


THE FIFTIE TWO
SERMON ON THE EIGHTH
CHAPTER OF THE BOOKE
OF IVDGES.



Verf. 8.
 Now I will goe forward with the rest of the text that remaineth, from the eight verse in these words: [*And he went thence to Penuel*] and so forth, as they are to be read before the last Sermon. Here we may see another discouragement and repulse that *Gedeon* sustained by the men of Penuel: for he being with his souldiers faint and weary, was denied bread not only by the of Succoth, as wee haue scene, but by the men

Noc.
 of Penuel also, as appeareth in this verse. For to them he went in the faintnes and wearines of himself and his souldiers, and had the repulse: whereby he might easily haue been tempted, and brought to thinke and feare, that God did not approue of his iourney, but did set himselfe against him. For so we are wont to conclude by the ill successe we haue euen in good attempts, especially when the lets be forisable, many and diuers, and one in the necke of another: as *Iabes* afflictions were, when among hard messages brought to him of other calamities that were besalne him, this was one that the fire



1. King. 13. 19.

Judg. 20.

Exod. 3. 19.

of God was fallen from heauen, and had burnt vp the sheepe and the seruants, as if God had been against him. So that we may learne by this, that things sometime may goe so contrary to our desire, liking, and expectation, and that in duties which God requireth, and will haue to be done of vs, as if he were not with vs, but against vs, yea as if hee would crosse vs in them of set purpose. Our dutie here is to looke what God bids vs doe, as the man of God sent from Iuda should haue done, who was drawne by the old Prophet of Bethel contrary to Gods commandement, to eat there. But indeed the case is not alway alike, when such difficulties befall vs: for sometime we may more clearely see cause thereof, then at other. For it may bee the same mans case, at one time to doe a good action, yet in an euill and inconuenient manner: and at another time to be well occupied, and take a good thing in hand, and doe it in a good manner: in both kinds it may fall out, that he hath many discouragements. If things succeed not with him, whē he goeth about them in the best manner, that is, the latter of these two; What then? may not the Lord trie his faith and patience, by so crossing him? And in the first kind, much more I may say, what maruell, if the Lord crosse him, when he hath done a good thing in a bad manner, to the end he may call himselfe to a more due examination of himselfe, and amend that which was amisse, ere he take in hand such holy duties? It was Gods wil that the cleuen Tribes should fight against *Beniamin*: but were they persons for their true repentance fit for that businesse? yea and for all their zeale they wanting the principall; to wit, faith; that God would bee with them, did they not goe to worke amisse? was there not great cause therefore why the Lord should fight as fast against them (to driue them to repentance for their reuoltings from him) as they fought against *Beniamin*? And to teach them that they wanted meekenesse, loue and discrētion to temper their seruent reuenge withall, that so they might doe the holy worke of God in an holy manner? Therefore in such a case let men be contented, nay glad, if God crosse them, that they may the better spie out what poysoneth their best duties and desires, as pride, rashnes, boldnesse, and learne hereby, meekenesse, humilitie, repentance, feare, &c. for God doth iustly suffer many discouragements to be vpon such, (as he did also oft times deale so with the Israelites going vp to Canaan out of Egypt, Exod. 3.) that they may stay their courſe, in any euill attempts, and proceed more aduisedly and commendably in their doings. But it falleth out sometime, as I said before, that sore and great difficulties stand vp in mens way, not vnlike to *Gedeons*: wherein the Lord deales with his, as if he sending them on a iourney, would make heauen and earth to be against them in their trauels, which is greatly to their admiration and astonishment. As who would haue said that *Dauid* had been chosen of God to be king, when yet the promise thereof, was oft renued and confirmed to him, seeing his discouragements were so many and strong that he met with whereas *Saul* came to his kingdome easily & without trouble? And in such cases, wherein we haue so much to dismay vs, yet Satan is euer at hand also, to worke vpon our weakenes, and to set vs much more backward, especially when wee shall bee brought to thinke, Gods deeds seeme contrary to his words and promise, as the death of the *Shunamites* child, which yet had bin giuen her as an vnlooked for blessing.

Now

Now when it pleaseth God to trie vs, by seeming to set such bartes in our waies, few of vs are wise inough to see, or at least, rightly to consider, why it is thus with vs, and why God suffereth things so to trouble vs: but as though wee had thereby iust cause to complaine of his doing, and to expostulate Note. with him; we begin to doubt how he wil make good his promise to vs, and whether we may go forward in the good course in which we haue begun: yea, and we are impatient (perhaps) or much disquieted at the least, (if we doe not also fret and fume) and so are discouraged from our good beginnings. Whereby we may see our froth rather than faith, which seemed before to bee good substance, and feele the stinch of our vsfauourie hearts, which vpon small occasion cast out such euill smelles. And yet herein wee differ from *Gedeon*, that, as he was found in his discouragements and crosses to be of farre greater courage and confidence then wee; so his triall was in great matters, and ours but in trifles for the most part.

And not onely when wee bee crossed and hindred in good actions we do thus, but if we haue but some one let in our way, as euen in our common businesse, such distemperature, as I haue spoken of, shall possesse vs: or if we haue lost something, though of small valew, yea though it be but only missing and out of the way: or if we be hindred by the weather which is ordinary, or (as oft it falleth out) through our own rashnesse only, as when we do but stumble and hurt our foot against a stone, what should we then bee Note. like to do, if in going about any duty, we should haue so many and great lets in the way, and crossings of vs, as may easily meet with vs, and those also as it were sent from God to resist vs? It is therefore the singular and onely grace of God to inable vs to belieue and bee perswaded, that hee doth oft times such things to trie vs, and that we may shew foorth the grace of faith and patience that is in vs; and therefore we are to hold our peace, seeing he hath done it. And such hinderances and crossings fall out sometimes, when we are going to prayer priuately, or in our familie, or to the hearing of the word preached, or to receiue the sacrament, &c. from which no wise body will say, we should be withdrawne by any pretence, as though wee pleased not God therein, seeing euen in them some lets do rise vp in the way to hinder vs. And the like we may obserue in those discouragements which are from within our selues. For example, when a Minister in his course of preaching, shall find ill measure at the hands of others, whose good he most seeketh, while they see not the purpose of God toward them; (as *Moses* did by the Israelites when he was first sent vnto them, Exod. 6. 9.) or if they shall Luke 15. 12. but despise Gods prouidence toward them, as the Pharisees are said to haue done, how (thinke we) is this like to worke vpon him? or (which is more) if he shall feele within himselfe great vsfitnesse, as *Moses* did, Exod. 3. 10. and some vnwillingnesse, deadnesse, drouinesse, or want of assistance from God in discharge of the worke of his ministry, (all which are great dampings to a man, who hath vsed the best meanes to furnish himselfe both with knowledge and conscience) and yet euen the best sometimes haue the prooffe hereof in themselues. What thoughts (thinke we) are like to arise in him in such a case? Therefore if a man looke not for these, and if he be not resolued before hand, that such quailings of him may fall out, and also if hee be not armed against the temptations which may arise therefrom, it is wonderfull,

how the diuell may weaken his faith, and zeale, and slacken his purpose of diligence in the Lords worke. But on the other side, if in such a case hee be able to stay himselfe by considering that such trials are vial (more or lesse) to the best seruants and Ministers of God, (and alway haue been) who haue their ebbings as well as their flowings, (as *Eliab*, *Paul*, yea our Saviour himselfe had strong discouragements,) what a singular benefit is this? Much more, if he hauing ouercome the first onset, shall in the second place meditate of the end which the Lord hath in abasing him thus, (he being occupied in Gods owne worke) and that is, that hee may teach him humilitie, yea how to flee out of himselfe and depend immediatly vpon the Lord for sufficiency and assistance, and not trust to his own wit, study, memory, tongue, or gifts, (which others make their onely refuge, and therefore are often disappointed) oh what gaine shall he reape thereby, and say with *Paul*, I am neuer fitter for Gods seruice then when I am lowest in mine owne opinion: hereafter therefore if I boast, I wil boast of mine owne infirmities, as the Apostle speaketh, in which the glory of God is most perfected and aduanced.

1. Cor. 13. 9.

Verf. 9.

Gedeon receiuing the like discourtesie and rude answer of the men of *Peuel*, as he had before of the men of *Succoth*, doth in like manner threaten them the throwing downe of their tower in which they so much gloried. And this threatening, (seeing it was afterward put in execution, was a crosse and discommoditie: which they did needlesly and by their owne sin bring vpon themselues. By which we may see, that many are authors and causers of their owne sorrow and trouble, which need not haue been, and that by their sinne, as stoutnesse, wilfulnesse, stiffneckednesse, and other vndutifulnesse, and rude behauiour, they doe (I say) bring vnseasonable affliction vpon themselues, euen as these men of *Succoth* and *Peuel* here did. Wee know that peace with men, to liue without feare by them, is a great benefit, and soone lost, and hardly recouered, men being wolues and lionlike one to another, especially if they be prouoked, and most of all, when they haue authoritic and superioritie one ouer another, and so may iustly vexe them who shal fall into their hands, by their wicked deserts and leaud behauiour. Therefore all should take heed how they prouoke one another in the least maner, as these did here.

Gal. 5. Iast.

But lamentable it is, that the most men make breaches of their peace, and losse of their commodities, by rigour, crueltie, and by an high mind, and proud heart, not bearing the least iniurie, but bending themselues by and by to reuenge, looking for all good measure to bee offered them by others, but yeelding little or no kindnesse againe: which peruersenesse is also euen betwixt many couples in the married estate, which causeth continuall iarring and vnquietnesse, whereas peace (a man would thinke) were fitter to be seene both betwixt them and all other, whom I speake of. Which they are commanded to seeke with all men, as much as in them lieth, yea and to pursue and follow it, though it flee from them, yea and to buy peace, though it cost them somewhat, but not to sel it at any hand, much lesse for trifles. Thus *Abraham* bought his peace of *Lot*. And let men learne to this end to know and consider what they are; to the pulling downe of their peccocks feathers, euen earth, earth, earth, and if they bee weighed in an equall ballance, farre worse then nothing. But of this I spake in verse 4. of this Chapter.

Heb. 12. 14.

Genes. 13. 9.

Gedeon

Gedeon goeth forward after the rest of the Midianites, and findeth them resting themselves in *Carkor* which was in the precinct of the Israelites; from whence they hoped to passe after that night, and so to escape. But *Gedeon* came vpon them on the backside of these two cities, *Iogbeah* in the Tribe of *Gad*, *Numb. 32.* and *Nobah* in the halfe Tribe of *Manasseh* being hard by, *Num. 32.* And so the two Princes were suddenly stricken with astonishment and feare, and flying were taken, and the hoast smitten and slaine: with whom were many hangbies, as scullions and such like that followed the army. And in that it is said, that hee returned backe with the two Princes when the Sunne was risen, it appeareth that the warre betwixt them was begun in the night, and in the same night was ended.

By this latter victory of *Gedeon*, it is manifest, what great things through Gods blessing are brought to passe by faith, and the diligence, and vnweariednesse of men in their callings. This is the maine point contained in these verses. Whereas delay and sloth (for I put them together to shew what delays I meane) are alwaies dangerous, euen as here if *Gedeon* had tarried to rest himselfe but one night by the way, hee had lost all his labour, and the fruit of it, to wit, the destroying of these Midianites. So God to the diligent hath promised his blessing, and good successe as *Gedeon* here found it. The men of *Succoth* and *Penuel* laughed him to scorne, but hee looked to God, and had an eye to his promise, which was, that he would giue them into his hands: and yet (as we see) he was neuer awhit the bolder to presume thereof, without diligent vsing of the meanes. It was as vnlike, (nay much more vnlikely) that *Dauid* should haue smitten downe *Goliath*, that *Noah* should haue saved the world by the Arke: and many other such things to haue bin brought to passe, as the conquering of the Nations by *Ioshua*: but they all, when they believed God, that he would doe that which he promised, went to worke with great care and diligence to serue Gods prouidence, seeing he wrought by meanes (as he doth still) and so they preuailed, and obtained that which they sought.

And this was the power of God through faith, they trusting and resting in him through the Mediator to come, so it is no lesse in vs, (for I will briefly apply it againe, though I haue stood largely on this point before, a new occasion being offered) that we outgrow many lets and discouragements by the same our faith, though wee bee prouie that there is otherwise nothing in vs, and that (when sometimes it hath seemed to vs almost impossible) the Lord hath done much for vs, and wrought great things by vs, while wee haue, although but weakely and poorely gone to work, whether we respect our faith, or our labour, which is the fruit of it. And we hauing been diligent to approoue our selues in both; we haue found the truth of that Scripture verified in vs, which saith, that faith ouercommeth the difficulties that are in the world; and haue growne to the contempt of many sinnes, and the subduing of them, in great measure, which had sometime preuailed against vs; and to be better heartned against afflictions, and to get strength of hope by experience for the time to come. But to see how soone *Moses*, *Ioshua*, and *Gedeon* here grew strong in faith, as in a few daies, which we are going about many yeeres, this ought as to humble vs, for that we are so farre behind them, so to encourage vs, looking duly vnto this, how gracioullie God

*Verf. 10. 11.
12. 13.
The clearing of
these verses.*

*Numb. 32. 35.
& 32. 42.*

*Doct. out of all
these verses.*

*1 Sam. 17. 51.
Heb. 11. 7.*

Ioshua 10. &c.

1. Iohn 5. 4.

*Note.
Rom. 5. 4.*

assisted them. And so (to apply this to the Sacrament) we haue communion with God and with Christ therein, and are much confirmed thereby in the couenant he hath made with vs, by our diligence and faithfulness in preparing our selues thereto, which they that beleue not think absurd, and more then needs, to looke after. And to conclude this point (seeing I haue shewed the necessitie of it, and the euill and hurt that falleth out on the contrary, I meane by loosenes, idlenesse, and vnbeliefe, in Christians, by many occasions heretofore) this I adde, that the cause of so great difference in the degree and measure of grace and goodnesse, which wee obserue in many professors, is this, that some are painfull in hearing, vsing good companie, marking, with their hearts deeply set vpon the same, remembring, and making vse of their knowledge, watching thereunto with prayer, &c. whereas others comber theselues so much with other matters, that there is no roome or leisure left for these. They looke to thriue spiritually, whether they take paines or no, sleeping or working. It is a true saying of a Father, fit to be vrged vpon such: *He that made thee without thee, will not saue thee without thee.* He will not saue thee for thy labours sake, but by thy labour. They that gathered more Manna then their fellowes, got nothing thereby: but it fareth otherwise here: gather much and haue much, labour little and haue little, euen as the Apostle speaketh of another thing on the contrary, he that soweth sparingly, shall reape sparingly. As we mete to the Lord, so will he measure out to vs againe. He that laboureth not, eateth not: but he that laboureth much, enioyeth the fruite thereof: some thirtie, some sixtie, some an hundred fold: euen as his diligence is. Oh it is strange to see how men set themselves to work in earthly businesse, wherein yet they haue no absolute promise of thriuing, because faith the chiefe help is wanting, but here where the Lord hath tyed himselfe to blesse their labour with abundance, men haue no list to stirre. A mediocritie of wealth contenteth few, and that maketh them so endlesse and restless in their desires and trauailes: but the commonest measure of grace pleaseth them best, because that is gotten with least trouble. It is fearefull that men should doe so much for the fulfilling of their lusts: and so little that they might excell in goodnesse. But their reward is thereafter. And in the meane season God puts as great difference betwix such, as there is betweene *Alexander, Caesar* or the like Captaines (who were vnwearied also in their conquests) and *Gedcon*, or others like, who fought the Lords battels, and laboured therein by faith in his promises. Now it followeth.

Note.

Nota.

14 *And tooke a seruant of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him, and hee wrote to him the Princes of Succoth, and the Elders thereof, euen seuentie and seuen men.*

15 *And he came vnto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zeba and Zalmunna, by whom ye vprayed me, saying, Are the hands of Zeba and Zalmunna already in thy hands, that we should giue bread vnto thy wearie men?*

16 *Then he tooke the Elders of the citie, and thornes of the wildernesse, and briners, and did teare the men of Succoth with them.*

17 *Also he brake downe the tower of Pennel, and slew the men of the citie.*

NOW in these verses following it is shewed that when *Gedeon* had taken the Princes of Midian, and was returned to Succoth, he seeks diligently to know the names of the chiefe men and Elders thereof: and he brought and shewed the Princes *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* vnto them: for hee kept them aliue, not to make his boast of them, but that he might shew them that God had deliuered them into his hands, as hee made no doubt thereof before, that so they might be the more ashamed and accused for that which they had done to him and his men, in denying them bread. And thereupon hee did vnto them as he had threatned, for he tare their flesh, to wit, of them of Succoth, with the thornes and briers of the wildernesse: and then ouerthrew the tower of the men of Penuel, and slew the citizens, either because they insulted more arrogantly then the men of Succoth did, or else because they resisted *Gedeon*, trusting in their tower, and so were slaine. Whether they of Succoth died by the paine & punishment, (as it is most like) or whether their flesh was onely torne, and yet life remaining in them, though the storie doth not declare, yet we cannot be ignorant, how sore and extreame the paine was. What kinde of execution was done vpon the men of Penuel themselues in putting them to death, the storie setteth not downe, but as it is sure they were slaine, so it is (not without good probabilitie) that the other were torne to death also.

Gedeon meeting this young man, causeth him to set downe the names of the chiefe Elders and gouernours of Succoth in writing, (as it might be the names of the Aldermen and citizens) for he would not trust his owne memorie in so waightie a matter. And this hee did, because hee would not flie vpon any in rashnes and anger, and would be sure by that his aduised deliberation, to punish onely those who were guiltie, and those were the ancients of the citie. As *Salomon* also was very attentiu in hearing the cause of the harlots. To teach vs our dutie in this point, that when any fall into our hands to be corrected by vs, wee doe not at any time hastily in an angrie mood, and without due consideration, vse correction, but weigh the cause rightly, and not reuenge our selues, by satisfiying our brutish affections vpon the persons: yea and to let them also see iust cause why they be corrected. And in this wee resemble the Lord himselfe, of whom *Abraham* saith, *It is farre from the Iudge of the whole world to destroy the righteous with the wicked.* Genes. 18. 25. *Genes. 18.*

It is an hard thing to be ruled by the word of God in correcting others, whereas flesh looketh to nothing, but to the will and reuenge of it selfe, and not to the bettering of the partie, and the good example of other, and discharge of a good conscience before God. Therefore *S. Paul* hath giuen a good rule to all by teaching one kind of correcters, namely fathers, that they should not be bitter to their children: euen as *Achan* in a waightie case was wisely handled, and kindly dealt with by *Ioshua* in a matter of life and death, and was regarded in, and concerning his soule, when sore punishment was inflicted vpon his bodie. Col. 3. 21. Iosa. 7. 19. Sundrie waies doe men shroud this cursed humour, vnder the false habit of zeale or lawfull seueritie: sometime to couer their ambition, as *Iehu* in killing *Ababs* posteritie; sometime couetousnes, as *Saul* in slaying some of the Amalekites: sometime pride and reuenge, as the Israelites in warring vpon the Beniamites. All of them failed of the ground,

end, manner or measure in executing the correction: all which being neglected, and not obserued, doth marre the action, be it neuer so lawfull in it selfe and necessarie. As when the offending partie seeth not the cause of his correction, or is cruelly handled by the correcter, who maketh not the end of his correction or punishment to be the sauing of the partie, and to make the sinne odious that he is punished for, and the same an example to other. And here is iustly condemned the doing of them who say, they cannot correct but in anger, and while their hearts are exasperated against the partie, as if they should say, they can neuer doe it rightly or without sinne, whereas God saith, *Be angrie, but sinne not*: for anger doth nothing well. Although what neede the word of God or the examples of the Saints bee vsed to shame them, whom heathens may shame? Of whom some prescribe rules to such as are angrie, how they may bridle anger from rash outrage: and one among the rest told his seruant, I had surely beaten thee, but that I was angrie. This doctrine is to be applied to Magistrates, Parents, Schoolemasters, and other superiors, namely step-mothers, and such as haue rule ouer poore orphans, or any other, whom it little becommeth to excuse their own corruption by the fault or desert of the partie guiltie: who though hee haue but his due, yet the punisher being no fit person to reuenge by his intemperate heate, may deserue a greater punishment at Gods hand, euen of a murderer (in heart) of his brother. And we see the effect of such seueritie, is to make the partie corrected to contemne it, and waxe desperate, not penitent, which is the peruerting of the right end of correction.

Note.

Ephes. 4. 26.

Yer. 15.

By *Gedeons* shewing of these Princes to the men of Succoth and Penuel, to their shame and astonishment (who thought they had been farre enough out of their hands, and therefore scoffed at his pursuing and following after them) I say, by this, wee may note how God oft times turneth the taunts, flouts, threatnings, curses, and iniuries which the wicked doe vexe Gods children withall, he turneth them to their owne shame and euill, and to the comfort of his owne people so abused and wronged by them: as here these mocked *Gedeon*, liuing and walking according to the life of faith, and going about the Lords worke carefully: who now hauing overcome the Midianites thereby, these wicked mockers are put to shame and paine, yea and to death also. And in like manner it fell out to *Semei* when he had cursed *Dauid*, to *Zenacherib* scorning at *Ezechia*, for trusting in his God, yea and for blaspheming God himselfe, also to the Pharisees who scorned Christ vpon the Crosse, but after his resurrection were abashed, and to *Haman* deadly hating *Mordecai* the faithfull seruant of God. Now if this appeare thus often times euen here in this world, how much more at the comming of the solemne and great day, when God shall iudge them? For when they see the Lord withdraw himselfe from his people neuer so little, (wherein hee doth no more then he did to his only sonne in whom he was well pleased) or behold them in some disgrace and abasement in the world: then they insult and crow ouer them, as the Babylonians and cursed Edomites did ouer the Iewes in captiuitie: but when as beyond expectation, they see them deliuered, yea and that the Lord graceth them, giues them fauour, restores them to libertie, and blesteth them with many benefits; then I say, they turne their scornes into admiration, and are ashamed of their vnreasonable disgracing them.

Psal. 137. 3, 7.

Note.

them. But further, if (besides this) the Lord shall pluck themselves downe, and humble them by the like afflictions, then they wish themselves in their case euen with the hardest and worst conditions.

So that we haue good cause abundantly to be contented to seeke to liue by faith in the sonne of God, trusting in, and cleauing to him and his word aboue all other things, esteeming our selues farre more rich thereby (euen when wee are counted most foolish and vile of the scornfull world) then they in their flourishingest estate and condition : for why? we rest on God, and waite by hope, hauing him on our side, and are not disappointed : they cast all (as the desperate Dicer) on blinde hope, likelihoods, and haphazard, and so are deceiued of their expectation. They haue a time of boasting and glorying, which deceiueth them, and maketh them thinke, that their iollitie and prosperitie will last alwaies, when yet it changeth as the weather, and continueth not in one estate, and they haue no wisdom to consider it, or their end which shall be worst of all. Gods people haue a time of mourning, but the end shall be reioycing : as here *Gedeon* bringeth before his vpbraiders *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* with triumph and glorie.

Psal. 20. 7.

Note.

Psal. 126. 6.

And with this we may also see, that the euill which they either doe not once dreame of, or which they thinke to be farre off from them, and make a mocke of it, is neere vnto them. According to that which the Apostle saith to the Thessalonians, *When men crie peace, peace, then commeth sudden destruction upon them, euen as the sorrow of a woman at her trauell.* *Chorah* and his companie, *Benadad* with many other are examples hereof. So that there is no heed to be taken how iocund they be, when they be aloft, or haue their hearts desire, neither neede any to be afraid at the beholding of their greatness, for why euen while it abideth, it is departing, and while it standeth, it is in falling, for when they be at their best and greatest, there is a greater then they, who is working their ouerthrow. But who is warned by others woe? But of this briefly, because often.

1. Thef. 5. 3.

Eccles. 5. 8.

Gedeon hauing well shamed these men of *Succoth* and *Penuel*, doth to them now as he had threatned, verse 7. and 9. that is : he tore the flesh of the men of *Succoth* with thornes, and cast downe the tower of the men of *Penuel* (euen their strong hold that they gloried in) he cast it downe (I say) to the ground and slew them. And might not both these punishments haue been auoided, thinke we? Yes, and so had been but for their owne sinne : I meane their vndutifulnes, boldnes, stout and sturdie stomacks, and their sli- nesse, hoping if *Midian* had preuailed, to haue gained by their vnnaturall dealing with their brethren, denying bread vnto them.

Verf. 16. 17.

Oh therefore how lamentable is it to see, how men bring shame, sorrow, and destruction vpon themselves by their wicked qualities, and bad behauiour, as wilfulnes, proud stomackes, crueltie, currish and vnkinde dealings, and such other, without the which they might haue enjoyed their peace and welfare euen to their hearts desire, and good contentment, yea and the fauour of God also : for it is nothing but mens sin that keepeth many good things from them, and heapeth many contrarie euils vpon them. As *Achan* by stealing, *Dathan* by rebelling against Gods faithfull seruant *Moses*, and *Israel* by oft revolting from God, and falling from their couenant, whereof this booke is too plaine a prooffe against them.

Doct.

Note.

Note.

So some among vs, are vndone by their idlencs, vnthriftinesse, and needlesse spending, some by their vnfaithfulnes, and deceitful dealing, lose their credit, and being no more trusted, come to naught: some by their oppressi- on sundry waies, are on their death-bed so terrified, that whereas by ma- king restitution of a shilling, noble, or a pounds valew, while it should haue been done, it might haue brought great ease to them: they would now in their terror restore ten for one, and yet cannot be quieted neither. So some for adultrie are brought to shame, and to worse should bee, if they had their due: and other by spitefull, malicious, and reuenging spirits, make them- selues odious to all, and they procure small ioy to themselues. And to adde something touching the particular sinne of these men, which was politike shifting and subtlety in playing the Newters, while the battell depended in an vncertaintie of issue: this I say, that of all other kind of offenders, these lie and wily companions are least pitied of men, when the Lord entrappeth them in their owne snare. Sooner would a man let loose a Lion (if he durst) out of the pit, or the danger wherein it is, then the Foxe: because (besides the hurtfulnesse) it hath so many shifts to conueigh it selfe from danger, and is so hardly catcht. Who pitieth these men of Succoth and Penuel? because they in seeking by subteltie to preferue their liues, iustly were beaten with their owne rodde, and lost them. Whereas he who falles into danger either in a good quarrell, or in his simplicities, is either saued by God, or pitied in his ruine by men. And is not this a double miserie, when men are in dis- tresse, to heare others say of them, they are well serued? Heathens haue obserued this cowardly subteltie (for who is more subill, then hee that is most fearefull) to be euer vnprosperous: and seldome euen in forren dissen- sions of Kings and States, haue they sped well, who haue held off, and plaid the spectators of other mens successe. For whosoever hath got the vpper hand, they haue smarted: if they whom they denied to succour, they are made the prey of them whom they forsooke: if the other, yet they smart al- so, in that they did onely forbear for their sakes, and not actually helpe. So vnnaturall is it counted, in a common calamitie, to betray one enemy to a- nother, or not to helpe when we are able. Which I speake not to excite men to parts taking away, in other mens iarres: but to shew how iustly these were handled for their craftinesse, in denying helpe, not to strangers, but their owne captaine. And euen so, how odious doth God make Newters and Temporisers in religion? they are hated of Papist and Protestant, and are as cursed, as he that is hanged betwixt heauen and earth. Touching the vse of this, and how to abhorre this sinne, reade before in the 2. doct. of the 6. verse.

And these with like punishments for the like iniquities, doe not light vp- on other that are plaine, vpright, mercifull, and in a word, religiously circum- spect in their carriage, and who make conscience of their waies. I doe not deny, but that the best doe oft meete with sharpe persecutions, but they are for good causes: or else their troubles be but fatherly trials and corrections, for their good: so S. Peter saith, *If ye suffer for righteousnesse sake, blessed are yee:* And againe, *If the will of God be that ye suffer, it is better that ye suffer for wel-doing then for euill.* So that we see, such haue to beare off the sharpenes and paine- fulnesse of their sufferings, by their reioycing in the Lord, and by the blessed estate

estate that they are in : whereas the other haue their punishments, as fore-runners of greater, euen here before hand, as the Apostle saith. Indeed full often (I confesse) they shelter themselves to men-ward by their greatnesse, and shift well inough when meane persons go to wracke. According to the prouerbe, *Great men dote, and poore men smart.* But when God (who is higher then they, as *Salomon* saith) calleth thē to account, (as being their only competent Iudge, when they haue broken through other iudgements, by fauor, feare or bribes, as great flies breake through cop-webbes) then they meete with their match. As alas who seeth not what waies there are to bring this about? As displeasure of prince, factions and partakings, treacheries challenges, and highnesse of spirits. As our owne English Chronicles for these 2. or 300 yeeres, plentifully witnessse. Now if the Lord spare not great ones, let all fawning flatterers who seeke to such, and willingly offer themselves as instruments of oppression, cruelty and wrong, because they looke to be safe vnder their wings from punishment (as *Ziba* and such like) let such feare I say : for their patrons shall not shelter themselves, howtsoever they (no doubt) thinke otherwise. And this be said of this point, for the fuller handling of that which I noted vpon the 9. verse to the same purpose.

And here we may more particularly marke by the executing of punishment vpon these chiefe men of the citie, rather then vpon the common citizens, that as the greatest in place and authoritie haue many priuiledges aboue the meaner persons, both in credit, wealth, estimation, and commanding others: so the Lord brings them foorth to the terrour of inferiours, and they lie open to greater danger, hurt and losse thereby, then others doe, and in time it breaketh out and appeareth, if they doe ill behaue themselves in their places. This is a great cause why men who are aboue other, should carrie themselves humbly and not proudly, as too many of them doe : and also looke well to themselves in euey part of their dutie : for a time will come when they shall pay for all, and when their estate shall be such, as the meanest vnder them, would be full loth to be in their roome. And to such I say as *David* in Psalm. 2. *Be wise now therefore, serue the Lord in feare: and kisse the sonne, yee mightie ones, lest he crush you in peeces: Happie then are all they that trust in him, if his wrath be kindled.* Also the inferiors should here learne, not to murmure against them, because they are so farre aboue them, for they sometime goe vnder more sore and heauy punishments, then they themselves doe : yea and though they behaue themselves commendably in their places, yet God oft correcteth them more then some others, lest they should kick vp their heele against him by meanes of their wealth and greatnesse : as it is too common a thing for such to do. So that as God hath his number among all estates both high and low; so he nutureth them all by afflictions according to his heauenly wisdom, that they may safely in their appointed time be gathered to their fathers. But here being a fit place to make an end, I will stay for this time.

Doct. 2. in
ver. 16. 17.

Note.

Psalm 2. 10.