is done (eius divinae officiis) and what he threatens is as easily and speedily effected.

The better therefore to awaken these dastardly sinners, and make them fear, the Prophet here sets forth the Majesty and Power of God, that they might see there was no contending with him, and that he was able, and would certainly bring to pass what ever he had threatened against them. To this end we often finde Moses and the Prophets setting forth the Majesty of God by his Titles & Works, as that he is the Mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings, &c. Sinners are hardly drawn to consider the Glory and Majesty of that God with whom they have to do; and therefore the Prophet so oft toucheth on this string, Amos 3. 6. 8. and 4. ult. and 5. 8. 9.

In this Verse, and the next, we have an elegant description of God's Power and Glory (where every word hath its weight)

And that is by his Names and Titles, He is the Lord, Jehovah, the Creator and Preserver of all things; and above
Ver. 3. of the Prophecy of Amos.

I fear his Threashings might not be concemmed. For he is the Lord of Hosts, he hath the Superior and inferiour Armies of Heaven and Earth, of Sea and Land, as it were, horse and foot to march against his enemies.

3 His Almighty Works set forth his Majesty and Power. 1 The Earth which is in his hands is solid, firm, hard, immovable body, yet acknowledgeth the Power and Dominion of its Almighty Lord and Creator; and therefore if he do but touch it (at least with any of his rods, and in displeasure) it presently melts like wax before the fire; or snow before the Sun: 2 If he be provoked to anger, he can make a sinful land to mourn, by bringing upon them the punishment due to them for their sins; he can make both things and persons melt.

Therefore fear to offend him; this must be annexed to every branch of this description of God; e.g., He is Jehovah the Lord of Hosts, therefore fear him. He makes the earth to melt, and the inhabitants thereof to tremble; therefore do you humble your selves before him. 3 If all this will not work upon you, yet consider he can drown you, and make his floods to go over all the land, as he did in Noah's time, and as he doth in many Islands, and other places at this day. See before Chap. 8.

4 If ye will not fear him for his Majesty, and Power that appears on earth, then look up to the heavens, ver. 6. and see his Wisdome and Power there, in creating the several Regions of the air, as so many stories one above another; besides the variety of creatures which he hath on earth, as so many Troops ready preft to do his service; and his sending of the waters of the Sea upon the earth, either by rain, or inundation to punish it. These all shew the Power and Glory of that God with whom we have to do, and therefore should make us fear to offend him, and speedily to make our peace with him.

The summe of all is this, Hidberfo ye have crufted in your own strengteh and priviledges, and have set light by Gods Threatenings, as if they had been but so many scare-crows; but now consider, O ye infirm, and sinful dust and ashes, against whom do ye rebel, against whom do ye think burden your selves? Is it not against the great and mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, this Creator of all things, whose Almighty power appears in that

Y yy
An Exposition

Chap. 9.

with a touch he can make the mighty and wise afraid to walk and dive as men before a mighty fire, and fill it with such horror, that all the inhabitants thereof shall mourn, and make it as in habitable as if it were drowned with a flood:

OBSERVATIONS.


2. He is an Almighty God. See before Amos 4:12.

Obl. 1.

3. If God do but touch the earth, or its inhabitants in wrath, they melt, and mourn, and fade away.

If he but touch Mountains Natural, or Mountains Metaphorical, there is no abiding.

1. The earth Natural: quakes at God's displeasure, the Rocks and Hills melt at his presence. 2 Sam. 22:8. Psal. 18:7; and 144:3, 6, 7. The masy Mountains which no ax nor wit of man can move, yet God's bare presence, how much more his wrathful presence makes them tremble as Mount Sion did in the presence of the Lord, Exod. 19:18. Judg. 5:8 = Job 9:6, Psal. 68:8. Hab. 3:10.

2. The earth Metaphorical: that is, wicked men that live in the earth, the guilt of their sins doth so damn them that they are not able to stand in God's presence, Exod. 9:24. Adam when he had sinned, hides himself from God, and Cain runs from his presence. Especially at the day of judgment they will not be able to stand before God's Tribunal, Psal. 1:5, 6. They will cry to Rocks and Mountains to hide them, and shall be driven to utter desperation, when they think of that dreadful sentence, Go ye cursed; yea when the Lord appears for his people here, these Metaphorical Mountains shall be dissolved, and melt like wax before the fire. The Churches enemies are oft compared to Mountains Isa. 64:1. Ezek. 47.

1. Because Mountains are higher than other parts of the earth, so are the wicked puffed up with pride, and think themselves higher than God himself, and therefore they set their mouths against the Heavens and blaspheme him, Psal. 73:8.

2. Mountains hinder us in our way. They are barren, it is the low Valleys that are fruitful.

The Church being troubled with these Mountains, seeks to-
When God ariseth, then the Dukes of Edom are amazed, and trembling takes hold on the mighty ones, Exod. 15:9, 10.

16. Hence 'tis that the Church desires that God would arise, for then his enemies should be scattered, and those that hate him should flee before him, and be driven away like smoke, (which the higher it riseth, the more 'tis scattered) and melt like wax before the fire, Phil. 2:10, 11. The Sons of Zion may be too strong for David, but not for the God of David, if he do but touch these Mountains, they vanish. 'Tis no trouble to us to breathe; why God can with as great facility overthrow the Churches enemies, one blast, breath, word, or look from him, undoes them, Job 4:9, 10, 11. By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they confused. And if the Earth melt and tremble when God is angry, how sad is the condition of hard-hearted sinners, who are wilder than the Earth, and more insensible than the very senseless, and insensible creatures, yea, worse than the very Devils themselves; for they believe and tremble! James 2:19.

4. The Lord can turn our Land into a Sea, and make our arrable, fallable; so that there shall be no dwelling in it; but it shall rise up wholly as a flood, and shall be drowned as by the flood of Egypt. The water is naturally above the earth, so that he can float it and flood it at his pleasure; and can easily pull up his sluices, and let in the Sea upon us, and bury us in one universal grave of waters. Let us then fear to provoke him, who hath Wind and Sea at command against us. The Lord wonders that any should be so fastidiously not to fear him upon this very account, Jer. 5:22. Fear ye not, saith the Lord, who hath placed the Sea for a bound to the Sea, that it cannot pass? Jer. 4:1. Whom will ye fear, if ye will not fear me? when the Sea is self, that terrible and tumultuous creature —
feareth and obeieth, and who have made the weak hand to bound the raging Sea. We are bound to blesse God that hath thus bounded that unruly element, and faith to it, His word shall thou go, and so further, and here shall thy proud waves be said, Job 38. 11, 12.

VERSE 6.
It is he that buildeth his stories in the Heavens, and hath founded his troop in the Earth; he that calleth for the waters of the Sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the Earth, The Lord is his Name.

The Prophet goes on in a magnificent description of the Wildome, Power, Majesty, and Glory of the great Jehovah; that to this stubborn people, considering with whom they had to do, might tremble at his threatenings, and prepare to meet him in a way of humiliation, who was now marching against them with his troops for their destruction.

Before he had set forth Gods All-mighty Power in ruling the Earth and the Rivers, now he proceeds to set forth his Majesty in the creating of the Heavens, of the Inferior Armies and the Seas.

And since the bare naming of God is little regarded by most men, therefore this blunt, suffick Prophet raffeth his file, grows Rhetorical and Philosophical, setting forth Gods excellency with variety of words, the better to affect his Heaters.

In this Vers we have 1. The Stories of Heaven. 2. His Troops on Earth. 3. The Rain out of the Sea. 4. By his tremendous Name, Jehovah.

The words are very Mythical and difficult, they have almost as many Expositions as there be Expositors. I shall in desavour to clear the way, and lay a good foundation, the building will stand the better.

He buildeth his stories in the Heavens.

The first Query will be, What is meant here by the stories of Heaven?
of the Prophecy of Amos.

Answ. By Heaven here is meant, the Air; hence the birds are called the souls of Heaven, and by Stories are meant, the heavenly Spheres or Orbs, which are distinct ascents (as 'tis Magnoliano, in the Original) and Stories one above another. We read of three Heavens.

ascendit. The Spheres being one above another, are elegantly called Stories.

1. There is the Aerial Heaven, which reacheth from us to the Stars, in which there are three Regions.

2. There is the starry Heaven, which hath eight Spheres Mr. Leignes Body of Divinity, l. 3; c. 3, p. 235; Sc. Polan. Synag. Cor. 12, 2. The first of these is for my Sustenance, I live and breathe in it. The second is for my Contemplation, I see and admire it; and the third is my Expectation, I long and wait for it.

By this most admirable and excellent work of God, in making the Heavens, which consist of so many Spheres, and have a certain order within themselves, and are as it were so many steps and stairs by which we ascend gradation, till we come to the Heaven of Heavens, the Prophet labours to awaken these secure sinners. This is the first Glass in which we may clearly see the Majesty of God. Job 37, 18.

And hath founded his Troop in the Earth.

The word which we render Troop, signifies not only a Troop, as appears by that parallel place, 2 Sam. 2, 25. The children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became Laaguddah (the very word in the Text) one Troop; or were gathered round together like a Globe. 2. The Agudda, fasci-word also signifies a little Bundle; So Isa. 58, 6: Unde the culus, conglobatio, turoma, à Gudab, colligere.

1. Some by a Troop understand the other, three Elements of Fire, Air, Water; which are all bound up as 'twere in one bundle, and founded upon the Earth, which is the basis and centre of them all. Hence the Geneva render it, He hath laid the foundation of his Globe of Elements in the Earth. Those three Elements are opposite to the heavenly Spheres, as God hath built the glorious Spheres of Heaven, so he hath founded the terrestrial Spheres and Elements in the Earth, ouf
of which he hath formed and framed all other things, uniting them in a due series and order, and binding them up as if they were in one bundle; the Elements lying like globes or bundles, one upon, or over one another.

2. Others conceive that by a Troop here, is meant all kinds of creatures, which are as so many Troops on Earth to serve God; hence he is so oft called, The Lord of Hosts, and these are called His Troops, because he is the Author and the Orderer of their Motion, q. d. As the Lord hath built the several Constitutions of his Orbs in the Heavens, so he hath provided Armies of creatures to do his will on Earth.

3. Others conceive it to be the whole frame of the world, which compared with God's Immensity, is but a little Bundle or fardel, yea an empty nothing, Isa. 40. 17.

2. As in a Bundle there are many things wrap up together, so in this terrestrial Globe, there are variety of creatures of different kinds and natures, all serving forth their Creator's praise.

He calleth for the waters of the Sea, and poureth them out on the face of the Earth.

Here is a third thing wherein the All-mighty Power of God appears, and that is in the generating of rain. By the heat of the Sun he draws up vapours out of the Salt-Sea, into the middle Region of the Air, where they condense into clouds, and then dissolves them into showers of fresh water for the use and service of man.

He calls for the waters of the Sea, either for Inundation, as (some conceive) to overflow a Land, q. d. 'tis the Lord, that by his command lets loose the waters of the Sea to destroy his enemies. But most genuinely it is applied to the generating of the Rain. He calls for the waters out of the Sea into the upper Region of the Air by the Sun beams, that he may pour them down again upon the face of the Earth. See the same expression before, Amos 5. 8.

'Tis true, the Rain is generated by Vapours that ascend out of the Earth, yet because the Sea doth concur with its Va-
Ver. 6. of the Prophet of Amos.

pours also, thereforthe the generation of the Rain is likewise a-
sebed voice, and hereina the All-mighty Power of God is
seen, that can at a beck call for the Rain, and suddenly the
clouds cover the face of the heavens over our heads; this shows
the incomparable Power of God, that can in a trice make
such a change.

Lastly, if you desire to know who is he that doth all these
great and glorious things, I will tell you in a word, 'Tis the
great Jehovah, that is his Name. This is the most proper Name
of God (as I have shewed before, Amos 4. ult.) and notes
his eternal essence, who gives being to all things, and to you,
O Israelites, amongst the rest, and therefore there is no hiding
your selves from him, nor dallying with him who is All-might-
ly, and hath his Troops in Heaven, in Earth, and in the Sea
against you.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Omnipotence and Majesty of God doth wonderfully
appear in the Heavens, the Sea, the Rain, &c.

As the Heavens, so all creatures do declare God's glory,
Psal. 19. 1. We should therefore study the book of the crea-
tures, that we may learn to fear, serve, trust, love and ad-
mire the Lord for his greatness and goodness.

We have but two books chiefly to study, The first is the
Book of Nature, or the works of God, and this we have sec
forth, Psal. 19. 1. to 7. 2. The Book of God, the holy Scrip-
tures, Psal. 19. 7. to 12. We should not lightly think of God's
wondrous works, but seriously consider them. Psal. 46. 8. for
this end he hath given us our judgements, and an understand-
ing faculty that we might be enabled to consider his works,
and this is the great end why he made the world, and adorned
it with such variety of creatures, viz. that by beholding them
we might be quickned to praise the giver of them, Prov. 16.
4. God will destroy such as consider not his works, Psal. 28. 5.

Much of God may be seen in the creatures: His Wisdom,
Mundus un-
Power, Goodness and Bounty are all written (as it were) in Capital Letters, so that he who reads may read them, for
the invisible things of God may be seen in them, Rom. 1. 20. Culverwell Spi.
As the Rivers lead us to the Sea, so these Rivers of Good-Obits, 8. 16."
ness and excellency which ye scattered in the earth, must lead us to their Creator; in whom are all these excellencies by way of eminency.

[See the Spiritual improvement of the creatures, In D. The.
Taylor, at the end of his Treatise of Repent; Church his Mis-
np. 257, 7. Woodward & Childs Portion, chap. 7. p. 90. Mr.
Austin his Spiritual use of Orchards and Gardens, 2 Part]

2. Obs. All creatures are God's Troop.

If he do but call for Fire, Water, Hall, Profit, Snow, &c.
they promptly obey the word of his Command. Psal. 147. 15,

3. Obs. All the world compared with God, is but a Bundle.
Yea it is not fascis, but fascicula, a very little bundle.
This the Prophet Isaiah, ch. 40. 12, 15, 16, 17. sets forth in most
lively, Rhetorical colours, he speaks so fully to this point, that
I shall not inlarge upon it. He proves God's Omnipotency
by his Works, he names but three, vers. 12.

\begin{itemize}
\item The Sea,
\item The Heavens,
\item The Earth
\end{itemize}

1. For the Sea, it is to the Lord but as an handful of water
is to us, and therefore he is said to measure or weigh the wa-
ters of the Sea in his fist, or in the hollow of his hand.

2. For the Heavens, they are but a span with him. I speak how
easily we span a thing which we would measure, with far more
ease doth the Lord measure out the height and longitude of the
Heavens. He measures the Heavens with a span, or takes
the measure of them with a span.

3. As for the Earth, he makes nothing of it. He comprehends
its dust in no measure; in a Tiere or Trienteal, that is, in some
small Vessel, holding some proportion with the fist and the
span. He doth this great work with three fingers as it were: he
puts not his whole hand to it, but as we weigh some small
matter with three fingers, so doth he do this great work with
great ease.

He weighs the Mountains in scales, and the Hills in a bal-
lance. The greatest Mountains are no more to him than an
ordinary weight is to one of us. All this bespeaks God's Om-

\textit{imperiousness,}
Ver. 6. of the Prophecy of Amos.

Sapiency that can form and proportion our such vast creatures with so much facility and ease, as if he were but spanning, measuring, weighing of them.

Yet he hath not done; ver. 15. he goes on to set forth the transcendent glory and Majesty of God. Behold the Nations are but as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. All Nations, all Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, compared with the Almighty, are mere nothing; they are but as a drop that falls from a full bucket, or as a small drop that carrieth behind in the bucket when the water is poured out, which doth not diminish the measure; or like the small dust of the balance, which remains in the balance when powder or beaten spice hath been weighed in it, which is easily blown away with a little puff of wind, or such small dust as hangs on the scales, without altering the weight.

Yet more, He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing. They are to him but as so many atoms or mores which flye up and down in the Sun, or as a little thin beaten powder (as the word signifies) which is blown away with a blast. Islanders are apt to be secure and insolent; because they have the Sea to surround and secure them, but with God they are as a very little thing, which is easily overthrown.

Ver. 16. Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering, q. d. so infinitely great is God, that if all the trees in Lebanon were fallen for fire, and all the beasts there were slain for a burnt offering, yet would it hold no proportion with the Dignity and Majesty of the Lord.

Ver. 17. As if he could never magnifie God, and nullifie man sufficiently he tells us yet more, That all Nations before him are nothing, less than nothing and vanity. See what a heap of diminishing terms are here! Nations, all Nations compared with God, are furorum nihil, nothing, less than nothing, vanity, yea lighter than vanity, Psal. 62:9. Before he had compared the Nations to a drop, and a little small dust, but now he goes further, and tells us, that all Nations &c. compared with God, are less than nothing. Now if All Nations compared with God be thus contemptible, what is one Nation, or one great man in a Nation, yea or all the great Zosummusims of the world, compared with him? This
An Exposition

Chap. 5.

May greatly comfort us when we lie oppressed by the greatest ills of the world; that though they be great; yet there is a greater than they; though they be mighty, yet God is more mighty, and can with a word of his mouth confound them all.

4. Rain is the gift of God.

It is he that calls for the waters of the Sea, raiseth the vapours, condenseth them into clouds, and then showeth them down upon us. But of this at large before; Amos 4-7.

5. If you take this calling for the waters of the Sea for an inundation and drowning of a Land, then observe, That God can make our Land to become a Sea, he can bring a flood upon us as he did on the old world. But of this before, ver. 5; Obad. 4.

6. God is Jehovah.

He only is the true and living God, who hath his being in and of himself, and gives being to all creatures. But of this before, Amos 4. 9; Obad. 7.

Verse 7.

Are ye not as children of the Ethiopian to me, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord? Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?

The Prophet goes on to confirm the certainty of Israel's destruction from the sinfulness of their condition; to this end, first, He labours to convince them of their ingratitude and apostasy; whereas the Lord had brought them in great mercy out of the land of Egypt, where they lay buried (as is were) in a grave of misery, and made them his Israel; and peculiar people; yet they did ingenuously behave themselves more like Edomians and Heathens, than his beloved Israel, and therefore as they had been like them in sinning, so now they should be like them in suffering.

In this Verse, the Prophet by a Prolepsis prevents two Objections: 1. Whereas they boasted that they were Gods people in Covenant, and descended of holy Progenitors, and therefore God would not destroy them.

2. To this the Prophet answers; that in their ways
and walking they were more like to prophanes, Heathenish, Idolatrous Ethiopians, who were strangers from the Covenant Scripture, a man of Grace, and aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, than Gentiles remotius, or the seed of Abraham since they did not the works of Abraham, but of Infidels; and therefore since they had made themselves thus vile by their sins, God regarded them no more than the most contemptible Nations in the world, and was resolved to deal with them accordingly. The Ethiopians were a vile, accursed Nation, the symbol of servitude, Gen. 9:25, Carved by Cham, a servant of servants, i.e. a most vile slave let him be. Now from this Cham came Canaan and his brother Cham, who was the father of the Ethiopians, hence they are called Cushites (as in the Text) from Cham and Cush, Gen. 10:6.

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, Art ye not as the children of the Ethiopian to me? q. d. Ye are so, there is an emphasis in that word arti, to me, q. d. though ye excel other Nations in many privileges, and are honoured by men, yet when you come before me, what can you bring that is not mine? all your feathers and favours are but borrowed, and when I have taken mine own from you, wherein are you better to me than Ethiopians, or the most vile and contemptible Nation in the world? In respect of Creation, and by nature we are all alike, both Saints and Sceptics, Infidels, and Ethiopians, we all came out of the same corrupt mass, it is openly free grace which makes the difference; and therefore the more God had done for Israel, the more humble and obedient they should have been. But since they forgot the God of their mercies, despised the counsel of his Prophets, and hardened themselves in their sins, the Lord spits them in plain terms, that now he esteemed them no more than the most base and barbarous Nations in the world; and this the Lord did to abase them, and make them know themselves, who were dust with such high conceits of themselves, and their privileges, though they walked clean contrary to them; in which respect they were inferior to Heathens, who never sinned against such light and love as they had done.

Obj. 2. A second Evasion was this, The Lord hath chosen us, for his own peculiar people, above all the Nations of the world, and hath delivered us from Egypt, and brought us into Canaan.
Canaan, and therefore (though we do go on in our sin, yet) we shall prosper; and no judgement shall come upon us, as this precise Prophet Amos threatens.

As. 1. It doth not follow, that because you have been delivered out of Egypt, that therefore you shall go unpunished for your sin; but the contrary, since you have received such great blessings, therefore you must yield univerable obedience, remembering that they which have much of them shall be much required; and if they offend, they shall be sooner, and more severely punished, Amos 3. 2. Deut. 9. 12. 2. The Prophet tells them, that they had no reason to be puffed up with this deliverance, for the Lord had granted the like external deliverances (though not alike in all circumstances to that of Egypt) to Heathenish and Idolatrous people, whom they lookt upon as Dogs and Swine. The Prophet instances in two Examples.

The first is that of the Philistians, whom the Lord brought from their slavery in Captivity, Jer. 47. 4. The Philistians and Caphtorims are put amongst the posterity of Mixraim, the Son of Cham, Gen. 10. 6, 14. 2 Chron. 1. 11, 12. they expelled the Avims which dwelt in Hazaraim, which belonged to the Philistines, and possessed their Country, Deut. 2. 23.

The second instance is that of the Syrians, whom the Lord brought from Kir, where they served other Nations. These are called Aramei, from Aram the Son of Shem, from whom they descended, Gen. 10. 22. these were gross Idolaters, and worshipped many Gods, Judg. 10. 6. and especially that noted Idol Kimmon, 2 King. 5. 18.

There was a double Kir, 1. There was Kir, a City of special note in the Land of Moab, Is. 15. 1. 2. Kir another City situate in Media, of which we read, 2 King. 16. 9. Is. 22. 6. Amos 1. 5. This was under the dominion of the Assyrians, and this is the Kir in the Text. Some make this Kir to be Cyrus, but there is no ground for that, for Cyrus was situate in Libya, but Kir in Media under the Assyrians, which is far distant from Libya. This deliverance of the Syrians from Kir, is mentioned only in this place; this they had from the histories of those times which were then well known; as they had many other things not mentioned in the Scripture, as I have shewed elsewhere.
Some give the sense thus, As the Philistines were ungrateful to God, who brought them out of Caphtor, and the Syrians, when he brought them out of Kir; so Israel hath been ungrateful to God, who brought them out of the Land of Egypt. But the genuine sense and summe of all is this. There is no reason, O ye children of Israel, why I should respect you more than the very Ethiopians (that are cursed and contemptible posterity of Cham), yea, why should I make any difference between you and the uncircumcised Philistines, or Idolurous Syrians, whom you have equalized, yea exceeded in sin? If you say that I brought you out of Egypt, did not I also bring the Philistines and Syrians out of Caphtor and Kir? you have therefore no cause to be proud up with these common favours. It is true, I have out of mine own free love to you, exalted you above the Nations, but since by your sins you have abused my favours, and abused yourselves, I do now no more value you than so many Blackmores and Heathens.

**OBSERVATIONS.**

1. To be born of pious Progenitors cannot preserve an impious people from ruine.

It will not avail men to say with those Jews, We have Abraham for our Father, unless we do the works of Abraham. John 8. 39. Rom. 9. 7. 8. Let our Ancestors be never so gracious, unless we follow their gracious example, and walk against Pride, in their steps; we are no better in God's esteem, than Edom. ii. 26. 7. p. 18. p. 18. piets and out-casts, yea the piety of predecessors is so far from justifying any in their sins, that it aggravates them, in that they had such good patterns set before them, and yet they would not follow them.

A Noble Pedigree is little worth, where the line of well-doing continues not; and 'tis much more glory to begin the honour of one's house, than either to end it, or not encrease. Afric. nobilités, it. What did it profit Cham that he was the Son of Neba? for all this, or hurt Abraham, that his Father Terah worshipped Gods of Saca virus? Juvenal. Satyr. 8. Terat iuris; voces examinant utique ero, a Africis nobilites. It. What did it profit Cham that he was the Son of Neba? for all this, or hurt Abraham, that his Father Terah worshipped Gods of Saca virus? Juvenal. Satyr. 8.
very good purpose, against there that boast of their Noble
Pedigree, when themselves have nothing that is truly Noble
in them.

3. Privileges abused increase wrath, Mar. 11. 20, 21, 22, 23,
Rom. 2, 9. 1 Cor. 10, 9, 3, 4, 5. Heb. 2, 1, 2, 3.

When men ungratefully abuse their mercies, and the God
doing their mercies, 'tis just with God to strip them of those mer-
acies. But of this at large elsewhere.

3. Sin debaseth a people, and makes glorious Nations like
unglorious and contemptible Heathens.

Whilst Israel walked up to his privileges, he was exalted,
but when he offended in Baal and fell to Idolatry, he died
and lost his reputation with God and Man, both at home
and abroad, Hos. 13, 3. Ezech. 16, 4.

4. The changes in Nations, and translating of Kingdoms
from one to another, are not casual, but providential. There is
the finger of God in them all. 'Tis he that destroyed the
Canaanites, and brought in Israel. 'Tis he that cast out Israel,
and brought in the Assyrian; he rooted up Judah, and brought
in the Chaldean; and rooted up the Chaldeans by the Medes
and Persians; and brought the Philistines and Syrians one out
of Caphtor and Kiri. He puts down one, and sets up another in
the Throne, and none may say unto him, 'What didst thou?'
Deut. 2, 30. &c. 4, 21.

5. External favours and deliverances are no Argument of
God's internal love and favour to a people.

See Mr. Baxter
in Mar. 5. 47.
vs. 166, 167.
6c. 162.

Uncircumcised Philistines, and Idolatrous Syrians may be
delivered from a Caphtor and Kiri, and yet these persecutious
may be to them but reservations to greater wrath. Pharaoh
was delivered from many plagues, yet his heart being hardened,
at last he perished in the Sea. All things come alike to all,
and there is no judging of God's favour by these external
things, Ecclef. 9, 1, 2. The Sun of prosperity shines as
well on the barren Wilderness, as upon the fruitful Pas

See Dyke on the
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See Deuteronomy chap. 4, p. 81, 82.

See six Observations more
in Mr. Hutchinson on the place. I study brevity.
Verse 8.

Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful Kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the Earth, saying that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord.

The Prophet goes on in the confirmation of what he had denounced against Israel, by an Argument drawn from the Justice of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with the least approbation, and who will not acquit nations or Kingdoms that persevere in their wickedness.

Behold the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful Kingdom to punish and destroy it.

In the words we have: 1. A note of Attention, Behold.
2. The matter to be attended, and that is, 1. A judgment declared, God will destroy Israel from the Superficies, or face Mobjel primis of the earth; that is, he will extinguish their memorial from amongst men, and root them out of the world, so that they shall never have more the face of a Nation upon Earth. The like expression we have, Ez. 13. 2. 12. 24. Deut. 7. 15. Warnings could not mend them, now Judgements shall rid the world of them.

2. Here is the reason why the Lord will thus destroy them, and that is, because they are a sinful Kingdom, or (as the words are in the Fournain), they are a sinning Kingdom, a Kingdom even composed of sin, and drowned in iniquity. A Kingdom that sinned not through weakness, but willfulness, whose sins were not infirmities, but enormities. They fell not by the violence of temptation, but 'twas their trade to be sinning, they were wholly given up to it; both Superiors and Inferiors had for many years been a race of Idolaters, persisting obstinately in their wicked ways; no warning, no warning, no mercy nor menaces could work upon them, they were incorrigible and incurable, and therefore the Lord now resolves to ease himself of them.

Quest. But what is meant here by the sinful Kingdom?

2. Some conceive that by Kingdom, here is meant, the
An Exposition

Chapter "4"

Sanctified Kingdoms indefinitely, but I conceive that Amos being sent more especially to prophesy against the Idolatry of the Kingdom of Israel, doth directly and primarily speak against the Idolatry of the Kingdom of Israel, for Idolatry is called This sin, by way of eminency (as I have shewed before on Amos 8:2) now Israel penitently as in other sins, so especially in this great sin of Idolatry, it is here called (Manasseh Hachatasah, Hee [regnunt persecutis] this sinful Kingdom; the article. He is emphatical, and the Text saith not, Mine eyes are upon a sinful Kingdom indefinitely, but upon This sinful Kingdom, viz., of Israel; and then secondarily it includes the Kingdom of Judah, which had deeply corrupted itself, and not long after they also were carried Captives to Babylon.

3 Here is the certainty of the judgement. The Eyes of the Lord are intent upon them for this purpose (see Ver. 4. before) he hath set his face in anger against them to destroy them.

4 Here is a mitigation or qualification of the Threatening. Yet he will not utterly destroy the House of Jacob, but in the midst of judgement he will remember mercy; and having purged out the dross, and destroyed the prophane body of the people, and rebellious root, he will preserve theremnant as a remnant for himself, according to his promise made to old to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Lev. 26:40, 41, 42. Though the Lord beat Heathenish Nations to dust, and stoke up the wicked root and branch; and though Israel deserved a total destruction, yet for his own Name sake, he will not deal so with his Church and choosen; he never utterly destroys them, but leaves some remnant to praise him, and to shine like lights in the midst of a pervertive people; and if he do bring them into Captivity, yet a remnant both of Israel and Judah shall return again, according to that precious promise; Jer. 30:3, 10. Lastly the days come that I will bring again the Captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; and will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. This was fulfilled when a remnant of Israel returned out of Assyria, and joyning themselves to Judah, came again into the holy Land after the seventy years Captivity.
It was usual with the Prophets to mollifie their Threatenings with the intemixture of some Promises, the better to encourage them to return, by giving them some glimpse of acceptance, and hope of mercy: for the Prophet having before uttered hard things against this people, he comes now in the close of all to end his Prophesie with promises of comfort to a remnant whom God would hide in the midst of their Captivity, till better times should come under the Gospel.

Some construe the words Ironically, and make them a confirmation of the punishment, *q.d.* I have punished Nations that never had the teaching which you have had, and do you think to go spot-free?

But this sense seems to be racked. It is better therefore to take the words as they simply import a promise of mitigation, moderation and favour to a remnant, because of the Covenant, and because of the Elect amongst them, and their Seed, who were to be the Seminary of the Church.

This is most agreeable to the contexture, and suits best with the next Verse, where the Prophet promiseth, that albeit God be resolved to sift the house of Israel, yet the least grain should not fall to the ground; and therefore the *Geneva* translation renders it well, *Nevertheless I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob.* Destroying, I will not destroy it; that is, I will not totally destroy the family and stock of Israel, but will preserve a remnant for my self, though they be captives in Assyria and Babilonia, yet as I have brought them in, so I will bring some of them out again, that they may praise me.

Here is the confirmation both of the Commination, and the Consolation. *Dixit Dominus,* the Lord who cannot lye, hath said it, who both can, and will perform what ever he hath spoken.

**Observations.**

1. The eyes of the Lord are upon sinful Kingdomes to destroy them.

The Kingdomes that will not submit to Christ, and serve him (be they never so many or mighty) must perish. **Isa. 63. 12.**

A a a a
As his eye is upon the righteous to preserve them, so his eye is upon the wicked to destroy them (as I have shewed before on ver. 4.) As he looks upon the righteous not with a bare look of intuition, but with a look of approbation in order to their assistance to do them good, and to exert his strength for them, so he looks upon the wicked with an eye of indignation for evil, and not for good, 1 Pet. 3:12.

When men are given up to sin, and are become hardened and habituated in iniquity (as these were) then judgement is near, Jer. 13.23, 24. especially when Kingdoms are defiled with Idolatry, that wickedness with a witness, that sin with an accent, which truly and properly denominates a Kingdom to be, The sinful Kingdom. Where ever this sin goes before, destruction is at the heels of it. It is a soul-damning, and a land-destroying sin, Judg. 5:8, Psal. 78.58. to 63. Jer. 22.7, 8, 9. one such a sinner in grain, destroys much good, Eccles. 9:17. The Idolater is a grand Traitor to the State he lives in. He helps to bring Sword, Plague, Famine, and all curses upon a Land, Ezek. 14.7, 8, 21. God's eye is upon such to cut them off from the face of the earth.

2 God's Ministers must wisely intermix Judgement and Mercy.

They must like the good Samaritan, have Wine and Oyl, Wine to stretch and cleanse men wounds; and Oyl to supple and heal them. The sharpness of the Law must be allayed with the sweetness of the Gospel, Luke 10.34. Amos had often threatened, now he comforts. Obstinate sinners must be terrified, and pulled with violence out of Satan's jaws; others, that are humble must be handled gently, Jude 23. We must frame our reproofs according to the necessities of our Auditors: All sores are not cured with one salve; that may be poison to one, which is medicinal to another. The soul must be thoroughly purged from sin, before it can be cured, or expect any health. It is in this case as it is in sores, if any corruption be left unexpelled, the wound will wrinkle, and may become mortal: For God is like Bishops weed, if you leave but little sprigs unweeded, they will run over your garden, and suffer nothing that is good to grow near it. Ministers then had need to have the Tongue of the Learned, to know how to speak a word in season; for if we preach at mercy,
of the Prophecy of Amos.

we shall teach men to presume; if all Judgement, to despand and despair. We must therefore wisely sing both of Mercy and Judgement; hence the Prophets did usually give some glimpses of comfort, and grounds of hope to Gods people in their distress. They had some pradventure you may be hid and heard, Joel 2. 14. Jonah 3. 9. Zeph. 3. 3. Take away hope, and you take away endeavours; impossibility of obtaining breaks the heart; and therefore 'tis that the Lord usually gives people some crumbs of comfort in their deepest distress, that so they might be encouraged to come in unto him.


Though God make a full and final end of other Nations, yet he makes not a full end with his people, but corrects them in measure, and in mercy, Jer. 46. 8. Though he punish some, yet he destroys not all, but moderates pubhck calamities, for the Elects sake, Matt. 24. 22. In the Babylonish captivity the Lord preferred Jeremy, Daniel, and others. When all the Old World was drowned, yet a little remnant was spared, viz. Noah, and his family. God is ever mindful of his Covenant to his people, and in the midst of all confusions he is a Tower to his. As I have shewed elsewhere.

Ver. 9.

For loe I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all Nations, like as Corn is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the Earth.

The Prophet having mentioned a mitigation of the punishment in the close of the precedent verse, he comes in this verse to confirm and illustrate this mitigation and moderation, by a Metaphor or Allusion taken from Husbandmen, who sift and winnow away the Chaff, but carefully preserve the Wheat.

For loe I will command the Assyrians and Babylonians, and they shall seize on Israel and Judah, and shall sift them; and if I command, who shall hinder it? how Israel was sifted, we have seen, how Judah was sifted up and down, you may see, Lom. 1. 3. & 5. 5. 6.
An Exposition

And I will sift them as corn is sifted in a sieve; which similitude implies three things. 1. That the men of Israel and Judah should be tossed and scattered among all Nations, as corn is tossed to and fro in a sieve.

2. As the corn and wheat is preserved in the sieve, when the chaff flies away, and falls to the ground; so in the midst of all these tossings and troubles, God would preserve his people that they should not perish eternally, though they might perish temporally, as Josiah did, and the righteous do, Isa. 57. 1. Daniel and other good men went here into captivity, as well as others, one by they had God’s eye upon them for good, which the others wanted.

The word corn or wheat is not in the Original, but is necessarily understood, and therefore all translations render it, like as corn or wheat is sifted in a sieve.

3. This tossing to and fro in the sieve, separates the wheat from the chaff. The chaff falls thoro’ and is blown away, but the wheat and little stones which are weighty abide in the sieve, and fall not to the ground. So these trials should blow wicked men out of their habitations, and out of the world to their own places. The corrupt body of the Jewish Nation should be scattered up and down, yet a remnant should be saved. The least grain of God’s corn shall not fall to the ground. Some render it the least stone shall not fall to the ground, and so give an allegorical sense, thus, God’s Elect which are like stones for solidity and stability, and are called lively stones for their zeal and activity, 1 Pet. 2. 5. shall not perish, but abide for ever. But our translation is most genuine and agreeable to the sense of the word in the Text.

9. d. Though the wicked shall perish from the Earth, yet not any thing of any weight or worth; not one grain or coin which is solid and heavy like a stone; (shall fall, nothing but the light, paltry chaff shall be blown away.) I will so order all your dispersions by my providence, that none of mine Elect shall perish eternally nor yet the remainder of the faithful be utterly extinguished.
of the Prophecy of Amos.

the Corn may be beaten in the same floor with the chaff, yet it shall not perish with the chaff.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Church of God in this life is subject to many siftings.

They must be sifted by Assyrians, sifted by Babylonians, sifted by false Brethren, sifted in Body, in Soul, in Name, Estate, every way. God hath many sieves and sieves to sift us with all, that so we may become pure manchets for our Lord and Master's use.

God hath many purgatory fires to bring his people thorough.

1. The fire of his Word, Jer. 5. 14. & 23. 29. 2. The fire of afflictions and persecutions, Zach. 13. ult. 1 Pet. 4. 12, and thus every man must be tried by fire, 1 Cor. 3. 13. 3. If none of these fires will mend men, then comes the fire of the last Judgement, and consumes them, Isa. 30. 33.

All that look for salvation, must look for siftings; thorough many tribulations, we must come into God's Kingdom, Acts 14. 22. The better any man is, the more trials he must look for. The more grace, the more siftings; as we see in Abraham, Isaac, Job, David, Paul, Peter, Luke, 22. 32. The Devil shoots his Arrows at the whitest marks. This spiritual Pyrate sets upon the laden Merchant. The Devil knows that the fall of one of these will more advantage his Kingdom than the fall of a thousand others; and therefore he fates to his Agents, as the King of Syria said to his Captains, Fight neither with small nor great, but against these spiritual Kings. Men of eminent gifts and graces, especially when called to eminent places, as Magistrates, Ministers, Governors, &c. must look for eminent trials. These better Sarans Kingdom, and break his head; and therefore let them be sure he will bruise their heels.

2. As we must look for all manner of siftings, so from all manner of parties.

Soul.

From Saran, and the World.

God will try us before, he will trust us; so be dealt by Abraham.
An Exposition

Abraham, Gen. 22.1. & Job 6.4, 8, 16.9. & the Israelites, 
Deut. 8.2. Christ tried the Ruler, Luke 16.32. & the wo-
man of Canaan. God tempts us to try us, but Satan to destroy 
us. God batters us by temptations, he never draws us into sin 
by them, as Satan doth.

3. The Devil will sift you. He that tempted thy Saviour, 
will not spare thee. He that was so bold with the head, will 
not spare the heel. This is the Devil's great battery, by 
which he labours to destroy God's graces in us; though the 
Lord so orders it, that they improve them, Job 23.10. Some-
times he keeps us from temptations, but he is always with us 
in them, Rev. 3.10. Yea when Satan is most busy in tem-
pering, then is Christ most busy in praying for us, Luke 22.32.

Now Satan sets upon men many wares; sometimes by evil 
suggestions, persuasions, instigations, 1 Chron. 21.1. 1 Thes. 
3.5. by blowing up the fire of corruption which lies in our 
bosomes. The Devil is a great studier of men, he is a great 
Naturalist, he hath been trying conclusions on men almost six 
thousand years. He suits his Temptations according to men's 
temper: if he have an Esau to deal with, he hath a morsel of 
portage for him; if a covetous Achan, he hath a wedge of 
gold for him, &c. The Devil cannot force the will, he may 
persuade, but he cannot compel. There is a threefold liberty 
of the will, 1 From sin; 2 From misery; 3 From Neces-
sity. The two first we have lost, but from necessity and co-
action the will is free; so free, that if it could be constrained, 
it were no will: and therefore in conversion the Lord doth 
not force the will, but sweetly inclines it. We should there-
fore blame ourselves for our folly, James 1.14. So did David, 
Psal. 51.4. and when by Satan's instigation he had numbed 
the people, yet he layes not the fault upon Satan, but upon 
himself; I have done exceeding foolishly. Pray with that good 
man, Lord deliver me from that evil man myself.

3. The world abounds with Temptations, we go upon 
snares, in our beds, at our boards, at all times, in all places, 
among all persons temptations are laid for us, in publick and 
private, above us, beneath us, round about us, we are beset: 
Prosperity and pleasures on the one hand destroy thousands, 
and persecution and losses on the other hand. Had we not 
need then to be sober and watch? 1 Pet. 5.8. and so watch.
and pray, Matt. 26. 41. shunning all occasions of sin: Not parling with temptations, diligent in our places, not trusting to our own strength. Sit down and cast what it will cost us if we be Christ's Disciples. These things should not discourage, but quicken us to duty. We say of some weeds they are ill things, but they are signs of rich ground. So these sittings and tentations are irksome, but wholesome: the Torch burns the brighter for beating. The Vine is the better for bleeding; The Orchard for pruning; The Garden for weeding, and the Soul for sitting. It is a good sign of some great good doing, when we have many adversities, and much opposition; 1 Cor. 16. 9. Standing pools gather mud. There are many dregs in those Moabs that are at ease, and are not emptied from vessel to vessel, Jer. 48. 11. I never knew any man kept long from corruption and perdition that was not (especially at his first setting out) salted and seasoned with many temptations and afflictions. Be not therefore offended at them; such Humiliations are the way to Exaltation, and such trials (if we sincerely, patiently and perseveringly improve them) our great glory. Job was more famous for his sufferings, than Alexander or Cæsar were for their Victories. His tentations brought more honour to him than all his riches. If Job had been only the richest man in the East, in all probability we had never heard of him, but that which honoured him so much as to have a whole book written in his praise, was his Tentations and Victories, his Conflicts and his Conquests.

These are via ad Regnum, the very path way to piety and glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Did the stone but know when it is hewn and squared that it is to sit for a King's house and service; or did the timber but know when its knots are hewn off, and is seasoned with wind and weather, that it might become a Throne for some high and mighty Prince, would it not rejoice and glory? And shall not we rejoice in those Tentations and Afflictions which fit us for the service of the King of Kings?

Nil tentatione, nec coronam, nec certaminem, nec præmia, nisi hyæmam, nec auras, chrysa.

Quod ignis est aurea, lapis femae, scalpium lapis, rumina ligno.

Nimi quum pane, ventilabrum trico, sal carmi, foro pani, mallemus saevo, hoc jus teneo tentatione.

[See more about Tentation in that excellent Treatise of Mr. ]
An Exposition


1. The captivity and punishment of a people comes from God.

As all other evils of punishment, so this amongst the rest comes from him. It is he that commands Assyrians and Babylonians to lead us into Captivity. Israel and Judah had been long in Captivity to Sin and Satan, and therefore the Lord sent them seven times into Captivity. This may befall God's dear Elijah and Daniel, and such of whom the world is not worthy, these may be driven from all, and be forced to wander in Deserts and Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the earth, Heb. 11. 37, 38. This must make us dumb and silent, since it is the Lord (who is a God of judgement, and knows what is better for us than we do for ourselves, Is. 30. 18.) that doth it. Wicked men cannot lead us into Captivity till God give the word of Command, I will command the house of Israel to be sifted amongst all Nations. This was in part fulfilled then; but since their crucifying of Christ, and rejecting the Lord of glory, all the twelve Tribes have been tossed and scattered over all the world, being hated and esteemed of all Nations.

2. The godly are God's grain.

They are called his Wheat, Math. 3. 12, 13, 30. The wicked are Chaff, Cockle, Wilde-oats, Drofs, Psal. 119. 119. Dregs, Scum, Filth, vain, light persons, that have no weight, nor worth, no favourinesse, nor soliditie in them, and therefore they are called Chaff, Psal. 1. 4, which is blown away with every wind as good for nothing. But the godly are God's Wheat, which is a substantial, precious grain, bringing great gain to the owner, strengthening and delighting the hearts of those that feed on it. Though it hang down the head, and make no great shew outwardly, yet within it is full of fine meal and flour, Psal. 81. 14. So the godly, though they make no great shew outwardly, yet they are all honour-
of the Prophecy of Amos.

ous within, their beauty is an internal beauty, which cannot be seen with bodily eyes, Psal. 45: 13. and though they be contemned by the prophane world, yet are their persons, Prayers, and performances very precious in Gods eyes.

2 Wheat is sifted, weighty, stable, and abides in the floor, it is not tossed up and down with every wind as the Chaff is; so the godly are rooted, grounded, and stablisht in the faith, Col. 2: 7. they are not tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, as those Palaearum homines of our times are, but they are an everlasting foundation, like stones that abide in the building, and cannot be removed by any storms.

3 Wheat must be threshed, winnowed, and ground to meal, that it may be fit for food. The godly are Gods Wheat in this sense also, they must be threshed, sifted, and fanned with many temptations and afflictions, yea they must be ground even to dust by the teeth of the wild beasts of the world, that they may become pure Manchet (as the Martyr said) for their Masters service.

4 Wheat when it is ripe is cut down, and laid up safe in the barn and garner. The Chaff and refuse we salt out of doors, but our choyce grain we house; so when Gods people are fit for Heaven, God sends his Angels to gather his Wheat into his garner, into heaven and happiness, Mat. 13: 30.

4 Not one grain of Gods pure precious corn shall perish.

Chaff and Darnel; Tares and Hypocrites shall fall and perish, but not one corn of right grain shall perish eternally; though they may goe into captivity, and be afflicted outwardly as well as others, as Jerem., Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, Nehe-}

Bbb

miah, Mordecai, Hester, Zenobabel, &c. and others went all into captivity: but the Lord was with them there, so that they kept their garments pure, and did shine like lights in the midst of an Idolatrous and perverse generation. They dye in peace, though (Joseph like) they fall in barrel, the Lord is a sanctuary to them in their captivity, Ezek. 11: 16, 17. and makes them to be pitied of those that lead them captive, Psa. 106: 46. and gives them favour as he did Joseph in the Prison, Gen. 39: 21. and Jeremiah in Babylon, Jer. 39: 11, 12. so that sifted and tempted they may and must be, but totally and finally destroyed they can never be; for they have Gods Almighty power to keep them, Job. 10: 28. they have Christ to pray.
pray for them, his Spirit to seal them, the seed of God abiding in them, so that nothing can separate them from Christ, as I have proved at large elsewhere.

VERSE 10.

All the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword, which say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

The Prophet having comforted God's people against final perishing, returns again to his Comminations against the obstinate, lest they should presume and appropriate those Promises to themselves which belonged not to them; where we have,

1. A Judgement threatned, viz. The Sword. They shall dye by the sword; that is, some of them shall be actually slain, the rest shall go into captivity and banishment, which is a civil death, or which is worse, they shall dye Gladius Spiritualis, (faith Mercer) by the sword of the Spirit, being blinded and rejected of God, so that they cannot repent. But this (though it be a truth) yet not from this text.

2. Here are the Persons upon whom this Judgement shall fall, and those are Sinners, all the sinners that are impenitent, Idolatrous, presumptuous sinners, especially Idolaters, those sinners with a witness, and such was the body and bulk of this people; All those be they high or low, superiors or inferiors, first or last they shall fall by the sword; since they will not believe God's Word, they shall feel his Rod.

Obj. But we are the Lords People, by external profession, by Covenant, and by visible Adoption.

A. Be it so, yet all the sinners of my people, by profession, since they condemn the counsel of my Prophets, and persist in their loose conversation, shall perish in their sin.

3. Here is a fairer Character of them, or another brand set upon them, whereby they may be known, and that is, their security, and incredulity, in flattering and condemning both God and his threatenings.

They say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.

See how diametrically opposite they are to God. The Lord says, the evil of punishment shall come upon them. They say
the contrary; This evil and calamity shall not come upon us, at least it shall not overtake us (or anticipate) and prevent us. For that is, either it shall not come, or it shall not come in our days, but when we are dead and gone; or if it do come, it shall not come upon us, if it shall not come near us; to surprise us. They thought themselves privileged from such perils, and that they should never seize on them.

But what faith the Lord to all this? Why he cannot bear with such high and horrid contempt of him and his Word, and therefore he tells them plainly, that all those incorrigible and incurable sinners should fall by the sword, since they say: This evil shall not overtake us, therefore it shall overtake them, and destroy them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Carnal security ends in misery.

When once men begin to put the evil day farre from them, and sing a Requiem to their Souls, then comes sudden and swift destruction, Isa. 28. 15, 17, 18. Jer. 23. 25. 31. 13, 19. there we have their security; and Ver. 14, 15, 16, 17. the punishment follows. So Mat. 24. 48, 49. see their security; and Ver. 50, 51. the punishment follows. When fore on Amos people are secure and incredulous, and will not hear, they shall be made to feel the truth of the Threatenings; as Esus Sons-in-law that would not believe, were burnt to ashes, Gen. 19. 14. yet the world abounds with such; sell the Idolater, the Oppressor, the Fornicator, etc. of Judgements ready to seize upon them, and they are ready to mock, and say, Let the day of the Lord come that we may see it, Isa. 5. 19. Jer. 17, 25. so they shall to their sorrow, Deut. 29. 19. 20. Amos 4. 18.

2. No privilege can preserve an impious, idolatrous people from ruin.

No, though they be my people, yet if my people will not walk in my ways, but will rebel against me, even the sinners of my people shall die by the sword. But of this oft before.

B b b b

V r a s
VERSE 11.
In that day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.

We are now come to the Third and last general part of this Chapter, and that is consolatory, containing many precious promises concerning the Kingdom of Christ, and the restoration and enlargement of the Church in the days of the Messiah.

The Prophet before had been Minatory, terrifying them with many dreadful comminations of desolation and utter ruine, for their Apostasie and rebellion; but now (that his Sun might not set in a Cloud) he concludes all with most sweet Evangelical consolations, for the refreshing of the remnant of the Elect under those sad Calamities which for many years they lay under. So this does and he assures them, that though all at present were in confusion, and the house of David lay in the dust; yet the Lord who usually brings light out of darkness, and comfort out of discomfort, would in the conclusion restore the Kingdom unto Israel, and make up all their losses in a better kind with spiritual blessings.

And this was the frequent practice of the Prophets, to intermingle comforts with their Threatnings; the very first judgment that was pronounced against fallen man, was allayed with a Promise presently annexed.

1. They used to awaken and humble their Hearers with terrors and threatnings, and then to raise them up again with consolations, especially with the promises of the Messiah, who was the salvation and consolation of Israel, yea, the joy and desire of all Nations, Hag. 2. 8, in whom all the Promises were ratified and confirmed. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

Both Israel and Judah were falling into a very forlorn scattered, sad condition; the Prophet therefore to keep the godly amongst them from sinking into utter despair, comforts them with this, that in the midst of judgement God would remember mercy, being ever mindful of his Covenant, and though
Vers. 11. of the Prophecy of Amos.

though he punish them for their transgressions, yet in due time he would send the Messiah with healing under his wings amongst them.

Some go about to confine this glorious Prophecy to Hezekiah's time, when Senachersib and his Host was slain:

Others refer it to the times when Judah returned out of their Babylonish Captivity, in the reign of Cyrus King of Persia, when they repaired the ruins of Jerusalem. But the text is clear against this, for those were but poor, slight, slender restorations comparatively with this. For 1. but a remnant came out of the Babylonish Captivity, and those poor and low, and farre fewer of Israel returned out of Assyria. But the restoration here spoken of is most ample and glorious, as appears by those high and Hyperbolical expressions of possessing all Nations, and the Mountains dropping wine; and the Hills running with Milk and Honey, and all Israel returning out of Captivity.

It is therefore confessed by all (even by some of the Jews themselves) that these Promises have relation to Christ, and should be fulfilled in Gospel-times, according to that Apostolical allegation, and interpretation of this very Text by Saint James in the Synod at Jerusalem, Act. 15. 16, 17. After this I will return, and build again the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down; that is, the Church of God, in which Christ the Son of David should dwell and reign, it should be repaired and restored by the Messiah, and I will build again the ruins thereof, viz. by planting in it the believing Jews, and bringing in the Gentiles as living stones, in the stead of the unbelieving Jews, That the refusals of men may seek the Lord; that is, not only the Jews, but all other Nations. The Apostle James following the Septuagint speaketh the same sense; but the very same words. The Prophet saith the Gentiles shall be called, and be intermixed in the residue of Edom; but James here speaks more generally, and saith, all the Gentiles (which includes Edom) shall seek after the Lord:

In these five last Verses of this Chapter, we have a notable Prophecy of glorious things to come, and a cluster of precious Promises, no less than five:

1. Here is a Promise of the restoration of David's Kingdom.

B b b b.
An Exposition

Chap. 2.

Of the calling of the Gentiles.
3. Of the abundance of spiritual gifts which should be in Christ's Kingdom, typified by the abundance of Corn and Wine.
4. Of the gathering of the Captives from banishment, into the Kingdom of Christ.
5. Of protection from their enemies, and perpetual habitation in their own Land.

Verse 11.

In that day will I raise up the Tabernacle of David, that is fallen, &c.

This general Promise is pregnant, and contains many particular branches within it.

1. The Lord promiseth, that he will build up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen.
2. He will close up the breaches thereof.
3. He will raise up his ruins.
4. He will build it up in the days of old.
5. Here is the time when all these glorious things shall be accomplished: and that is, \textit{In illo die}, \textit{In that day}, viz. in that glorious day of the Gospel, when Christ the Son of Righteousness should come into the world. In that day of Salvation, in that day of Light and Grace, when the substance should be come, and the shadows be gone; in those glorious Gospel-times should this glorious restoration and separation of the house of David come by Christ: Or, in that day (say some) of Israel's deep distress and sad Captivity, will I arise, and raise them out of the dust.

That Christ should come in the East, the Prophets had assured them, but of the particular day, and year when he should come, they were uncertain; and therefore the Prophets made diligent search as far as they might with sobriety into this Mystery. 1 Pet. 1. 11. This made them speak so modestly and generally, \textit{In that day}, or \textit{in that time} (for it is an usual Hebraism to put a day indefinitely for time, as Hos. 2. 27. Joel 3. 1.) which was foretold by the Prophets, Gen. 49. 10. Isa. 11. 1. Dan. 9. 24. and appointed by God when the...
of the Prophecy of Amos.

As the time should come, Gal. 4. 4. then would the Lord raise up the Tabernacle of David which was fallen, v. d. In the days of the Messiah I will restore the Kingdom of David, and make that which was before a temporal and mutable Kingdom, to become a Spiritual and eternal Kingdom; and let this Rule be remembred once for all. That these promises of temporal blessings must be understood Spiritually; they must not be taken literally for the setting up of any earthly, external, pompous Kingdom in the Posterity of David, such a one as the Jews look for, Acts 1. 6. and the Millenniums fancy to themselves, who take this Text in the Letter for building of fine Houses, and plenty of Corn and Wine, and delighting themselves with the Quintessence of the Creature; whereas it is usual with the Prophets in the Old Testament, to shadow forth Spiritual blessings by Temporal things; and this the Lord did the better to work upon the Jews, who were a carnal, rude, rugged people, and not so easily wrought upon by Spiritual blessings, as by Temporal and visible ones; so that as the Legal threatenings were usually of Temporal Judgements (though they comprehended Spiritual ones also) Deut. 28. 16, 17, 18, &c. so the Promises under the Law were usually of Temporal blessings, though they included Spiritual ones also. But the Gospel proclaims Spiritual mercies, which are more noble and divine: for though peace and plenty are the Concomitants of the Gospel, yet these are poor uncertain things, compared with Covenant-Mercies, which are called sure Mercies, Isa. 55: 3. Besides, Christ's Kingdom is not of this world, his Kingdom is not meat and drink, Rom. 14. 17. but it is a Spiritual kingdom, and so must be taken here. This Kingdom Christ will restore when he shall gather his Church out of Jews and Gentiles, in which Church there shall be greater glory, than ever David or Solomon had, though in respect of outward splendor it be lesse, yet in respect of inward glory, it shall excel, Hag. 2. 9.

Let us take the Text in the Letter, and see what absurdities will follow.

1. If you take this building of the Tabernacle of David, for a restoring of the Kingdom of Israel to its former pomp and power, and for the subduing of Edom, and other Nations by the Sword, and that they should never be rooted out of their
owne Land, &c. See how all these things are contradicted. For,
1. When they returned out of Babylonish Captivity, they had
indeed a Kingdom, but it was a poor, torn, contemptible
one.

2. They were so farre from reigning over Edom, and the
other Nations, that they were Tributary a long time to the
Medes and Persians, to the Egyptians and Syrians, and at
last were brought under the Roman yoke, Herod the Ascalonite
tyrannizing over them, even when Christ was born, and at last
for rejecting Christ, and Crucifying the Lord of Glory, their
City and Temple was destroyed, and themselves despised like
Vagabonds over the whole World, and so have continued this
sixteen hundred years; so that literally this Text was never
yet fulfilled, nor ever will be, whatever vaine men may
fancy.

But let us take the words in a Spiritual sense, in reference
to Christ, who hath indeed repaired the ruines of the House
of David, by sending his Apostles to preach the Gospel thro'
row the world, and to gather Jews and Gentiles into the unity
of his Church, and to erecting to himself an everlasting King-
dome, according to that of the Angel Gabriel, Luke 1. 32,33.
He shall be great, and he shall be called the Son of the most high,
and he shall sit upon the throne of his father David, and he shall
reign over the house of Jacob for ever. These words are an ex-
cellent Comment upon the text, The Lord shall give him the
throne of his father David; that is, Christ shall have a Spirit-
ual Kingdom over his Church, whose earthly Kingdom was a Type;
and he shall be a Spiritual King over the spiritual house of Jacob for ever. Thus you see it is a Spirit-
ual raising up of the decayed Tabernacle of Jacob, and not
any Temporal one that is here spoken of; and this Spiritual
sense St. James confirms in the fore-mentioned place, Acts
15. 7, 13. to 17. where he proves the conversion of the Gentiles
by the preaching of the Gospel from this very text in Amos;
and this will better appear when we come to ver. 12. Now
whether shall we believe Saint James, who faith that this text
in Amos relates to Christ, and to the conversion and vocation
of the Gentiles, unto the faith of Christ, or else the
Jews and Millenarians, who dream (as Dr. Homee doth)
of a Saviour that shall reign in a Corporal, visible man-
of the Prophecy of Amos.

set here on earth, in external glory and felicity with the Saints a thousand years.

I will raise up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen.

By the Tabernacle of David is meant the House or Kingdom of David, which was a Type of the Church, which is Christ's spiritual kingdom. It is here called a Tent, or Ta-

bernacl, because of that mean and low condition which Da-

vid's family was now in; it was not now a Palace, but a poor flitting Tent, or Tabernacle, and that a fallen one too, full of rup
tures and ruines; which intimates the sad désolation which had been made in David's family. His Kingdom which was sometimes potent and flourishing, now was become like a poor ruinous Cottage, for all was out of order both in Church and State when Christ came.

1 The ten Tribes fell off from the house of David to Je-

roboam, and from the true Worship of God to worship Calves.

2 The Syrians and the Philistines made inrodes upon them.

3 The Assyrians made havoc of Israel, and carried the ten Tribes into Captivity; and the Babylonians fell upon Judah, and carried them Captive into Babylon, and the Romans fell upon them again after they came out of Babylon, and scatter-
ed them over the whole world; Israel never returned again out of the Assyrian Captivity, only some few gleanings joined themselves to Judah when they returned out of Babylon and came to Jerusalem; and though Judah did return after the seventy years were expired, yet Tyrants did to tear and shatter them (as appears by the Books of the Maccabees) that there was no splendor, no glory, nor scarce the face of a King-
dom amongst them, Amos 5. 2. at last came Herod the Ty-
 rant, who rooted up David's stock, and settled the Crown upon his own head. Besides, when Christ came, he found the Church pestered with false Prophets, swarming with Scribes and Pharisees, and such as taught for Doctrines the Precepts of men. Thus what with the cruelty of Tyrants on the one hand, and the corruptions of false teachers on the other hand, the Tabernacle of David was sadly fallen.

And thus the house of David lay in its ruines (being shrunk from C c c c
from David the King, to Joseph the Carpenter till Christ the Son of David came, who repaired the breaches, and fulfilled the Prophecies. Then in that day, and at that time when all seemed to be gone, and all Human help failed, the Lord who loves to be seen in the Mount; sent the Messiah to raise up this Tabernacle of David which was fallen, and make it more illustrious than ever: yet not in Temporals, but which is more glorious and divine, in Spirituals; enlarging the Churches dominion over all Nations, Matt. 28. 19. and changing that earthly Kingdom of David, into a Spiritual and everlasting Kingdom, according to that promise; 2 Sam. 7. 16.

Q. But why is this restoration of all by Christ called, the raising up of the Tabernacle of David?

A. For two reasons; 1. Because the Kingdom of David was Typical, as David himself was a Type of Christ, so his Temporal Kingdom typified and prefigured Christ's Spiritual Kingdom. 2. Christ was the Son of David according to the flesh, now the Kingdom was promised to David and his Seed for ever, Psal. 72. 17. hence Christ is so oft called, David, Jer. 30. 9. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 14. Hos. 3. 5.

And I will close up the Breaches thereof.

I will make up the gaps of the Tabernacle of David, or hedges and wall up the breaches of it, by causing the Gospel to be preached over all the World, which will quickly close up all the ruptures, and make up all the ruins which Sin and Satan hath made; and chase away all those Traditions of men which false Prophets had brought into the Church of God. This began to be accomplished when Christ began to preach, and his Apostles after him, as when Paul and Barnabas preaching to the Gentiles converted them: Acts 15. 7. &c. and it is daily accomplishing by the enlarging of the Church, but a more full accomplishment hereof will be when the Jews and Gentiles shall be called, and united together under Christ their Head.

And I will raise up his ruins.

All its Batteries and Breakings, all its Rubbish and Ruines shall be repaired by Christ still. We see (as hath been shewed before) how low the house of David was sunk.
Ver. 11. of the Prophecy of Amos.

It was like a poor Tent or Cottage, ruinous and full of breaches, and to a carnal eye irrecoverable and past hope.

And I will build it as in the days of old.

When it was in its most flourishing and prosperous condition, in those purest times of David, and the beginning of Solomon's reign, when they were free from Superstition and Idolatry, leaving the Lord in simplicity and singleness of heart.

The summe of all is this; In that day of Jacobs deep distress, I will raise up my Evangelical Church, which is the Tabernacle of the true and glorious Son of David, the Messiah of the World, even upon the ruins of the Jewish Church, which I will repair, and so make up the Spiritual breaches thereof; as that both Jews and Gentiles shall make up one Church, which shall be made as Spiritually compleat as ever the Temple was materially.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Modesty and Sobriety becomes us, especially when we treat of divine Mysteries.

We must not be wise above that which is written, nor curiously pry into the secrets of the Almighty; and therefore great is the folly of many in our times, that take upon them to tell the day, the year, and almost the hour (so divinely inspired are they, at least in their owne conceits) when Babylon shall fall, and the Jews be called. One says, Antichrist shall fall One thousand six hundred thirty nine; another One thousand six hundred forty three; another One thousand six hundred and fifty, another One thousand six hundred fifty five; to Clavis Apocalyptica, many One thousand six hundred sixty six; only Sir Henry Vane witer than all the rest (as least opinionatively) tells us flatly, that the walls of this Jericho shall fall flat before Jesus the true Joshua, hundred and forty years hence, viz. In the year Two thousand, then comes the seventh part of time which shall be the true Sabbath. Wisely done Sir Henry, to set so long a time that you may be dead and rotten before it comes; when others that have set shorter times have lived to be laughed at to their faces; the folly of these men hath been made known to all.
were well if men would learn of the Prophet here to keep to
generals. In that day, and at that time, and not point at par-
ticulars to their owne shame. Secret things belong to the
Lord, there is enough revealed to exercise our parts and stu-
dies, though we should live Meroe Salmon dyses.
2 That the Church of God in this life may be brought to a
very low condition.

It may seem like a poor little Tent, or tattered Cottace,
full of breaches and ruins, Isa. 1. 9 so that it is scarcely vi-
sible, and yet be a true Church, 1 King. 19. 30. as the Moon
is the Moon and in Heaven still, though it lyeth hid for a time
under the Clouds from our sight.

3 After deep humiliation comes great consolation.

Never any so deeply humbled as Christ, and never any
more highly exalted, Phil. 2. 6. to 12. after this people had
for many years been sifted, and tossed, and captivated, and
the family of David brought to the dust, and no Human help
appearing, but they lay like dry bones scattered up and down,
yet now doth the Lord appear, and raise up the Tabernacle of
David that was fallen, by sending the Messiah that little
Branch, or Sprig, out of the stock or contemptible stump of
Jesse, that was hewn down and cut off, Isa. 11. 1. when mans
help faileth, then God appears; our extremity is his opportuni-
ity, Cum duplicator lateres, venit Moses. In the Mount will
the Lord be seen. Christ came not here till all seemed to bee
lost and laid on heaps, he still reserves his holy hand for a
dead lift, and delights to help those that are forsaken of their
hopes, Deut. 32. 36. Psal. 10. 14. & 22. 11. when this good-
ly Family was sunk so low as from David the King, to Joseph
the Carpenter, so that there was neither King nor Prince left,
then Christ appears and raiseth it up; when the Scepter was
departed from Judah, then Shilo comes, Gen. 49. 10. when all
was here in confusion both in Church and State, then comes
the Messiah, that Horn of Salvation, and the glory of his peo-
ple Israel.

4 The Churches comforts are hid in Christ.

It is he that makes up our breaches, raiseth us out of our
ruines; and restores comfort to Sion, and to her Mourners.
All our comforts, and all our fresh Springs are in him; our Ex-
lection, Vocation, Justification, Sanctification, Salvation,
come all from this Fountain, Ephes. 1. 3. to 15. He is Bread, to strengthen us, Wine to comfort us, Water to wash us; a King to defend us, a Prophet to teach us, a Priest to intercede for us. In a word, he is All in All unto us, as I have shewed In my Com. on elsewhere.

5 The Old Testament is the Word of God, and abides in New Testament times.

James the Apostle when he would prove the calling of the Gentiles he goes to the Old Testament, the written Word of God, and from thence proves it; now had it not been Authen-
tical, the Apostles allegation had been invalid. But of this at large elsewhere.

6 Gospel privileges are glorious privileges.

The Church was glorious of old in Davids time, when men went by troops to the House of God, and fled as the Clouds, and flockt as the Doves unto their windows. But the Spiritual glory of the Church in the days of the Gospel is farre more glorious than in the days of Israel of old. They had but the shadow, we have the substance; they saw Christ but darkly in Types and Figures, but we see him with open face. Hence the glory of the latter Temple is said to be greater than the glory of the former, Hag. 2. 9. But how can that be, since the glory of the first Temple was farre more excellent for building than the latter? in some of the ancient now wept to see how short it came of the former. I, but the glory of this latter House (though inferior for structure) yet shall be greater than the glory of the former, because Christ the Messiah should personally appear there; and from thence should the Gospel of peace goe forth into all the world, which should work a true and blessed tranquility in the hearts of all believers. Hence John the Baptist is preferred before the Old Testament Prophets, both in dignity and doctrine; and New Testament Ministers (who publish the whole Gospel) are preferred before him, Matt. 11. 11. Let us then bless the Lord for Gospel-privileges, keeping them in purity and simplicitie, for though in Old Testament-times God allowed them Musick in publick Services, with Altars, Holy Vestments, &c. yet Christ their substance being come, these shadowes are gone, and now Christ will demand, who required these things, at CCCC.
An Exposition

That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this.

The Prophet goes on to comfort the remnant of the faithful in Israel and Judah in their low condition, with the promises of better times under the Messiah; then should David's Spiritual Kingdom be more glorious than ever, and the bounds of it more ample than in the days of old; for when the Messiah shall come, the Gentiles shall be called, and the very Edomites (which were deadly enemies to God's ways and people, Amos 1. 9, 11. Obad. 10, 11, 12.) shall submit their necks to Christ's yoke, and be brought into the communion of Christ's Church, by the operation of the Spirit in the preaching of the Gospel. Yea and all the elect Heathen shall come in with them according to that Promise, Psal. 2. 8. Isa. 19, ult.

Formerly the Church was shut up within narrow bounds, and confined to the Jews only, but now it shall spread itself over all Nations. The Prophet begins and names Edom first, because they were near neighbours, and though Brethren to the Jews, yet were they bitter enemies to them, rejoicing in their calamity, and laughing at their downfall, Lam. 4. 21. Obad. 22. Yet now these should be converted, and their foes become friends, and at unity with God's people. These Lions should be turned into Lambs, and these Wolves into Sheep, and some remnant out of all Nations (though never so rude and barbarous) should be brought unto Christ's Sheep-fold.

God had plagued Edom very sore, Num. 24. 18. Isa. 63, 1. especially by the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, yet now he promises that a remnant of them shall be joyed with the Jews in

What these Edomites were, see at large in the large Annotar. on Amos 1. 11.
in one Church whereof Christ is the Head, Obad. 18, 19. and therefore the Apostle James tells the Jews, that they ought not to wonder that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost as well as they, since it was fore-told by the Prophets, and amongst the rest by our Prophet here, Acts 15, 15, 16, 17.

2 Here is a further description of these Gospel-Converts, they are such as upon whom my name is called; that is, they are such as are called by my name, who are indeed my people. The like expression we have, Gen. 48, 16. The Lord bless thee the Lads, and let my name be called on them; that is, let them be accounted my Progeny (faith Jacob) and be called my children. The like parallel expression we have, Isa. 44, 1. & 63, ult.

Let us be called by thy name; that is, let us be thine. So the People of Israel are called, The People which are called by God's name, Deut. 28, 10. 2 Chron. 7, 14. that is, the Church and God's People of God who professes his name, acknowledging that he was their God, and they his People. So those Gentile-Nations which were sometimes strangers from the Covenant, and aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and were not God's People, shall now be called the People of the living God; they shall shew themselves unto Christ, and have his name put upon them, and shall be called Christians, Acts 11, 26.

Obj. It is impossible that ever such desperate Edomites, and old enemies should ever be converted and brought in to Christ.

A. With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible: It is the Lord that doth it (faith the text) and therefore doe not doubt of the performance, for he is both faithful and able who hath promised. Neither be offended that the Gentiles are called whom ye call unclean, for it is God that doth this, who doth all things well.

Q. But when was this Promise ever fulfilled, say the Millenarian Jews?

A. It began to be fulfilled when the Gentiles were brought in with the remnant of the Jews, who came in the room of the unbelieving Jews in the Apostles times, so that the Promise is fulfilled inchoative already.

2 It is daily fulfilling, and shall be more and more fulfilled even to the end of the world, especially, when the Jews shall be called, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in,
and they shall all become one Church, and make up one Body, and one Sheep-fold under Christ their head.

The summe is this, In Gospel-times both Jews and Gentiles shall be joined; that they shall make up one Church, and the bounds thereof shall be extended over all the earth, even to the remotest Heaven, which shall then be called by my name, saith the Lord that doth this.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Election of God is free.

He doth not chuse men for any fore-seen works or merits, or improvement of Free-will, but all is Mercy and Free-grace. What did the Lord see in those prophane, Idolatrous Edomites, to move him to call a remnant of them? Nay, what did he not see in them why he should not reject them? and yet of his own free-mercy, these cruel Edomites, and prophane Gentiles which were not his People, are here called his People. Away then with all those conceits of Merit, Free-will, Universal Election (which is a gross contradiction) for if all be chosen, then it is not an Election, but a Collection of all; for Election implies a chusing of some, and a passing by of others.

Let us then who are Gentiles, remember our baseness and loathe our selves, and let Free-grace in all the golden links of Election, Vocation, Justification, &c. be for ever magnified by us, that the Lord should passe by his owne People the Jews, and make them a People of his Curse these sixteen hundred years, and shoule plant us poor Canaanites, and accursed Gentiles in their stead, is no lesse an act of Mercy than of wonder, Psal. 2. 8. Isa. 54. 23. & 60. 4, 5. Acts 2. 39. Rom. 9. 25, 26. Ephes. 3. 6.

Yet let us not be high-minded but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches, much lesse will he spare such wild branches as we are, if we walk in unbelief as they did, Rom. 11. 20, 21.

2. Few are chosen.

It is not all Edom, it is but a remnant according to the Election of Grace that shall be converted and saved. Hence the Scripture so oft calls the Elect a Remnant, multitudes pesish.
Verse 11.

of the Prophecy of Amos.

it is but a remnant, a little remnant that are saved, Isa. 1. 9.
Joel 2. ult. Rom. 11. 5. Straight is the Gate, and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few there be that find it, Matt. 7. 14.
Christ's flock is a little little flock, Luke 12. 32. How few were saved of the Old World, Sodom, Jerusalem?

The way to Heaven it is a difficult way, and calls for difficult things, and hard lessons which the world cannot endure to hear of, much less to practice.

1. It calls for Universal Self-denial, all Self-conceit, Self-ends, Self-interest, &c. must be renounced if we will be Christ's Disciples. Here most stick.

2. It calls for a saving, sanctifying, working, lively faith, and this is hard; Presumption is ease, but to believe requires the exceeding greatness of God's power to work it in us, Ephes. 1. 19. Coloss. 2. 12.

3. It calls for sincere Conversion, and that is an exceeding hard thing; it is no less than the change of Nature, it is the changing of a Lion into a Lambe, of a Wolf into a Sheep, of Fire into Water, &c.

4. There are many hard things to be suffered as well as to be done, many losses, crosses, temptations from the world, the Devil, and our own corruption: all which laid together shew the difficulty of Salvation, and by consequence the paucity of such as shall be saved.

[See more at large on this Point, Mr. Aut. Burgess's Spirit. Refining, 1 Part, Ser. 222. p. 643, and on 1 Cor. 3. 15, p. 197. Shephard Sincere Convert, chap. 5. p. 92. to 117. Mr. Watts on Phil. 2. 12. to 23. Mr. Swinmack on Phil. 1. 21. p. 132. to 139. Mr. Rogers on 1 Pet. 3. 19. p. 511. Mr. Sheffield against Hypocrisy, ch. 11. p. 91. &c.]

The real and sound conversion is the peculiar and proper work of God.

If a remnant of Edom be called and converted, it is the Lord that doth it. The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, Jer. 10. 23. It is not in him that walketh, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy, Rom. 9. 16. Noah may speak perswatively, but it is God only that can perswade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem.
VERSE 13.
Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the Blow-man shall overtake the Reaper, and the treader of Grapes him that soweth seed, and the Mountains shall drop Sweet Wine, and all the Hills shall melt.

Man by nature is a very sroward, pettish, perverse Peace, especially when under the crostle, God hath much ado to saften any comfort on us. When Israel lay in deep distress in Egyptian bondage, they hearkned not to Moses because of the anguish of their spirits, Exod. 6. 9, they were so opprest with sorrow that they could not mind what Moses said, nor believe any thing that was spoken concerning their deliverance, as deeming their deliverance desperate and past hope. So this People having lain long in Babylonia Captivity, and after that tired out with many troubles, the Lord here heaps up Promise upon Promise, to assure them of better times at hand. In this Verse we have a third Promise, where the Holy God by the abundance of external and corporal blessings, doth shadow forth unto us the great plenty of Spiritual gifts, which should be poured out in Gospel-times; yet since Piety hath the promise of the blessings of this life as well as of that to come, and temporal blessings doe oft attend the Gospel, and God hath promised, that if we first seek his Kingdom, all other things shall be added upon us, Matt. 6. 33, we may take the words in the largest sense, as a promise both of Temporal and Spiritual blessings, which should be poured out upon the Church in Gospel-times.

1. Spiritual blessings are promised absolutely and primarily, they being necessary per se; but Temporal blessings are promised as accessories only conditionally, with exception of the Curse, and so farre as they shall be good for us. Things necessary we are sure of, and if more may doe us good we shall not want it.

Though both are promised here, yet Spiritual blessings are specially intended, as will appear by these reasons:

1. If we look into those Primitive times, when these Spiritual gifts here promised were poured out abundantly,
Church was low in Temporals, though rich in Spirituals, they were Persecuted and Plundered of all, *Heb.* 30. 34. besides, the Gospel calls for Self-denial, and a contempt of all these low enjoyments.

2 In Old Testament times the Church was in its Childhood, and therefore *Moses* and the Prophets by such expressions did condescend to the capacity of the rude, and inhuman Jewish people, which were as Children under the rudiments of the Law, and spake to them as we use to doe to our little children in their own Language, when we make promises to them. Hence we read so frequently in the Old Testament of heavenly things shadowed forth unto us by Feasts, and other Temporal blessings, *Isa.* 25. 6. and Earthly peace typifying Spiritual peace, and plenty of Corn and Wine, plenty of Grace, as here in the text. By all those Temporal things the Lord would raise up our hearts to the contemplation of heavenly and eternal things.

In the words we have, 1. *A Blessing promised,* and that is, a glorious abundance and abundance of all things, set forth in Hyperbolical terms, and very lofty expressions. As,

1 The Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper.
2 The Treader of Grapes him that soweth the seed.
3 The Mountains should drop Wine.
4 If this be not enough, all the Hills shall melt, and dissolve into Milk, Honey, Oyl.

All figurative promises of Spiritual Graces and Blessings in Gospel times.

3 Here is the Time when all this shall be affected, and that is in Gospel-times, set forth in those general terms, *The days shall come,* viz. when the Tabernacle of *David* shall be built, and the Kingdom of Christ be raised up.

3 Here is the confirmation of all this, *Dixit Dominus,* 
*The Lord hath said it.*

4 Here is an *Ece,* to quicken our attention to these glorious Promises, *Behold the days come saith the Lord.*

So much for the Analysis, now for the explication of the terms.

1 The Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper, &c. The Harvest shall be so great and plentiful, that before you can house
...it, the Plow-man will be at your heels to prepare the ground for another crop. Such plenty there should be, that they should scarce have time enough to gather it in; for before the harvest was in, it should be time to Plow, and the Vintage should reach unto the seed time.

And the treader of Grapes him that soweth the seed: Or draweth forth the seed, \textit{viz.} out of his Sack to sow, \textit{q. d.} The Vintage shall be so plentiful that it shall last even till seed time; so that when you should be sowing, you shall be gathering of grapes; yea such plenty shall there be of all things, that when one kind of fruit is ripe, another shall follow, every one in his due course and order.

A Parallel place we have, \textit{Levit. 26. 5.} to which the Prophet seems to allude, where we have the same Blessings promised almost in expressive terms, \textit{Your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time, \textit{q. d.}} you shall have such plentiful Harvests, that before you can have threshed out your Corn, the Vintage shall come; and such rich Vintages, that before they be ended, it shall be time to sow your seed; so that you shall have one blessing in the neck of another, you shall always be getting and gathering of fruit, there shall be no time wherein the earth shall not be yeeding you somewhat, either for necessity or delight.

And the Mountains shall drop sweet wine, or Must, which is newly trodden, and is called sweet, because new Wine is so. Mountains usually are hard, rocky, wild, barren places, but now they shall be so cultivated, and made so fruitful, that they shall even \textit{gus wine.} The Prophet seems to allude to \textit{Judaea}, which had Mountains betier with Vineyards, \textit{q. d.} The Vines in the Mountains shall abound with Grapes. The like expression we have almost in \textit{terminis}, \textit{Joel 3. 18.} and \textit{it shall come to passe in that day, that the Mountains shall drop down new Wine, and the Hills shall flow with milk, \textit{q. d.}} In Gospel-times God shall give plenty of Spiritual nourishment unto his Church; so as every part thereof shall abound with the means of Salvation; for as in the text, so here, by figurative expressions is shadowed forth the blessed estate of the Church under the Kingdom of Christ; and it is usual in the Old Testament to set forth heavenly things by earthly Similitudes, as in the Book of the Canticles.
Ver. 13. of the Prophecy of Amos.

And all the Hills shall melt; that is, they shall seem to do so, by reason of the abundant increase of Milk, Oyl, Honey,&c. as if they flowed with them. The Hills shall flow with Milk (as Joel) that is, they shall so abound with Cartte, Bees, Vines, and Olives, that Milk, Honey, Wine, and Oyl, shall as it were flow from the Hills, and though they be high and hard, yet now they shall all dissolve into moisture; and be made fit for culture.

Some Allegorize thus; By Mountains they understand the Apostles and Apostolical men, whose Evangelical Doctrine was as Wine to comfort disconsolate souls. These plowed and sowed the world with the seed of heavenly Doctrine; and by Hills are meant the ordinary Preachers, who had Milk for Babes. Or, the Mountains are great men, and the Hills the inferior sort; all these both high and low should in Gospel-times be inricht with gifts and graces. The multitudes of Converts should be so great, that they should keep the Lords Spiritual Husband-men in continual employment, so that they should always be Plowing, Sowing, Reaping, &c. always Praying, Preaching, Planting, &c.

The summe of all is this, That in Gospel-times there should be such abundance of blessings, that one should overtake another in a perpetual succession; as it is in a rich and fruitful oyl, where the Harvest is no sooner in, but the Plough is put into the ground for another crop; and the Vintage is no sooner done, but the seed is sown for a new Harvest. Thus it shall be with the Church, where one blessing endeth, another shall begin, and even the driest and barrenest hearts shall yield excellent fruits of grace in great abundance.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. Gospel-times are blessed times.

It is the truly Golden Age, when all runs Milk, and Wine, and Honey, and all this without price and without money. Isa. 55. 1, 2. Of Christ's fulness we all receive grace for grace, John 1. 16. The weak are now made strong, the barren fruitful, Isa. 55. 1, 2. the Hills are levelled, the Vallyes enricht, the Evangelical Plough makes all mellow and fruitful, and fit for Christ.

We should therefore bless the Lord, who hath cast our Lots.

D d d d 3.
An Explication

Lects in this pleasant time of Spiritual richnes, peace, joy, and abundant consolation. Happy we, if in this our day we know the things that concern our everlasting peace, before they be hid from our eyes. How great then is the folly of those that separate themselves, and forfake those fountains and mountains of Wine and living water, and goe toinking Ponds and broken Cisterns of mens inventions, that can yeild them no comfort or refreshing in troublous times.

2. Piety brings plenty.

When men first seek Gods Kingdom (as in Gospel-times, it is prophesied they should doe, Isa. 2, 3.) then Wine, and Milk, and Honey, and all other temporal blessings of peace and plenty shall be given in with the Gospel of Peace. The Gospel comes not empty handed, especially to an obedient people; as we see in Constantines dayes, and in Q. Elizabeths dayes, when the Gospel flourished, the Nation flourished with all temporal abundance. Piety hath the promise, and that vertually is every thing. If we be obedient, we shall ease the good of the Land, Levit. 26. 3, 5. Isa. 1. 29. Hos. 2. 20, 31.

See more in my "The Beauty of Holiness," ch. 7. obj. 1, and Mr. Sec-her his "Non-futurist Professor", p. 169, &c.

VERSE 14.

And I will bring againe the Captivity of my people of Is-rael, and they shall build the waste Cities, and inhabit them, and they shall plant Vineyards, and drink the Wine thereof, they shall also make Gardens, and eate the fruit of them.

The Prophet having fore-told this People of their misery, how their Cities should be ransackt, their Land laid waste, the inhabitants captivated and flaine, comes now to comfort the remnant, multiplying words, and adding Promise to Promise, assuring them of comfort in the end; though the body of the People never returned out of the Abyssin Captivity, yet the elect remnant should be brought out of this misery into an estate of joy and felicity.

To the former Promises the Prophet here adds a fourth, which brancheth it selfe into four particulars.

They
Ver. 14. of the Prophecy of Amos.

I will bring again the Captivity of my people. There is a Paraphrase in the words which cannot be translated without loss; such elegancies are frequent, as I have shewed before.

This Promise was fulfilled when the Messiah came, and delivered them from their spiritual captivity to Sin and Satan, and brought them into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

And here the Jews and their followers are out again, taking these Promises Literally, which are especially to be understood Spiritually, Mystically, and Metaphorically. For this returning here is an Evangelical returning to Christ, when the remnant of the Elect both of Judah and Israel should be converted, which though it be very sparingly now, yet in Apostolical times they had many Jewish Converts, we read of about three thousand of the House of Israel converted at one Sermon, Acts 2. 36, 37, 41. in so much that St. James writes a whole Epistle to the dispersed Jews, and Peter writes two.

2. They should have Peace, with sweet security and plenty of all things, which appears by the fruits and effects of it.

As 1. Plantation,

They should build Cities.
Plant Vine-yards.
Make Gardens.

They should have fruition of all these,
They should inhabit their Cities,
Drink the Wine of their Vine-yards,
And eat the fruit of their Gardens.

The like Promise we have, Isa. 65. 21, 22. My Servants shall build Houses and inhabit them, and plant Vine-yards, and eat the fruits of them; that is, they should peaceably enjoy the blessings of God, where still under Temporal blessings are shadowed forth Spiritual and eternal ones. As when God was angry with the Jews, he used to terrifie them with legal Curses, as before, Amos 5. 11. They should build houses and not dwell in them, plant Vine-yards, but not eat the fruit of them. So on the contrary here he promiseth, that they should not labour in vain, as they did before when they served Idols,
and provoked him with their inventions. Speaking to the Jews, he tells them all of Legal Blessings, which typified Evangelical and Spiritual mercies, as was usual with the Prophets for to doe, as Mr. Burroughs shewes at large on Hos. 11. Lect. 7. p. 183. &c. his only fault there is, that he inclines too much to that fancy of the Millenniums, as Mr. Baily shewes, in his Disswasive from the Errors of the Times, p. 224, &c.

And they shall build vast Cities; that is, they shall restore the pure Worship of God, and build up the Elect in their moxt holy faith.

Verè urbes des- sertas instau- rant, qui cul- tum verum restitunt, & Ecclesiæ instaurant. Mercem in locum, ubi plura.

They shall plant Vine-yards and Gardens; that is, particular Churches, in which God delights to walk, and feed on the grapes of obedience which grow there. And drink the Wine thereof; that is, they shall have comfort in their labours, which they should see were not in vain in the Lord. The Church is Gods Husbandry, and the Apostles with their Successors are Gods Husband-men and Visitors, that must plant Churches and water them, and as much as in them liy, propagate them all the world over, that Christ's truth may bee known upon earth: and his saving health among all Nations. So that this verse is a continued Metaphor taken from such as returned out of Captivity into their owne Country, for such are wont to build Cities, plant Vine-yards, make Gardens, &c. now the rule must still be remembred, that by these are set forth Spiritual blessings.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 When God is at peace with a People, then peace, plenty, prosperity internal, and external follow.

When Gods face shines upon a People, then there is a new face set upon things; and those that frowned before, now smile on us, Gen. 32. 28. Hos. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23. when God is at peace with us, he makes all at peace with us,

2 (Chron. 15. 15. & 17. 7. to 12. Pjal. 81. 82. 83. 14.


2 Chris
Verse 15.

And I will plant them upon their Land, and they shall no more be pulled up, out of their Land, which I have given them, saith the Lord.

We are now come to the fifth and last Promise; which brancheth itself into two particulars. 1. A Promise of Plantation and Settlement. I will Plant them in their own Land. They shall have a settled and sure habitation in the Church Militant here, and in the Church Triumphant hereafter. 2. They shall have establishment, They shall be no more pulled up out of their Land. This cannot be understood literally, for the Jews did not abide in their own Land for ever. 1. Before Christ's time, when they returned out of Babylon, 'twas but a small number that returned to their own Land, and those abode not long there neither. 2. They were so far from ruling over all Nations, that they were tributary to them. 3. Their bounds were much straitened. 4. When the Jews shall be called, yet I think no sober man will say, they shall no more be pulled up out of their own Land, but shall abide there for ever, as the letter of the Text imports. I know that for ever, is oft in Scripture put for an age, or for a long time; but the Miflenaries take it here in the letter, at least for their thousand years reign, but without any ground.

But take the words spiritually, alluding to Christ's Kingdom, in Gospel-times, and then all these Promises are abundantly fulfilled, though not specifically, in the same kind, yet Valore, in spirituals, which are of far greater value than if they had been Lords of the East and West Indies; besides the bounds of the Church are very much enlarged by the Gospel.

So that I shall (with the best Divines) take the words in a spiritual sense, for the perseverance of the Saints, such as are.
true Members of Christ's Church shall never fall away, none shall pull them from Christ, or separate them from his love. Christ will so settle his Church upon earth, that it shall never be rooted up by the violence of men, nor be prevailed against by the gates of Hell.

3. Here is the confirmation of all this, saith the Lord thy God. He is Thy God in Covenant, reconciled to thee in Christ, ready to give thee all things needful for life and godliness. 'Tis he that hath promised, who cannot lie, nor deceive, and therefore thou mayest safely build upon his word.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Elect shall never totally and finally perish.

Christ will build his Church, and if he be the builder, who shall hinder him? Mat. 16. 18. and 24. 24. The Elect are Trees well rooted, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified in them, Isa. 61. 3. Though they may fall souly, yet never finally; they were never real Saints that fell away totally and finally. Such as go out from us, were never truly of us. They that are truly ingrafted into Christ, no enemies visible or invisible shall ever prevail against them.

'Tis true, the Potentates and Tyrants of the world, have been in all ages heaving at this Stone, but it hath crushed them all to peeces, Zach. 12. 3. Christ hath always had a Church, a little Flock, a Remnant to serve him, and ever will have in despight of all opposition. As I have shewed at large elsewhere.

2. God will faithfully perform what ever he hath promised to his people.

As all the Threatnings shall certainly fall on the heads of the wicked; so all the Promises shall first or last be made good to the righteous. 'Tis God who cannot lie, that hath said it, and therefore he will certainly do it.
Homesius denuo enervatus.

Dr. Homes, Chiliasfarum ille Achilles, that Sword and Buckler, that great Millenarian Champion, which hath printed a whole Book in folio of ten shillings price (to my cost I speak it, for I never paid so dear for so much waste-paper, and a great nothing in a Juggling-box) in defence of that fancy. Amongst one and fifty Proofs taken out of the Old Testament for the confirmation of this Tenet, hee produceth this of Amos, 9. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. for one; you see how directly he comes in my way, otherwise I had not stirred one step, nor indeavour'd in the least any confusion of the Doctors Folio, which doth sufficiently shew its own folly without a Confluter; 'Tis like a Puppet strut with Bumbaste, in which there is neither life nor spirit. I have read of one that wrote a whole Sheer in the praise of a Louise; that indeed is an Ens, a living creature: But I never read nor heard of any that ever spent so many Sheers in Folio about this fancy and Chimera Chimaerifima before. What Luther said of the Monks, is true of the Millenaries. Sicut Monasticas religio nihil videat in Scripturis nihil videat in Scripturis nihilo videat in Scripturis nihil videat Phantasias. Corrupt heads, and corrupt hearts pick corrupt notions, and impure senses out of the pure word of God. Many in our daies, instead of solid food, do fill and feed themselves with golden dreams, and so resemble him that made the golden Legend, who is said to be a man Flammae oris, ferrei cordis, aci frontis. 'Tis said of the Porish Priests, that they plead stoutly for Extream Unction, ut ipsi evadant Unctiores, that they may the better lick their own fingers. I hope the Doctor had no aspiring thoughts, when he wrote those High flown notions, but when I shall have shewed you how unlike Dr. Homes in 1651, was to Dr. Homes in 1641. we may well say there was somewhat of self at the bottom.

Quelst. But what doth Dr. Homes think of such men?
Homesius Enervatus.

A. He tells you in the year 1641. Thus for a man deliberately, and to please a Party, to wrest the sacred Word of God, or indirect blasphemy; and St. Austin calls it Heresy, Hereticum esse, August. de uni. Aliquae temporis commodi causa, & maximis gloria & literarum, i.e., principiis, falsae opiniones aut gignit aut sequitur. I doubt we have too many such Augustinian Heretics still.

This of the Man, let us now to the Matter.

This text in Amos (faith Dr. Homes) will prove (for so that end he cites it) that all the Saints departed shall rise and reign with Christ a thousand years here upon earth, in a wonderful, visible, spiritual, glorious manner, drinking wine, and enjoying the Quintessence of the Creatures, &c. Now how this text should prove such a Tenet, I must confess my dim eyes cannot discern. But the Doctor, who can see as far into a Millstone as another man, will clear it up. But first, let us should think the Doctor to be singular in this opinion; he tells you, that the great Mercer, and judicious Calvin on the place, concur with him (in the main at least) in this point; which how true (besides what I have already produced before in the Commentary) I come now to examine.

1. For Mercer on the place, of all Commentators, I find him most inclining, yea peremptory for a spiritual sense in all these five Verses. How oft doth he cry, Hec Aon ad literam, non ad literam sed Spiritualiter, spiritualiter, spiritualiter sive accipienda? Where is now the Doctors corporal, pleasant, external reigning? By his abusing this learned Author we may guess at the rest, for no better doth he deal with Calvin. Hear how expressly he speaks against the Doctors opinion, Quod hic dicitur de terisici et vini abundancia, debe est exponi pro natura regni Christi; ergo quia spiritualis est renum Christi, sufficiat eis amnibus afferri spiritualibus bonis: Ex Judaeis, quos Dominus sibi residuum servavit, contenti fuerunt illia spiritualiam abundaniam. Sic quis objicit Prophetam hic non Allegoricè locuit, responsio facitis est; nempe hunc modo passi. receptum iste in Scripturis, ut felicibus sub commodis praemii vita, et terrenis benedictionibus quasi pingaturn ante oculos nostrorum: ipse enim hoc observare in Prophetis licet, quia stylum accommodabatur ad captum rudis et infirmi populi. What could be spoken more (from this text) against the Doctors opinion, and yet the Doctor still tells us, that he mainly contends for a literal sense, and for a corporal bringing back of
Homesius Enarratus.

the ten Tribes into their own country. But a greater than Doctor Homes is of another judgement, it is the learned Doctor River, V. Rivet, in glossing on Amos 9. 13. thus he faith, Harum pronomionum minima pars ad temporalia referri debet, ut ex iis surgamus ad spiritualia; et plerique stiam non implovi purcelli in hac vita sequence, sed cælestem beatitudinem resipere, quomodo, quando excellentius est quod prorsus regni Christi civibus præsandum, quæm unquam temporalis fuit præstitum, necessarium est ut de bonis spiritualibus accipiatur per Christum donandis, e.c. ubi plur. 

But to put all out of controversie, St. James citing Amos 9. 11, 12, interprets them Spiritually, and proves the calling and conversion of the Gentiles in the Apostolical times from them (as I have shewed before) Acts 15. 7. to 17. now whether shall we believe the Apostle James that interprets these words Spiritually, or Doctor Homes who mainly contends for a literal sense?

2 Datum non consensisse, giving but not granting what the Doctor faith, suppose all these promises were to be taken literally, for temporal blessings, yet how doth it follow hence that Christ shall reign with the Saints on earth in a visible manner a thousand years? Let any one read over all these five Verses, and put to any one of them singly, or to all conjunctly, ergo Christ shall reign with the Saints a thousand years here on earth; and see if he can forbear smiling at such gross Non sequitur, which agree like Harp and Harrow.

Lastly, the Doctor in the close of all challengeth all the Men, and Books in the World, to shew when ever these promises were yet fulfilled? When ( faith this self-conceited Doctor ) were all the waft Cities re-built, the breaches made up, when was there ever yet all spiritual, and all outward prosperity in the Church? When did the Mountains ever run Wine, or the Hills ever melt into Oyl, and Milk, and Honey, and when were all these enjoyments perpetuated?

Ans. If you take the Promises spiritually, St. James hath told us they were fulfilled in the Apostles dayes; if you take them literally they never were, nor ever will be fulfilled; who ever looks for a sinless, sorrowless, deathless condition, (as the Doctor dreams of) in this world, when the Mountains shall run Wine, &c. none but grosse Fanaticks will
fancy such fables. I am even cited with mentioning them.

Obj. But if this text in Amos will not prove the point; yet the
Doctor hath one prime place which will prove it terminis termi-
nanciouis, and that is Revel. 20. 4, 5, 6.

Answ. Doctor Home shall confute Doctor Home. Doctor
Nathaniel Home, 1641, shall confute dreaming Dr. Home,
1651. the greatest Antimillenarian could hardly say more a-
gainst them than he did then, when the opinion was not in
fashion. But he may say as a loose Bishop did sometimes,

Nunc alii tempus, alii pro tempore mores.

But hear what he sayes (in his Ser. on 2 Pet. 3. 13. p. 4. to
7. preacht' before the Parliament, 1641. where he strongly
affects the excellency of the Presbyterian Government, p. 29.
38, &c. I mention this only, lest he should face about
again, but I think his Ramp--is broken, &c.) Our Divines (faith
he) commonly called Millenarians, would understand this text of
Peter, of the Martysre reigning a thousand years on earth, before
they be taken up soul and body into heaven; but these are as wide
as earth from Heaven. Of innumerable particulars which might
be alluded, let us at this time be content with some
touches on that leading place, Revel. 20. 4, &c. 1. The text
tells us (faith he) that it is their Souls shall reign, and not
their Bodies, and by a thousand years is meant an eternity of
felicity and reigning in heaven. Then he cites Papus on Rev.
20, against them, and perswades his Reader to read that Lear-
med man on that point. Then he takes off their objections, and
at last tells us, that Papus the first Author of this opinion was
a credulous man, and apt to receive fables for verities; I with
D. H. were not too like him. You see by this time what little
credence is to be given to this Weather-cock, that can turn,
and turn, but never crow.

But what talk I of D. H. when I find learned Sir Henry
Vane (in eadem hares) in his vain piece of Learned Non-
sense to favour this opinion, I may say of that Cloudy Book
with better reason what one saied of Persius, Si non vis intelligi,
debes negligi. Truth loves not clouds and corners, it is error
that is fugitive, and fears the light.

I shall be brief, remembering that of Cyprian, Brevitas con

...
Homesius Enervatus.

Sir Henry Vane, in his Mystery of Godliness, ch. 25. tells us, that when these thousand years are come, Magistracy, and Visible Worship, and forms of Christian Religion, &c. shall be destroyed, &c. Those places which point expressly at the Day of Judgment, he wracks and wretches to prove his thousand years reign, as Acts 3, 19, 20, 21, & 17. 31. 1 Thes. 4, 16, & 1 Cor. 6, 2, 3.

Q. But when doth Sir Henry say that this thousand years reign shall begin?

A. So far as I can gather from him, this thousand years reign of Christ on earth shall begin in the seventh thousand year of the world, viz. about 440 years hence. Wisely done S. H., to set a longer time than most of this way doe, that so he may not be laughed at for his vain calculation whilst he liveth.

But that I may not wrong him (for he hath wronged himself too much already) take his own words, ch. 26. p. 4, 8, 428. The General assembly of the first born are to continue and abide for a thousand years in the exercise of this immortal, incorruptible, bodily life here in this world, keeping the true Sabbath of rest unto the Lord, in that seventh part of the time of the world's duration. All worldly strength, wisdom, power, shall then as the walls of Jericho, fall flat before Jesus the true Joshua, and these true Israelites, as having been by them compassed about six days, and now on the seventh, a thousand years being with the Lord as one day, 2 Pet. 3, 8 making way for the end mentioned, 1 Cor. 15, 24. so that now see all this men may know when the Day of Judgement shall be, viz. about four hundred and forty years hence.

But how doth Sir H. prove all these high-flown Notions, why ipse dixit, he that never erred saies it, witness our self at W.

It will be the wisdom of those in authority, speedily to suppress such real Fanatical opinions; else Ha nunc serio fiunt. These trifles may become troubles.

If any shall take offence at my plainness against these loose Principles, I shall answer with Bernard, Malo in me moriar hominum quam in Deum, bonum est mihi, si Deus me custodiat pro claque.

FINIS.
A Table of the Principal things contained in this Commentary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Church Musick a Novelty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Church must be dear to us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>our love to it rewarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cities ruined by Sin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Come, every wicked man hath his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>come, 13. and good men should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Company of the wicked to be shunned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conversion the end of correation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consideration, how necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Covetous men are carnal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creature is vanity, 356. How to improve it to Gods glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curiosity to be shunned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DArkness, what it signifies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decrees of God abide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Despair, the wicked do so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drinking put for feasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Duties daily to be practised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Election free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Englands Mercies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Epicurism vile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Evil, since it | Gods Worship
| 204, 205 | warestome to
<p>| Examples of Saints abused | wicked men | 464, 465 |
| 347 | Godly vilified, they are Gods |
| Examples of great men when wicked, do much bane | grains | 551 |
| 10 | Good things must be often pressed |
| Extremity, Gods people oft brought to it | 209 |
| 373 | Good intentions no warrant for evil actions | 27 |
| F | Godly not seditions, but peaceable, proved at large, Chap. 7. Vers. 10, Obs. 4. |
| Famine a sad judgement | 61, 62. what Sins bring it, 62. famine of the word most sad | 489 |
| Feasting when unlawful, 322, 323 | Family duties to be set up, 30. false Prophets, enemies to the true, Chap. 7. 10, Obs. 1 |
| Fear proper to wicked men | 19 |
| Few are saved | 569 |
| Flying will not avail the wicked | 518, 521, 523 &amp; 222, 223 |
| Free will, we have lost | 105, 153 |
| Fruit, lost by sin | 80 |
| G | H |
| Atres, how used | Hardened Sinners are inconvertible, 65, 66, 100, 101 |
| 279, 180 | Heart searched by God | 127, 128, 130 |
| God is Omnipotent | Holy Ghost is God | 120 |
| 125, 385, fear him, 125, 127. a six-fold comfort in it, 126, 127 | Hope upheld us | 211 |
| He is Omniscient, 11, 12, 189 | Humiliation goes before consolation | 564 |
| He is just, 384. but he is most High, 135, 136. most Holy, 15. Good 264, Patient, 359 | Hypocrites are Ceremonious, 57 |
| Lord of Hosts, 197, 337. he is the saddest enemy, 524, 525. if he be against us, all is against us, 149. his special presence the glory of a place, 205. He is merciful | their service no service, 67 |
| 347 | I. |
| Idolatry brings Judgements, 74. it is a great Sin, 502. it is a flesh-pleasing sin, 59. it is very dangerous 253, 254, 458 | Jehovah, what it notes | 236 |
| Ingratitude, vile | Ingratitude, vile | 295 |
| Instruments, God wants not to doe his work | Ironies lawful | 8 |
| 24 | Mr. Jones his bounty | 47 |
| Judicial Astrology, vile | Judgements seholome goe alone | 73, 73 |
| 340. they usually begin at Gods lungs | Jude, what it is | 22, 26 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Table</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>L.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Promises adumbrate</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Blessings</td>
<td>559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Judgements contemned</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make way for greater</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Spiritual its excellency</td>
<td>158,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; 468</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury breeds cruelty</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matters of moment must be marked</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy to the poor our duty, &amp;c. at large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercies abused provoke wrath</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy and Judgement mixed</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirth of the wicked turned to mourning</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry is searching,</td>
<td>133,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>322</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers must persevere in their</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedience, qualifications of it</td>
<td>58, 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppressors rich men many times are such</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppressors of others shall be oppressed</td>
<td>15, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience in calamities necessary</td>
<td>200, 201, 346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance necessary, 553, 978</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parity of sin brings parity of suffering</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persecution dangerous</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pestilence comes from God, 84, what sins bring is, 84, 85, as sad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgement, 86, whether was may fly from it, 87, 88, Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men may dye of it</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piety brings plenty</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places debated by sin, 25, some l-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dolatrous places</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasures carnal, costly</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plots, broken by God</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty, the causes of is so shamed</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaine Preachers disliked, &amp;c. 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Table</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer our daily practice, 29, is powerful, 109, 374, when argumentative, 372, perseveres in it, 377. Short prayer if fervent may prevail much</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praises due to God, 58 &amp; 357</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preach none may without a Call 8, Preaching to be preferred before Miracles, 97, 98. It is the souls food, 487, contempt of it brings a famine</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priviledges cannot keep off Judgments</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of God the glory of a place</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progenitors though pious cannot avail an impious people</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence governs all 99, 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbial speeches commendable</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudence three-fold, 192. Pious men are prudent, 196. Which appears in eight particulars</td>
<td>197, 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quakers, how vile</td>
<td>57, 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions, how useful</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Sacrifices without obedience odious to God</td>
<td>227, 229, 230, 234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security brings misery</td>
<td>294, 555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-judging necessary</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek God, how that must be done</td>
<td>155, 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sensual life odious</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sifted, Gods Church is many ways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence, when a point of prudence</td>
<td>198, 199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven, how used</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver away's not in a day of trouble</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing of Psalms its excellency</td>
<td>316, How to sing, 317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sins of omission dangerous</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin and punishment are inseparable</td>
<td>15. It makes war between God and a people, 379. It robs all of our comforts, 94. It ruins places, 100. It is an evil thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smelling, what is notes</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superstitition to be avoided</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swearing, when lawful</td>
<td>15, 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathize we must with Gods people</td>
<td>143, 314, 315, 371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Entations useful</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten, how used</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Times in God's hand</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What use to make of it</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling, take heed of it</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts known to God;</td>
<td>122, 127, 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses of it, Comforts from it</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tythes due</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Universal in sin brings universal in suffering</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmercifulness a great sin</td>
<td>31, 486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrighteous dealing sinful</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warning, God give</td>
<td>108, 295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will-worship sinful</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing we must be in God's Service</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicked men are like beasts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they are the offsprings of a place</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they grow worse and worse</td>
<td>26, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they are sinful</td>
<td>518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God records their wickedness</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winds, a bilging</td>
<td>119, 120, 121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woe, what signifies</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers not sometimes denounced</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of God is Critical</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldly men are industrious for the world</td>
<td>465, 468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You men cut off for sin</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Table of the Texts explained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen. 7. 17</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>Jer. 5. 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan. 24 19 30</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>5. 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh. 14 12</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>5. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judg. 9 18</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>16. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sam. 4 18</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>Ezek. 45. whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chron. 22 8</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>Dan. 9 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job 1. whole</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>Micah 6 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 10</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>Hag. 2 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 12</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>Matt. 23 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psal. 31 15</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>Luke 6 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 1</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>6 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 10</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>16. whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106 7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 3</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Rom. 5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139 7 10 13</td>
<td>521 322</td>
<td>12 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prov. 4 14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1 Cor. 9 19 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 16</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>2 Cor. 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Gal. 1 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eccles. 11 1 2</td>
<td>49 50</td>
<td>Colos. 3 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isa. 1 6</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>1 Tim. 6 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 1</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>James 3 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9 17          | 93    | Phil. 2  
| 38 1          | 224   | 2 Pet. 1 19 |
| 40 15 16 17   | 533 537 | Rev. 14 8 |
| 46 6          | 321   |        |
Questions Resolved.

1. In what cases a man may seek to please men? p. 6
2. Whether Churches be holier than other places? p. 25
3. Whether good intentions be a sufficient warrant for evil actions? p. 27, 28
4. Whether wandering Beggars may be releeved? p. 52
5. Whether Judicial-Astrology be unlawful? p. 72, 73
6. Whether a man may fly in time of Pestilence? p. 87
7. Whether a godly man may dye of the Plague? p. 89
8. Whether wee may use the name of Munday, Tuesday, &c. p. 168
9. Whether costly Oyments may be used by any? p. 305, 306
10. When Musicke is unlawful? p. 310, 311, &c.
11. Whether Relicks of Saints may be worshipped? p. 345
12. Whether we may rejoice in the destruction of the wicked? p. 142
13. Whether Incloures are lawful? p. 462
14. Whether Week-day Lectures be lawful? p. 466, &c. 497
15. Whether men may swear by Idols? p. 503
16. Whether Rulers may be called the Heads of a Land? p. 516

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