Demonologia Sacra:

OR, A

TREATISE

OF

Satan's Temptations.

In Three Parts:

By RICHARD GILPIN.

2 COR. ii. 11. *We are not ignorant of his Devices;*



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Printed by R. FLEMING, and sold at the Printing-house in *Pearson*'s Closs; and by most Booksellers in Town and Country: And at *London*, by *John Oswald* at the *Rose* and *Crown* in the *Poultry* near *Stocks-market*. 1735.

Apostle obtruded an empty Notion upon Believers, when he re commended that observable Truth to them, Rom. ii. 28. He is no a Jew which is one outwardly, &c.) *For their Sakes have I undertaken this Labour of collecting and methodizing the grand Stratagems, and chief Ways of Delusion of the great Deceiver. To these I must particularly account for some few Things relating this Discourse: As,*

1. *That I have satisfied myself in the Reasons of the Publication of these Papers, and do not judge it requisite to trouble any so far, as to tell what these Reasons are. They who desire to resist such an Enemy, and whose Experience doth convince them that all Helps are necessary, will not need them, and those that are Men of Scorn, or of avowed Carelessness, will not regard them though I should declare them.*

2. *To prevent the Misapprehensions (which possibly some may otherwise labour withal) of a monstrous Product from one Text because they may observe one Text in the Front, and no other mentioned throughout the First and second Parts; they may know that I made use of several in the preaching of these Discourses as suitable Foundations for the several Particulars herein mentioned; but in the moulding up of the Whole, into the Method of a Treatise, for the Ease of the Reader, I thought fit to lay aside those Introductions, as also many other occasional Applications which were proper for Sermons, and a great many Things which were necessary to be spoken for Explication and Illustration of these Points to a popular Auditory, and have only presented the Substance in a more close Connection; because if there be any little Obscurity that may at first appear to any, for Want of Variety of Words, the Treatise being under their Eye, will be at Leisure to attend their Review in a second or third Reading. Which however I would recommend earnestly to those that, in these Concerns, do really design to be* wise for themselves.

3. *Neither should it seem strange, that I have frequently made use of Instances from History, or other later Relations. Whosoever shall consider the Nature of the Matter treated on, will not complain of this as a needless Trouble put upon them; yet withal have been so careful of doing any Persons an Unkindness, by making too bold with them, that I mentioned no Names but such, as upon such Occasions have been made Publick by others before. The rest I have only mentioned in the general, discovering the Case where it was useful, but concealing the Persons.*

4. *It may perhaps seem a Defect, that the several Directions, Remedies or Counsels which are requisite to be observed in ma-*

ing Reſiſtance againſt Satan, are not added, except ſome few Hints in the latter End of the Third Part, and ſome other Things in that Part, in the Applications of the ſeveral Doctrines therein, (which I thought fit, upon good Grounds, to leave in the Order of a preaching Method) but ſuch may be pleaſed to conſider, that ſeveral have performed that Part very fully, to whoſe Labours I had rather refer the Reader, than trouble him with a Repetition: It was only my Deſign to endeavour a more full Diſcovery (though every Way ſhort of the Thing it ſelf) of Satan's Craft, becauſe the Knowledge of this is ſo neceſſary, and what others have done it more ſparingly. Such as it is accept, and improve for thy ſpiritual Advantage; for that was the End of this Undertaking, by him who deſires that thy Soul may proſper.

RICH. GILPIN.

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DÆMONOLOGIA SACRA;

OR, A

TREATISE of *Satan's Temptations.*

PART I. Containing a DISCOURSE of the Malice, Power, Cruelty and Diligence of Satan. Of his Cunning in Temptation in the general. Of his Method of tempting to Sin. Of his Policies for maintaining his Poſſeſſion. Of his Deceits for the preventing and ſpoiling Religious Services and Duties.

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1 PET. v. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant; becauſe your Adverſary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about ſeeking whom he may devour.*

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Text, from a Conſideration of the deſperate Ruin of the Souls of Men. The Text opened, expreſſing Satan's Malice, Power, Cruelty and Diligence.

THE Souls of Men are *precious*, the whole World cannot repair their Loſs; hence by God are all Men in particular charged with Care and Watchfulneſs about them. He hath alſo ſet up Watchmen and Overſeers, whoſe Buſineſs is to watch over Souls, and in the moſt ſtrict and careful Manner, as thoſe that muſt give an Account.

What can more ſtir up Men to the Diſcharge of this Duty, than the frequent *Alarms* which we have of the Aſſaults of ſuch an Adverſary, whoſe Buſineſs 'tis to deſtroy the Soul? *The Philiſtines are upon thee* Sampſon; he fights continually, and uſeth all the Policy and Skill he hath for the Management of his Strength.

Beſides, 'tis a Conſideration very affecting, when we view the *Deſolations that are made in the Earth*; what Wounds, what Overthrows, what Cruelties, Slaveries, and Captivities theſe conquered Vaſſals are put to. It was (as ſome think) an inexcuſable Cruelty in *David* againſt the *Ammonites*, when he *put them under Saws, and Harrows of Iron, and made them paſs through the Brick-kiln*, 2 Sam. xii. 31. But this ſpiritual *Pharaoh* hath a more grievous *Houſe of Bondage*, and Iron Furnace. Neither is this miſerable Deſtruction ended, but will keep Pace with Time, and ſhall not ceaſe, till Chriſt ſhall at his Appearance finally conquer him, and tread him down. If *Xerxes* wept to look upon his Army through the Proſpective of devouring Time, which, upon an eaſy Foreſight, ſhewed him the Death of ſo great a Company of gallant Men; we may well weep (as *David* at *Ziglag*) till we can *weep no more*; or (as *Rachel* for her Children) *refuſing to be comforted*, while we conſider what a great Number of ſucceeding Generations, *Heaps upon Heaps*, will be drawn with him to a conſuming *Topbet*. And could we follow him thither to hear the Cries of *his Priſoners*, the Roarings of his Wounded, where they *curſe the Day* that brought them forth, and *themſelves* for their Folly and Madneſs in hearkning to his Deluſions; the dreadful Out-cries of *Eternity*, and then their *Rage againſt Heaven* in Curſings and Blaſphemings, while they have no Mitigations, or Eaſe, nor the Refreſhment of *a Drop of Water to cool their Tongues*, we would ſurely think we could never ſpend our Time better, than in oppoſing ſuch an Enemy, and warning Men to *fly from the Wrath to come*, to take Heed they come not into his Snare; with what Earneſtneſs would we endeavour to perſuade Men? What Diligence would we uſe to caſt Water upon theſe devouring Flames, and to pluck Men as Brands out of the Fire? 'Tis true, if Satan had dealt plainly with Men, and told them what Wages they were to expect, and ſet a viſible Mark upon his Slaves, or had managed a *viſible deſtructive Hoſtility*, Men have ſuch natural

Prin-

Principles of *Self-preservation*, and of *Hatred* of what *appears* to be Evil, that we might expect they would have fled from him, and still have been upon their Guard: But he useth such Artifices, such Slights and Couzenage, that Men are cast into a Sleep, or a *golden Dream*, while he binds them *in Chains of Darkness*, they see not *their End*, the Snare, nor the Pit; nay, he intoxicates them with *a Love* of their Misery, and a Delight in helping forward their Ruin; so that they are *Volunteers* in his Service, and possessed with a *Madness* and Rage against all that will not be *as willing as themselves* to go to Hell; but especially if they put forth a compassionate Hand to help any out of that Gulf of *Misery*, they hate them, they *gnash upon them with their Teeth*, and run upon them with utmost Violence, as if they had no Enemies but these compassionate *Samaritans*.

How great is this *Mystery* of Darkness! Who shall be able to open the Depths of it? Who shall declare it fully to the Sons of Men, to bring these *hidden Things to Light*? Especially seeing these hellish *Secrets*, which are yet undiscovered, are *double to those that have been observed*, by any that have escaped from his Power: He only whose Prerogative it is *to search the Hearts of Men*, can know, and make known, what is in the *Heart of Satan*; he views all his Goings, even those Paths which the *Vulture's Eye hath not seen*; and can trace those Foot steps of his, which leave no more Print or Tract behind them, than *a Ship in the Sea*, or *a Bird in the Air*, or *a Serpent on a Stone*.

Yet notwithstanding we may observe *much* of his Policies, and *more* would God discover, if we did but humbly and faithfully improve what we know already. 'Tis my Design to make *some Discovery* of those Haunts I have observed, if by that Means I may be useful to you to quicken and awaken you. And first I shall set before you the Strength and Power of your Enemy, before I open his Cunning and Craft.

There are found in him whatsoever may render an Adversary dreadful. [*The Text opened.*

As first, *Malice* and Enmity; ὁ Ἀντίδικος is a Law Term, and signifies an Adversary *at Law*, one that is against *our Cause*; and the Text (as some think) heightens this *Malice*, (1.) By the Article ὁ, which denotes an *arch Enemy*. (2.) The Name Διάβολος *, which signifies a Slanderer or Calum-

* Vide *Leigh.* Crit Sac.

Calumniator, (for the Word is twice in the *New Teſtament* uſed for a Slanderer) ſhewing his Hatred to be ſo great, that it will not ſtick at Lying and Falſhood, either in accuſing *God* to us, or *us* to God †. Nay, it particularly hints, that when he hath in *Malice* tempted a poor Wretch to ſin, he ſpares not to accuſe him for it, and to load him with all Things that may aggravate his Guilt or Miſery, accuſing him for *more* than he hath really done, and for a *worſe Eſtate* than he is really in.

Secondly, His *Power*, under the Metaphor of a *Lion*, a Beaſt of Prey, whoſe innate Property is to deſtroy, and is accordingly fitted with Strength, with tearing Paws, and a devouring Mouth; that as a Lion would rend a Kid with Eaſe, and without Reſiſtance, ſo are Men *ſwallowed* up by him, as with open Mouth; ſo the Word καταπιῆ * ſignifies, he can ſup them up at a Draught.

Thirdly, His *Cruelty*, a *roaring Lion*, implying, not only his innate Property to deſtroy, which muſt be a ſtrange Fierceneſs, but alſo that this innate Principle is *heightned* and whetted on, as *Hunger* in a Lion ſharpens and enrages that Diſpoſition, till he get his Prey; ſo that he becomes raving and roaring, putting an awful *Majeſty* upon *Cruelty*, and frighting them out of Endeavours or Hopes of Reſiſtance, and increaſing their *Miſery* with Affrightments and Trem-blings. Thus Satan ſhews a fierce and truculent Temper, whoſe Power being put forth from ſuch an implacable *Malice*, muſt needs become Rage and Fierceneſs.

Fourthly, His *Diligence*; which, together with his Cruelty, are Conſequences of his Malice and Power; he *goes about, and ſeeks*; he is reſtleſs in his Purſuit, and diligent, as one that promiſeth himſelf a Satisfaction or joyful Contentment in his Conqueſts.

† *The Accuſer of the Brethren.* Rev. 12. 10. Gen. 3. 3. Job 1.
* 2 καταπιω.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Malice of Satan in particular. The Grounds and Causes of that Malice. The Greatness of it proved; and Instances of that Greatness given.

I Shall *first* give some Account of his *Malice*, by which it shall appear, we do not wrong the Devil in calling him malicious; the Truth of which Charge, will evidence itself in the following Particulars.

First, The Devil, tho' *a Spirit*, yet is a proper *Subject* of Sin. We need no other Evidence for this, than what doth by daily Experience result from ourselves; we have Sins, which *our Spirits* and Hearts do act, that relate not to the Body, called *a Filthiness of the Spirit*, in Contradistinction to the *Filthiness of the Flesh.* 'Tis true it cannot be denied, but that those Iniquities which have a necessary Dependence upon the *Organs* of the Body, (as Drunkenness, Fornication, *&c.)* cannot properly, as to the *Formality of the Act*, be laid at Satan's Door, (tho' as a Tempter and Provoker of these in Men, he may be called the Father of these Sins) yet the forementioned Iniquities which are of a spiritual Nature, are *properly and formally* committed by him, as Lying, Pride, Hatred, and Malice. And this Distinction Christ himself doth hint, *John* viii. 44. *When he speaketh a Lie, he speaketh of his own;* where he asserts such spiritual Sins to be *properly* and formally acted by himself. The Certainty of all appears in the *Epithets* given him, the *wicked One*, the *unclean Spirit*; as also those Places that speak his Fall, *They kept not their first Estate*, Jude 6. *The Angels that sinned*, 2 Pet ii. 4. If Sins spiritual are in a true and proper Sense attributed to the Devil, then also may Malice be attributed to him.

Secondly, The Wickedness of Satan is capable of *Increase*, a *magis & minus*, tho' he be a wicked Spirit, and as to Inclination full of Wickedness, tho' so strongly inclined that he cannot but sin; and therefore, as God is set forth to us, as the *Fountain* of Holiness, so is Satan called the *Author* and *Father* of Sin. Yet seeing we cannot ascribe an *Infiniteness* to him, we must admit, that (as to Acts of Sin at least) he may be more or less sinful, and that the Wickedness of his Heart may be more drawn out, by *Occasions*, Motives, and

Provocations: Beſides, we are expreſly taught thus much, *Rev.* xii. 12. *The Devil is come down, having great Wrath, becauſe his Time is ſhort*: Where we note (1.) That his Wrath is called *great*, implying greater than at other Times. (2.) That *external Motives* and Incentives, (as the Shortneſs of his Time) prevail with him to draw forth greater Acts of Fury.

Thirdly, Whatſoever *Occaſions* do draw out, or kindle Malice to a Rage, Satan hath met with them in an *eminent Degree*, in his own *Fall*, and Man's *Happineſs* (*a*). Nothing is more proper to beget Malice, than *Hurts* or *Puniſhments*, *Degradations* from Happineſs. Satan's Curſe, tho' juſt, fills him with Rage, and fretting *againſt God*, when he conſiders that from the State and Dignity of a *bleſſed Angel*, he is caſt down to *Darkneſs*, and to the baſeſt Condition imaginable: For the Part of his Curſe, (which concerned Satan as well as the Serpent) *Upon thy Belly ſhalt thou go, and Duſt ſhall be thy Meat*, implies a State moſt baſe; as the Uſe of the Phraſe proves, *they ſhall lick the Duſt of thy Feet*. *Thine Enemies ſhall lick the Duſt*, Pſal. lxxii. 9. *They ſhall lick the Duſt as a Serpent*, Micah vii. 17. Where the Spirit is ſo wicked, that it cannot *accept the Puniſhment* of its Iniquity, *Iſa.* xlix. 23. All Puniſhment is as a *Poiſon*, and envenoms the Heart with a *Rage* againſt the Hand that inflicted it; thus doth Satan's Fall enrage him, and the more, when he ſees Man enſtated into a *Poſſibility* of enjoying what he hath loſt. The Envy and Pride of his Heart boils up to a Madneſs (for that is the only Uſe that the wretchedly miſerable can make, of the Sight of that Happineſs which they enjoy not; eſpecially if having once enjoyed it, they are now deprived:) This begot the Rage and Wrath in *Cain* againſt *Abel*, and afterward his Murder. The *Eye* of the Wicked is *evil*, where God is *good*. Hence may it be concluded, that Satan (being a wicked Spirit; and this Wickedneſs being capable of acting higher or lower according to Occaſions, and with a Suitableneſs thereto) cannot but ſhew an unconceivable Malice againſt us, *our Happineſs* and *his Miſery* being ſuch *proper Occaſions* for the Wickedneſs of his Heart to work upon.

Fourthly, This Malice in Satan muſt be *great*:

Firſt, If we conſider the *Greatneſs* of his Wickedneſs in ſo great and *total* an Apoſtacy. He is ſo filled with Iniquity, that

(*a*) Quia inordinatam excellentiam affectando, ordinatam amiſerunt, ideo de aliorum excellentia dolebat, & ad eam oppugnandam malicioſe ferebatur *Am. med. l. 1. c.* 11.

that we can expect no small Matters from him, as to the Workings of such cursed Principles; not only is he wicked, but the *Spirit* and *Extract* of Wickedness, as the Phrase signifies (*a*), *Eph.* vi. 12.

Secondly, The Scripture lays to his Charge all *Degrees*, *Acts*, and *Branches* of Malice; as (1.) *Anger*, in the *impetuous* Haste and Violence of it, *Rev.* xii. *great Wrath*, θυμὸς there signifies *Excandescentia*, the *Inflammation* of the Heart and whole Man, which is violent in its Motion, as when the Blood with a violent Stream rusheth through the Heart, and sets all Spirits on Fire; and therefore this Wrath is not only called great, but is also signified to be so, in its Threatning *a Wo to the Inhabitants of the Earth.* (2.) *Indignation* is more than Anger, as having more of a *fixed* Fury; and this is applied to him, *Eph.* iv. 27. in that those that have this τόπος, are said *to give Place to the Devil*; which is true, not only in Point of Temptation, but also in respect of the *Resemblance* they carry to the Frame and Temper of Satan's furious Heart. (3.) *Hatred* is yet higher than Wrath or Indignation, as having deeper Roots, a more confirmed and *implacable Resolution*; Anger and Indignation are but *short Furies* (b), which like a Land-flood are soon down, tho' they are apt to fill the Banks on a sudden; but Hatred is lasting, and this is so properly the Devil's Disposition, that *Cain* in *hating his Brother*, is (1 *John* iii. 12.) said to be the proper Offspring and lively Picture of that *wicked One*, who is there so called, rather than by the Name of the Devil, because the Apostle would also insinuate, that Hatred is the *Master piece* of Satan's Wickedness, and that which gives the *fullest Character* of him. (4.) All *Effects* of his Cruelty arise from this Root; this makes him *accuse* and calumniate; this puts him upon breathing after those *Murders* and Destructions which damned Spirits are now groaning under.

Thirdly, This Malice is the *Result* of that *Curse* laid upon Satan, *Gen.* iii. 15. *I will put Enmity betwixt thee and the Woman, between her Seed and thy Seed*: Which implies (1.) A *great Enmity*; and some render it, *inimicitias implacabiles*, implacable Enmities. (2.) A *lasting Enmity*, such as should continue as long as the Curse should last. (3.) That this should be *his Work* and Exercise, to prosecute and be prosecuted with this Enmity; so that it shews, the

(a) Πνευματικὰ τῆ πονηρίας. (b) Ira brevis furor.

the Devil's *whole* Mind and Desire is in this Work, and that he is *whetted* on, by the *opposing* Enmity which he meets withal, it is the Work of his *Curse*, of his *Place*, of his *Revenge*, and that wherein all the Delight he is capable of, is placed. In that Part of the Curse, *Dust shall be thy Meat*; 'tis implied, (if some interpret right) that if Satan can be said to have *any Delight* or Ease in his Condition, 'tis in the eating of *this Dust* (a), the Exercise of this Enmity: No Wonder then if Christ speak of his Desires and Solicitations with God, to have a Liberty and Commission for this Work; *Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may winnow thee.*

That this Curse relates not only to the *Serpent* who was the *Instrument*, but also to *Satan* who was the *Agent*, is agreed by all almost, that it was not the Serpent *alone*, but the Devil speaking by it, is evinced, from its *speaking* and *reasoning*; and that the Curse reached further than a *natural Enmity* 'twixt a Serpent and a Man, is as evident, in that *Christ* is expresly held forth, as giving the full Accomplishment of this Curse against *Satan*, 1 John iii. 8. *The Devil sinneth from the Beginning: For this Purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil*; which is a clear Exposition and *Paraphrasis* of the *Woman's Seed bruising the Serpent's Head.*

Fourthly, I shall add to this some few *Instances* of Satan's Malice, by which it will appear to be great.

First, That Malice must needs be great, which shews itself, where there is such a Load of *Anguish* and *Horror* that lies upon him; he is now *reserved in Chains of Darkness in Hell*, 2 Pet. ii. 4. he is *in Hell*, a Place of Torment; or which is all one, *Hell is in him*, he carries it about him in his Conscience, which by God's Decree binds him to his Horror like a Chain. 'Tis scarce imaginable that he should have a Thought free from the Contemplation of his own Misery, to spend in a malicious Pursuit of Man. What can we think less of it, than a desperate Madness and Revenge against God, wherein he shews his Rage against Heaven, and hunts after our Blood, as for a *little Water* to *cool his Tongue*; and when he finds his Hand too short to pull the *Almighty* out of his Throne; he endeavours (*Panther-like*) to tear his *Image* in Man, and to put Man, created after his Image, upon blaspheming and dishonouring his Maker.

Secondly,

(a) Vid. *Pool Synop.* in loc.

Secondly, That Malice muſt needs be great, that *ſeeks* its own *Fewel*, and provides or begs its own Occaſions; and thoſe, ſuch as give no *proper Provocation* to his Anger. Of this Temper is his Malice; he did thus with *Job*, he begs the Commiſſion, calumniates *Job* upon unjuſt Surmiſes, preſſeth ſtill for a further Power to hurt him, inſomuch that God expreſly ſtints and bounds him, (which ſhews how boundleſs he would have been if left to his own Will) and gives him at laſt an open Check, *Job* ii. 3. wherein he lays open the Malice of his Heart in three Things. (1.) His own preſſing Urgency, *Thou movedſt me.* (2.) His deſtructive Fury, no leſs would ſerve, than *Job's utter Deſtruction.* (3.) *Job*'s Innocency: *All this without Cauſe, thou movedſt me to deſtroy him without Cauſe.*

Thirdly, That Malice muſt needs be great, that will purſue a *ſmall Matter*. What ſmall Game will the Devil play, rather than altogether ſit up? If he can but trouble, or puzzle, or affright; yet that he will do, rather than nothing, if he can (like an Adder in the Path) but bite the *Heel*, tho' his *Head* be bruiſed for it, he will notwithſtanding buſy himſelf in it.

Fourthly, That Malice muſt be great, which will put it ſelf forth, where it knows it can *prevail nothing*, but is certain of a Diſappointment. Thus did Satan tempt *Chriſt*; thoſe Speeches, *If thou be the Son of God*, do not imply any Doubt in Satan; he knew what was *propheſied* of Chriſt, and what had been *declared from Heaven* in Teſtification of him; ſo that he could not but be certain he was *God* and Man; and yet what baſe unworthy Temptations doth he lay before him, as *to fall down and worſhip him*? Was it that Satan thought to prevail againſt him? No ſurely, but ſuch was his Malice, that he would put an Affront upon him, tho' he knew he could not prevail againſt him.

Fiftbly, The Malice of *wicked Men*, is an Argument of Satan's great Malice; they have an *Antipathy* againſt the Righteous (as the Wolf againſt the Sheep) and upon that very Ground, that they are *called out of the World*; how great this Fury is, all Ages have teſtified. This hath brought forth Diſcord, Revilings, Slanders, Impriſonments, ſpoiling of Goods, Baniſhments, Perſecutions, Tortures, cruel Deaths, as Burning, Racking, Tearing, Sawing aſunder, and whatever the Wit of Man could deviſe, for a Satisfaction to thoſe implacable, furious, murtherous Minds; and yet all this is done

to Men of the ſame Image and Lineage with themſelves, of the ſame Religion with themſelves (as to the main;) nay, ſometime to Men of their own Kindred, their own Fleſh and Blood, and all to thoſe that would live peaceably in the Land. What ſhall we ſay to theſe Things? How come Men to put on a *ſavage Nature*, to act the Part of *Lions*, *Leopards*, *Tygers*, if not much worſe? The Reaſon of all we have, *John* viii. 54. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, he was a Murderer from the Beginning*; as alſo *Gen.* iii. 15. *I will put Enmity between her Seed and thy Seed:* So that all this ſhews what Malice is in Satan's Heart, who urgeth and provokes his Inſtruments, to ſuch bloody Hatreds. Hence whoever are the *Agents*, Rev. ii. 10. in impriſoning the Saints, the Malice of Satan in ſtirring them up to it, makes him become the Author of it; *Satan ſhall caſt ſome of you into Priſon.*

CHAP. III.

Of Satan's Power. His Power as an Angel conſidered. That he loſt not that Power by his Fall. His Power as a Devil. Of his Commiſſion. The Extent of his Authority. The Efficacy of his Power. The Advantages which he hath for the Management of it, from the Number, Order, Place, and Knowledge of Devils.

THAT Satan's *Power* is *great*, is our next Enquiry: Where, *Firſt*, We will conſider his Power as an *Angel*. In *Pſal.* ciii. 20. Angels are ſaid *to excel in Strength*; and in *verſ.* 21. as alſo *Pſ.* cxlviii. 2. they are called *God's Hoſt*; which is more fully expreſſed, 1 *Kings* xxii. 19. *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon his Throne* (a), *and all the Hoſt of Heaven* (b) *ſtanding by him on his right Hand and on his left*; which Phraſe, tho' it import their *Order* and Obſervance, yet undoubtedly the Main of its Intendment is, to ſet forth their *Power*, as Hoſts are the Strength of Kings and Nations. God himſelf in putting on that Title, *The Lord of Hoſts* (c), makes it an Evidence of his incomprehenſible Power, that ſuch Armies of ſtrong and mighty Creatures are at his Command. But this only in the general. That which comes nearer to a particular Account of their Strength, is that Notion of a *Spirit*, by which they are

(a) *Hebr.* TSABA. (b) *Hebr.* SHAMAJIM. (c) *Hebr.* TSEBAOTH.

are frequently described, *He maketh his Angels Spirits, his Ministers flaming Fire*, Ps. civ. 4. The *Being* of a Spirit is the highest our Understanding is able to reach; and that it shews a *Being* very *excellent*, is manifest in this, that *God* is pleased to represent himself to us under the Notion of a *Spirit*; not that he is *truly* and properly such, but that this is the most excellent Being that falls under our Apprehension. Besides, that the Term *Spirit* raiseth our Understanding to conceive a Being of an high and extraordinary Power; it doth further tend to form our Conceptions to some Apprehensions of *their Nature*. (1.) From the Knowledge that we have of our own Spirits; that our Spirit is of a *vast Comprehension* and *Activity*, our Thoughts, Desires, Reasonings, and the particular Undertakings of some Men of a raised Spirit, do abundantly evidence. (2.) In that it represents a spiritual Being, *freed* from the *Clog* and Hinderance of *Corporeity*; our own Spirits are *limited* and restrained by our Bodies, as Fire, an active Element, is retarded and made sluggish by Matter unapt to serve its proper Force, as when 'tis in an Heap of Earth; which is also sufficiently pointed at in that Opposition betwixt *Flesh and Blood*, and *Principalities and Powers*, Eph. vi. shewing that Flesh and Blood are a *Disadvantage* and Hindrance to the *Activity* of a Spirit. A Spirit then, as *incorporeal*, may be conceived to move *easily* without Molestation, *quickly*, *imperceptibly* and *irresistibly*. (3.) This is yet further illustrated by the Similitude of *Wind* and *Fire*, which are (to the common Experience of all) of very great Force. And 'tis yet further observable, that the Scripture sometimes speaks of the Power of Angels in the *Abstract* (*a*), chusing rather to call them *Powers* than *powerful*, Col. i. 16. clearly shewing, that Angels are Beings of vast Strength, as indeed the Actions done by them do abundantly testify; such was the destroying *Sennacherib*'s Host in a Night, the opening the Prison-doors for *Peter*, the carrying *Philip* in the Air, and such other Acts, which tend to the Protection of the Faithful, or punishing of the Wicked.

Tho' this may fully satisfy us, that Angels excel in Strength, yet the Scripture suggests another Consideration relating to the *Office* and Imployment of Angels, where their Commission shews not only a *Liberty* for the Exercise of this Power; but also doth imply such a Power as is *fit* to be *commis-*

(*a*) Ἐξουσίαι

commissionated to such Acts; these invisible Beings are called *Thrones*, *Dominions*, *Principalities*, *Powers*, Col. i. 16. 'Tis indeed a Task beyond a sober Undertaking, to distinguish these Words, and to set their true Bounds and Marks of Difference. This *Augustin* acknowledged (*a*), yet may we hence conclude, (1.) That these Words imply a very *great Authority* in Angels. (2.) A Power and *Strength* suitable to their Imployment, and that God furnished them with Power answerable to the Work which he intended for them, in his moving the Heavens, and governing the World, *&c.* However, in some Cases, God works by Instruments every way *disproportionable* to the Service, *That the Excellency of the Power might be of God*; yet in the *ordinary* Way of his working, he puts an *innate, suitable* Force in Creatures, for the Acts to be done by them; as there is an innate Power in the Wind to blow, in the Fire to burn, in Herbs and Plants for medicinal Uses. Thus may we conceive of Angels, that God using them as *his Host*, his *Ministers to do his Pleasure*, he hath endowed them with an innate natural Power for those great Things which he doth by them; which must not be supposed in the least *derogatory* to the Power of God, in his ways of Mercies or Judgments, seeing all the Strength of Angels is *originally* from God. Hence is it that all the Names of Angels which we read of in Scripture carry this Acknowledgment in their *Signification*. *Michael* thus unfolds itself, *Who is like God?* *Gabriel* thus, *The Glory of God*; and therefore may we suppose them not so much the *proper* Names of Angels, but (as *Calvin* noteth) *Nomina ad captum nostrum sendita* (*b*) Names implying God's great Power in them.

Such a powerful Spirit is Satan by *Creation*. But because it will be doubted, left his Fall hath *bereaved* him of his Excellency, and *cast him down from his Strength*, I shall evidence that he still retains the same *natural* Power. To which Purpose 'tis not unfit to be observed, (1.) That the *same* Terms and Names which were given to *good Angels*, to signify their Strength and Commission, *Col.* i. 16. and i. 10. are also given to *Satan*, Eph. vi. 12. *Devils* are called *Principalities*, *Powers*, *Rulers*; and *Col.* ii. 15. they have the same Names which in *Vers.* 10. were given to good Angels,

(*a*) Quid inter se distant quatuor ista vocabula, dicant qui possunt, si tamen possunt probare quæ dicunt, ego me ista ignorare confiteor. *Enchirid.* ad *Laurent.* c. 58. (*b*) Instit. l. 1. c. 4. § 8.

gels, *he ſpoiled Principalities and Powers.* (2.) The Scripture gives particular *Inſtances* of Satan's Power and Working, as his raiſing Tempeſts in the Air, commanding Fire from Heaven, both which he did in Proſecution of his Malice againſt *Job*; his carrying the Bodies of Men in the Air, as he did with Chriſt, hurrying him from the Wilderneſs to the Mountain; from thence to the Pinacle of the Temple; his breaking Chains and Fetters of Iron, *Mark* v. 4. His bringing Diſeaſes, Inſtances whereof were that crooked Woman whom Satan had *bowed together*, Luke xiii. 16. and the *lunatick Perſon*, Luk. ix. 31. with a great many more. (3.) 'Tis alſo obſervable, that notwithſtanding Satan's Fall hath made an *Alteration* as to the *Ends*, *Uſes*, and *Office* of his Power; yet nevertheleſs *God makes uſe* of this Strength in him, not only as an *Executioner* of Wrath againſt his Enemies (as when he vexed *Saul* by this evil Spirit, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 14. and through this *lying Spirit*, gave up *Ahab* to be deluded into his Ruin, 1 *Kings* xxii. 21. and inflicted Plagues upon *Egypt*, by ſending *evil Angels among them*, Pſal. lxxviii. 49.) but alſo for the *Trial* of his own Servants. Thus was *Job* afflicted by Satan, and *Paul* buffetted by his *Meſſenger*.

Secondly, This Power of his, as a *Devil*, falls next under our Conſideration, wherein are divers Particulars to be noted: As,

Firſt, His *Commiſſion* and Authority. If any put that Queſtion to him, which the *Jews* did to Chriſt; *By what Authority doſt thou theſe Things?* or, *Who gave thee this Authority?* We have the Anſwer in *John* xii. 24. and xvi. 11. where he is called *the Prince of this World*; and accordingly the Scripture ſpeaks of a two fold Kingdom of *Light* and of *Darkneſs*; and in this we hear of Satan's *Seat* or Throne, of his *Servants* and Subjects. Yea, that which is more, the Scripture ſpeaks of a Kind of *Deity* in Satan; he is called *the God of this World*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Which doth not only ſet forth the intolerable Pride and *Uſurpation* of Satan in propounding himſelf as ſuch, ſo drawing on poor blind Creatures to worſhip him,
but alſo diſcovers his Power, which by *Com-* *Zanchius.*
miſſion he hath obtained over the *Children of*
Diſobedience. Hence doth he challenge it, as a Kind of Right and Due from the poor *Americans* and others, that they ſhould fall down and worſhip him; and upon this Sup-

poſition

poſition was he ſo intolerably preſumptuous in offering the Kingdoms of the World to Chriſt for ſuch a Service and Worſhip.

Queſt. If it be queſtioned, What Satan's Authority is? I ſhall anſwer it thus.

Anſ. *Firſt*, His Authority is not *abſolute* or *unlimited*; he cannot do what he pleaſeth; and therefore we do find him begging Leave of God for the exerting of his Power in particular Caſes, as when he was a Lying Spirit in the Mouth of *Ahab*'s Prophets, and in every Aſſault he made upon *Job*; nay, he could not enter into the *Swine* of the *Gaderens*, till he had Chriſt's Commiſſion for it.

Secondly, Yet hath he a Commiſſion in general, *a ſtanding Commiſſion*, as petty Kings and Governors had under the *Roman Emperor*, where they were authorized to exerciſe an Authority and Power, according to the Rules and Directions given them; this is clearly ſignified by thoſe Expreſſions, they are Captives *at his Will*—and *given up to Satan*, as Perſons excommunicated; and when Men are converted, they are ſaid to be *tranſlated from his Power*, and put under another Juriſdiction, in the *Kingdom of Chriſt*. All which would have been highly *improper*, if a *Commiſſion* for Satan, and an Authority for thoſe Works of Darkneſs had not been ſignified by them.

Next, Let us view the *Extent* of this Authority, both as to *Perſons* and *Things*. In relation to *Perſons*, the Boundary of his Kingdom reacheth as far as *Darkneſs*; he rules in the *dark Places of the Earth*, or the *Darkneſs of this World*; and therefore his Kingdom is hence denominated a *Kingdom of Darkneſs*. This extends (we may well imagine) as far as *Heatheniſm* reacheth, where he is worſhipped as God, as far as any Darkneſs of *Mahometaniſm* ſtretcheth itſelf, as far as the Darkneſs of *Infidelity* and Blindneſs upon the Hearts of unconverted Men, which if ſummed up together, muſt needs take up the greateſt Part of the World by far; which is acknowledged, not only by that large Expreſſion, *World*, *Prince of this World*, &c. but alſo by that Prophetick Speech of *Rev.* xi. 15. *The Kingdoms of this World, are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and his Chriſt*; which acknowledgeth they had not been ſo before, in the Senſe wherein we now ſpeak.

Neither is his Kingdom ſo *bounded*, but that he alſo can (when allowed) make *Excurſions* and Inroads into the Kingdom

dom of Christ, so far as to molest, disturb and annoy his Subjects: As the Kings of any Nation, besides the Power which they exercise in their proper Jurisdiction, may molest their Neighbours. And Christ *so far* permits this, as is *useful* to his *own Designs*, yet still with strait Reserves and Limitations to Satan, and a resolved Rescue and Conquest for his own People.

If we enquire the Extent of his Power in relation *to Things*, we find the *Air* in a peculiar Manner permitted to him, so that he is named by it, as by one of his chief *Royalties*, *the Prince of the Power of the Air*; we find also *Death*, with the Powers of it given up to him, so that this is a *Paraphrasis* of him, *He that hath the Power of Death*, Heb. ii. 14. And if we take notice of his large Proffer to Christ of the Kingdoms of the World, *All this will I give thee*; we may imagine that his Commission reacheth *far* this Way, as *Rewards* and *Encouragements* to his Service; which we will the readilier entertain, when we find that by God's Allowance, wicked Men have their *Portion in this Life*, and that these are called *their good Things*.

Thirdly, Let us proceed a Step further to the *Efficacy* of this Authority; which also,

First, Upon *wicked Men* is no less remarkable than is his Commission; he is called the *strong Man* in reference to their Hearts, which he fortifies as so many *Castles* and *Garrisons* against God: He also *rules in them* without Controul; his Suggestions and Temptations are as *Laws* to them; *Acts* v. 3. *he fills their Hearts* with his Designs, and raiseth their Affections to an high and greedy Pursuit of them; he works in them, and by an inward Force doth hurry them on to atchieve his Enterprises, *Eph* ii. 2. In all this ensnaring and captivating them at *his Pleasure*, 2 Tim. ii. 26.

Secondly, The *Saints*, which are Subjects of another Kingdom, are still *fearing*, complaining, watching, praying, and spreading out their Hands, with lifting up their Eyes to Heaven for Help against him; they complain of Violence and restless Assaults from him; they are sensible that he can suggest evil Thoughts, and follow them with incessant Importunities; that he can draw a Darkness upon their Understanding, by bribing their Wills and Affections against them; that he can disturb their Duties, and that because of him they cannot do the Good they would: Many

a Fear doth he beget in their Hearts; many a diſquiet Hour have they from him; their Fleſh hath no Reſt, and happy are they if they eſcape from him without broken Bones: Many excellent Ones have been caſt down by him, and for a Time have been like dead Men. 'Tis ſad to ſee ſo juſt a Perſon as *Lot* under his Feet; ſo choice a Saint as *David* wounded almoſt to the Death; ſo high an Apoſtle as *Peter* by Force and Fear from him, to open his Mouth with Curſes and Imprecations in the Denial of his Saviour; to ſay nothing of the Buffetings of others, which was ſufficiently wearifom to *Paul*, and deſcribed by a *Thorn in the Fleſh*, 2 Cor. xii. 7. which (if a learned Man (*a*) think right) is compared by a Metaphor, to thoſe ſharp Stakes upon which Chriſtians were cruelly ſpited and burnt.

Thirdly, His *quick* and ready Accompliſhment is a further Proof of the Efficacy of his Power. No ſooner had God given him a Commiſſion in reference to *Job*, but he *quickly* raiſeth the Tempeſt, brings down the Houſe, ſlays his Children, brings Fire from Heaven; and (which would ſeem ſtrange) hath the Troops of the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* at his Beck, as if they had been liſted under his known Command; ſo that in a little Time he puts his Malice into Act.

Fourthly, If any would ſlight all this, as being the Force of *Principalities* and *Powers* againſt *Fleſh* and *Blood*: We may ſee he hath ſo much Strength and Confidence, as to grapple with an *Angel of Light*, as he did in the conteſting for *Moſes* his Body, *Jude ver.* 9. This was a *created Angel*, elſe he durſt not ſure have brought a *railing Accuſation*; but in that he ſtrove, and railingly accuſed, it ſhews he wanted not a daring Boldneſs to ſecond his Commiſſion and Power.

Fourthly, It will be alſo requiſite to lay open the *Advantages* he hath in the Management of all this Power, which are great: As,

Firſt, The *Multitude* of Devils: That there are many, is not denied, upon the Evidence of *ſeven* caſt out of *Mary Magdalen*, and the *Legion* which were ſettled in one poor Man at once. It may be we may not credit the Devil's own Account of his Strength ſo much, as to believe that their Number was *exactly* anſwerable to a *Roman Legion*, which (if

(*a*) Σκόλοψ, *Arrowſ.* Tract. Sacr. l. 2. c. 8. § 2.

(if ſome ſpeak right) was 6666 : Yet there being ſo plain an Alluſion to a *Roman* Legion ; and the Scripture in the Recital favouring it ſo far, as to conſent to a Truth in that Part of the Story, we can do no leſs than conclude that the Number of Devils in that Perſon was a very great Number, and ſo great, that the Similitude of Legion was proper to expreſs it by. Beſides, if the Scripture had been ſilent in this Particular, our Reaſon would have clearly drawn that Concluſion from ſuch Premiſes as theſe, That he is the *God of the World*, and rules in the *Children of Diſobedience* ; for whatſoever we conceive of his Power, we cannot think him *Omnipotent*, or *Omnipreſent*, theſe being the *incommunicable Attributes* of the great Creator of all Things, in which no Creature can ſhare with God. Being then aſſured that he is the Tempter of all Men, and that he cannot be in all Places at once, we muſt needs apprehend the Devils to be many, as is ſignified by that Expreſſion, the *Devil and his Angels*.

Secondly, He hath alſo an Advantage for the executing of his Deſigns, from that *Order*, which from the fore mentioned Grounds we muſt be forced to conceive to be among Devils. I know the bold Determination of the Order of Angels by *Dyoniſius* is juſtly rejected, not only by *Irenæus* and *Auguſtin* (*a*) but alſo by the Generality of Proteſtants, who upon that, and other Grounds of like Preſumption, do reject that Author as not being the *true Dyoniſius* the *Areopagite*. Neither do ſome of our Proteſtant Authors (as *Chamier* and others) admit the Government of Angels to be *Monarchial* (*b*), (which Suppoſition the *Papiſts* would gladly make uſe of, as a Foundation whereon to eſtabliſh the *univerſal Headſhip* of the *Pope*) being a Thing which *Dyoniſius* himſelf, (as *Chamier* affirms) never dream'd of : Yet do none of theſe Authors deny an Order among the Angels, but willingly grant it, as clearly implied from the Term *Arch-angel* uſed by *Paul*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. (*c*) and from their being called *God's Hoſt* or Army, where Order is neceſſary for the right Management of their Strength, and Confuſion the Way to the Ruin of their Deſigns : The Thing they diſlike is, the bold and peremptory Determination of the *particular Orders* among them (*d*), and the *Aſſignment* of the ſeveral Charges, Imployments and Stations to each ;

(*a*) Lib. 2. *Enchir.* c. 58. (*b*) *Panſt.* Vol. 2. l. 9. c. 11. (*c*) *Selater* in loc. (*d*) *Cal.* Inſtit. l. 1. c. 14. § 8.

which whoſoever ſhall do, muſt needs be guilty of *intruding into Things which he hath not ſeen.* It would upon the ſame Score be a preſumptuous Folly to make ſuch a Determination of the ſeveral Ranks and particular Imployments of Devils: Yet this hindereth not, but with a warrantable Sobriety we may believe in the general, that there is *an Order* among the Devils. *(a)* Not only do theſe Expreſſions (*Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils, the Devil and his Angels*, and in that they are called, *Principalities and Powers*) warrant us ſo to think; but the fore-mentioned Conſiderations about the *Multitude* of Devils, will force our Reaſon to an Aſſent: For if they muſt be many, becauſe all Mankind is ſenſible of their Aſſaults, they muſt have alſo an Order in the Management of their Temptations; without which, their Deſigns of Cruelty and Malice muſt (at leaſt in great Part) fall to the Ground. Neither do I know well, how thoſe Authors may be juſtly blamed (*b*), who proceed a little further in their Suppoſitions, to tell us (as moſt probable) That theſe infernal Spirits do *ſhare* the *World* among them, and are allotted to ſeveral Countries and Places, as their own proper Charge and Juriſdiction; for what other Interpretation thoſe Paſſages in *Dan.* x. 13. can receive, I cannot ſee, *The Prince of the Kingdom of Perſia withſtanding the Angel one and twenty Days*; and his Help in that Oppoſition from *Michael*, cannot (if Things be well weighed) be properly underſtood of *Cambyſes* the Son of *Cyrus*, or a Conteſt with any Man. However if we let this go, as a Thing uncertain (*c*), (becauſe this Interpretation is denied by ſome) yet that which is ſpoken of their Order in the general, and the Advantage theſe Spirits have againſt us upon that Conſideration, ſeems to be paſt Denial.

Thirdly, The Advantage of *Place* among Armies is reckoned much. Satan ſeems to have ſomething this Way as an Advantage of *Ground*, in that he is ſtiled ſpiritual Wickedneſs in *high Places (d)*. What Advantage high Places may be to Devils and Spirits, we cannot further imagine, than that they being thus above us and about us in the Air, ſee and know our Ways and Actions, and ſo receive Information from thence for their malicious Proceedings againſt us.

Fourthly, But his greateſt Advantage is from his Knowledge, which I ſhall a little explain in the following Chapter.

CHAP.

(*a*) Vid. *Bayne* on *Epheſ.* vi. 12. (*b*) *Bayne*, ibid. (*c*) *Calvin* in loc. (*d*) Ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις. Epheſ. vi. 12.

CHAP. IV.

That Satan hath a great Measure of Knowledge, proved, by comparing him with the Knowledge of Adam *in Innocency, and by his Titles. Of his Knowledge Natural, Experimental, and Accessory. Of his Knowledge of our Thoughts. How far he doth not know them, and how far he doth, and by what Means. Of his Knowledge of Things future, and by what Ways he doth conjecture them. The Advantages in point of Temptation that he hath by his Knowledge.*

IN the Discovery of Satan's *Knowledge*, I shall first give Evidence and Demonstration thereof. To which Purpose, (1.) Let us consider the Knowledge of *Adam* in *Innocency*; which being found to be great, it will thence be easily concluded, that Satan's Knowledge is far greater: *Two* notable Discoveries we have of *Adam*'s Knowledge, the one was his giving of *Names* to all Creatures, *Gen.* ii. 29. Which was not only a Sign of his *Dominion*, but also a notable Instance of his *Understanding*, seeing the *Names* were given according to the *Natures* of Creatures; whereof *Bochartus* gives a large Account *(a)*, as the *Camel* is called GAMEL, because 'tis apt to repay Injuries; the *Kite*, RAAH, from its Sharpness of Sight; the *Pelican* is named KAATH from its usual Vomiting, *&c.* The Consideration of the Aptness of Names imposed on Creatures, made *Plato* acknowledge, That it was a Work above ordinary Capacity. The other Discovery of *Adam*'s Knowledge, was his Knowledge of the *Original* of *Eve* at first Sight; *Gen.* ii. 23. he said, *This is now Bone of my Bones, and Flesh of my Flesh*, &c. This Instance *Luther* made use of to prove the Knowledge that we shall have of one another in Heaven; which shews that *Adam*'s Understanding was then incomparably more sublime than ours, and of a nearer Approach to the Knowledge which a State of Glory shall furnish us withal. To this might be added a further Proof from the rare *Inventions*, and excellent Discoveries that some raised Wits have made, of Things that have lain deep, and far out of the View of common Capacities. As also those *Views*, Sights, and more than ordinary Comprehensions which the Souls of Men have had, when they were

(a) *Hierozoicon*, 1st Part.

a little freed from the Clog and Hinderance of the Body, either in *Extaſies*, or by *approaching* Death; all which put together, will go far to prove a very great Meaſure of Knowledge in Satan, if we take along with us this Foundation, That in all the Works of God, we find the *higheſt Knowledge* in the *nobleſt Being*: Living Creatures are more excellent than Stones or Trees, and therefore hath God furniſhed them with Senſes, and hath alſo diſtinguiſhed them by higher Degrees of Sagacity, according to their Excellency above others: Thus the Ape, Fox, Elephant, *&c.* have ſuch Abilities above the Worm and Fly, *&c.* that ſome have queſtioned whether they had not ſome lower Degrees of Reaſon: Yet as theſe are below Man, ſo doth his Reaſon far excel their greateſt Quickneſs of Senſe. Angels are an higher Being than Man, (for he made him *lower than the Angels*) and conſequently their Knowledge is proportionably greater. So that if *Adam* in Innocency underſtood the Nature of Things, how much more exactly and fully muſt we imagine Satan to know them?

Secondly, But the Proof is more full and direct, from thoſe *Appellations* and Titles which the Scripture, and the Experience of Men, have put upon him; his uſual Name *Δαίμων, which (in *Matth.* viii. 31. *Mark* v. 12. *Rev.* xvi. 14.) we tranſlate Devil, properly ſignifieth one that is *wiſe*, knowing, or skilful. And however the Wickedneſs of that Spirit hath ſo far diſhonoured this Word, that 'tis always (as ſome think) uſed to ſignify *unclean Spirits*; yet ſtill it carries an Evidence of their Nature in reference to Knowledge, that though they are wicked Creatures, yet are they wiſe and knowing: 'Tis ſaid, *Gen.* iii. 1. *The Serpent was more ſubtile than any Beaſt of the Field*; which though it be true literally of the Serpent, whoſe Wiſdom and Subtilty, Naturaliſts have abundantly noted, yet that Expreſſion hath an Eye upon Satan, who was the principal Agent; and the Serpent there is called *ſubtile*, as *influenced* by Satan, whoſe Inſtrument he was: Which we may believe, not only upon the Credit of *Auſtin* and *Lyra* (*a*), but more ſecurely upon the Teſtimony of other Scriptures, which name him the *Old Serpent*, Rev. xvii. 9. and impute all that Craft in the Management of that Temptation, to a particular remarkable Skill and Subtilty of Satan; *The Serpent beguiled Eve through Subtilty*, 2 Cor. xi. 3. and (if *Beza*

* Quaſi Δαΐμων. (*a*) Principaliter ad Diabolum referenda eſt calliditas.

Beza conjecture right) the Appellation Δαίμων doth ſo fitly ſuit this Hiſtory of the Tree of Knowledge, that the Title of Knowledge ſeems to be given him for this ſingular Maſter piece of Craft.

Thirdly, That Satan hath great Knowledge is by theſe Arguments diſcovered; but if further Enquiry be made into the *Nature* of his Knowledge, we ſhall be nearer to a Satisfaction in this Particular. And here we may obſerve a *threefold* Knowledge in Satan.

1*ſt*, A *natural* Knowledge, which the Schoolmen have diſtinguiſhed into theſe *Two*. (1.) An *Evening*-knowledge (*a*), which he received from Things created, whereby the *Species* of Things were impreſſed upon his Mind, and ſo received, being a Knowledge *a poſteriori*, from the *Effects* of Things; which becauſe it is more dark and obſcure than that which ariſeth from the *Cauſes* of Things, they termed *Evening-knowledge*. (2.) The other is *Morning-Knowledge*, which is a Knowledge of Things in the Power and Wiſdom of God, in which he ſaw the *Ideas* and Images of all Things. This Knowledge they prefer before the other, as Lines and Figures are better known from *Mathematical* Inſtruction, than by their bare Tract, as written in Duſt.

2*dly*, Beſides this he hath an *experimental Knowledge*, which is the Improvement of that natural Stock, by further Acquiſitions and Attainments; and indeed Satan had very high Advantages for an Increaſe of Knowledge, he had a great *Stock* to begin withal, he hath had fit and *ſuitable Objects* to work upon in his Contemplations; ſo that by comparing Things with Things, in ſo large a Field of *Variety*, and that for ſo *many Years* together, it cannot be but that he ſhould be grown more experienced and ſubtile than he was at firſt; and the Scripture doth fairly countenance this Suppoſition, by telling us of his *Devices* (b), 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. of *his Wiles* (c), *Eph.* vi. 11. and of *his Depths* (d), *Rev.* ii. 24. All which Phraſes imply, That Satan hath ſo *ſtudied* the Point of Temptation, that he hath now, from long Experience and Obſervation, digeſted it into an *Art* and *Method*, and that with ſuch Exactneſs,

(*a*) Cognitio veſpertina & matutina. *Barth. Sybillæ* Otium Theol p. 361, *Aug.* in 3 Gen. & civitat. Dei. lib. 11. c. 29. *Dr.* Jeniſon *Height of Iſrael's Idolatry*, p. 31. Ipſam creaturam melius ibi, hoc eſt, in ſapientia Dei, tanquam in arte qua facta eſt, quam in ea ipſa ſciunt, *Aug.* civit. Dei, ibid.

(b) Νόηματα. (c) Μεθοδείας. (d) Βάθη.

that it is become a *Myſtery* and a *Depth*, much covered and concealed from the Notice and Obſervation of Men.

3*dly*, To both the former may be added another Knowledge, which, becauſe 'tis from another Spring, I may call it an *acceſſory Knowledge*, conſiſting in occaſional Diſcoveries made to him, either when *God* is pleaſed to make known ſo much of his Mind and Purpoſe as he imploys him (as an Inſtrument or Servant) to execute, as he did in the Caſe of *Job* and *Ahab*; or when he *informs* himſelf from the *Scriptures*, or catcheth Hints of Knowledge from the *Church*, and the Ordinances thereof. If *good* Angels have an Increaſe of Knowledge this way, as is evident they have (*For to Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places is made known by the Church the manifold Wiſdom of God*, Eph. iii. 10.) we cannot but imagine that Satan hath ſome Addition of Knowledge from ſuch Diſcoveries. While we are upon this Point, it will be neceſſary to offer ſome Satisfaction to *two Queſtions*.

Queſt I. *Whether Satan knows our Thoughts?*

Anſw. I. 'Tis undoubtedly God's *Prerogative* to know the Thoughts; he knows them *intuitively*, which is beyond the Power of any Creature, *Jer.* xvii. 9. *Who can know it?* This is a Challenge to all, implying the utter Impoſſibility of it to any but to God alone; *I the Lord ſearch the Heart*; he knows the moſt *inward* Thoughts. *Rev.* ii. 23. *I am he which ſearcheth the Reins, and the Heart*; he knows them *evidently* and certainly, *All Things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do*, Heb. iv. 13. Thoſe ſecret Thinkings and Intendments which are hid from others, and which we ourſelves cannot diſtinctly read, becauſe of their ſecret Intricacy or Confuſedneſs, yet the very (*a*) *Inſide* and *Outſide* of them are uncaſed, (*b*) *cut up* and *anatomized* by his Eye; in all which Expreſſions God is careful to reſerve this to himſelf, *I the Lord do it*, or *I am he* that ſearcheth, and ſignifies, that none elſe is able to do the like.

Anſw. II. Yet Satan can do *much* this way; for if we conſider how he can come ſo *near* to our Spirits, as to *communicate* his Injections to us, and that he often entertains a *Diſpute* with us in this ſecret way of Acceſs that he hath to our Thoughts; if we obſerve his *Arguings*, his *Anſwers* and *Replies* to our Refuſals, ſo *direct*, ſo *pertinent*, ſo *contenued*, we ſhall be conſtrained to grant, that he can do more this

(a) Γυμνά. (b) Τετραχηλισμένα.

this way than is commonly imagined. That I may explain this with a due Reſpect to God's Prerogative of knowing the Heart, I ſhall,

Firſt, Shew, that there are *two* Things which are clearly out of Satan's Reach. (1.) Our *future Thoughts*, he cannot tell what ſhall be our Thoughts for Time to come; he may poſſibly adventure to tell what *Suggeſtions* he *reſolves* to put into our Hearts; but what ſhall be our *Reſolves* and *Determinations* thereupon, he knows not. This is ſingled out as one Part of God's Prerogative, that he knoweth the *determinate Purpoſes* and Reſolves of the Heart aforehand, becauſe he turneth the Heart as he pleaſeth, *Prov.* xxi. 1. (2.) Our *preſent formed Thoughts*, the immediate and imminent Acts of the Mind he cannot *directly* ſee into: He may tell what *floating Thinkings* he hath put into our Heart, but our own proper Thoughts, or *formed Reſolves*, he cannot *directly* view; this is alſo particularly inſiſted on as proper to God alone, *John* ii. 24, 25. *Chriſt knew all Men*, ſo directly, that *he needed not that any ſhould teſtify of Man*, (this Satan ſtands in need of; he ſometimes knows Men and their Thoughts, but he *needs a Sign* or Notification of theſe Thoughts, and cannot *immediately* look into them;) the Reaſon why Chriſt needed not this, is render'd thus: *For he knew what was in Man*, Math. xii. 25. that is, *intuitively* he knew his Thoughts, and could immediately read them.

Secondly, I ſhall endeavour to explain *how* much, or how far he can *pry* into our Thoughts. Several Things are granted, which argue Satan can go a great Way toward a Diſcovery: As,

1*ſt*, That he knows the *Objects in our Fancy (a)*, or Phantaſms, and this as clearly as we do behold Things with our Eyes; and the Proof given hereof is this, That there are *Diabolical Dreams* (*b*), in which the Devil cannot create *new Species*, and ſuch as our Senſes were never acquainted withal (as to make a blind Man dream of Colours) but that he can only call forth and ſet in Order thoſe Objects, of which our Imagination doth retain the Shadows or Impreſſions; and this he could not do, if he did not viſibly behold them in our Fancy.

2*dly*, 'Tis certain he knows his *own Suggeſtions*, and Tempta-

(*a*) *Dr.* Jeniſon's *Height of Iſrael's Idolatry*, p. 35. (*b*) *Vid.* Goodwin's *Child of Light*, p. 65.

Temptations darted into our Minds, upon which he can at *present* know what our Thoughts are buſied upon.

3*dly*, He knows the *ſecret Workings* of our *Paſſions*, as Love, Deſire, Fear, &c. becauſe theſe depend upon, or are in a Concomitancy of the Motions of the Blood and Spirits, which he can eaſily diſcern, tho' their Motions and Workings may be kept ſecret from the Obſervation of all Byſtanders.

4*thly*, Some go further (as *Scotus*, *referente Barthol. Sybilla*) ſuppoſing that he knows what is in our Thoughts at any Time, only he knows not *to what* theſe Thoughts *incline* (*a*); but I leave this to thoſe that can determine it certainly, in the mean Time I proceed,

Thirdly, To ſhew what a gueſſing Faculty he hath of what he doth *not directly* know; he hath ſuch Grounds and Advantages for Conjecture, that he ſeldom fails of finding our Mind: As,

1*ſt*, His long *Experience* hath taught him what *uſually* Men do think, in ſuch Caſes as are commonly before them; by a cunning *Obſervation* of their Actions and Ways he knows this.

2*dly*, He by Study and Obſervation knows *our Temper* and Inclination, and conſequently what Temptations do moſt ſuit them, and how we do ordinarily entertain them.

3*dly*, He knows this the more, by taking Notice of our *Prayers*, our Complainings and Mournings over our Defects and Miſcarriages.

4*thly*, He is quick and ready to take Notice of any *exterior Sign*, by which the Mind is ſignified, as the *Pulſe*, the *Motion* of the Body, the *Change* of the Countenance (*b*); all which do uſually ſhew the Aſſent or Diſſent of the Mind, and at leaſt tell him what Entertainment his Offers have in our Thoughts.

5*thly*, Being ſo quick ſighted, he can underſtand thoſe *particular Signs* which would eſcape the Obſervation of the wiſeſt Men; there are ſome Things ſmall in themſelves (and therefore unobſerved) which yet to wiſe Men are very great *indicia* of Things. The like may be ſaid of us, in reference to our Inclinations, our Acceptance or Reſiſtance of Temptations, which yet he hath curiouſly marked out.

6*thly*, No doubt but he hath ways to *put us upon a Diſcovery*

(*a*) Queſt. peregrinarum, p. 392. Dæmones cognoſcunt cogitationes noſtras, quantum ad ſubjectum, objectum & affectum, non autem quantum ad finem. Sciunt quid cogitamus, ſed ignorant ad quem finem.

(*b*) .. Deprehendas animi tormenta latentis ex ægrotorum facie. Sæpe tacens vocem, verbaque vultus habet.

very of our Thoughts, while we conceal them, as by continuing and profecuting Temptations or Suggeſtions, till our Trouble or Paſſions do ſome way diſcover how it is with us. By all which it appears, that his Gueſſings and Conjectures do ſeldom fail him. 'Tis now Time to ſpeak to the other Queſtion, which is.

Queſt. II. *Whether and how far Satan knows Things to come?*

Anſw. To this I ſhall return Anſwer in theſe two Concluſions.

Concluſ. 1.] *Firſt*, There is a way of knowing future Things, which is *beyond the Knowledge* of Devils, and *proper* only to *God*. Iſa. xli. 23. there God puts the Competition 'twixt Himſelf and *Idols*, about the Truth of a *Deity*, upon this Iſſue, That *he that can ſhew the Things that are to come hereafter, he is God*; which becauſe they cannot do, he doth hereby evince them to be no Gods. If Satan could truly and properly have done this, he had had a Plea for a *Godhead*. In Divine Predictions two Things are to be conſidered. (1.) The *Matter* foretold, when the Events of Things *contingent*, and (as to *ſecond* Cauſes) *caſual*, depending upon *indeterminate* Cauſes, are foretold. (2.) The *Manner*, when theſe Things are not *uncertainly*, or *conjecturally*, or darkly; but *clearly*, *certainly*, *infallibly* and *fully* predicted. Of this Nature are divine Predictions, which Satan cannot perform, nor yet the Angels in Heaven.

Concluſ. II.] *Secondly*, Yet Satan hath ſuch Advantages for the Knowledge of future Things, and ſuch Means and Helps for a Diſcovery of them, that his Conjectures have often come to paſs.

Firſt, He knows the *Cauſes* of Things, which are *ſecret* to us. Upon which he ſeems to foretel many Things ſtrange to us; as a *Phyſician* may foretel the *Effects*, Workings, and Iſſues of a Diſeaſe, as ſeeing them in the *Cauſes*, which would paſs for little leſs than *Prophecy* among the Vulgar. Thus an *Aſtrologer* foretells *Eclipſes*, which would be taken for a *divine Excellency*, where the Knowledge of the Ground of theſe Foretellings had not taken away the Wonder.

Secondly, Many Things are made known to him by *immediate divine Revelation*: We know not the Intercourſe betwixt God and Satan in the Matter of *Job*; Satan (having obtained his Commiſſion to afflict him) might have made a long Prophecy of what ſhould come to paſs in Reference

to *Job*, his Children and Subſtance; how many ſuch Predictions he might make, we little know.

Thirdly, He hath a deep *Inſight* in *Affairs* of Kingdoms and States, and ſo might (from his Experience and Obſervation) eaſily conjecture *Mutations* and Alterations. A Politician may do much this Way For ought we know, Satan's Prophecy (in the Likeneſs of *Samuel*) to *Saul*, of his Ruin, and the Tranſlation of his Kingdom to *David*, might be no more than a conjectural Concluſion, from his comparing the Order of the preſent Providence, with former Threatnings and Promiſes.

Fourthly, He hath a greater Underſtanding of *Scripture-prophecies*, than ordinarily the wiſeſt of Men have; ſo that at *Second hand* he might be able to forerel what ſhall come to paſs. Whilſt we that do not ſo clearly ſee into Scripture-predictions, may not be able to find out the Matter. Hence by *Oracle* he foretold *Alexander* of his Succeſs *a*, which he knew from the Prophecy of *Daniel*, Chap. xi. long before.

Fifthly, He hath Advantage from his Nature as *a Spirit*, by which he *overbears* and *ſees* the *private* Actings, Complottings and Preparations of Men in Reference to certain Undertakings, and can eaſily, by his Agents, communicate ſuch Counſels or Reſolves in *remote* Countries and Kingdoms, which muſt paſs for real Predictions, if the Event anſwer accordingly.

Sixthly, He can *foretel* (and with Probability of Succeſs) ſuch Things as he by Temptations is about to *put Men upon*, eſpecially ſeeing he can chuſe ſuch Inſtruments, as he (from Experience) knows are not likely to fail his Enterpriſe.

Seventhly, To this may be added, the *Way and Manner* by which he expreſſeth himſelf, either in *doubtful* or enigmatical Terms, or in *general* Expreſſions, which may be applied to the Event, what Way ſoever it ſhould happen (*b*). Of theſe, Authors have obſerved many Inſtances, which were ſuperfluous to enumerate.

Satan's Knowledge being thus explained, it is eaſy to imagine what an Advantage it is to him in the Management of his Temptations: For,

Firſt, He by this Means knows our *Tempers* and Diſpoſitions.

Secondly, And what is moſt likely to *prevail* with us.

Thirdly,

(*a*) Invictus eris Alexander. Plutarch in vit. Alexandri. (*b*) Non non ſuperabit Gallus Apulum. Ibis redibis nunquam per bella peribis.

Thirdly, How *inclinable* we are upon any Motion made to us, and what Hope to gain upon us.

Fourthly, He knows *fit Times*, Seasons and Advantages against us.

Fifthly, He knows how to *pursue* Suggestions, and can chuse strong Reasons to urge us withal.

Sixthly, He knows how to *delude* our Senses, to *disturb* our Passions.

Seventhly, He knows all the Ways and Arts of *Affrightments*, Vexations, Disquietments, *Hinderances* and Disturbances of Duty.

Eighthly, He by this Means is furnished with Skill for his *publick Cheats* and Delusions in the World, how to amuse, astonish, and amaze Men into *Errors* and Mistakes, which he hath always endeavoured with very great Success in the World, as we shall see hereafter.

CHAP. V.

Instances of Satan's Power. Of Witchcraft, what it is. Satan's Power argued from thence. Of Wonders. Whether Satan can do Miracles. An Account of what he can do that Way. His Power argued from Apparitions and Possessions.

I Shall add in the fifth Place, some particular *Instances* of his Power, in which I shall insist upon these Four, *Witchcraft*, *Wonders*, *Apparitions* and *Possessions*.

I. *Witchcraft* affords a very great Discovery of Satan's Power: But because some give such Interpretations of Witchcraft as (if true) would wholly take away the Force of this Instance, I shall first endeavour to establish a *true Notion* of Witchcraft; and *secondly*, From thence argue Satan's Power.

First, Tho' the *being* of Witches is not *directly* denied (because the Authority of Scripture, *Exod.* xxii. 18. *Levit.* xviii. 10. &c. hath determined beyond Controversy, that such there are;) yet some will allow no other Interpretation of the Word, than a *Skill and Practice in the Art of Poisoning* (a), because the *Septuagint* doth interpret the *Hebrew* Word MACHSHEPHAN by φάρμακον, *veneficam*, which Appro-

(a) Scot, *Discovery of Witchcraft*, l. 6. c. 1.

Apprehenſion they ſtrengthen by the Authority of *Joſephus* (a), who giveth this Account of the Law, *Let none of the Children of Iſrael uſe any deadly Poiſon, or any Drug wherewith he may do Hurt*, &c. 'Tis eaſy to obſerve, that this Conceit ariſeth from a great *Inobſervancy* of the Reaſon of the Application of theſe Words, φάρμακον & and *veneficus* to Witchcraft, in *Greek* and *Latin* Authors.

Witchcrafts were ſuppoſed to be helped forward by the *Strength* of ſeveral Herbs, and theſe by *Incantations* and other *Ceremonies* at their Gathering, imagined to attain a poiſonous and evil Quality or Efficacy for ſuch Effects, as were intended to be produced by them, as appears by *Ovid*, *Virgil*, and other *Authors* (*b*). Hence was it that the Word φαρμακὸν became applicable to any Sort of Witchcraft. To this may be added, that ſuch Perſons were *reſorted* to, for Help againſt *Diſeaſes*, *Vid.* Leigh. *Crit. Sac. in Voc.* As alſo that they uſed *Unguents* for Tranſportations; Hence *Godwin*, *Jew. Antiq. lib.* 4. *c.* 10. renders φαρμάκους *Unguentarios*. *Diaſcorides*, *Cap. de Rhamno*, hath an Expreſſion to this Purpoſe, That the Branch of that Tree, being placed before the Doors, doth drive away τῶν φαρμάκων κακουργίας, Witchcrafts; it were ridiculous to ſay, it drives away Poiſonings, which is a ſufficient Evidence that the *Græcians* uſed that Word to ſignify another Kind of Witchcraft, than that which this Miſtake would eſtabliſh. Beſides this, the Scripture doth afford *two* ſtrong Arguments againſt this Interpretation of Witchcraft. (1.) That this Word is ranked with others, (as being of the ſame Alliance) which will carry the Apprehenſions of any conſiderate Man, to *Effects* done by the *Help* of Satan, in an *unuſual* Way, as *Deut.* xviii. 10. *There ſhall not be found among you, any that maketh his Son or his Daughter to paſs through the Fire*, (this is not the conſuming of their Chil-

(a) *Antiq.* l. 4. c. 8. (*b*) --- Medeides Herbæ miſtaq; cum magicis merſa venena ſonis. *Ovid.* Art. Amandi l. 2. Has Herbas atque hæc Ponto mihi lecta venena. Ipſa dedit Mœris..... his ego ſæpe lupum fieri & ſe condere Sylvis Marim, ſæpe animas imis exire Sepulchris. *Virg.* Ecl. 8.

φαρμακία, Philtrum, & magicas actiones quæ in imaginibus, & cáracteribus, certis verbis, ac ſímilibus conſiſtun-, ſignificat. Unde pharmaceutria appelatur Idyllium Secund. Theocriti. & Eclog. 8. Virgilii & antiquos etiam vocabulum φαρμακίας, pro omni veneficii genere, quo vel hominibus, vel jumentis, vel frugibus, ſeu carmine, ſeu aliis modis nocetur, accipere, manifeſte patet ex Platone lib. 10. de Legibus. Et apud Ariſtot. Hiſt. Animal. cap. 25. φαρμακῖδες nominantur. Et Apocal. c. 18. φαρμακία pro præſtigiis & impoſtura ſumitur. --- Dan. Sennert. Tom. 3. lib. 6. part 9. Cap. 2.

Children to *Moloch* (a), but by VVay of *Luſtration* a *Mock baptiſm*, a Piece of *Witchcraft* (b), to preſerve from *violent Death*) or *that uſeth Divination, an Obſerver of Times, or an Inchanter, or a Witch*, &c. The very Neighbourhood of the *Witch*, will tell us that this Witch muſt be *a Diviner* (c), Divination being the *general* Term, comprehending the *ſeven* Particulars following: It would be an harſh Straining to put in the Poiſoner, (in the Senſe of our Oppoſites) among the Diviners. Yet the ſecond Argument is more cogent, which is this; that among thoſe whom *Pharaoh* called together to encounter with *Moſes*, *Exod.* vii. 11. we find *Witches* or Sorcerers expreſſed by the ſame Word MECASHEPHIM, which is uſed in *Exod.* xxii. and *Deut.* xviii. What can more certainly fix the Interpretation of the Word than this Place, where the End of *Pharaoh*'s calling them together, was not to poiſon *Moſes* and *Aaron*, but by *Enchantment* to *outvy* them in Point of Miracles. Which will ſhew that *Witchcraft* is not poiſoning, but the doing of ſtrange Acts by the Aid of Satan. Neither was this the Act of one Man, (who might poſſibly, together with that preſent Age, be under a Miſtake concerning *Witches*, tho' it be a Thing not to be ſuppoſed) but long after him, *Nebuchadnezzar* in *Dan.* ii. 4. being aſtoniſhed with his Dreams, calls for the *Sorcerers* or *Witches*, and *Magicians* (d), to give him the Interpretation; which had been a Matter very improper for them, if their Skill had lain only in mixing Poiſons.

When we have thus ſilenced this Imagination, we have yet another to encounter with, and that is of thoſe that think theſe Witches, of which the fore-cited Texts do ſpeak, are but mere *Cheats*, and by ſome Tricks of Deluſion and *Legerdemain*, pretend they can do Things, which indeed they cannot do at all; and yet finding Death threatened to ſuch, which (in a Buſineſs of mere Jugling) would ſeem too great a Severity, they have framed this Anſwer to it, that the Death is threatned, not for the *jugling* (e), but for their *preſumptuous* and *blaſphemous* undertaking to do Things that belong to a *Divine Power*, and for *taking his Name in vain*. Or (as others are pleaſed to (f) ſay) tho' they have *no real Power*, they are juſtly puniſhed for the *Belief* they have, *that*

(a) *Fuller* Piſg. Sight. l. 4. c. 7. p. 128. (b) *Maimon* vid. *Pool* in loc. (c) Godwin *Jewes Antiq.* l. 4. c. 10. *Pool* in loc. (d) *Witchcraft reckoned as diſtinct from Murder, in* Gal. 5. 20, 21. (e) Scot. *Witchcraft*, l. 6. c. 2. (f) Hob's *Leviath.* c. 2. p. 7.

that they can do ſuch Miſchief, joined with their Purpoſe to do it, if they can.

In Anſwer to this Apprehenſion, I ſhall not much inſiſt upon theſe Reaſons, which yet are ſufficiently weak, (the *latter* accuſing God's Laws of *unreaſonable Severity* (*c*), and the former accuſing them of *unneceſſary Redundancy*, ſeeing enough in other Places is provided againſt Blaſphemers) but ſhall offer a Conſideration or two, which I judge will be of Force to rectify the Miſtake.

Firſt, Tho' it cannot be denied, but that a great many Cheats there have been in all Ages, by which Men have endeavoured to raiſe the Repute and Eſteem of their own Skill and Excellencies, or for other baſe Ends; yet from hence to conclude, that *all theſe Things* that have been done under the Name of *Witchcraft* were ſuch, muſt be an unſufferable Piece of Inſolence; not only denying that *Credit* which all ſober Men owe to Hiſtory, to the conſtant Belief of all Ages, to the Faithfulneſs and Wiſdom of *Judges*, *Jurors*, *Witneſſes*, *Laws* and *Sanctions*, but alſo dangerouſly overthrowing all our *Senſes*; ſo that at this Rate we may well queſtion, Whether we really eat, drink, move, ſleep, and any Thing elſe that we do; this Reaſon is urged by grave and ſerious Men (*b*).

Secondly, It cannot be imagined that ſuch Things are merely deluſory, where the *voluntary Confeſſions* of ſo many, have accuſed themſelves and others, not of Thinking or Jugling, but of *really acting*, and doing ſuch Things; with ſuch *Circumſtances* as have particularized Time, Place, Thing, and Manner.

Thirdly, The *real Effects* done by the Power of *Witchcraft*, ſhew it not to be Deluſion (*c*): Such are the *Tranſportation* of Perſons many Miles from their Habitations, and leaving them there; their *telling* Things done in remote Places; *raiſing* of Storms and Tempeſts; *Vomiting* of Pins, Needles, Stones, Cloth, Leather, and ſuch like; and theſe ſome

(*a*) *Teneſon Hob's* Creed. exam. Art. 4. p. 63. (*b*) Baxter's *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, p. 83. J. Glanvil. *Conſiderations of Witchcraft*, p. 6. Teneſon *againſt* Hobs, Art. 4. p. 59. (*c*) Vid. Epiſt. D. *Balthaſaris* Han. M. D. in calce. Tom. 3. oper. *Dan. Sennerti* de fœmina faſcinatâ, in cujus cute, literæ N. B. notæ Crucis † à capite ad calcem, cum Aſtronomicorum & Chymicorum caracteribus, Roſæ figura in dextra & trifolii in ſiniſtrâ artificioſe picta cum anno Chriſti 1635. cor Servatoris telis transfixum. & imago ſtulti cum verbo Germanico *Narr*, procumbebant. [Dr. *More*.] Mr. *Baxter* ut ſupra. *Dan. Sennertus* Tom. 3. Lib. 6. pars 9. Varias hiſtorias enumerat de morbis incantatione inductis. Ex *Jo. Langio*, *Alex. Benedicto*, *Cornel. Gemma*, *Foreſto*, & aliis.

ſome of them atteſted by ſober and intelligent Perſons who were Eye witneſſes. Large Accounts you have of theſe in *Bodinus*, *Sprengerius*, and ſeveral *others* that have borrowed theſe Relations from them.

The Notion of Poiſonings, or deluſory Juglings, being below what the Scripture intends to ſet forth, as *Witchcraft*; it is evident that *Witchcraft* is a Power of doing great Things by the Aid of the Devil. By which our Way is open to improve this Inſtance, to demonſtrate (which was the *ſecond* Thing promiſed) that Satan's Power muſt be great: For,

Firſt, 'Tis acknowledged that a great Part of thoſe Things that are done in this Matter (*a*), as *concurrent* with, or helpful toward the promoting of ſuch Acts, are Satan's *proper Works*, as the troubling the Air, raiſing Storms, Apparitions, various Shapes and Appearances, Tranſportations from Place to Place, and a great many more Things of Wonder and Amazement, all which *exceed* human Power.

Secondly, Many Things of Wonder done by ſuch Perſons; to which (ſome ſuppoſe) the ſecret Powers of Herbs, or Things, contribute their natural Aids or Concurrence, are Evidences of Satan's *deep Knowledge* of, and Inſight into *natural Cauſes*. Of this Nature is that *Ointment* with which *Witches* are ſaid to beſmear themſelves in order to their Tranſportation: The Power and Efficacy whereof, is by ſome (*b*) imagined to conſiſt in this, that it keeps the Body *tenantable*, and in a fit Condition to receive the Soul by *Re-entry*, after ſuch *Separations*, as (by all Circumſtances are concluded) have been *really made* in Purſuit of thoſe viſionary Perambulations and Tranſactions. Which Things if they be ſo, (as they are not improbable) *Witches* have them from Satan's *Diſcovery*, and they are to be aſcribed to his Power.

Thirdly, Thoſe Actions that are moſt properly the *Witches own Actions*, and in which the Power of Hurting doth (as ſome ſuppoſe) reſide, are notwithſtanding, either *awakened* or *influenced* by Satan: So tho' we grant (what ſome (*c*) would have) that the Power of Hurting is a natural Power,

(*a*) *Helmont.* Magnet. Vuln. cura. § 87. (*b*) Dr. More. *Death conſiſts not ſo much in an actual Separation of Soul and Body, as in the Indiſpoſition and Unfitneſs of the Body for vital Union. What is the Meaning elſe of that Expreſſion,* [Whether in the Body, or out of the Body I cannot tell] *except the Soul may be ſeparated from the Body without Death.* J. Glanvil, *Witchcraft*, p. 15. 18. (*c*) *Helmont* ubi ſuprà. *Aricenna.* vid. *Barthol. Sybilla.* Perig. quæſt. p. 401. Neſcio quis teneros oculos, &c. Glanvil *Witchcraft*, p. 24.

Power, and a *venomous Magnetiſm* of the *Witch*, and that her Imagination, by her Eye, darts thoſe malignant Beams which produce real Hurts upon Men, (after the Manner of the Imagination's Force upon a Child in the Womb, which hath (as by daily Experience and Hiſtory is confirmed) produced Marks, Impreſſions, Deformities, and Wounds) and that Satan doth but cheat the *Witch* into a Belief of his Aid in that Matter; that with a greater Advantage he may make Uſe of her Power, without which he could do nothing (*a*); yet even this ſpeaks his *Ability*, in that *at leaſt* he doth awaken and raiſe up that magical Force, (which otherwiſe would lie aſleep) and ſo puts the Sword into their Hand. Yet ſome attribute far more to him, *to wit*, the Infuſion of a poiſonous Ferment, (by that Action of ſucking the *Witch* in ſome Part of the Body) by which not only her *Imagination* might be heightened, by poiſonous Streams *breathed* in, which might infect Blood and Spirits with a noxious Tincture.

2. *Wonders.* The IId grand *Inſtance* of his Power, I ſhall produce from thoſe Actions of *Wonder* and Aſtoniſhment, which he ſometime performs, which indeed have been ſo great, that they have occaſioned that *Queſtion*;

Q. *Whether Satan can do Miracles?*

A. 1. To this we anſwer; (1.) That *God alone* can work Miracles. A Miracle being *a real Act, done viſibly, and above the Power of Nature* (*b*). Such Works ſome have ranked into *three* Heads †; 1. Such as created Power cannot produce; as to make the Sun ſtand ſtill, or go backward. 2. Such as are in themſelves *produceable by Nature*, but not in ſuch an *Order*, as to make the Dead to live, and thoſe that were born blind to ſee, which is ſtrongly argued *John* ix. 32. to be above human Power; and *John* x. 21. to be above the Power of Devils. 3. Such as are the *uſual Works* of Nature yet *produced*, above the Principles and Helps of Nature, as to cure a Diſeaſe by a Word or Touch.

Things that are thus truly and properly miraculous, are peculiarly Works of God; neither can it be imagined, that ſince he hath been pleaſed to *juſtify his Commands, Ways,* and

(*a*) *Helmont* ut ſuprà, § 102. Satan itaque vim magicam hanc excitat (ſecus dormientem & ſcientia exterioris hominis impeditam) in ſuis mancipiis..... Glan. *Witchcraft*, p. 18. (*b*) *Polanus* 1632. † Tho. Cont. Gent. lib. 3. c. 101, *cited by* Sclater *on 2 Theſ.* 2. 9.

and *Meſſages*, by ſuch mighty Acts, 2 *Cor.* xii. 12. *Heb.* ii. 4. *John* x. 38. and alſo hath been put to it, to juſtify himſelf and his ſole ſupreme Being and Godhead, from falſe Competitors, *Pſal.* lxxxvi. 10. and lxxii. 18. by his miraculous Works: It cannot be imagined, I ſay, that he would permit any created Beings, (much leſs Satan) to do ſuch Things.

(2.) Tho' Satan cannot do Things *miraculous* (*a*), yet he can do Things *wonderful* and amazing. And in this Point lies the Danger of Deluſion, as Chriſt foretells, *Mat.* xxiv. 24. *Falſe Chriſts ſhall ariſe, and ſhew great Signs and Wonders.*—In 2 *Theſ.* ii. 4. the Apoſtle tells us, *The coming of Antichriſt ſhall be with all Power, and Signs, and Wonders*; that is, (as ſome (*b*) interpret) with the Power of Signs and Wonders; which however they be *lying*, both in Reference to the Deſign they drive at, (which is to propagate Errors) and alſo in their *own Nature*, being truly ſuch, in Reſpect of their Form, *falſe*; as *Miracles*, being indeed no ſuch Matter, but jugling Cheats: Yet notwithſtanding there is no ſmall cunning and working of Satan in them, inſomuch that the Uncautious and Injudicious are *deceived by thoſe Wonders that he hath Power to do*, Rev. xiii. 13. In this Matter, tho' we are not able to give a particular Account of theſe *under-ground* Actions; yet thus much we may ſay,

Firſt, That in many Caſes, his great Acts, that paſs for Miracles, are no more but *Deceptions of Senſe*. *Naturaliſts* have ſhewn ſeveral Feats and *Knacks* of this Kind: *Jo. Bap. Porta* (*c*) hath a great many Ways of ſuch Deceptions, by *Lamps*, and the ſeveral Compoſitions of *Oils*, by which not only the Colours of Things are changed, but Men appear without Heads, or with the Heads of Horſes, *&c.* The like Deceptions are wrought by *Glaſſes* of various Figures and Shapes. If Art can do ſuch Things, much more can Satan.

Secondly, He can mightily work upon the Fancy and Imagination; by which Means Men are abuſed into a Belief of Things that are not: As in Dreams, the Fancy preſents Things which are really imagined to be done and ſaid, whenas they are Viſions of the Night, which vaniſh when the Man is awake; or as in *melancholly* Perſons, the Fancy of Men doth ſo ſtrongly impoſe upon them, that they

(*a*) Mira non miracula. (*b*) *Sclater* in loc. (*c*) Magia naturalis, l. 2. c. 17.

believe ſtrange abſurd Things of themſelves; that they have *Horns* on their Head, that they are made of *Glaſs*, that they are *dead*, and what not: If Fancy, both aſleep and awake, may thus abuſe Men into an Apprehenſion of impoſſible Things, and that with Confidence, no Wonder if Satan (whoſe Power reacheth thus far, as was before proved) doth take this Advantage for amuſing of Men with ſtrange Things. *Nebuchadnezzer* his Judgment, *Dan.* iv. 25. whereby he was *driven from Men, and eat Graſs as Oxen*, was not a *Metamorphoſis*, or real Change into an Ox; this all Expoſitors reject as too hard; neither ſeems it to be only his *extream Neceſſity*, and low Eſtate, whereby he ſeemed to be little better than a Beaſt, (tho' *Calvin* (*a*) favour this Interpretation) but by that Expreſſion, *Verſe* 25. [*then my Underſtanding came to me*] it ſeems evident, (as moſt Commentators think) that his Underſtanding was ſo *chang'd* in that Puniſhment, that he *imagined* himſelf to be a *Beaſt*, and behaved himſelf accordingly, by eating Graſs, and lying in the open Fields. There are ſeveral Stories to this Purpoſe of ſtrange Transformations, as the Bodies of Men into *Aſſes*, and other Beaſts, which *Auguſtine* (*b*) thinks to be nothing elſe but the Devil's Power upon the Fancy.

Thirdly, There are wonderful *Secrets in Nature*, which if cunningly uſed and applied to *fit Things* and *Times*, muſt needs amaze vulgar Heads; and tho' ſome of theſe are known to *Philoſophers* and *Scholars*, yet are there many ſecret Things lock'd from the wiſeſt Men, whoſe Powers and Natures, becauſe they know not, they may alſo be deluded by them. *Auguſtine* (*c*) reckons up many Inſtances, as the *Loadſtone*, the Stone *Pyrites*, *Selenites*, the Fountain of *Epirus* that can kindle a Torch, and many more; and determines that many ſtrange Things are done by the Application of theſe natural Powers, either by the *Wit of Man*, or *diabolical Art*. To this Purpoſe he (*d*) gives an Account of an *unextinguiſhable* Lamp, in a Temple of *Venus*, which allured Men to worſhip there, as to an unqueſtionable *Deity*, when in Truth the Thing was but an *ingenious* Compoſition from the Stone *Aſbeſton*; of which *Pliny* makes Mention (*e*), that being kindled, it will not be quenched with Water. Of this Nature were thoſe *Lamps* found in ſeveral

(*a*) *Calvin* in loc. (*b*) Civit. Dei, l. 18. c. 18. (*c*) De Civit. Dei. l. 21. c. 5, 6.
(*d*) Λύχνον ἄσβεστον.
(*e*) Plin. lib. 28.

ral *Vaults* accompanying the Aſhes of the Dead, reſerved there in Urns, both in *England* and elſewhere †. If Men by ſuch Helps find ſuch eaſy Ways to delude Men, what Exactneſs of Workmanſhip, and ſeeming Wonders may be expected from Satan upon ſuch Advantages?

Fourthly, Many of his Wonders may challenge an *higher Riſe*. Satan knows the ſecret Ways of *Nature's Operations*, and the Ways of *accelerating* or *retarding* thoſe Works. So that he cannot only do what Nature can do, by a due Application of *active* to *paſſive Principles* (*a*), and the Help of thoſe *ſeminal* Powers that are in Things, but he may be ſuppoſed to perform them in a *quicker* and more expeditious Manner: Thus *Worms*, *Flies*, and *Serpents*, that are bred of Putrefaction, Satan may ſpeedily produce; and who can tell how far this Help may reach in his Works of Wonders?

Fifthly, The *ſecret* Way of Satan's *Movings* and *Actings* is no ſmall Matter in theſe Affairs. How many Things do common *Juglers* by the *ſwift Motions* of their Hands, that ſeem incredible? Thus they make the By-ſtanders believe they change the Subſtances, Natures, and Forms of Things, when they only, by a *ſpeedy Conveyance*, take theſe Things away, and put others in their Room. They that ſhall conſider Satan as a Spirit, ſubtile, imperceptible, quick of Motion, *&c.* will eaſily believe him to be more accompliſh'd for ſuch Conveyances than all the Men in the World.

Having now ſeen the Way of his Wonders, let us next conſider the Advantage he hath by ſuch Actions. If we look upon *Simon Magus*, Acts viii. 10, 11. we find, that he by theſe Ways, had a general Influence upon the People, *To him they all gave Heed, from the leaſt to the greateſt*; and that his Actions were reckoned no leſs than miraculous, as done by the mighty Power of God. If we go from hence to the *Magicians* of *Pharaoh*, Exod. vii. 11. 'tis ſaid, *They did ſo with their Inchantments*, which (howſoever the Matter was) prevailed ſo with *Pharaoh* and the Court, that they ſaw no Difference 'twixt the Wonders done by *Moſes* and them, ſave that (it may be) they thought *Moſes* the more skiful *Magician*. But beſides this, if we conſider what they did, it will argue much for his Power, if we can imagine (as ſome (*b*) do) that they turned

† Vid. L. Vives Comment. in lib. 21. c. 6. De Civit. Dei. (*a*) Determinata activa ad determinata paſſiva applicando. (*b*) Ap. *Cajetan. Dyrin.*

ed their *Rods* into *real* Serpents, the Power is evident: And there is this that favours that Opinion, it is said, they *could not make Lice*, which seems to imply, they *really* did the other Things, and it had been as easy to *delude* the Senses in the Matter of *Lice*, as in the *Rods*, if it had been no more than a Delusion; neither are some a-wanting to give a Reason of such a Power, *viz.* Serpents, Lice, &c. being the Offspring of Putrefaction, by his dextrous Application of the seminal Principles of Things, he might quickly produce them. If we go lower, and take up with the Opinion of those (*a*), that think they were neither *mere Delusions*, nor yet *true Serpents*, but *real Bodies like Serpents*, tho' *without Life*, this will argue a very great Power: Or if we suppose (as some do) that Satan *took away* the Rods, and secretly *conveyed* Serpents in their Stead, or (which is the lowest Apprehension we can have) that *Pharaoh*'s Sight was *deceived*: The Matter is still far from being contemptible, for as much as we see the Spectators were not able to discern the Cheat.

Apparitions.

III. The next *Instance* produceable for evidencing his Power, is that of *Apparitions*. It cannot be denied, but that the *Fancy* of melancholick or timorous Persons, is fruitful enough to *create* a thousand *Bugbears*. And also that the *Villany* of some Persons hath been designedly imployed to deceive People with *Mock-apparitions*; of which Abundance of Instances might be given from the *Knavery* of the *Papists*, discovered to the World beyond Contradiction; but all this will not conclude, that there are *no real Appearances* of Spirits or Devils. Such sad Effects in all Ages there have been of these Things, that most Men will take it for an undeniable Truth.

Instead of others, let the Apparition at *Endor* to *Saul* come to Examination: Some (*b*) indeed will have us believe that all that was but a *subtile Cheat*, managed by that old Woman; and that neither *Samuel* nor the *Devil* did appear, but that the Woman, in *another Room* by herself, or with a *Confederate*, gave the Answer to *Saul*. But whosoever shall read that Story, and shall consider *Saul*'s bowing and Discourse, and the Answers given, must acknowledge that

(*a*) *Barth. Sybilla* Exeg. Quæst. p. 372. *Rivetus*. (*b*) Scot. *Witchcraft*, l. 7. c. 13.

that *Saul thought*, at leaſt, he *ſaw* and ſpake with *Samuel*: and indeed the whole Tranſaction is ſuch, that ſuch a Cheat cannot be ſuppoſed.

Satisfying ourſelves then that there was an Apparition, we muſt next enquire whether it was true *Samuel*, or *Satan*: It cannot be denied but that many (*a*) judge it was true *Samuel*, but their Reaſons are weak.

(1.) That Proof from *Eccleſiaſticus* xlvi. 23. is not *canonical* with us.

(2.) That he was called *Samuel* is of no Force; Scripture often gives Names of Things according to their Appearances.

(3.) That Things future were foretold, was but from Conjecture; in which Satan yet (all Things conſidered) had good Ground for his gueſſing.

(4.) That the Name *Jehovah* is oft repeated, ſignifies nothing, the Devil is not ſo ſcarce of Words; *Jeſus I know*, ſaith that Spirit in the *Acts*.

(5.) That he *reproved* Sin in *Saul*, is no more than what the Devil doth daily to *afflicted Conſciences* in order to deſpair.

I muſt go then with thoſe that believe this was Satan in *Samuel*'s Likeneſs.

(1.) Becauſe God refuſed to anſwer *Saul* by *Prophets* or *Urim*. And 'tis too harſh to think he would ſend *Samuel* from the Dead, and ſo anſwer him in an *extraordinary* Way.

(2.) This (if it had been *Samuel*) would have given too much Countenance to *Witchcraft*, contrary to that Check to *Ahaziah*, 2 Kings i. 3. *Is it not becauſe there is not a God in Iſrael, that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub.*

(3.) The *Prediction* of *Saul*'s Death, tho' true for *Subſtance*, yet failed as to the *Exactneſs* of Time, for the Battle was not fought the next Day.

(4.) The Acknowledgment of the Witch's Power [*Why haſt thou diſquieted me?*] ſhews it could not be true *Samuel*, the Power of *Witchcraft* not being able to reach Souls at Reſt with God.

(5.) That Expreſſion of *gods aſcending out of the Earth*, is evidently ſuſpicious.

The Reality of Apparitions being thus eſtabliſhed, Satan's Power will be eaſily evinced from it. To ſay nothing of the Bodies in which Spirits appear; the haunting of

(*a*) Vid. *Poole's Synops.* in loc.

Places and Persons, and the other Effects done by such Appearances, speak abundantly for it.

Possessions.

IV. The last Instance is of *Possessions*, the Reality of which can no Way be questioned, because the *New Testament* affords so much for it; I shall only note some Things as concerning this Head. As,

First, The *Multitudes* of Men possessed: Scarce was there any Thing in which Christ had more Opportunities to shew his Authority, than in casting out of Satan; such Objects of Compassion he met with in every Place.

Secondly, The *Multitudes* of Spirits in *one* Person, is a Consideration not to be passed by.

Thirdly, These Persons were often *strongly* acted, sometime with *Fierceness* and Rage, *Matth.* viii. 28. some living without *Cloaths*, and without *House*, Luke viii. 27. some by an incredible Strength *breaking Chains and Fetters*, Mark v. 3.

Fourthly, Sometime the Possessed were sadly *vexed* and afflicted, cast *into the Fire* and *Water*, &c.

Fifthly, Some were *strangely influenced*: We read of one, *Acts* xvi. 16. that had *a Spirit of Divination*, and told many Things to come, which we may suppose frequently came to pass; else she could have brought *no Gain to her Masters by South-saying*. Another we hear of, whose Possession was with a *Lunacy*, and had Fits at certain Times and Seasons. The possessed Person with whom Mr. *Rothwell* discoursed, (within the Memory of some living) could play the *Critick* in the *Hebrew* Language (*a*).

Sixthly, In some the Possession was so strong, and so *firmly seated*, that *ordinary Means* and Ways could not dispossess them: *This Kind comes not out but by Prayer and Fasting*, Matth. xxvii. 21. which shews that all Possession was not of one Kind and Manner, nor alike liable to Ejection.

To all these may be added *Obsessions*: Where the Devil afflicts the Bodies of Men, disquiets them, haunts them, or strikes in with their melancholy Temper, and so annoys by hideous and black Representations. Thus was *Saul* vexed by *an evil Spirit from the Lord*, which (as most conceive) was the Devil working in his *melancholy Humour*. That the Devil should take Possession of the Bodies of Men,

and

(*a*) Vid. *Clark's Lives.*

and thus act, drive, trouble and distress them; so distort, distend, and rack their Members; so seat himself in their Tongues and Minds, that a Man cannot command his own Faculties and Powers, but seems to be rather changed into the Nature of a Devil, than to retain any Thing of a Man; this shews a Power in him to be trembled at.

Satan's Power being thus explained and proved, I shall next speak something of his Cruelty.

CHAP. VI.

Of Satan's Cruelty. Instances thereof in his dealing with wounded Spirits, in ordinary Temptations of the Wicked and Godly, in Persecutions, Cruelties in Worship. His cruel handling of his Slaves.

HE that shall consider his Malice and Power; must unavoidably conclude him to be *cruel*. *Malice* is always so, where it hath the Advantage of a *proportionable* Strength and Opportunity for the effecting of its hateful Contrivances: It banisheth all Pity and Commiseration, and follows only the Dictate of its own Rage with such Fierceness, that it is only limited by wanting Power to execute. We may then say of Satan, That according to his Malice and Power such is his Cruelty. The Truth of this will be abundantly manifested by Instances: As,

First, From his desperate *Pursuits* of Advantage, upon those whose Spirits are *wounded*. The Anguish of a distressed Conscience is unspeakably great, in so much, that many are (as *Heman*, Psal. lxxxviii. 15.) *even distracted, while they suffer the Terrors of the Almighty*. These tho' they look round about them for Help, and invite all that pass by to pity them, *because the Hand of the Lord hath touched them*; yet Satan *laughs* at their *Calamity*, and *mocks* at them under their *Fears*, and doth all he can to augment the Flame: He suggests dreadful Thoughts of an incensed Majesty; begets terrible Apprehensions of infinite Wrath and Damnation; he aggravates all their Sins, to make them seem unpardonable: Every *Action* he calls a *Sin*, and every *Sin* he represents as a *wilful* forsaking of God; and every *deliberate* Transgression he tells them is *the Sin against the Holy Ghost*. He *baffles* them in their Prayers and Services,

vices, and then *accuſeth* their Duties for intollerable Profanations of God's Name; and if they be at laſt affrighted from them, he then clamours that they are *forſaken of God*, becauſe they have forſaken him: He (as *a right Baalzebub*) rakes in their Wounds, as Flies are ever ſucking where there is a Sore. Their Outcries and Lamentations are ſuch Muſick to him, that he gives them no Reſt; and with ſuch Triumph doth he tread upon thoſe that thus ly in the Duſt, that he makes them ſometimes accuſe themſelves for that which they *never did*, and in Deriſion he inſults over them in their greateſt Perplexities, with this, *Where is now thy God?* and *who ſhall deliver thee out of my Hand?* This were enough to evidence him altogether void of Compaſſion. But,

Secondly, He ſhews no leſs Cruelty in his *Uſage* of thoſe that are his *Slaves*. The Service that he exacts of thoſe that are his moſt willing Servants, is no leſs than the higheſt Cruelty; and not only (1.) In regard of the *Miſery* and Deſtruction which he makes them work out for themſelves, (which is far greater, than where Men are forced by the moſt brutiſh Tyrants, to *buy their own Poiſon*, or to *cut their own Throats*; becauſe this is unſpeakably leſs than the endleſs Miſeries of eternal Torments:) But (2.) Alſo in regard of the very Slavery and *drudging Toil* of the Service which he exacts from them; he is not pleaſed that they *ſin*, but the *vileſt* Iniquities, moſt contrary to God, and moſt abominable to Man, as the higheſt Violations of the Laws of Nature and Reaſon, are the Things which he will put them upon, where there are no Reſtraints in his Way: He drave the Heathens (as *Paul* teſtifies *Rom.* i.) to Affections ſo *vile* and loathſom, that in their Way of ſinning, they ſeemed to act rather like *Brutes* than *Men*, their Minds becoming ſo *injudicious*, that they loſt all Senſe of what was fit and comely. Neither (3.) Doth this ſatisfy his Cruelty that the worſt of Abominations be practiſed, but he urgeth them to the *higheſt Deſperateneſs* in the Manner of Performance, and ſo draws them out to the *Front* of the Battle, that they might contemn and *out dare God* to his Face; he will have them ſin with an *high Hand*, and in the higheſt *Bravado* of Madneſs to ruſh into Sin, as *the Horſe into the Battle.* This Cruelty of Satan were yet the leſs, if he only brought them forth preſumptuouſly, in ſome *one* or two ſet Battles upon *ſpecial* Occaſions; But (4.) He would

have

have this to be their *constant Work*, the Task of every Day; upon the same *Score* that *Achitophel* advised *Absalom*, to an open and avouched Defilement of his Father's Concubines, that so the *Breach* 'twixt them and God might be *fixed* by a resolute *Determination*; and consequently, that their Hands might be strong, and their Hearts hardened in Rebellion against God. And (5.) That Satan might not come short of the utmost of what Cruelty could do: We may yet further observe, that tho' Sinners *offer themselves willingly* enough, to conflict against God in *the high Places of the Field*, yet as not satisfied with their Forwardness, he *lasheth* and whips them on to their Work, and sometime *over-drives* them in their own Earnestness. *Haman* was so hurried and overborn with violent Hatred against *Mordecai* and the *Jews*, Esth. v. 13. that his own Advancement, and the Marks of singular Favour from the King availed him not, as to any *Satisfaction* and present Contentment. *Ahab*, tho' King of *Israel*, is so vehemently urged in his Desires for *Naboth*'s Vineyard, that he covered his Face and grew sick upon it. Thus, as *Gally-Slaves*, were they *chained* to their Oar, and forced to their Work beyond their own Strength.

Thirdly, There is also a Cruelty seen in his *incessant Provokings* and Force upon the *Children of God*, while he urgeth his loathed Temptations upon them against their Will. When I consider *Paul's* Out-cry in this Case, (*Rom.* vii. 15, 19.) *That which I do, I allow not, the Evil which I would not, that do I*, &c. my Thoughts represent him to me, like those Christians that were tortured in the *Trough*, where Water was poured by a continued Stream upon their Mouths, till the *Cloth* that lay upon their Lips was *forced down their Throats*; or like those that had stinking *Puddle-water* by a Tunnel poured into their Stomachs, till they were ready to *burst*; and surely he apprehended himself to be under very cruel Dealing by Satan, when he cried out, *O wretched Man that I am! Who shall deliver me?* If we seriously consider the Mind and Endeavours of those Children of God, that are *striving* against Sin, and have cast it off as the most *loathsom* abominable Thing, when Satan urgeth them to Evil with his incessant Importunities; it is as if they were forced to *eat their own Excrements*, or to *swallow* down again their own *Vomit*; for the Devil doth

doth but (as it were) *cram* these Temptations down their Throats against their Will.

Fourthly, If we cast our Eye upon the *Persecutions* of all Ages, we shall have thence enough to charge Satan withal, in point of Cruelty; for he, who is stiled a *Murderer from the Beginning*, set them all on Foot; 'tis he that hath filled the *World* with Blood and Fury, and hath in all Ages, in one Place or other, made it a very *Shambles* and *Slaughter-house* of Men. (1.) Can we reckon *how often* Satan hath been at this Work? that is impossible. His most *publick* and general Attempts of this Kind are noted by *Histories* of all Ages. The Persecutions of *Pharaoh* against *Israel*, and of the prevailing Adversaries of *Israel* and *Judah*, against both or either of them, are recorded for the most Part in Scripture: The Persecutions of the *Roman Emperors* against Christianity are sufficiently known, and what is yet to come, who can tell? A great Persecution by *Antichrist* was the general Belief and Expectation of those that lived in *Austin's* Time, and long before (*a*); but whether this be one more, to the ten former Persecutions (that so the Parallel betwixt these, and *Pharaoh's* Ruin in the Red-Sea after his ten Plagues, might run even) be only to be looked for, or that others are also to be expected, he thinks it would be Presumption and Rashness to determine: But however, his particular Assaults of this Nature cannot be numbred: How busy is he still at this Work, in all Times and Places? insomuch, that *he that will live godly in this World must suffer Persecution*. But (2.) If we withal consider what *Inventions* and Devices of Cruelty and Torture he hath found out, and what endless Variety of Pains and Miseries he hath prepared, (a Catalogue whereof, would fill a great Deal of Paper) we can do no less than wonder at the mercileſs Fury, and implacable Rage of him that contrived them. Satan the great *Engineer*, doth but give us the *Picture* of *his Mind* in all those *Instruments* of *Destruction*. And when we see amongst Tyrants, Ways of torturing *every Member* of the Body, and Arts of *multiplying Deaths*, that so those that perish by their Hands, might not have so much as the Mercy of a *speedy Dispatch*, but that they might *feel themselves to die*, we may reflect it upon Satan, in *Jacob's* Words to *Simeon* and *Levi*, *Cursed be his Anger, for it is fierce, and his Wrath, for it*

(*a*) De civit. Dei lib. 18 c. 52.

it is cruel. (3.) But if we consider what *Instruments* he useth, and *against whom*, we shall see Cruelty in an *higher Exaltation*: Had he used some of the *Beasts* of the Earth, or some of his *apostate Associates*, to persecute and afflict the innocent *Lambs* of Christ, it might have been much excused, from the natural *Instinct* or cursed *Antipathy* of such Agents: Or had he used only the *vilest* of the Children of Men to act his tragical Fury, the Matter had been less: But as not content with common Revenge, he persecutes *Men* by *Men*, though all of *one Blood* and *Off-spring*, and so perverts the *Ends* of Nature, making those that should be the *Comforts* and Support of Men, to be the greatest *Terror* and Curse to them; a Thing which Nature itself abhors, and in regard of which, (that the Impressions of Pity might be more permanent and efficacious) God forbade *Israel to seyth a Kid in the Mother's Milk*; nay, he hath prevailed with some of *good Inclinations*, and *rare Accomplishments* (for such were some of the persecuting *Emperors*) to be his *Deputies*, for *authorizing* the Rack, for *providing* Fire and Faggot; and (which is strange) hath prevailed so far with them, that they have been willing to *open* their Eats to the most *palpable* Lies, the grossest Forgeries, the most unreasonable Suggestions that known Malice could invent; and then after all, when they were drawn out to *Butchery*, and Slaughter by Multitudes, they have made such *Spectacles* (which might make Impressions upon an *Iron* Breast, or an *Adamant* Heart,) only *Advancements* of their *Jollity*; and as *Nero* upon the Sight of flaming *Rome*, took his Harp and made Melody: So have these tormenting Furies fired (by the Help of combustible Matter) Multitudes of such harmless Creatures, and then taken the Opportunity of their *Light*, for their *Night-sports*. And yet (methinks) the Devil hath discovered a *keener* Fury, when he hath made them rage against the *Dead*, and dig their Graves, and revenge themselves upon their *senseless Ashes*, and when they could do no more, seek to please themselves by executing their Rage against their Pictures or Statues; which Actions, though they might be condemned for *Follies*, yet are they Evidences of *highest Fury*, which commonly destroys the *Judgment*, and sacrificeth *Wit*, *Reason*, and *Honour*, upon the *Altar* of Revenge. That the Devil should so *poison* Man's Nature, that he should thus rise up against his Fellow, that

carries the same *specifick* Being with himself, shews enough of his Temper against Man, but never more than when he prevails against the Engagements of *Kindness*, *Blood*, *Affinity*, and *Relation*, to raise a Man's Enemies *out of his own House*, *the Father against the Son*, *and the Son against the Father*; *the Daughter against the Mother*, *and the Mother against the Daughter*: For this is little less than an *unnatural Mutiny* of the Members against the Body.

Fifthly, We have yet a more visible Instance of his Cruelty, in his *bloody* and tyrannical *Superstitions*. Look but into the Rites and Ways of his Worship, among the Heathen, in all Ages and Places, and you will find nothing but vile and *ridiculous* Fooleries, or *insolent* and despightful Usages. In the former he hath driven Men to *villanous Debaucheries*, in the latter to *execrable Cruelties*. Of the latter I shall only speak, (though in the former, by debasing Man to be his *Laughing-stock*, he is cruel in his Scorn and Mockery:) Here I might mention his *tyrannical* Ceremonies of the lower Order, such as *touch not Life*; such were their tedious Pilgramages, as in *Zeilan* their painful *Whippings*; as of the Youth of *Lacedæmon* at the Altar of *Diana*; of their Priests, and that with *knotted* Cords upon their Shoulders as at *Mexico*, and *New Spain*; their harsh Usages in tedious Fastings, stinking Drenches, hard Lyings upon Stones, eating Earth, strict Forbearances of Wine, and Commerce, their Torturings and *Manglings* of their Bodies by terrible Lancings and Cuttings (*a*), for the Effusion of Blood; their dismembring themselves, plucking out their Eyes, mangling their Flesh, to cast in the Idol's Face, sacrificing their own Blood, as did the Priests of *Bellona* and *Deasyria* (*b*); so did the Kings of *New-Spain* at their Election, as *Montzeuma* the second (*c*), who sacrificed by drawing Blood from his Ears, and the Calves of his Legs. In *Narsinga* and *Bisnagar*, they go their Pilgrimages with *Knives* sticking in their Arms and Legs, till the wounded Flesh fester'd (*d*). Some cast themselves under the *Wheels* of the Waggon, on which their Idol is drawn in Procession. Yet are all these but small Matters, in Comparison of the bloody Out-rages committed upon Mankind, in the abominable Custom of sacri-

(*a*) 1 *Kings* xviii. 28. (*b*) Tertul. Apolog. *cap.* 9. (*c*) Purchas. Pilgrim. Part 1. l. 8. c. 10. (*d*) Idem, Part 1. l. 5. c. 11.

facrificing Men to him (*a*). Of this, many Authors give us a large Account, the *Lacedæmonians*, to avert the Plague, facrifice a *Virgin*; the *Athenians* (by the Advice of *Apollo*'s Oracle) fent yearly to King *Minos* feven *Males*, and fo many *Females* to be facrificed to appeafe the Wrath of the God, for their killing of *Androgeus* (*b*); the *Carthaginians* (being vanquifhed by *Agathocles* King of *Sicily*) facrificed two hundred Noblemens Children at once; the *Romans* had every Year fuch Sacrifices of Men and Women (of *each Sex two*) for a long Time; and this was fo common among the wifer Pagan Nations, that whenfoever they fell into Danger, either of War, Sickneffes, or of any other Calamity, they prefently (to expiate their Offences againft their fuppofed incenfed Gods, and to clear themfelves of their prefent Miferies or Dangers,) facrificed fome mean Perfons (*c*), who for this Reafon were called *καθάρματα*, Expiations; and to this doth the *Apoftle* allude, in 1 *Cor.* iv. 13. (as *Budæus*, *Stephanus*, *Grotius*, and many others think) as if he fhould fay, we are as much *defpifed*, and loaded with Curfings, as thofe that are *facrificed* for publick *Expiation*. But what cruel Ufage may we expect for the poor barbarous Nations of the World, where he had all poffible Advantages for the Exercife of his bloody Tyranny? Many fad Inftances of this Kind are collected by *Purchas* in his Pilgrimage, in his Difcourfes of *Virginia*, *Peru*, *Braſilia*, *Mexico*, *Florida*, and other Places, whofe Stories of this Subject are fo terrible, and occur fo frequently, that they are almoft beyond all Belief; all which for Brevity's Sake I omit, contenting my felf to note one Inftance or two out of the Scripture, 2 *Kings* iii. 27. The King of *Moab took his eldeft Son that fhould have reigned in his ftead, and offered him for a Burnt-offering upon the Wall:* This he did (according to the Cuftoms of the *Phœnicians* and others,) being reduced to great Straits, as fuppofing by this Means (as his laft Refuge) to turn away the Wrath of his God. Of *Ahaz* 'tis recorded, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 3. *That he burnt his Children in the Fire, after the Abominations of the Heathen.* That this was not a *Luſtration*, or Conſecration of their Children (tho' that alfo was ufed) but a real facrificing, is without Doubt to *Joſephus*,

(*a*) Iphigenia facrificata, de qua: Sanguine placaftis ventos & virgine cæſa, *Virg.* (*b*) Plut. Paral. c. 66. (*c*) *Goodwin's* Moſes and Aaron, l. 3. c. 8.

4thly, In some Places the Devil brought them to *set Times* for those Offerings; some were *monthly*, some *annual*. The *Latins* sacrificed the *tenth* Child; the *annual* Drowning of a Boy and a Girl in the Lake of *Mexico*; the casting of Two *yearly* from the *pons Milvius* at *Rome* into *Tyber*, are but petty Instances in Comparison of the rest.

5thly, We cannot pass by the *vast Number* of Men offered up at *one* Time; so thirsty is Satan of humane Blood, that from *one* or *two*, he hath raised the Number incredibly high; in some Sacrifices *five*, in some *ten*, in some a *hundred*, in some a *thousand* have been offered up. It was the Argument which *Montezuma* the last Emperor of *Mexico* used to *Cortez*, to prove his Strength and Greatness by, that he sacrificed yearly *twenty thousand* Men, and some Years *fifty thousand*. Some have reserved their *Captives* for that End; others have made *War*, only to furnish themselves with Men for such Occasions.

6thly, There are also several *Circumstances* of these diabolical Outrages, that may give a further Discovery of his Cruelty, as that these miserable Creatures thus led to be butchered, have been *loaden* with all the Cursings, Revilings, and contumacious Reproaches, as a necessary Concomitant of their violent Deaths. Thus were those used, who were forced to be the publick καθάρματα, or Expiation, for the Removal of common Calamities. Death also was not enough, except it had been most *tormenting* in the Manner of it, as of those that suffered by the Embracements of *Moloch*, the *Joy* and *Feastings* of such Sacrificings (which were in themselves Spectacles of Mourning and Sorrow) were *Cruelties to the Dead*, and a *barbarous Enforcement* against the *Laws* of Nature in the Living. But the dashing of the *smoaking* Heart in the *Idol's Face*, and the pulling off the *Skins* from the massacred Bodies, that Men and Women might *dance* in them, were yet more cruel Ceremonies. And *lastly*, In those that have been prepared for those Solemnities, by *delicious Fare*, *gorgeous Ornaments*, and the *highest Reverence* or Honours (as was the Manner of several Countries) yet was this no other than Satan's *insulting* over their Miseries, of which we can say no otherwise, than that his *tendereſt Mercies are Cruelties*.

7thly, I may cast in to the Account, that in some Places Satan (by a strange Madness of Devotion) hath perswaded some to be *Volunteers* in suffering these Tortures and Deaths. Some have cast themselves under the Chariot wheels of their Idols,

Idols, and ſo have been cruſhed to Pieces (*a*). Some *ſacrificed themſelves* to their gods, firſt they cut off ſeveral Pieces of their Fleſh, crying every Time, *For the Worſhip of my god, I cut this my Fleſh*; and at laſt ſay, *Now do I yield myſelf to Death in the Behalf of my god*, and ſo kills himſelf outright.

Stbly, It is wonderful to think, that the Devil ſhould (by ſtrange *Pretexts of Reaſon*) have *ſmoothed* over theſe barbarous Inhumanities, ſo that they have become *plauſible* Things in the Judgments of thoſe miſerable Wretches. In piacular Sacrifices, they believed, that except the *Life* of a Man were given for the *Life* of Men, that the gods could not be pacified (*b*). In other Sacrifices, both Euchariſtical, and for Atonement, they retained this Principle, That *thoſe Things are to be offered to the gods, that are moſt pleaſing and acceptable to us; and that the offering of a Calf or a Pigeon, was not ſuitable to ſuch an End.* This Maxim they further improved, by the Addition of another of the ſame Kind, *That if it were fit to offer an Human Sacrifice, it muſt alſo be innocent; and conſequently little Children are the fitteſt for ſuch a Purpoſe* (*c*). And ſome have alſo conjectured, that the Devil hath not been a wanting to *improve* the Example of *Abraham* ſacrificing his Son, or the Law in *Lev.* xxvii. 28. (*d*), or the Prophecies concerning the Death of Chriſt, as the great Sacrifice of Atonement, to *juſtify* and warrant his helliſh Cruelty. In ſome Caſes, *Cruelty* hath ariſen from the very *Principles of Reverence and Love*, which Children have to Parents, and Friends to Friends (*e*): As in *Dragoian*, when any are ſick, they ſend to their Oracle, to know whether the Parties ſhall live or die; if it be anſwered they ſhall die, then their Friends ſtrangle them and eat them; and all this from a Kind of religious Reſpect to their Kindred, to preſerve (as they imagine) their Fleſh from Putrifaction, and their Souls from Torment. The like they do at *Java Major*, when their Friends grow old and cannot work; only they eat not their own Friends, but carry them to the Market, and ſell them to thoſe that do eat them (*f*).

Laſtly, Let us call to Mind *how long* the Devil domineer'd in the World at this rate of Cruelty. When the World grew to a freer Uſe of Reaſon, and greater Exerciſe of Civility,

(*a*) *Purchas* Pilgr. part 1. l. 5. c. 11. (*b*) Pro vita hominum niſi vita hominis reddatur, non poſſe Deorum numen placari, arbitrantur. (*c*) *Jean D'Eſpan.* popular Errors, c. 19. (*d*) Vid. *Lud. Capel.* de voto *Jephtæ* § 9. Vid. *Pool* Synopſ. Crit. on 2 *Kings* 3. 27. (*e*) *Purchas* Pilg. part 1. l. 5. c. 16. (*f*) *Purchas* ibid.

vility; they found out Ways of Mitigation, and changed these barbarous Rites into more tolerable Sacrifices; as in *Laodicea*, they substituted an *Hart* to be sacrificed instead of a *Virgin*; in *Cyprus*, an *Ox* was put instead of a *Man*; in *Egypt*, *waxen Images* instead of *Men*; Images of *Straw* at *Rome* were cast into *Tyber*, in the place of living Men; and the terrible Burnings of *Moloch* (which was not peculiar only to the Nations near to *Canaan*, but was in use also at *Carthage*, and found in the *American Islands* by the *Spaniards*; the like brazen Images were also found in *Ludovicus Vives* (*a*) his Time by the *French*, in an *Island* called by them *Carolina.*) These were at last changed into a *Februation*, and instead of burning their Children, they only passed them betwixt two Fires; but it was long before it came to this. In the Time of *Socrates*, human Sacrifices were in use at *Carthage*, and they continued in the *Roman* Provinces till the Time of *Tertullian*, *Eusebius* and *Lactantius*, tho' they had been severely forbidden by *Augustus Cæsar*, and afterward by *Tiberius*, who was forced to crucify some of the Priests that dared to offer such Sacrifices, to affright them from those barbarous Customs. In other Places of the World, how long such Things continued, who can tell, especially seeing they were found at *Carolina* not so very long since?

How impossible is it to cast up the *total Sum* of so many large *Items*? When these terrible Customs have had so *general* a Practice in *most* Nations, upon so *many* Occasions, upon such seeming *plausible Principles*, when such *great* Numbers have been destroyed at *once*, and these Usages have been *so long* practised in the World, and with such *Difficulty* restrained; what vast Multitudes of Men must we imagine have been consumed by Satan's execrable Cruelty?

6thly, There remains one Instance more of the Devil's Cruelty, which is yet different from the former, which I may call his *personal Cruelties*, because they are acted by his own *immediate Hand* upon certain of his Vassals, without the Help or Interposure of Men, who (in most of the forementioned Cases) have been as Instruments acted by him. Here I might take Notice of his Fury to those that are *possessed*: Some have been as it were *racked* and tortured in their Bodies, and their Limbs and Members so distorted, that it hath been not only Matter of *Pity* to the Beholders

(*a*) *Diod. Siculus.* Biblioth. l. 20. *Lod. Vives* on *Aug.* de Civ. Dei. l. 7. c. 19.

holders to ſee them ſo abuſed, but alſo of *Admiration*, to conſider how ſuch Abuſes ſhould be conſiſtent with their Lives, and that ſuch Rendings and Tearings have not quite ſeparated the Soul from the Body. In the *Goſpels* we read of ſome ſuch *caſt into the Fire*, and *into the Water*; others converſing *with Tombs* and *Sepulchres* in the *cold* Nights without *Cloaths*; and all of them ſpoken of as Creatures ſadly tormented, and *miſerably vexed*. The Hiſtories of later Days tell us of ſome, that vomited *crooked Pins*, *Pieces of Leather*, *Coals*, *Cloth*, and ſuch like; of others *ſnatched* out of their Houſes, and tired even to fainting, and waſte of their Spirits, as *Domina Roſſa* (mentioned by *Bodin*) with a great many more to this ſame Purpoſe. We may take a View of his dealing with *Witches*, who (tho' he ſeem to gratify them in their Tranſportations from Place to Place, and in their Feaſtings with Muſick and Dancing) are but cruelly handled by him very often; the very Work they are put upon (which is the Deſtruction of Children, Men, Women, Cattle, and the Fruits of the Earth) is but a *baſe Imployment*; but the Account he takes of them, of the full Performance of their Enterprizes, and the cruel Beatings they have of him, when they cannot accompliſh any of their Revenges, is no leſs than a *ſevere* Cruelty. He gives them no Reſt, unleſs they be doing Hurt; and when they cannot do it to the Perſons deſigned, they are forced to do the ſame Miſchief to their *own* Children or Relations, that they may gratify their tyrannical Maſter. *Bodin (a)* relates the Story of a *French Baron* (who was afterward put to Death for Witchcraft) that after he had killed *eight* Children, was at laſt upon a Deſign of ſacrificing his *own Child* to the Devil; and if at any Time they grew *weary* of ſo execrable a Slavery, or confeſs their Wickedneſs, they are ſo miſerably tormented, that they chuſe rather *to die than live*. And what elſe but Cruelty can theſe Slaves expect from him, when the *Ceremonies* of their Entrance into that curſed Service, betokens nothing elſe; for their Bonds and Obligations are uſually writ or ſubſcribed with their *own Blood*, and ſome magical Books have been writ with the *Blood* of many Children; beſides, the Farewel that they have of him at their uſual Meetings, is commonly this thundering Threatning, *Avenge your ſelves, or you ſhall die.* All theſe

(*a*) Pag. 180.

theſe Particulars are collected from the Confeſſions of Witches, by *Bodin*, *Wierus*, and others.

But leaving theſe, let us further enquire into Satan's Carriage toward thoſe that in *America*, and other dark and barbarous Places, know no other god, and give their devouteſt Worſhip to him. To thoſe he is not ſo kind as might be expected, but his conſtant Way is to *terrify* and *torment* them, inſomuch, that ſome know no other Reaſon of their Worſhip, but that he may *not hurt them.* And ſince the *Engliſh Colonies* went into theſe Parts, theſe *Americans* have learned to make this Diſtinction between the *Engliſhman's* God and theirs, that theirs is an *evil god*, and the other a *good God* (*a*); tho' that Diſtinction in other Places is in the general far more ancient, where they acknowledge *two Gods*, one good, the other bad; and the worſe the god is, the *ſaddeſt*, moſt *mournful* Rites of ſacrificing were uſed, as in *Caves*, and in the *Night*, the Manner of the Worſhip fitly expreſſing the Nature of the god they ſerved. Our Countrymen have noted of the Natives of *New England*, that the Devil appeared to them in *ugly Shapes*, and in hideous Places, as in *Swamps* and *Woods.* But theſe are only the Prologue to the *Tragedy* itſelf; for they only ſerve to impreſs upon the Minds of his Worſhippers, what Cruelties and Severities they are to expect from him; and accordingly he often lets them feel his Hand, and makes them know, that thoſe dark and diſmal *Preludiums* are not for nothing; for ſometime he appears to the Worſhippers, *tormenting* and *afflicting* their Bodies, *tearing the Fleſh from the Bones*, and *carrying them away quick* with him (*b*); ſometime *ſix* have been carried away at once, none ever knowing what became of them. By ſuch bloody Acts as theſe, he kept the poor *Americans* in Fear and Slavery; ſo that as bad a Maſter as he is, they durſt not but pay their Homage and Service to him. All theſe Particulars being put together, will ſhew we do the Devil no Wrong when we call him cruel.

(*a*) *Porphyrius* l. 2. de Abſtinent. *Plutarchus. Lod. Vives* in *Aug.* de Civ. Dei. l. 8. c. 13. (*b*) *Wonder-working. prov. for N. E.* lib. 1. cap. 10.

CHAP. VII.

Of Satan's Diligence in ſeveral Inſtances. The Queſtion about the Being of Spirits and Devils handled. The Sadducees *Opinion diſcovered. The Reality of Spirits proved.*

THE laſt Particular obſerved in the Text, is his Diligence. This adds Force and Strength to his Malice, Power, and Cruelty, and ſhews they are not idle, dead, or *unactive Principles* in him, which (if they could be ſo ſuppoſed) would render him leſs hurtful and formidable. This I ſhall diſpatch in a few Inſtances, noting to this Purpoſe.

Firſt, His *Pains* he takes in *hunting* his Prey, and purſuing his Deſigns: 'Tis nothing for him to *compaſs Sea and Land*, to labour to the utmoſt in his Imployment; 'tis all his Buſineſs to tempt and deſtroy, and his whole Heart is in it. Hence Intermiſſion or Ceſſation cannot be expected, he *faints* not by his Labour, and his Labour with the Succeſs of it, is all the Delight we can ſuppoſe him to have: So that being puſhed and hurried by the helliſh Satisfactions of *deadly Revenge*, and having a *Strength* anſwerable to thoſe *violent Impulſes*, we muſt ſuppoſe him to undergo (with a Kind of pleaſing Willingneſs) all imaginable *Toil* and *Labour*. If we look into ourſelves we find it true, to our no ſmall Trouble and Hazard: Doth he at any Time *eaſily* deſiſt, when we give him a Repulſe? Doth he not come *again and again*, with often and impudently repeated Importunities? Doth he not carry a Deſign in his Mind for *Months* and *Years* againſt us? and when the Motion is not *feaſible*, yet he *forgets* it not, but after a long Interruption begins again where he left, which ſhews that he is big with his Projects, and *his Mind hath no reſt:* He ſtretcheth out his Nets all the Day long: We may ſay of him, that he *riſeth up early, and ſitteth up late* at his Work, and is content to labour in the *very Fire*, ſo that he might but either *diſturb* a Child of God, or *gain* a Proſelyte.

Secondly, Diligence is not only diſcovered in Laborioſneſs, but alſo in a *peculiar Readineſs* to eſpy, and to cloſe in with fit Occaſions, which may, in Probability, anſwer the End we drive at. In this is Satan admirably diligent, no

Occaſion

Occaſion ſhall ſlip, or through Inadvertancy eſcape him: No ſooner are Opportunities *before us*, but we may perceive him *ſuggeſting* to us, *Do this, ſatisfy that Luſt, take that Gain, pleaſe yourſelves with that Revenge.* No ſooner obtains he a Commiſſion againſt a Child of God, but preſently he is upon his Back, as he dealt with *Job*, he loſt no Time, but goes out immediately from the Preſence of the Lord and falls upon him. Beſides what he doth upon *ſolemn* and extraordinary Occaſions, theſe that are common and ordinary are ſo carefully improved by him, that every Thing we *hear* or *ſee* is ready to become our *Snare*, and Satan will eſſay to tempt us by them, tho' they ly ſomething *out of the Way* of our Inclination, and be not ſo likely to prevail with us

Thirdly, 'Tis alſo a Diſcovery of his Diligence, that he never fails to purſue every *Advantage* which he gets againſt us, to the *utmoſt*. If the Occaſion and Motion thereupon incline us, ſo that if we are perſwaded by them, he follows it on, and is not ſatisfied, with either a *lower Degree* of acting ſinfully, or with *one* or *two* Acts; but then he preſſeth upon us *to ſin to the Height*, with the greater Contempt of God, and Grievance of his Spirit, the greater Scandal and Offence to our Brethren; and having once cauſed us to *begin*, he would never have us to make *an End*. His Temptations roll themſelves upon us, like the *breaking in of Waters*, which by the Fierceneſs of their Current, make a *large Way* for more to follow. He knows how to improve his *Victories*, and will not thorow Slothfulneſs, or Pity, neglect to compleat them. Hence it is, that ſometimes he reaps a *large Harveſt* where he had *ſown little*, and from *one* Temptation, not only wounds the Soul of him that *committed* it, but endeavours to diffuſe the Venom and poiſonous Steam of it to the *Infection of others*, to the Diſgrace of Religion, the hardning the Hearts of wicked Men, and the turning the Ignorant out of the Way of Truth. In like Manner, if he perceive the Spirits of Men grow diſtempered and wounded, he then plys them with Threatnings, fills them with all Manner of Diſcouragements, dreſſeth every Truth with the worſt Appearance, that it may be apprehended otherwiſe than it is, and puts ſuch Interpretations on all Providences, that every Thing may augment the Smart of the Wound till they be overwhelmed with Terrors.

Fourthly, The *various Ways* which he takes, ſhews alſo his Diligence; if one Plot take not, he is immediately upon another; he confines not himſelf to *one* Deſign, nor to *one* Method; but if he find one Temptation doth not reliſh, he prepares another more *ſuitable*; if *Covetouſneſs* doth not pleaſe us, then he urgeth to *Profuſeneſs*; if *Terrors* do not affright us to Deſpair, then he abuſeth *Mercies* to make us careleſs and preſuming. If we are not content to be *openly* wicked, then he endeavours to make us *ſecretly* Hypocritical, or Formal; ſometime he urgeth Men to be *Profane*, if that hit not, then to be *erroneous*; if he cannot work by one Tool, then he takes another, and if any Thing in his Way diſguſt, he will not urge it over-hard, but ſtraight takes another Courſe; ſuch is his Diligence, that we may ſay of him (as it was ſaid of *Paul* upon a better Ground) he will *become all Things to all Men, that he may gain ſome.*

Fifthly, Diligence will moſt ſhew itſelf when Things are at the *greateſt Hazard*, or when the *Hopes* of Succeſs are *ready to bring forth.* In this Point of Diligence our Adverſary is not wanting; if Men are upon the *Point* of Error or Sin, how induſtriouſly doth he labour to bring them *wholly* over, and to ſettle them in Evil? One would think at ſuch Times he laid aſide all other Buſineſs and only attended this: How frequent, inceſſant, and earneſt are his Perſwaſions and Arguings with ſuch? the like Diligence he ſheweth in obſtructing, diſturbing, and diſcouraging us, when we are upon our greateſt Services, or near our greateſt Mercies, what Part of the Day are we more wandring and vain in our Thoughts, (if we take not great Care) than when we ſet about Prayer? At other Times we find ſome more Eaſe and Freedom in our Imaginations, as if we could better rule or command them; but then (as if our Thoughts were only Confuſion and Diſorder) we are not able to maſter them, and to keep the Door of the Heart ſo cloſe, but that theſe troubleſome unwelcome Gueſts will be crouding in, is impoſſible: Let us obſerve it ſeriouſly, and we ſhall find that our Thoughts are not the ſame, and after the ſame Manner impetuous at other Times as they are, when we ſet about holy Things, which ariſeth not only from the *Quickneſs* of our *ſpiritual Senſe* in our readier Obſervation of them at that Time, but alſo from the Devil's *buſy Moleſtation*, and ſpecial Diligence againſt us on ſuch Occaſions. Beſides, when he foreſees our Advantages or Mercies, he beſtirs him-

himself to prevent or hinder us of them; if Ministers set themselves to study and preach Truths that are more *pier-cing*, *weighty* or *necessary*, they may observe more *Molesta-tions*, *Interruptions*, or *Discouragements* of all Sorts, than when they less concern themselves with the Business of the Souls of Men. He foresees what *Sermons* are provided, and often doth he upon such Foresight endeavour to turn off *those* from hearing, that have *most need*, and are most likely to receive Benefit by them. Many have noted it, that those *Sermons* and Occasions that have done them most good, (when they came to them) they have been some Way or other most *dissuaded from*, and *resolved* against be-fore they came; and then when they have broken through their strongest Hinderances, they have found that all their Obstruction was Satan's *diligent Foresight*, to hinder them of such a Blessing as they have, beyond Hope, met withal. The like might be observed of the constant *Returns* of the *Lord's Day*, if Men watch not against it, they may meet with more than ordinary, either *Avocations* to prevent and hinder them, or *Disturbances* to annoy and trouble, or *bo-dily Indispositions* to incapacitate and unfit them: And 'tis not to be contemned, that some have observed themselves more apt to be *drowsy*, dull or sleepy *on that Day* Others have noted greater *bodily Indispositions* then ordinarily, than at other Times; all which make no unlikely Conjecture of the Devil's special Diligence against us on such Occasions.

Let's cast in another Instance to these, and that is, of those that are upon the Point of Conversion, ready to forsake Sin for Christ. Oh! what Pains then doth the Devil take to keep them back? He visits them every Moment with one Hindrance or other; sometimes they are tempted to *former Pleasures*, sometimes affrighted with *present Fears* and *fu-ture Disappointments*; sometimes discouraged with *Re-proaches*, Scorns and Afflictions that may attend their Al-teration; otherwhile *obstructed* by the Persuasion or Threat-ning of *Friends* and old Acquaintances; but this they are sure of, that they have never *more Temptations*, and those more *sensibly* troubling than at that Time; a clear Evidence that Satan is as diligent as malicious. I should now go on to display the Subtility of this powerful, malicious, cruel and diligent Adversary. There is but one Thing in the Way, which hitherto I have taken for granted, and that is, *Whe-ther indeed there be any such Things as Devils and wic-*

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ked Spirits, or that these are but theological Engines contrived by Persons that carry a good Will to Morality, and the publick Peace, to keep Men under an awful Fear of such Miscarriages, as may render them otherwise a Shame to themselves, and a Trouble to others. It must be acknowledged a Transgression of the Rules of *Method* to offer a Proof of that now, which (if at all) ought to have been proved in the *Beginning* of the Discourse: And indeed the Question at this length, whether there be a Devil, hath such Affinity with that other, (tho' for the Matter they are as different as *Heaven* and *Hell*) *whether there be a God*, that as it well deserves a Confirmation, (for the Use that may be made of it to evidence that there is a God, because we feel there is a *Devil*) so would it require a serious Endeavour to perform it substantially. But it would be not only a needless Labour, to *levy an Army* against professed *Atheists*, who with high Scorn and Derision roundly deny both God and Devils; seeing others have frequently done that, but also it would occasion too large a Digression from our present Design. I shall therefore only speak a few Things to those that *own a God*, and yet deny *such a Devil* as we have described, and yet not to all of these neither; for there were many Heathens who were confident Assertors of a *Deity*, that nevertheless denied the Being of Spirits, as *severed from Corporeity*; and others were so far from the Acknowledgement of *Devils*, that they confounded them in the *Number of their Gods*; others there were, who gave such Credit to the frequent Relations of Apparitions, and *Disturbances* of that Kind, that many had attested and complained of, that they expressed more Ingenuity than *Lucian*, (who pertinaciously refused to believe, because he never saw them) and yet tho' they believed something of Reality, in that that was the Affrightment and Trouble of others, they nevertheless ascribed such extraordinary Things to *natural Causes*: Some (*a*) to the Powers of the *Heavens* and Stars in their Influences upon natural Bodies, or by the *Mediation* of certain Herbs, Stones, Minerals, Creatures, Voices and Characters, under a special Observation of the *Motion* of the Planets. Some* refer such Things to the *Subtility and Quickness* of the *Senses* of hearing and seeing, which might create Forms and Images of Things, or discover (I know not what) Reflections from the Sun and Moon. Some fancy

(*a*) *The Peripaticks. Porphyrius.* * *Aug.* De Civ. Dei, I. 10. c. 11. *Galen.*

fancy (*a*) the Shapes and Visions to be *exuviæ*, thin *Scales* or Skins of *natural* Things, giving Representations of the Bodies that cast them off, or *Exhalations* from Sepulchres representing the Shape of the Body †. Others (*b*) make them the *Effects* of our untrusty and *deceitful Senses*, the Debility and Corruption whereof, they conclude to be such, and so general, that most Men are in Hazard to be imposed upon by delusive Appearances. But with far greater Shew of Likelihood, do some (*c*) make all such Things to be nothing else but the *Issues of melancholly and corrupt Humours*, which makes Men believe they hear, see, and suffer strange Things, when there is nothing near them; or really to undergo strange Fits, as in *Lunacy* and *Epilepsy* (*d*). Leaving these Men as not capable of Information from Scripture-evidence, because disowning it; let us enquire what mistaken Apprehensions there have been in this Matter, among those that have pretended a Reverence to, and Belief of Scripture: The *Sadducees* deserve the first Place, because they are by Name noted in Scripture to have *denied the Resurrection*, and to have *affirmed that there is neither Angel nor Spirit*, Acts xxiii. 8. Matth. xxii. 23.

This Opinion of theirs (could we certainly find it out) would make much for the Confirmation of the Truth in Question, seeing (whatever it was) it is *positively condemned* in Scripture, and the contrary asserted to be true. Many (and that upon considerable Grounds) do think, that they do not deny absolutely that there were any *Angels at all*, but that acknowledging that something there was which was *called an Angel*, yet they imagining it to be *far otherwise* than what it is indeed, were accused justly for denying such a *Kind of Angels* as the Scripture had every where asserted and described: For considering that they owned a *God*, and (at least) the *five Books of Moses*, if not all the other Books of the Old Testament, (as *Scaliger* and others judge (*e*), not without great Probability; for neither doth the Scripture, nor *Josephus*, mention any such Thing of the Prophets) it is unimaginable that they would altogether deny that there was *Angel or Spirit* at all They read of *Angels* appearing to *Lot*, to *Abraham*, and met with it so frequently, that believing the *Scriptures* to be *true*, they could

(*a*) *Pomponatius. Epicureans.* † *Cardan.* (*b*) *Academicks.* (*c*) *Averroes.* (*d*) *Cassius* ad Brutum ex *Plutarch.* in vita Bruti. (*e*) Vid. *Scaligeram*, dub Evang. Part 3. dub. 29.

could not believe *Angels* to be an *absolute Fiction*; for *one Fable* or *Falsity* in Scripture (which so highly asserts itself to be an *unerring Oracle* of the true God) must of Necessity have *destroyed* the Credit of all, and rendred them as justly suspected to be true in *nothing*, when apparently false or fabulous in *any Thing*.

Again, If we call to Mind what *Apprehensions* they had of *God*, (which all consent they did acknowledge) we might more easily imagine what Apprehensions they had of *Angels*; for in Regard that *Moses* made Mention of *God's Face* and *Back-parts* (*a*), and that frequently *Hands* and other *Parts* of Man's Body were attributed to him, they concluded God to be *corporeal*; and seeing the best of Creatures which God created cannot be supposed to have a more *noble Being* than was that of their *Creator*, and at the utmost, to be made according to the Pattern of his own *Image* and Likeness, they might upon this Bottom easily fix a Denial of *incorporeal Spirits*, and by Consequence that the *Soul of Man* was *mortal*; and therefore that there could be no *Resurrection*; so that the Nature of *Angels* being described under the Notion of *spiritual Substances*, they are judged to deny any such Thing, supposing that to be *incorporeal*, was as much as *not to be at all*; and yet it were unreasonable to deny, that they had not some *Interpretation* for these Passages of Scripture that mentioned *Angels*, which in their Apprehensions might be some *Salvo* to the Truth of those historical Writings, which they acknowledged, but what that was, we are next to conjecture: And indeed *Josephus* (*b*) by a little Hint of their Opinion seems to tell us, that they did not so much deny the *Being of the Soul* as the *Permanency* of it, and so by Consequence they might not so much deny *absolutely the Existence* of Spirits as their *natural Being and Continuance*. Something there was that was called by the Name of *Angel*, (that they could not but own) and that this must be a *real*, and not an *imaginary* Thing, is evident from the *real Effects* and Things done by them; yet observing their *Appearances* to have been upon some *special* Occasion, and their *disappearing* to have been on a *Sudden*, they might conjecture them to be *created by God for the present Service*, and then *reduced to nothing* when that Service was done.

Their

(*a*) Exod. 33. (*b*) Lib 2. de Bello Jud. c. 7. Ψυχῆς τε τὴν διαμονὴν, καὶ τὰς ὑπὸ γῆν δίκας τιμωρίας καὶ τιμὰς ἀραιρῆσθαι.

Their Opinion then of Angels seems to be one of these *two*, Either that they were *corporeal Substances* created upon a *special Emergency*, but not *permanent* Beings; or that they were but *Images* and *Impressions* supernaturally formed in the *Fancy* by the special *Operation* of God, to signify his Mind and Commands to Men, upon which they might fitly be called God's *Messengers* and *Ministers*. I put in this last into the Conjecture, because I find it mentioned by *Calvin (a)*, as the Opinion of the *Sadduces*, but both are noted by *Diodate* on *Acts* xxiii. 8. as with equal Probability belonging to them; his Words are, *They did not believe they were subsisting and immortal Creatures, but transitory Apparitions, or some Divine Actions and Motions to produce some special and notable Effect.*

Others also have been lately *hammering* out the *same Apprehension* concerning Angels, and profess themselves delivered from it with great Difficulty (*b*), differing only in this from some of the Heathens before-mentioned, that what those ascribed to the *Puissance* of the Stars, natural Powers, or to Weakness of Senses and corrupt Humours, they (by the Advantage of the general Notions of Scripture) have *ascribed to God*, putting forth his *Power upon the Minds and Fancies of Men*, or working by the *Humours* of the Body: Upon this Foundation they will easilier make bold with Devils to deny, if *not their Being, yet their Temptations*, imagining that we may possibly do him wrong, in fathering upon him these Solicitations and Provocations to Sin, which we by Experience find to be working and acting upon our Minds, thinking that our own *Fancies* or Imaginations may be the *only Devils* that vex us; and this they more readily hearken to, from the Nature of *Dreams* and Visions which happen to Men in an ordinary natural Way, where our Fancies *play* with us as if they were *distinct* from us: As also from this Consideration, that the *Lunatick, Epileptick* and *Frenzical* Persons are in Scripture called Demoniacks, as *Matth* xvii. 15. with *Luke* ix. where the the Person is called *Lunatick*, and yet said to be taken and *vexed by a Spirit*: So also *John* x. 20. he hath *a Devil, and is mad*: But these Reasonings can do little with an intelligent considering Man, to make him deny what he so really

(*a*) Instit. l. 1. c. 14. § 9. Fuit illa quidem olim Sadducæorum opinio, per Angelos nihil designari quam vel motus quos Deus hominibus aspirat, vel ea quæ edit virtutis suæ specimina. (*b*) *Hobbs* Lev. c. 34. p. 212 and 214.

really feels, and is so often forewarned of in Scripture: For suppose these were called *Demoniacks* by the *Vulgar*, it doth not compel us to believe they were so. Men are apt to *ascribe* natural Diseases to Satan (*a*), and Christ did not concern himself to *cure their Misapprehensions, while he cured their Diseases.* This *some* suggest as a Reason that may answer many Cases, though indeed it cannot answer that of *Matth.* xvii. because *ver.* 18. 'tis said expresly that *Jesus rebuked the Devil, and he departed out of him*, which would not have been proper to have been spoken on the Account of Christ by the Evangelist, to express the *Cure of a natural Disease*, for so would he unavoidably have been rendred guilty of the same Mistake with the *Vulgar*. But if we should grant, that divers mentioned under the Name of *Demoniacks*, were Men disturbed with *Melancholly*, or the *Falling-Sickness*, all were not so; for those in *Matth.* viii. 31. *besought Christ after their Ejection*, to have Liberty *to go into the Herd of Swine*: So that if Mr. *Mede* intended to assert (*b*), that all *Demoniacks* were no other than *mad Men*, and *Lunaticks*: I question not but he was mistaken, and by his Reason, not only must *mad Men* and *Lunatick Persons* pass for *Demoniacks*, but *all Diseases whatsoever*; for the *Blind* and *Dumb* were called also *Demoniacks*, Matth. ix. 32. and and xii. 22. But the Matter seems to be this, that where Men were afflicted with *such Distempers*, Satan *took the Advantage* of them, and acted the *Possessed* accordingly; as he frequently takes the *Advantage* of a *melancholly Indisposition*, and works great Terrors and Affrightments by it, as in *Saul*, or at least that, where he possessed, he *counterfeited* the Fits and Furies of those *natural* Distempers, and acted, some like *mad Men*, and others he made *dumb and deaf*, (which seems to have been the Case of those in *Matth.* ix. and 12. where the *Deafness and Dumbness* did *depend* upon the *Possession*, and was *cured* with it:) Others were made to *fall on a Sudden into Fire or Water*, as those that are *Epileptick*, and therefore might such be called both *Lunatick*, or *Epileptick*, and also *possessed with a Devil.*

As to that Reason which some fetch from *Dreams*, 'tis rather a *Dream* than a *Reason* against the Being of Devils, seeing the *Effects* of these infernal Spirits are *far otherwise*, than

(*a*) Dr. *More*'s Mystery of Godliness. l. 4. c. 6. § 10. (*b*) Lib. 1. p. 85. on *John* x. 20.

than the utmoſt of what can be imagined to be acted upon the *Stage of Imaginations*; ſo that the *real* and *permanent* Being of Devils may be eaſily proved:

Firſt, From thoſe *real Acts* noted to be done by Angels and Devils. The *Angels* that appeared to *Lot*, were *ſeen* and entertained in the Family, *ſeen* and obſerved by the *Sodomites*. Thoſe that appeared to *Abraham* were more than fancied Appearances, in that they *eat and drank* with him. The Devil *conveyed* Chriſt from Place to Place; this could not be a Fancy or Imagination: Their begging Leave to go *into the Swine*, ſhews them real Exiſtences.

Secondly, From the *real Effects* done by them. We have undoubted Teſtimonies of Men really *hurt* and tormented by Satan. Of ſome *really ſnatch'd* away, and carried a great Diſtance from their Dwellings. Of others *poſſeſſed*, in whom the Devil *really ſpeaks audible Voices*, and *ſtrange Languages*, gives Notice of *Things paſt*, and ſometime of *Things to come*. The *Oracles* of the Heathen, (which however they were for the moſt Part falſe or deluſory, yet) in that they were *Reſponſes* from *Images* and Idols, were more than *Phantaſms*.

Thirdly, From what the *Scripture ſpeaks* every where of them. Of their *Malice* and *Cruelty*. That Devils are *Murderers* from the Beginning. Their *daily waiting* how they may devour. Their *Arts*, *Wiles* and *Stratagems*. Their *Names* and Appellations, when ſtiled *Principalities*, *Powers*, *ſpiritual Wickedneſſes*. *The Prince of the Power of the Air*, and a great many more to that Purpoſe, ſhew that without apparent Folly and Dotage, we cannot interpret theſe of *Motions* only upon the Minds and Fancies of Men: Beſides, the Scripture ſpeaks of the *Office* of *good Angels*, as their *ſtanding continually before the Throne*, Dan. vii. 10. their *beholding the Face of God*, their *accompanying Chriſt at his ſecond Coming*, their *gathering the Elect from the four Winds*, &c. which cannot be underſtood of any Thing elſe, but real and permanent Beings; and this is alſo an Evidence that Devils are, ſeeing the Scripture mentions their *Fall*, and their *Puniſhment*.

Fourthly, Seeing alſo the Scripture condemned the Opinion of the *Sadducees*, the *contrary* of that Opinion muſt be true; and expreſſly in *Acts* xii. 9. that which was done by an *Angel*, is oppoſed to what might be *viſional or imaginary*.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, The Reality of Devils, and their Malignity hath been the Opinion of *Heathens*. For there is nothing more common among them than the Belief of *inferior Deities*, which they called δαίμονες or δαιμόνια, that is Devils; and notwithstanding that they supposed these to be *Mediators* to the supream Gods (*a*), yet they learned to distinguish them into *Good* and *Evil*. The *Platonists* thought that the Souls of *Tyrants* after Death became *Lemures* & *Larvæ*, that is *hurtful Devils* (*b*); and at last, the Name *Devil* became of so *bad* a Signification, that to say, *thou hast a Devil*, was Reproach and not Praise; but what these gropped at in the Dark, the Scripture doth fully determine, using the Word *Devil* only for a *malignant Spirit*.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Satan's Cunning and Craft in the general. Several Demonstrations proving Satan to be deceitful; And of the Reasons why he makes use of his Cunning.

WE have taken a Survey of our Adversary's *Strength*, and this will open the Way to a clearer Discovery of his *Subtilty* and Craft, which is his great *Engine*, by which he works all his Tyranny and Cruelty in the World, to the Ruin or Prejudice of the Souls of Men; of which the Apostle (in 2 *Cor.* ii. 11.) speaks, as a Thing known by the common Experience of all discerning Persons; his Way is to over-reach and take *Advantages*, and for this End he useth *Devices* and *Stratagems*, which is a Thing so ordinary with him, that none can be ignorant of the Truth of it; *We are not ignorant of his Devices*.

This (before I come to the Particulars) I shall prove and illustrate in the general, by the gradual Procedure of these few following Considerations.

First, All the Malice, Power, Cruelty, and Diligence of which we have spoken, with all the Advantages of Multitude, Order, and Knowledge, by which these cruel Qualifications are heightned: These are but his *Furniture* and Accomplishment which fit him for his subtile Contrivances of

(*a*) *Mede* Apost. latter Times, p. 19. (*b*) *August*, de Civ. Dei. l. 9i c. 11. and c. 19.

of Deluſion, and make him able to deceive, neither hath he any *Uſe* of his Power and Knowledge but in reference to *Deceit*, in *Eph.* vi. 11, 12. (which is a Place wherein the Apoſtle doth of Purpoſe preſent Satan in his Way of dealing with Men) his whole Practice is ſet forth under the Term and Notion of *Arts* and *Wiles*; *that you may be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil.* This is the whole Work of Satan, againſt which the Furniture of that ſpiritual Armour is requiſite; and leſt any ſhould think that his Power or Wickedneſs are other diſtinct Things in him, which are to be provided againſt by other Means of Help, he preſently adds, that theſe are no otherwiſe uſed by him, but in *order* to his *Wiles* and Cunning; and therefore not to be looked upon as *diſtinct*, tho' indeed to be conſidered in *Conjunction* with his Subtilty and Cunning, as Things that make his Wiles the more dangerous and hazardous, *For we wreſtle not againſt Fleſh and Blood, but againſt Principalities, againſt Powers, againſt the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, againſt ſpiritual Wickedneſs in high Places*; which Words do but ſtrengthen the Apoſtle's Warning and Caution about the forementioned Wiles, which are therefore the more carefully to be obſerved and watched againſt, becauſe his *Power* is ſo great, that he can *contrive* Snares with the greateſt *Skill* and Art imaginable; and his *Wickedneſs* is ſo great, that we cannot expect either *Honeſty* or *Modeſty* ſhould reſtrain him from making the *vileſt* and moſt diſingenuous Propoſals, nor from *atteſting* a Conveniency or Goodneſs in his Motions, with the higheſt *Confidence* of moſt notorious *Lying*.

Secondly, The *Subtilty* that the Scriptures do attribute to *Sin*, or to the *Heart*, is moſtly and chiefly intended to *reflect* upon Satan as the *Author* and Contriver of theſe Deceits. In *Heb.* iii. 13. there is Mention of the *Deceitfulneſs of Sin*, but 'tis evident that ſomething elſe (beſides Sin) is intended, to which Deceitfulneſs muſt be properly aſcribed (*a*); for Sin being (as moſt conclude) formally a *Privation*, or if we ſhould grant it a *poſitive Being*, (as ſome contend) yet ſeeing the higheſt Notion we can arrive at this Way, (excluding but the Figment of *Flaccus Illiricus* (*b*), who ſeems to make *Original* Sin *indiſtinct* from the very *Eſſence* of the Soul) is but to call it an *Act*. Deceitfulneſs cannot be properly attributed to it, but with Reference *to Him*

(*a*) Vid. *Burlow Exer. Metaph.* Exer. 2. (*b*) *Flac.* Scrip. Tract. 6. p. 479.

him who *orders that Act* in a Way of Deceitfulneſs and Deluſion, which ultimately will bring it to Satan's Door: If here the Deceitfulneſs of Sin be devolved upon the Subject, then it runs into the ſame Senſe with *Jer.* xvii. 9. *The Heart is deceitful above all Things*: But why is the Deceitfulneſs fixed upon the Heart? The Ground of that we have in the next Words, it is deceitful, becauſe it is wicked, *deſperately wicked*. But who then inflames and ſtirs up the Heart to this Wickedneſs? Is it not Satan? Who then is the proper Author of Deceit but he? 'Tis true indeed, that our Hearts are proper Fountains of Sin, (and ſo may be accuſed poſſibly in ſome Caſes where Satan cannot be juſtly blamed;) yet if we conſider Deceitfulneſs as a *Companion* of every Sin, tho' our *Hearts* be to be blamed for the Sin, Satan will be found guilty of the *Deceitfulneſs*. It may be ſaid a Man complies with thoſe Things which are intended for his Deluſion, and ſo *improperly* by his Negligence may fall under Blame of *Self deception*, but 'tis unimaginable that he can *properly* and formally intend to *deceive himſelf*. *Deceit* then not being from Sin, nor ourſelves properly, can find out no other Parent for itſelf than Satan. Beſides this, that theſe Texts, upon a rational Enquiry, do charge Satan with the *Deceitfulneſs of Sin*: They do over and above point at the known and conſtant Way of Satan, working ſo *commonly* by *Deluſion*, that *Deceitfulneſs* is a cloſe *Companion* of *every* Sin. The *Deceitfulneſs of Sin*, is as much as *the Deceitfulneſs of every Sin*. Nay further, that Text of *Jer.* xvii. ſhews this *Deceitfulneſs* not to be an ordinary Slight, but the greateſt of all *Deceits above Meaſure*, and of an unſearchable Depth or Myſtery, *Who can know it?*

Thirdly, All *Acts* of Sin (ſome Way or other) come thorow Satan's *Fingers*. I do not ſay, that all Sin is Satan's proper Offspring, for we have a curſed Stock of our own; and it may be ſaid of us, (as elſewhere of Satan) ſometime we ſin out of our *own* Inclination and Diſpoſition; yet in every Sin, whether it ariſe from us, or the World, Satan blows the Sparks, and manageth all. As *David* ſaid to the Woman of *Tekoah*, Is not the Hand of *Joab* with thee in all this? So may we ſay, is not the Hand of Satan with thee in every Sin thou committeſt? This is ſo eminently true, that the Scripture *indifferently* aſcribes the Sin ſometimes *to us*, ſometimes *to the Devil*. It was *Peter*'s Sin

to

to tempt Christ to decline Suffering, yet Christ repelling it with this Rebuke, *Get thee behind me Satan*, Matth. xvi. 23. doth plainly accuse both *Peter* and Satan. 'Tis the personal Sin of a Man to be angry, yet in such Acts he *gives Place to the Devil*, Eph. iv. 26. both Man and Satan concur in it. *Paul's Thorn in the Flesh* (whatever Sin it was) he calls *Satan's Messenger*, 2 Cor. xii. 7. He that submits not to God, doth in that comply with Satan; as on the contrary, he that doth *submit* himself to *God*, doth *resist the Devil*, James iv. 7.

Neither doth that Expression of the Apostle, *James* i. 14. *Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Lust*, &c. give any Contradiction to this; 'tis not the Apostle's Design to *exclude* Satan, but to *include* Man as justly culpable, notwithstanding Satan's Temptations; and that which he asserts is this, that there is *Sin* and a Temptation truly prevalent when there is the *least Consent* of our Lust or Desire, and that it is that brings the Blame upon us; so that his Purpose is not to excuse Satan, or to deny him to have a Hand in drawing or tempting us on to Sin, but to shew that 'tis our *own Act* that makes the Sin to become *ours*.

Fourthly, Such is the *Constitution* of the Soul of Man, that its sinning cannot be conceived without some *Deception* or Delusion *(a)*: For granting that the Soul of Man is made up of *Desires*; and that the Soul were nothing else, but as it were, *one willing* or lusting *Power* diversified by several Objects; and that this Power, or these Faculties, are depraved by the Fall, and corrupted; and that Man in every Action doth consult with his Desires; and that they have so great an Influence upon him, that they are the *Laws of the Members*, and give out their Commands accordingly for Obedience; yet still these *three* Things are firm and unshaken Principles,

First, That Desires cannot be set upon any Object but as 'tis *apprehended* (truly or apparently) *good* (b): 'Tis incompatible to a rational Soul to desire Evil as Evil.

Secondly, The Will doth not *resolvedly* embrace any Object (*c*), till the *Light* of the Understanding hath made out (some Way or other) the Goodness or Conveniency of the Object.

Thirdly, There is no Man that hath not a *competent*

(*a*) *Mouton* on *James* i. 14. (*b*) Omne appetit bonum. (*c*) Voluntas sequitur ultimum dictamen intellectus practici.

Light for Diſcovery of the Goodneſs or Evil of an Object preſented. Unregenerate Men have (1.) The Light of *Nature*. (2.) Some have an additional Light from *Scripture-diſcovery*. (3.) Some have yet more from *common Convictions*, which beget ſenſible Stirrings and awful Impreſſions upon them. (4.) To thoſe God ſometimes adds *Corrections* and Puniſhments, which are of Force to make that Light burn *more clear*, and to ſtir up Care and Caution in Men for the due Entertainment of theſe Notices that God affords them. Regenerate Men have all this Light, and beſides that, they have (1.) The Light of their own *Experience*, of the vileneſs and odiouſneſs of Sin; they know what an *evil and bitter Thing it is*. (2.) They have a more *full Diſcovery* of God, which will make them *abhor themſelves in Duſt and Aſhes*, Job xlii. 6. (3.) They have the Advantage of a *new Heart*, the *Law of the Spirit of Life, making them free from the Law of Sin and Death*, Iſa. vi. 5. (4.) They have alſo the *Help* and Aſſiſtance of the *Spirit*, in its Motions, Suggeſtions and Teachings. (5.) They fortify themſelves with the ſtrongeſt *Reſolutions* not to give Way to Sin.

Notwithſtanding all theſe, 'tis too true, that both regenerate and unregenerate Men do ſin. The Reaſon whereof cannot be given from any other Account than what we have aſſerted; to wit, they are ſome Way or other *deluded* or deceived; ſome *Curtain* is drawn 'twixt them and the Light; ſome *Fallacy* or other is put upon the Underſtanding ſome Way or other; the *Will* is *bribed* or biaſſed, there is Treachery in the Caſe, for 'tis unimaginable that a Man in any Act of Sin ſhould offer a plain open and *direct Violence* to his own Nature and Faculties; ſo that the whole Buſineſs is here, *Evil* is preſented under the *Notion* of *Good*; and to make this out, ſome Conſiderations of Pleaſure or Profit do *bribe* the Will, and give falſe Light to the Underſtanding: Hence is it, that in every Act of Sin, Men (by Compliance with Satan) are ſaid to *deceive*, or to put Tricks and Fallacies upon *themſelves* (a).

Fifthly, All *Kinds* of Subtilty are in Scripture directly charged upon Satan, and in the higheſt Degrees. Sometime under the Notion of *logical Fallacies*; thoſe Slights which Diſputants in arguing put upon their Antagoniſts. Of this Import is that Expreſſion, 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. *We are not ignorant*

(a) *James* i. 22, 29. παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς.

ignorant of his Devices, where the Word in the Original is borrowed from the sophistical Reasonings of Disputants (*a*). Sometime 'tis expressed in the Similitude of *political Deceits* (b); as the Scripture gives him the Title of a *Prince*, so doth it mark out his *Policies* in the Management of his Kingdom, *Rev.* xii. 7. expresly calling them *Deceits*, and comparing him to a *Dragon* or *Serpent* for his Subtilty. Sometime he is represented as a *Warrior*, Rev. xii. 17. *The Dragon was wroth, and went to make War*, &c. and here are his *warlike Stratagems* pointed at. Mention is made (2 *Tim.* ii. 26.) of his *Snares* (c), and the taking of Men *alive*, or captive, directly alluding to warlike Proceedings. The subtile Proceedings of *Arts* and Craft are charged on him and his Instruments: Men are said to be *enticed*, James i. as Fish, or Fowl, by a *Bait*: Others deluded, as by *Cheaters* in false Gaming (*d*) *Eph.* iv. 14. *By the Slight of Men, and the cunning Crafts of these that lye in wait to deceive* e): The over-reaching of Merchants or crafty Tradesmen, is alluded to in 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. All these Slights are in Satan, in their *highest* Perfection and Accomplishment: *He can transform himself into an Angel of Light*, 2 Cor. xi. 14. where he hath an Occasion for it. In a Word, all *Deceiveableness of Unrighteousness* is in him, 2 *Thes.* ii. 10. So that a general πανουργία, a Dexterity and Ability for all Kind of subtile Contrivances is ascribed to him, 2 *Cor.* xi. 3; and that in his very *first Essay* upon *Eve*, when *the Serpent deceived her thorow Subtilty*; so that whatsoever *Malice* can suggest, or *Wit* and Art contrive for Delusion, or whatsoever *Diligence* can practise, or *Cruelty* execute, all that must be imagined to be in Satan.

Sixthly, All this might be further proved by *Instances*: What Temptation can be named wherein Satan hath not acted as a Serpent? Who can imagine the Cunning that Satan used with *David* in the Matter of *Uriah*? How easily he got him to the Roof of the House in order to the Object to be presented to him? How he directs his Eye, wrought upon his Passions, suggested the Thought, contrived the Conveniences? What Art must there be to bring a Darkness into *David*'s Mind, a Forgetfulness of God's Law;

(*a*) νοήματα. *Thus Satan* (Jud. 9.) *disputed, urged Sophisms about the Body of* Moses. (*b*) διελέγετο. (*c*) ἐζωγρημένοι. (*d*) ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ, πρὸς τὴν μεθοδείαν πλάνης. (*e*) πανουργίαν dicit qui avaritiæ vel aliis malis artibus lucra comparat. *Bezæ*.

a Fearleſsneſs of his Diſpleaſure, and a Neglect of his own Danger; ſurely it was no ſmall Matter that could blind *David*'s Eye, or beſot his Heart to ſo great a Wickedneſs? But above all Inſtances, let us take into Conſideration that of *Eve*, in the firſt Tranſgreſſion, wherein many Things may be obſerved: As *firſt*, That he choſe the *Serpent* for his Inſtrument; wherein tho' we are ignorant of the Depth of his Deſign, yet that he had a Deſign in it of Subtilty, in Reference to what he was about to ſuggeſt, is plain from the Text. *Now the Serpent was more ſubtile than any Beaſt of the Field*; it had been needleſs and impertinent to have noted the *Serpent's Subtilty* as Satan's Agent, if he had not choſen it upon that Score, as *advantageous* for his Purpoſe. (2.) He ſet upon the *weaker Veſſel*, the Woman, and yet ſuch (as once gained) he knew was likely enough to prevail with the Man, which fell out accordingly. (3.) Some think he took the Advantage of her *Husband's Abſence*, which is probable, if we conſider that 'tis unlikely, that *Adam* ſhould not interpoſe in the Diſcourſe if he had been preſent. (4.) He took the Advantage of the *Object*. It appears ſhe was within Sight of the Tree, *She ſaw that it was good for Food, and pleaſant to the Eyes*: Thus he made the Object plead for him. (5.) He falls not *directly* upon what he intended, (leſt that ſhould have ſcared her off) but fetcheth a Compaſs and enters upon the Buſineſs by an Enquiry of the Affair, as if he intended not Hurt. (6.) He ſo enquires of the Matter, [*Hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every Tree of the Garden,*] as if he made a Queſtion of the Reality of the Command; and his Words were ſo ordered, that they might caſt *ſome Doubt* hereof into her Mind. (7.) He under a Pretence of aſſerting God's *Liberality*, ſecretly *undermines* the Threatning, as if he had ſaid, *Is it poſſible that ſo bountiful a Creator ſhould deny the Liberty of eating of any Tree? To what Purpoſe was it made, if it might not be taſted?* (8.) When he finds that by theſe Arts he had *gained* a little Ground, and brought her to ſome Kind of *queſtioning* of the Reality of the Threatning, (for ſhe ſeems to extenuate it, in ſaying, *Leſt we die,*) he grows more bold to ſpeak out his Mind, and plainly to *annihilate* the Threatning, *Ye ſhall not die*; this he durſt not do, till he had gained in her Mind a *wavering Suſpicion* that poſſibly God was not

not in good Earneſt in that Prohibition. (9.) Then he begins to urge the Conveniency and Excellency of the Fruit, by equivocating upon the Name of the Tree, which he tells her, could make them *knowing as Gods.* (10.) He reflects upon God as prohibiting this, out of Envy and Ill-will to them. (11.) In all this there is not a *Word* of the Danger, but Impunity and Advantage promiſed. (12.) This deadly Advice he covers with a Pretence of greater Kindneſs and Care than God had for them. See in this, as in a clear Glaſs, Satan's Way of Policy; after this Rate he proceeds in all his Temptations.

If any enquire, why ſo mighty and potent a Prince uſeth rather the *Fox's Skin* than the *Lion's Paw*, theſe Reaſons may ſatisfy.

Firſt, There is a Neceſſity upon him ſo to do: He muſt uſe his Craft, becauſe he cannot compel (*a*): He muſt have God's Leave before he can overcome (*b*): He cannot winnow *Peter* before he ſue out a Commiſſion, nor deceive *Ahab* till he get a Licenſe; neither can he prevail againſt us without our own Conſent (*c*). The Scripture indeed uſeth ſome Words that ſignify a Force in tempting, as, that *he put it into the Heart of Judas, filled the Heart of Ananias, provocked David, rules in the Hearts of the Children of Diſobedience, and leads them captive at his Will*, &c. yet all theſe and the like Expreſſions intend no more than this, that he uſeth *forcible Importunities*, frames *ſtrong Deluſions* and joins ſometime his Power to his Temptations (*d*); as ſometime Fowlers ſhew themſelves to the Birds they intend to enſnare, that ſo they may be affrighted into an Awe and Amazement, to give a better Opportunity to ſpread their Nets over them.

Secondly, If he could compel, yet his Way of Craft and Subtility is generally the moſt *prevalent* and ſucceſsful. Force ſtirs up an Oppoſition, it uſually alarms to Caution and Avoidance, and frights to an utter Averſneſs in any Deſign; ſo that where Force ſhould gain its *thouſands*, Subtility will gain its *ten thouſands*.

Thirdly, His Strength is not *uſeleſs* to him: For beſides, that it enables him to deceive with higher Advantage than

(*a*) Vid. *Capel.* Temp. p. 27. (*b*) *Will. Paris* in Ameſ. Caſ. Conſc. lib. 2. c. 19. (*c*) *Gerdwin* Child of Light, p. 47. (*d*) Caryl *on* Job 1. 14. *All are his Inſtruments, he never conſtrains any, neither can he; the Will is never forced by him, neither may it be.*

otherwise he could do, (as hath been said) he hath Times and Occasions to shew his Strength and Cruelty, when his Cunning hath prevailed so far as to give him Possession. What was said of Pope *Boniface*, that he *entred* like a *Fox*, and *ruled* like a *Lion*, may be applied to him, he insinuates himself by Subtility as a *Fox* or Serpent, and then rules with Rigour as a *Lion*.

CHAP. IX.

Of Satan's Deceits in particular. What Temptation is. Of tempting to Sin. His first general Rule. The Consideration of our Condition. His second Rule. Of providing suitable Temptations. In what Cases he tempts us to Things unsuitable to our Inclinations. His third Rule. The cautious Proposal of the Temptation, and the several Ways thereof. His fourth Rule is to entice. The Way thereof in the general, by bringing a Darkness upon the Mind through Lust.

OUR next Business is to enquire after these Ways of *Deceit* in particular, in which I shall first speak of such as are of more general and universal Concernment. Such are his Temptations to Sin, his *Deceits* against *Duty*, his Cunning in promoting *Error*, his Attempts against the Peace and Comfort of the Saints, &c. and then I shall come to some Ways of *Deceits* that relate to Cases more special.

As an Introduction to the first, I shall speak a Word of Temptation in the general. This in its general Notion, is a *Trial* or *Experiment made of a Thing*: The Word that signifies to tempt, comes from a Word that signifies to *pierce* (*a*); or bore through, implying such a Trial as goes to the *very Heart*, and Inwards of a Thing. In this Sense 'tis attributed to God, who is said to have *tempted Abraham*, and to put our *Faith* upon *Trial*; and sometimes to *Satan*, who is said to have tempted Christ, tho' he could not expect to prevail: But tho' God and Satan do make these *Trials* (*b*), yet is there a vast Difference betwixt them, and that not only in their Intentions, (the one designing only a *Discovery* to Men of what is in them, and that for

most

(*a*) Πειράζω a πείρω. (*b*) *Calv.* Instit. l. 3. c. 20. § 46.

moſt *holy Ends*, the other intending *Ruin* and Deſtruction;) but alſo in the *Way* of their Proceedings. God by Providence *preſents* Objects and Occaſions; Satan doth not only do that, but farther *inclineth* and *poſitively* perſuadeth to Evil. Hence is it, that Temptations are diſtinguiſhed into Trials merely, and Seducements, ſuitable to that of *Tertullian* (*a*), *Diabolus tentat, Deus probat*, the Devil tempts, God only tries. We ſpeak of Temptation as 'tis from Satan, and ſo 'tis deſcribed, to be a *drawing or moving Men to ſin under Colour of ſome Reaſon* (*b*). By which we may obſerve, that in every ſuch Temptation there is the Object to which the Temptation tends, the Endeavour of Satan to incline our Hearts, and draw on our Conſent, and the *Inſtrument* by which is ſome Pretence of Reaſon; not that a real and ſolid Reaſon can be given for Sin, but that Satan offers ſome Conſiderations to us to prevail with us, which if they do, we take them to be Reaſons. This may a little help us to underſtand Satan's Method in tempting to ſin, *&c.* of which I am firſt to ſpeak.

In Temptations to ſin, we may obſerve Satan walks by *four* general Rules.

Satan's firſt general Rule.

Firſt, He conſiders and acquaints himſelf with the Condition of every Man, and for that End he ſtudies Man. God's Queſtion concerning *Job*, *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant Job*? Job i. 8. doth imply, not only his diligent Enquiry into *Job*'s State, (for the Original expreſſeth it, by Satan's *putting his Heart upon* Job (*c*), or *laying him to his Heart*) but that this is uſual with Satan ſo to do; as if God had ſaid, *'Tis thy Way to pry narrowly into every Man; haſt thou done this to* Job? *Haſt thou conſidered him as thou uſeſt to do*? And indeed Satan owns this as his *Buſineſs* and Imployment in his Anſwer to God, *I come from going to and fro in the Earth, from walking up and down in it.* This cannot be properly ſaid of him who is a *Spirit*; Bodies go up and down, but not Spirits: So that his Meaning is, he had been at his Work of enquiring and ſearching. And ſo *Broughton* tranſlates it *, from *ſearching* to and fro in the Earth; as 'tis ſaid of the Eyes of God, *that they run to*

(*a*) De Orat. (*b*) *Capel.* Tempt. p. 26. (*c*) *Caryl.* in loc.
* *Heb.* [ŠHANATH] circumſpexit, luſtravit. *Metaph.*

fro, which intends his Intelligence, Search, and Knowledge of Things; 'tis such a going to and fro, as that in *Dan.* xii. 4. which is plainly there expressed to be for the Encrease of Knowledge.

The Matter of his Enquiry, or Particulars of his Study, are such as these: (1.) Man's State, he considers and guesseth whether a Man be regenerate or unregenerate. (2.) The Degree of his State: if unregenerate, how near or far off he is the Kingdom of God; if regenerate, he takes the Compass of his Knowledge, of his Gifts, of his Graces. (3.) He enquires into his Constitution and Temper, he observes what Disposition he is of. (4.) His Place, Calling and Relation, his Trade, Employment, Enjoyments, Riches, or Wants. (5.) His Sex. (6.) His Age; *&c.*

The Way by which he knows these Things is plain and easy, most of these Things are open to common Observation; and what is intricate or dark, that he beats out, either by comparing us with ourselves, and considering a long Tract of Actions and Carriage; or by comparing us with others, whose Ways he had formerly noted and observed.

The End of this Search is to give him *Light* and Instruction in Point of Advantage; hence he knows where to raise his Batteries, and how to level his Shot against us. This Christ plainly discovers to be the Design of all his Study, *John* xiv. 30. where he tells his Disciples, he expected yet another Onset from Satan, and that near at Hand, *for the Prince of the World* was then upon his Motion, he was a *coming*; but withal, he tells them of his Security against his Assaults, in that there was *nothing in Christ* of Advantage in any of these forementioned Ways to foot a Temptation upon. It appears then that he looks for such Advantages, and that without these he hath little Expectancy of prevailing.

Satan's second general Rule.

Secondly, Satan having acquainted himself with our Condition, makes it his next Care to provide *suitable* Temptations, and so strike in the right Vein; for he loves to have his Work easy and feasible; he loves not to go against the Stream. Thus he considered *Judas* as a *covetous* Person, and accordingly provided a Temptation of Gain for him. He did the like with *Achan*; and hence was it, that he had the *Sabeans* so ready for the Plunder of *Job*; he had observed them a People given to Rapine and Spoil;

and

and accordingly *Job*'s Goods being propounded to them as a good and easy Booty, he straightway prevailed with them. It was easy for him to draw *Absalom* into an open Rebellion against his Father, he had taken Notice of his *ambitious* and aspiring Humour, and of the *Grudges* and *Dissatisfactions* under which he laboured; so that providing him a fit Opportunity, he engaged him immediately, according to this Rule, where he observes Men of *shallow Heads* and low Parts, he the more freely imposeth upon them in Things palpably *absurd*; where he takes notice of a *fearful* Temper, there he tempts them with *Terrors* and affrightful Suggestions; he hath Temptations proper for the *sanguine Complexion*, and for the *Melancholly*; he hath his Methods of Dealing with the *Lustful* and Wanton; with the *Passionate* and Revengeful; he hath *Novelties* at Hand for the *itching Ear*, and Suggestions proper for those that are *Atheistcally* inclined.

'*Object.* To this may be objected, That Experience tells us, Satan doth not always walk in this Road, nor confine himself to this Rule; sometime he tempts to Things which are *cross* to our *Tempers* and Inclinations, *&c.*

Answ. 'Tis true he doth so; but yet the general Rule is not prejudiced by this Exception, especially if we consider,

'*First*, That Satan being still under the Commands and *Restraint* of the Almighty, he cannot always tempt *what he would*, but according to a superior Order and Command. Of this Nature I suppose was that Temptation, of which *Paul* complained so much, *he kept down his Body*, upon this very *Design*, that he might have it *in Subjection*, and yet is he *buffeted* with a Temptation, which expected an Advantage usually from the *Temper* and Frames of our Bodies (for so much I suppose, that Phrase, *a Thorn in the Flesh*, will unavoidably imply, (though it still leave us at Uncertainties) what the Temptation was in particular.) Here Satan tempts at a Disadvantage and contrary to this Rule; but then we must know, that he was not the *Master* of his *own Game*; God expressly ordering such a Temptation as was *disagreeing* with the *Apostle's Disposition*, that it might the *less prevail* or hazard him, and yet be more available to keep him *low*, *lest he should be exalted above Measure*, which was God's *Design* in the Matter.

'*Secondly*, Sometime our Temper *alters*. As the Tempers of our Bodies in a Sickness may in a Fit be so changed, that they

may

may desire at that Time what they could not endure at another. A special Occasion or Concurrence of Circumstances may alter for the Time our Constitution, and so an *unusual* Temptation may at that Time *agree* with this *Design*.

Thirdly, Sometime by *one Temptation* Satan intends but to lay the *Foundation* of another, and then of Purpose he begins with a *strange Suggestion*, either to keep us at the *Gaze*, while he covertly doth something else against us, or to move us to a *contrary Extream* by an over-hasty Rashness.

Fourthly, Sometime he tempts when his *main* Design is only to *trouble* and disquiet us, and in such Cases the most *unnatural* Temptations, backed with a violent *Impetuousness*, do his Work the best.

Satan's third general Rule. Satan's next Work is the *Proposal* of the Temptation: In the two former he provided Materials and laid the Trains, in this he gives Fire, by propounding his Design; and this also he doth with Caution, these several Ways.

First, He makes the *Object* speak for him, and in many he is scarce put to any further Trouble; the Object before them speaks Satan's Mind, and gains their Consent immediately, yet is there no small Cunning used in fitting the Object and Occasion, and bringing Things about to answer the very *Nick* of Time which he takes to be advantageous for him.

Secondly, Sometime he appoints a *Proxy* to speak for him; not that he is *shame-faced* in Temptation, and not always at *Leisure* for his own Work, but this Way he *insinuates* himself the more dangerously into our Affections, and with less Suspicion using our *Friends*, Relations or intimate Acquaintance to intercede for a wicked Design. He did not speak himself to *Eve*, but chose a *Serpent*; he thought *Eve* would sooner prevail upon *Adam* than the Serpent could. He tempted *Job* by the Tongue of his Wife, as if he had hoped, that what so near a Relation had counselled, would easily be hearkned to. He tempted *Christ* to avoid suffering by *Peter*, under a Pretence of highest Love and Care, *Master, spare thy self*; yet our Saviour forbears not to note Satan's Temptation closely twisted with *Peter*'s Kindness. At this Rate are we often tempted where we little suspect Danger.

Thirdly, If he finds the two first Ways unhopeful or unsuitable, then he *injects the Motion*, and so plainly speaks to us *inwardly* himself. *Do this Act, take this Advantage*

for

for Pleasure or Profit, &c. He thought it not enough to tempt *Judas* by the *Object* of Gain, but he brake his Mind in direct Terms, and *put it into his Heart*, John xiii. 2. He did the like to *Ananias*, whose Heart he *filled* with a large Motion for that Lie, and backed it with many Considerations of the Necessity and Expediency of it, *Acts* v. 3. There is no Question to be made of this; Dr. *Goodwin* (*a*) gives clear Proofs of it, and so did several others. When we consider, that Thoughts are sometime cast upon the Minds of Men which are *above their Knowledge*, and that they say and do Things sometime which are far beyond any of their Accomplishments and Parts, and yet in the Nature of it wicked, we must be forced to run so high as to charge it upon Satan. *Saul*'s prophesying, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 10. was by the Influence of the evil Spirit; and this (as *Junius* (*b*), *Tirinus*, and others interpret) must of Necessity be understood of such a Kind of Action and Speaking, as the true Prophets of the Lord usually expressed under the Influences of the blessed Spirit; for from the *Likeness* of the Action in both, must the Name be borrowed. The Experience that we have of *inward Disputings*, the bandying of Arguments and Answers in several Cases, is a Proof of this beyond Exception: Wounded Consciences express an admirable *Dexterity* in breaking all Arguments urged for their Peace and Establishment; as also in *framing* Objections against themselves, so far above the usual Measure of common Capacities, that we cannot ascribe it to any other than Satan's private Aid this Way.

Fourthly, The Motion being made (if there be Need) he doth *irritate* and stir up the Mind to the Embracement of it: And this he doth *two* Ways.

First, By an *Earnestness of Solicitation*; when he urgeth the Thing over and over, and gives no Rest; when he joyns with this, an Importunity of begging and intreating with the repeated Motion; when he draws together, and advantageously doth order a *Multitude* of Considerations to that End; and when in all this he doth *hold down* the Mind and Thoughts, and keep them upon a Contemplation of the Object, Motions, and Reasons. Thus he provoked *David*, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. And this Kind of Dealing occasioned the Apostle to name his Temptations, and our Resistance, by the Name of *Wrestlings*, in which usually

(*a*) *Child of Light*, p. 45. (*b*) Vid. *Poole's Synops.* in loc.

ly there appears many Endeavours, and often repeated, to throw down the Antagoniſt.

Secondly, He doth irritate by a *ſecret Power* and Force that he hath upon our Fancies and Paſſions. When Men are ſaid to be *carried* and *led* by Satan (*a*), it implies (in the Judgment of ſome) more than *Importunity*; and that though he cannot *force* the *Spring* of the Will, yet he may conſiderably act upon it, by pulling at the *Weights* and Plummets, that is, by moving and acting our Imaginations and Affections.

Satan's fourth general Rule.

The Motion being thus made, notwithſtanding all his Importunity, often finds Reſiſtance; in which Caſe he comes to the Practice of a *fourth* Rule, which is to *draw* away and entice the Heart to *conſent* (*b*); as 'tis expreſſed, *James* i. 14. *Every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away and enticed.* I ſhall avoid here the Variety of the Apprehenſions which ſome declare at large about the Meaning of the Words, ſatisfying myſelf with this, that the Apoſtle points at thoſe *Artifices* of Satan by which he *draws* and allures the Will of Man to a Compliance with his Motions; which when he effects in any Degree, then may a Man be ſaid to be prevailed upon by the Temptation. But then here is the Wonder how he ſhould ſo far prevail againſt that Reaſon and Knowledge which God hath placed in Man, to fence and guard him againſt a Thing ſo abſurd and unreaſonable as every Sin is? The Solution of this Knot we have in 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. *The God of this World blinds the Eyes of Men*, draws a Curtain over this Knowledge, and raiſeth a Darkneſs upon them; which Darkneſs, tho' we cannot fully apprehend, yet that it is a very great and ſtrange Darkneſs may be diſcovered, (1.) Partly by conſidering the Subject of it, *Man*, a rational Creature, in whom God hath placed a *Conſcience*, which is both a *Law*, and *Witneſs*, and *Judge*. It cannot be ſuppoſed an eaſy Matter to cloud or obliterate that Law, to ſilence or pervert that Witneſs, or to corrupt that Judge; but it will riſe higher in the Wonder of it, if we conſider this in a *godly Man*, one that *ſets God before him*, and is wont to have his Fear in his Heart; ſuch a Man as *David* was, that in ſo *plain* a Caſe, in ſo *high* a Manner, ſo long a *Time*, with ſo *little* Senſe and Apprehenſion

(*a*) Dr. *Goodwin* Child of Light. (*b*) *Maresius* L.

henſion of the Evil and Danger, Satan ſhould ſo *quickly* prevail, 'tis an Aſtoniſhment. Neither will it be leſs ſtrange, if we conſider (2.) The *Iſſue* and Effect of this Blindneſs: Some *riſe up* againſt this Law of Conſcience, arguing it falſe and erroneous, and making Concluſions directly contrary, as *Deut.* xxix. 19. *I ſhall have Peace, though I walk on in the Imaginations of my Heart. I have Fellowſhip with him, though I walk in Darkneſs,* 1 Joh. i. 6. *We will not hearken unto thee, but will certainly do whatſoever Thing goeth out of our own Mouth,* Jer. xlv. 16, 17. in which Caſes the *συνείδησις*, or Principles of Conſcience are quite overthrown. Some are *hardned*, and as to any *Application* of their Acts to this Rule, quite dead and ſenſeleſs; tho' they riſe not up againſt the Light, yet are they *willingly ignorant*, without any Conſideration of what they are doing; here the *συνείδησις*, or witneſſing and excuſing Power of Conſcience is idle and aſleep. Some tho' they know the Law, and in ſome Meaſure ſee their Actions are ſinful, yet they paſs *no Judgment*, apprehend no Danger; *No Man ſmites upon his Thigh, ſaying, What have I done?* Jer. viii. 6. Nay, ſome are ſo far from this, that they preſumptuouſly juſtify themſelves, tho' they ſee their own Blame and Ruin before them, *I do well to be angry, and that to the Death,* ſaith *Jonah*, when Satan had ſpread a Darkneſs upon him.

What ſhall we ſay of theſe Things? Here is Darkneſs *to be felt*, *Egyptian* Darkneſs: To explain the Way of it fully is impoſſible for us, to do it in any tolerable Way is difficult. To make ſome Diſcovery herein I ſhall, 1. Shew that the Devil doth entice to Sin, by *ſtirring up our Luſt.* 2. That by the *Power* and Prevalency of our Luſt, he brings on the *Blindneſs* ſpoken of.

CHAP. X.

That Satan enticeth by our Luſt. The ſeveral Ways by which he doth it. Of the Power and Danger of the Violence of Affections.

THE Way then by which he doth entice, *is by ſtirring up our Luſt.* By *Luſt*, I mean thoſe *general Deſirings* of our Minds after *any* unlawful Object, which are forbidden in the *Tenth* Commandment; thus we read of *worldly Luſts*,

Lusts, Tit. ii. 12. of the *Lusts of the Flesh*, 1 Pet. ii. 18. of *Lustings to Envy*, Jam. iv. 5. and in a Word, we read of *divers Lusts*, Tit. iii. 3. the whole Attempt and Striving of corrupt Nature against the Spirit, being set forth by this Expression, *of lusting against the Spirit*, Gal. v. 17.

That Satan takes Advantage of our own Lusts, and so plows with *our Heifer*, turning our own Weapons against our selves, is evident by the general Vote of Scripture. The Apostle *James* i. 14. tells us, that every Temptation prevails only by the Power and Working of our *own Lusts*: Satan is the Tempter, but our Lusts are the Advantages by which he draws and enticeth. The corrupt Principle within us is called *Flesh*, but the way whereby it works, either in its *own proper* Motion, or as *stirred* up by the Devil, is that of *Lust and Affection*; and therefore he that would stop that Issue, must look to mortify it in its *Affections and Lusts*, Gal. v. 24. We are further told by *John*, *1st Epist.* ii. 16. that all those Snares that are in the World, are only hazardous, and prevailing by *our Lusts*. More generally the Apostle *Peter* speaks, the whole Bundle of actual Sins that have ever been in the World came in at this Door, *The Corruption that is in the World is through Lust*, 1 Pet. i. 4. In the stirring up our Lusts, Satan useth no small Art and Subtilty, and ordinarily he worketh by some of these following Ways.

1st, He useth his Skill to *dress* up an Object of Lust, that it may be taking and alluring; he doth not content himself with a *simple Proposal* of the Object, but doth as it were *paint* and varnish it, to make it seem beautiful and lovely; besides, all that Wooing and Importunity which he useth to the Soul by private and unseen Suggestions, he hath (no doubt) a Care to gather together all possible concurring Circumstances, by which the seeming Goodness or Conveniency of the Object is much heightned and enlarged. We see those that have *Skill* to work upon the Humours of Men, place a great Part of it in the *right circumstantiating* a Motion, and in taking the Tempers and Inclinations of Men at a *right Time*; and they observe, that the missing of the right Season is the Hazard of the Design, even there where the Object and Inclination ordinarily are suitable. There is much in placing a Picture in a right Position, to give it its proper Grace and Lustre in the Eyes of the Beholders. When a Man is *out of Humour*, he *nauseats* his usual Delights, and grows *sullen* to Things of frequent Practice. 'Tis likely

likely *Eve* was not a Stranger to the Tree of Knowledge before the Temptation; but when the Serpent suggests the *Goodness* of the Fruit, the Fruit itself seems *more beautiful* and desirable, *good for Food, and pleasant to the Eyes.* Tho' we are not able to find out the way of Satan's beautifying an Object, that it may affect with more piercing and powerful Delights; yet he that shall consider, that not only *Prudence* (in an advantageous Management of Things) adds an additional Beauty to Objects proposed; but also that *Art*, by placing Things in a right Posture, may derive a Radiency and Beam of Beauty and Light upon them (as an ordinary Piece of Glass may be *so* posited to the Sun-beams, that it may *reflect* a sparkling Light as if it were a *Diamond*:) He that shall consider this (I say) will not think it strange for the Devil to use some Arts of this Kind for the adorning and setting off an Object to the Eye of our Lusts.

2*dly*, We have Reason to suspect, that he may have ways of Deceit and *Imposture* upon our *Senses*. The Deceits of the Senses are so much noted, that some *Philosophers* (*a*) will scarce allow any Credit to be given them; not that they are always deceitful, but that they are often so, and therefore always suspicious. The Soul hath no *Intelligence* but by the *Senses*; 'tis then a Business of easy Belief, that Satan may not altogether slight this Advantage, but that when he sees it fit for his Purpose, he may impose upon us by the Deception of our Eyes and Ears; we little know how oft our Senses have disguised Things to us. In a pleasing Object, our Eyes may be as a *magnifying* or *multiplying* Glass. In the first Temptation Satan seems to have wrought both upon the Object, and also upon the Senses, *She saw it was good for Food, and pleasant.* Who can question but that she saw the Fruit *before*? but this was *another Kind* of Sight, of more Power and Attraction. An Instance of Satan's Cunning in both the forementioned Particulars we have from *Austin*, relating the Story of his Friend *Alipius* (*b*), who by the Importunity of his Acquaintance, consented to go to the *Theatre*, yet with a Resolve *not to open his Eyes*, lest the Sight of these Spectacles should entice his Heart; but being there, the Noise and sudden Shouting of the Multitude prevailed so far with him, that he forgot his Resolution, takes the *Liberty* to see what occasioned the Shouting; and

once

(*a*) *Des Cartes.* Ant. le grand. Philosoph. vet. &c. (*b*) Spectavit, clamavit, exarsit, abstulit inde secum insaniam qua stimularetur redire, &c.

once seeing, is now so inflamed with Delight, that he shouts as the rest do, and becomes a Frequenter of the *Theatre* as others. What was there to be seen and heard he knew before, by the Relation of others; but now being present, his Eyes and Ears were by Satan so heightned in their Offices, that those bloody Objects seemed pleasant, *beyond* all that had been *reported* of them, and the Lust of his Heart drawn out by Satan's cunning Disposal of the Object and Senses.

3*dly*, There is no small Inticement arising from the *Fitness* and Suitableness of Occasion; an Occasion exactly fitted, is more than half a Temptation. This often makes a Thief, an Adulterer, &c. where the Acts of these Sins have their Rise from a sudden Fit of Humour (which *Occasion* puts them in) rather than from *Design*, or Premeditation. Cunningly contrived Occasions are like the Danger of a *Precipice*; if a Man be so foolish as to take up a *Stand* there, a small *Push* will throw him over, tho' a far greater might not harm him if he were upon a Level. 'Tis Satan's Cunning to draw a Man within the *Reach* of an Occasion. All the Resolves of *Alipius* were no *Safeguard* to him, when once he was brought *within* Hearing and Sight of the Temptation: If he staid at Home, the Hazard of Satan's Suggestions (tho' earnest) had not been so much as the Hearing of his Ears, and Sight of his Eyes. In 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. *Paul's* Fears of Satan's taking Advantage against the *Corinthians*, did manifestly arise from the *present Posture* of their Church-affairs; for if the excommunicated Person should not be received again into the Church, an ordinary Push of Temptation might either have *renewed* or *confirmed* their Contentions, or precipitated them into an Opinion of *too much Severity* against an offending Brother (*a*); and that their present Frame made them more than ordinarily obnoxious to these Snares, is evident from the Apostle's Caution inserted here in this Discourse so *abruptly*, that any Man may observe, the *Necessity* of the Matter, and the *Earnestness* of his Affections did lead his Pen. The *Souls* of Men have their general *Discrasia*'s and Disaffections, as our Bodies have, from a lingring Distemperature of the Blood and Humors; in which Case, a *small* Occasion (like a particular Error of Diet, &c. in a declining Body) will easily *form* that Inclination into particular Acts of Sin.

4*thly*,

(*a*) Vid. *Calvin* in loc.

4thly, Satan hath yet a further Reach in his Enticements, by the Power which he hath upon our *Fancies* and Imaginations; that he hath such a Power was discovered before. This being then supposed, how serviceable it is for his End, 'tis now to be considered. Our Fancy is as a *Glass*, which with admirable *Celerity* and Quickness of Motion, can present before us all Kinds of Objects; it can in a Moment run from one End of the Earth to the other; and besides this, it hath a Power of *creating Objects*, and casting them into what *Forms* and Shapes it pleaseth; all which our Understanding cannot avoid the Sight of. Now the *Power* of Imagination is acknowledged by all to be very *great*, not only as working upon a *melancholy* (*a*) and distempered Spirit (of which Authors give us large Accounts) but also upon Minds *more remote* from such peremptory Delusions, as may be daily observed in the *Prejudices* and *Prepossessions* of Men, who by reason of the (*b*) *Impressions* of Imagination, are not (without Difficulty) drawn over to the Acknowledgment of the Truth of Things, and the true Understanding of Matters; neither is the *Understanding* only liable to a more than ordinary Heat and *Rapture* by it, but the *Will* is also quickned and *sharpned* in its Desires by this Means. Hence is it (as one of the forecited Authors observes) that (*c*) Fancy doth often more toward a Persuasion by its *Insinuations*, than a *cogent Argument*, or rational *Demonstration*.

This is no less a powerful Instrument in Satan's Hand, than commonly and *frequently* made use of. Who amongst us doth not find and feel him dealing with us at this Weapon? When he propounds an Object to our Lust, he doth not usually expose it *naked*, under the Hazard of dying out for want of Prosecution; but presently calls in our *Fancy* to his Aid, and there raiseth a *Theatre*, on which he *acts* before our Minds the Sin in *all its Ways and Postures*. If he put us upon Revenge, or upon Lusts of Uncleanness, or Covetousness, or Ambition, we are sure (if we prevent it not) to have our Imagination presenting these Things to us, as in *lively Pictures* and Resemblances, by which our Desires may be enflamed and prepared for Consent.

5thly, Sometime he shews his Art, in preparing and fitting *our Bodies* to his Designs, or in fitting Temptations to our Bodies, and the Inclinations thereof. The *Soul*, tho'

(*a*) *Burton's* Melanch. Part 1. § 2. p. 93. (*b*) *Reynolds* Treat. of Passions, c. 4. (*c*) *Reynolds* ibid.

it be a noble Being, yet is it *limited* by the Body, and incommodated by the *Crazineſs* and Indiſpoſitions thereof; ſo that it can no more act *ſtrenuouſly* or evenly to its Principles in a *diſordered* Body, than it can rightly manage any *Member* of it (in its natural Motions) where the Bones are *diſjointed*. Hence Sickneſs or other bodily Weakneſſes do alter the *Scene*, and add another Kind of *Biaſs* to the Soul than what it had before. This Satan takes Notice of, and either follows his Advantage of the *preſent Indiſpoſition*, or (if he hath ſome ſpecial Deſign) endeavours to *caſt* our Body into ſuch a Diſorder, as may beſt ſuit his Intention. *Aſa* was more eaſily drawn to be overſeen in Peeviſhneſs and raſh Anger in his *latter* Days, when his Body grew diſeaſed. Satan had his Advantage againſt *Solomon*, to draw him to Idolatry, when *old Age* and *Uxoriouſneſs* had made him more *ductile* to the Sollicitation of his Wives. *When Solomon was old, his Wives turned away his Heart*, 1 Kings xi. 4. The Devil, when he took upon him to foretel *Job*'s blaſpheming God to his Face; yet he attempted not the main Deſign, till he thought he had throughly *prepared* him for it, by the Anguiſh and Smart of a diſtempered Body and Mind; and tho' he failed in the great Buſineſs of his Boaſt, yet he left us an Experiment in *Job*, that the likelieſt way to *prevail* upon the Mind in hideous and deſperate Temptations, is to mould the Body to a *ſuitable* Frame: He prevailed not againſt *Job* to cauſe him curſe God; yet he prevailed far, *he curſed the Day of his Birth*, and ſpake many Things by the Force of that Diſtreſs, which he profeſſeth himſelf aſhamed of afterwards. The Body then will be in Danger (when 'tis diſordered) to give a Tincture to every Action, as a diſtempered Palate communicates a Bitterneſs to every Thing it takes down.

6thly, Evil *Company* is a general Preparatory to all Kinds of Temptation; he enticeth ſtrongly that way. For (1.) Evil Society doth *inſenſibly deaden* the Heart, and quench the Heat of the Affections to the Things of God; it hath a Kind of bewitching Power, to eat out the Fear of the Lord in our Hearts, and to take off the Weight and Power of religious Duty; it not only *ſtops our Tongues*, and retards them in ſpeaking of good Things, but *influenceth* the very *Heart*, and poiſons it into a Kind of Deadneſs and *Lethargy*; ſo that our Thoughts run low, and we begin to think that ſevere Watchfulneſs of Thoughts, and the Guard of

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our Minds, to be a needleſs and *melancholly Self-impoſition*. (2.) Example hath a ſtrange inſinuating Force to *inſtamp a Reſemblance*, and to beget Imitation. *Joſeph* living where his Ears were frequently bearen with Oaths, finds it an eaſy Thing (upon a feigned Occaſion) to ſwear by the Life of *Pharaoh*. Evil Company is Sin's *Nurſery*, and Satan's *Academy*, by which he trains up thoſe, whoſe Knowledge and hopeful Beginnings had made them ſhy of his Temptations; and if he can prevail with Men to take ſuch Companions, he will with a little Labour preſently bring them to any Iniquity.

Thirdly, But his *higheſt* Project in order to the enticing of Men, is to engage their *Affections* to an Height and *Paſſionateneſs*. The Scripture doth diſtinguiſh betwixt the ἐπιθυμίας and παθήματα, the *Affections* and *Luſts*, Gal. v. 24. clearly implying, that the way to procure *fixed* Deſires and actual Luſtings, is to procure thoſe *paſſionate* Workings of the Mind.

How powerful a Part of his Deſign this is, will appear from the Nature of theſe Paſſions, which are:

1. *Firſt, Violent Motions* of the Heart (*a*), the very Wings and Sails of the Soul, and every Paſſion in its own working doth expreſs a Violence. *Choler* is an earneſt Rage, *Voluptuouſneſs* is nothing leſs, *Fear* is a deſperate Hurry of the Soul (*b*); *Love ſtrong as Death*, *Jealouſy cruel as the Grave*; each of them ſtriving which ſhould excel in Violence; ſo that 'tis a Queſtion yet undetermined which Paſſion may challenge the Superiority.

2. *Secondly*, Their Fury is *dangerous* and *unbridled*, like ſo many *wild Horſes* let looſe, hurrying their Rider which way they pleaſe. They *move* not upon the Command of Reaſon, but oft prevent it in their *ſudden Riſe*; neither do they take Reaſon's *Advice* for their *Courſe*, proportionable to the Occaſion; for often their *Humour*, rather than the *Matter* of the Provocation, gives them *Spurs*; and when they have *evaporated* their Heat, they ceaſe, not as following the Command of Reaſon, but as *weakned* by their own *Violence*.

Thirdly, They are *not eaſily conquered*, not only becauſe they *renew* their Strength and Onſet after a Defeat, and like ſo many *Hydra*'s Heads, ſpring up as faſt as cut off; but they

(*a*) Vid. *Feuner* Treat. of Affection. (*b*) *J. F.* Senault of Paſſions, p. 36.

are *ourselves*, we can neither run from them, nor from the Love of them.

Fourthly, And consequently highly *advantagious* in Satan's Design and Enticement, when they are driven up to a *Fury* and Passionateness; for besides their *inward Rage* (which the Scripture calls *Burning*, 1 Cor. vii. 9.) by which Men are *pricked* and goaded on without Rest or Ease, to *make Provisions for the Flesh*, Rom. i. 27. and to enjoy or act what their unbridled Violence will lead to in the Execution of their Desires: They carry all on before them, and engage the *whole Man* with the highest Eagerness *to fulfil every Lust*, Eph. ii. 3. to go up to the highest Degrees, and with an unsatiable *Greediness* to yield themselves *Servants of Iniquity unto Iniquity*, Rom. vi. 19.

CHAP. XI.

That Lust darkens the Mind. Evidences thereof. The five Ways by which it doth blind Men. (1) *By preventing the Exercise of Reason. The Ways of that Prevention:* (1.) *Secresy in tempting, Satan's Subtilty therein.* (2.) *Surprisal.* (3.) *Gradual Intanglements.*

THAT Satan doth entice us by stirring up our Lust, hath been discovered; it remains that I next speak to the second Thing propounded, which was,

That by this Power of Lust he *blinds and darkens our Mind*. That the Lusts of Men are the great Principle upon which Satan proceeds in drawing on so great a Blindness, (as we have spoken of) I shall briefly evince from these few Observations.

First, From the *Unreasonableness* and Absurdity of some Actions in Men otherwise sufficiently rational. He that considers the Acts of *Alexander* in murdering *Callisthenes*, for no other Crime than defending the *Cause of the Gods*, and affirming that *Temples* could not be built to a *King*, without provoking a *Deity*; and yet this so smoothed, (if (a) *Quintus Curtius* represent him right) that he seemed to flatter *Alexander* with an Opinion of *Deification* after his Death: Whosoever (I say) shall consider this Cruelty, will

(a) Ego autem feram immortalitatem precor Regi,--- Hominem consequitur aliquando, nunquam comitatur Divinitas. *Curt.* lib. 8.

will condemn *Alexander* as blind and irrational in this Matter, and yet no other Cauſe can be aſſigned hereof, but that his *Luſt after Glory and Honour* darkned his Reaſon. The like may be ſaid of his killing *Ephestion*'s Phyſician, becauſe he died. The brutal Fury of that *Conſul*, that made a *Slave* to be eaten up with *Lampreys*, for no other Fault than the breaking of a Glaſs, can be aſcribed to nothing elſe but the boiling over of his Paſſion. A ſadder Inſtance of this we have in (*a*) *Theodoſius ſenior*, who for an Affront given to ſome of his Officers in *Theſſalonica*, commanded the Deſtruction of the City, and the Slaughter of the Citizens to the Number of 7000, without any Diſtinction of nocent and innocent: This blind Rage the *Hiſtorian* notes, as the Fruit of violent and unbridled Luſt in a Man, otherwiſe juſt and gracious. Thouſands of Inſtances of this Nature might be added. But,

Secondly, If we conſider the known and *viſible Hazards* to Life and Eſtate, and (that which is more) to that Part of them which *is immortal*; upon all which, Men do deſperately adventure, upon no other Ground or Motive than the *Gratifications* of their Luſts: We may eaſily conclude that there is a ſtrange Force and Power in their Paſſions to blind and beſot them; and this notwithſtanding, is the common Practice of all Men, where Grace (as the only *Eye-ſalve*) doth not reſtore the Sight. The Heathens in all theſe Practices of Filthineſs and Folly, recorded *Rom.* i. 29. They had ſo far a Diſcovery of the Danger (if they had not impriſoned that *Truth* and Light in *Unrighteouſneſs*, Ver. 18.) that they knew *the Judgment of God, that they which commit ſuch Things are worthy of Death*, Ver. 32. Yet notwithſtanding, the Vanity of their Imaginations (influenced by Luſt) darkned their Heart ſo much, that they did *not only do theſe Things* (of ſo great Vileneſs and unſpeakable Hazard) *but had Pleaſure in thoſe that did them.*

Thirdly, The blinding Power of Luſt is yet more remarkable: When we ſee Men *glorying in their Shame*, and mounting their triumphal Chariots to expoſe themſelves a *Spectacle* to all, in that *Garb of Deformity* which their Luſts have put them in. 'Tis a Blindneſs to do any Act againſt the Rules of Reaſon, but 'tis a far greater Blindneſs

(*a*) Immoderata animi concitatione impulſus ... facinus crudele ut nefarium commiſit. Iracundia ... velut Tyrannus omnia ſuo metu gubernans ruptis habenis, & jugo rationis excuſſo gladios inique contra omnes diſtrinxit. *Theod.* Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. p. 587.

for Men to pride themſelves in them. What have the Iſſues of moſt Wars been, but burnings of Cities, Devaſtations of flouriſhing Kingdoms, ſpilling the Blood of Millions, beſides all the Famine and other Miſeries that follow; yet theſe Actions (that better beſeem Tigers, Lions and ſavage Brutes, than Men of Reaſon) are honoured with the great triumphant Names of *Virtue, Manhood, Courage, Magnanimity, Conqueſt*, &c. If the Power and Humour of their Luſts of Vain glory and Revenge had not quite muffled their Underſtandings, theſe Things would have been called by their *proper Names*, of Murder, Cruelty, Robbery, &c. and the Actors of ſuch *Tragedies*, inſtead of triumphal *Arches* and Acclamations of Praiſe, would have been buried under Heaps of Ignominy and perpetual Diſgraces, as *Prodigies* of Nature, *Monſters* of Men, and *Haters* of Mankind.

Fourthly, But there is yet one Evidence more plain and convincing, when our Luſts *are up*, tho' *Reaſon* offers its *Aids* to allay the Storm, yet the wiſeſt of Men (otherwiſe compoſed and calm) are ſo far from taking the Advantage of its Guidance, that oftentimes they *trample* upon it and deſpiſe it; and, as if Luſts (by ſome ſecret *Incantation*) had made them *impenetrable*, they are not capable of its Light and Conduct, and can make no more Uſe of it, than a *blind* Man can do of a *Candle*. To this Purpoſe, let us obſerve the Carriage of Diſputants; if Men do any Way publickly engage themſelves in a Conteſt of this Nature, tho' Truth can be but on the one Side, yet both Parties give Arguments, and anſwer Objections with equal Confidence of Victory, and a Contempt of the Reaſons and Strength of each others Diſcourſes: And this proves ſo fatal to him that maintains the Miſtake or Untruth, that not one of a Thouſand hath the Benefit and Advantage for the finding of Truth, which free and *unprejudiced Byſtanders* may have; ſo true is that, *Omne ſperit judicium cum res tranſit in affectum*, when Affections are engaged, Judgment is darkned. 'Tis a Thing of common Obſervation, that when Men are diſcourſed into *Anger* and Heat, they preſently grow *abſurd*, are diſabled for ſpeaking or underſtanding Reaſon, and are oft hurried to ſuch Inconveniences and Miſcarriages, that they are *aſhamed* of themſelves, when they *cool* and the Fit is over, *impedit ira animum*, &c. To all this might be added, the Power of Luſt in Perſons *voluptuous*, who dedicate themſelves to the Pleaſures of

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the Flesh. These *that serve divers Lusts and Pleasures*, their slavish Estate, their base Drudgery, do clearly evince that Lust *unmans* them, and puts out their Eyes. *Mark Antony* by this Means became a Slave to *Cleopatra*; never did a poor Captive strive more to obtain the Good will of his Lord than he to please this Woman, insomuch that besotted with his Lust, he seemed to want that *common Foresight* of his Danger, which the smallest Measure of Reason might have afforded to any, and so dallied himself into his Ruin. From all these Considerations and Instances, it appears our Lusts afford such Vapours and Mists, that our Reason is darkned by them, or rather, they are like a *Dose of Opium* that strongly stupifies and binds up the Senses. But yet it remains that the various Ways by which our Lusts do blind us be particularly opened, and they are five. (1.) Our Lusts blind us by *preventing* the Use and Exercise of Reason. (2.) By *perverting* it. (3.) By *withdrawing* the Mind from it. (4.) By *disturbing* it in its Operation. And (5.) By a *desperate Precipitancy*. All which I shall more fully explain.

First, Our Lusts blind us by *preventing* and intercepting the Exercise of Light and Reason, and Satan in this Case useth these Deceits.

First, He endeavours so to *stir up* our Lust, as yet to *conceal his Design*. *Secrecy* is one of his main *Engines*, he doth not (in this Case) shew his Weapon before he strikes; and indeed his Policy herein is great. For (1.) By this Means he takes us at *unawares*, secure and unprepared for Resistance. (2.) We are often ensnared *without Noise*, and before our Consideration of Things can come in to *rescue* us. (3.) If he get not his whole Design upon us this Way, yet he oft makes an *half Victory*; by this Means he procures an half Consent, or Inclination to sin before we discover that we are under a Temptation; for when the *Foundation* of a Temptation is laid *unespyed*, then we awaken with the Sin *in our Hand*, as sleeping Men awake sometime with the Words in their Mouths. If any Question, how can these Things be? How can he *steal* a Temptation upon us with such Secrecy? I answer, He can do it these three Ways.

First, He sometimes, after a *careless Manner*, and as it were by the By, *drops* in a Suggestion into our Hearts, and that without Noise or Importunity, giving it (as it were this

Charge,) *ſtir not up, nor awaken him*; and then he ſits by to obſerve the Iſſue, and to ſee if the *Tinder* will take Fire of itſelf. Thus many a Motion thrown into our Hearts, as it were accidentally, or ever we are aware, begets a ſudden Flame.

Secondly, He ſometimes *fetcheth a Compaſs*, and makes a Thing far *different* to be a *Preamble* or Introduction to his intended Deſign. Thus, by Objects, Imployments, Diſcourſe, or Company, that ſhew not any direct Tendency to Evil, doth he inſenſibly occaſion Pride, Paſſion, or Luſt. How ſlyly and ſecretly doth he put us upon what he intends as a further Snare? How unawares, while we think of no ſuch Thing, are we carried ſometime upon the Borders of Sin, and into the Enemy's Quarters? Satan in this acts like a Fowler, who uſeth a ſtalking Horſe, as if he were upon ſome other Imployment, when yet his Deſign is the Deſtruction of the Bird.

Thirdly, Another Way of Secrecy is his raiſing a *Croud of other Thoughts* in the Mind, and while theſe are mixed and confuſedly floating in the Underſtanding or Fancy, then doth he thruſt in among them the intended Suggeſtion, and then ſuffering the reſt to vaniſh, he by little and little ſingles this out as a more ſpecial Object of Conſideration, ſo that we caſt a ſudden Glance upon this, and we are often taken with it before we conſider the Danger. In this Satan doth as Soldiers, who take the Advantage of a Miſt to make a nearer Approach to their Enemies, and to ſurpriſe them before Diſcovery of the Danger: This he doth with us while we are in a *muſing Fit*, or a *melancholly Dream*.

A *ſecond* Deceit for the *preventing* of a ſerious Conſideration, is *ſudden Surpriſal*. In the former he endeavoured to *conceal the Temptation* while he is at Work with us, but in this he *ſhews the Temptation plainly*, only he ſets upon us without giving us *Warning* of the Onſet; but then he backs it with all the violent Importunity he can, and by this he hinders the recollecting of our ſelves and the Aid of Reaſon. This Courſe Satan only takes with thoſe whoſe Paſſions are apt to be *very ſtirring* and boiſterous; or ſuch as being his Slaves and Vaſſals are *more ſubject* to his Commands. Thus a ſudden Provocation to an angry Man, gives him not Time to conſider, but carries him Headlong. A *Surprize* of Occaſion and Opportunity, is frequently a *Conqueſt* to thoſe that have any *Earneſtneſs* of Hope, Deſire,

or

or Revenge: Surely *David* was taken at this Advantage in the Matter of *Bathsheba.* And here we may note, that good Men upon such a *sudden Motion*, do *yield* (without any Blow or Struggling) to that which at *other Times* they could not be drawn to by many *Reasons.*

Thirdly, Consideration is prevented by *gradual Intanglements.* Satan so orders the Matter, that Sin creeps on upon us as Sleep, by *insensible Degrees*: For this End sometimes he *dissembles* his Strength, and sets upon us with *lower* Temptations, and with less Force than otherwise he could: He knows we are not moved to *Extreams*, but by *Steps* and *Habits*, are not confirmed, but by *gradual* Proceedings; to take too great Strides, may *sometime* prevail at present, but the Suddenness and Greatness of the Alteration begetting a *Strangeness* on the Soul, may occasion *After thoughts* and Recoyling: Therefore he tempts first to *Thoughts*, then to a *Delight* in these Thoughts, then to the *Continuation* of them, then to *resolve*, and so on to *practice.* And in like Manner, he tempts some to make bold with a *small Matter*, which shall scarce come under the Notion of Wrong; then to a *greater*, and so gradually to *higher* Things, and thus he insensibly brings on a thievish Inclination and Practice. For the same End sometimes he shews his Skill in the Management of Occasions, he imperceptibly hooks Men into Sin, by drawing them first to be bold with *Occasions*: he tells them they may sit at the Ale-house, and yet not be drunk; that they may keep Familiarity, and yet not be lewd; that they may look upon a Commodity, and yet not steal, And when the *Occasions* are by this Means made *familiar* to them, then he puts them on a Step further, but by such slow Motions, that the Progress is scarce discerned till they be in the Snare.

CHAP. XII.

Of Satan's perverting our Reason. His second Way of blinding. The Possibility of this, and the Manner of accomplishing it directly, several Ways; and indirectly, by the Delights of Sin, and by sophistical Arguments; with an Account of them.

THE second Way by which Satan blinds us through the Power of Luft, is by *perverting* and *corrupting* our Reason,

Reason drawing it to approve of that, which it first *disapproved*. That our Lusts have such a Power upon the Understanding to make such an Alteration, need not seem strange to those that shall consider, that the Scripture propounding the Knowledge of the highest Mysteries, doth positively require (as a necessary Prerequisite to these Things) that we *lay aside all Filthiness and Superfluity of Naughtiness* (in these Terms, noting the loathsome Defilement of our Lusts) that so we may *receive the ingrafted Word*, Jam. i. 21. strongly implying that our Lusts have a Power to *elude* and evade the *strongest Reasons*, and to hinder their Entertainment: Which our Saviour notes, to have been also the Cause of the *Jews* Blindness, *How can ye believe which receive Honour one of another*? John v. 44. Their Lusts of Honour stood in their Light, and perverted their Reason.

But because this may seem to some almost impossible that Lusts should turn our *Sun* into Darkness, I shall a little explain it.

The Understanding doth usually, (if Practice of Sin have not put out its Light) *at the first* faithfully *represent* to our Mind the Nature of Good and Evil in Matters of Temptation and Duty; yet its Power in this Case is only *directive* and suasive to the *Will*, not *absolutely imperative*; the Will must follow the Understanding's Dictate, but is not under any Necessity of following its *first Advice*; 'tis the *ultimum dictamen*, the last Dictate that it is engaged to follow: However the *Will* (in the Case last mentioned) be dependent upon the Understanding, yet the *Understanding* doth also *quoad exercitium*, depend upon the *Will*, and as to the *Act of Consideration*, is under its Command; so that after the Understanding hath faithfully represented the Evil of a Sin, the *Will* can command it to another Consideration, and force it to *new Thoughts* and Consultations about it; in which Case, the *Will* doth *prompt* the Understanding, tells it what *Verdict* it would have it to bring in, and so doth really solicite and beg for a Compliance.

The Understanding is *ductile* and capable of being *brib'd*, and therefore suffers its *right Eye* to be put out by the *Will*, and as a false Witness, or a partial Judge, gives Sentence *as the Will would have it*; and thus (as one (*a*) observes) the *Understanding* and *Will* are like *Simeon* and *Levi*,

(*a*) *Former* Epistle Dedicatory to *Mystery of saving Grace*.

Levi, *Brethren in Evil*, mutually complying with, and gratifying each other.

The Possibility of Lust's perverting our Understanding being discovered, the Way and Manner how Lust doth thus corrupt it, is needful to be opened.

Lust exerciseth this Power under the Management of Satan, directly and indirectly.

First, Our Reason is directly perverted, when it is so far wrought upon as to call that *Good*, which is indeed plainly and apparently *Evil*. So great a Corruption is not common and ordinary, neither can the Heart of Man be easily drawn to go so palpably against clear Light and Evidence: 'Tis therefore only in some Cases, and in some Persons, either of weaker Faculties, or of extraordinary debauched Principles that Satan can work up Lust to give so great a Darkness: However 'tis evident that Satan useth these Deceits in this Thing.

1st, He strives, (where the Matter will bear it) to put the Name of *Virtue* or *Good* upon Actions and Things that are not so. This Temptation doth most appear in those Things that are of a doubtful and disputable Nature, or in those Actions which in their Appearance or Pretensions may seem to be virtuous. Whatever Sin is capable of any Paint or Varnish, that he takes the Advantage of. *Saul*'s sacrificing was a great Iniquity, and yet the Pretence of the *general Goodness* of the Action (being in itself commanded) and the supposed Necessity of *Saul*'s doing it, because *Samuel* came not, were Considerations upon which his Understanding warranted to him that Undertaking. *Paul*'s Persecution, (tho' a real Gratification of his envious Lustings) by his blinded Understanding was judged Duty: What more common than for Worldly mindedness and Covetousness, to be called a faithful and dutiful Care for the Provision of our Families? Lukewarmness is often justified under the Notion of Moderation and Prudence; and any Thing that can but pretend any *Kindred* to, or Resemblance of Good, our Lusts presently prevail for an Approbation and Vindication of it.

2dly, Satan useth the Advantage of *Extreams*, for the corrupting of our Understandings. To this Purpose he doth all he can to make such an Extream odious and displeasing, that so we may run upon the contrary as Matter of Duty. Many there are whose Heads are so weak, that if they see

the Danger of one Extream, they never think themſelves in Safety till they fly to a contrary Exceſs, and then they think the Extream they embrace needs no other Juſtification, than the apparent Evil of what they have avoided. Satan knowing this, like the *Lapwing*, makes the greateſt Noiſe when he is furtheſt from his Neſt, and in much ſeeming Earneſtneſs, tempts us to ſomething that is moſt croſs to our Temper or preſent Inclination; or endeavours to render ſomething ſo to us, not with any Hopes to prevail with us there, but to make us run as far from it as we can into another Snare, and alſo to make us believe that we have done well, and avoided a Temptation, when indeed we have but exchanged it.

3*dly*, He directly blinds our Underſtandings in ſinful Practices, by engaging us to corrupt Opinions which lead to wicked or careleſs Courſes. Satan with no great Eaſe can put Men upon Sin, when once he hath prevailed with them to receive an Error, which directly leads to it. Corrupt Principles do naturally corrupt Practices, and both theſe may be obſerved to meet in thoſe deluded Ones, whom the Scripture mentions, *Jude* 4. *that denied the only Lord God, and Jeſus Chriſt, turning alſo the Grace of God into Laſciviouſneſs*; falſe Teachers that brought in *damnable Hereſies*, counted it *Pleaſure to riot*, had *Eyes full of Adultery*, and *could not ceaſe from Sin*, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 13, 14. With what Confidence and Security will Sin be practiſed when an Opinion ſigns a *Warrant*, and pleads a Juſtification for it?

4*thly*, In Actions, whoſe Goodneſs or Badneſs is principally diſcoverable by the Ends upon which they are undertaken, 'tis no great Difficulty for Satan to impoſe upon Men a Belief that they act by Ends and Reſpects, which do not indeed move them at all; and in this Caſe Men are ſo blinded, that they do not, or will not know or acknowledge they do Evil; the Matter of the Action being warrantable, and the End being out of the Reach of common Diſcovery, they readily believe the *beſt* of themſelves; and looking more at the Warrantableneſs of the Nature of the Act in the general, than at their Grounds and Intentions, they think not that they do Evil. This was a Fault which Chriſt obſerved in the Diſciples when they called for *Fire from Heaven* upon the *Samaritans*, Luke ix. 55. The Thing itſelf *Elias* had done before, and Chriſt might have done it then,

but

but they wanted the *Spirit of Elias*; and therefore Christ rejects their Motion as unlawful *in them*, who considered not that a Spirit of Passion and Revenge did altogether influence them, and instead of shewing a just Displeasure against the *Samaritans*, he shews that Satan had blinded them by their Lust, and that the Thing they urged was so far from being good, that it was apparently evil, in that they were acted by *another Spirit* than they *imagined*. This Way of Deceit is very common. How often may we observe Christians pretending *conscientious Dissatisfactions* about the Actions of others, when the private Spring that animates them is some secret Grudge that lies at the Bottom; and yet because the Thing wherein they are dissatisfied may truly deserve *Blame*, they are not apt to *condemn* themselves, but think they do well.

Secondly, Lusts also pervert our Reason and Knowledge *indirectly*; and this is, when we are not *so far* blinded, as to believe the Thing unto which we are tempted, to be *good absolutely*; yet notwithstanding, we are persuaded of *some considerable Goodness* in it, and such as may for the present be embraced. For this Purpose Satan hath ready these *two* Engines:

1*st*, He sets before us the Pleasures, Profits, and other *Delights* of Sin: These he heightens with all his Art and Skill, that he may fix in our Minds this Conclusion, that however it be *forbidden*, yet it would conduce much to our Satisfaction or Advantage if it were practised; and here he promiseth such golden Ends and Fruits of Sin, as indeed it can never lead unto, inviting us in the Words of the Harlot, *Prov.* vii. 16. *I have decked my Bed with Coverings of Tapestry, with carved Works, with fine Linnen of Egypt. I have perfumed it with Myrrhe, Aloes and Cinamon. Come, let us take our Fill of these Delights.* Thus he set upon *Eve*, *Taste this Fruit, and ye shall be as Gods.* Thus he attempted Christ himself, *All these will I give thee*, proffering the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them. The Pleasures of Sin are Satan's great *Bait*, and these strongly invite and stir up our Lusts; yet because the Fear of the Danger may stick in the Heart, *'Tis pleasant, but I dare not*, saith the Sinner, *I fear the Hazard or the Evil that may follow*: Therefore Satan hath his other Engine at Hand to blind us, and to carry our Minds from such Considerations, and that is,

2*dly*,

2*dly*, His *Sophistical Arguments*, by which the Danger may be leſſened; of theſe his Quiver is full. As,

1. He urgeth that the Sin tempted to *is little*. But a *little one*, 'tis not (ſaith he) ſo great a Matter as you make it, there are other Sins far greater, and theſe alſo practiſed by Men that profeſs as much as you. Thus he would *Shame* us (as it were) out of our *Fear*, by calling it *Scrupulosity*, *Niceneſs*, or an unneceſſary *Preciſeneſs*. If this prevail not,

2. He hath then another Argument. Oh (ſaith he) be it ſo, that it is a *little more* than ordinary, yet it is *but once*; *taſte* or try it, you need not engage yourſelves to frequent Practice, you may retreat at Pleaſure. But if the Fear of the Danger prevail againſt this, then,

3. He labours to put us under a Kind of Neceſſity of ſinning, and this he pleads as a Juſtification of the Evil. 'Tis not altogether right, but you cannot well avoid it. This Plea of Neceſſity is large, Occaſion, Example, Command of others, Strength of Inclination, Cuſtom, and what not, are pleaded by him in this Caſe; ſome (*a*) particularly reckon them up: And rather than ſome Men will *acknowledge* the Evil, they will blame God's *Decree*, as if they were *neceſſitated* by it, or his Providence, as *Adam*, *The Woman that thou gaveſt me, ſhe gave me of the Tree*: *David's* bloody Reſolve againſt the Houſe of *Nabal* ſeems to be juſtified by him, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 21. from *Nabal's* great Ingratitude, *In vain have I kept all that this Fellow hath in the Wilderneſs*, &c. and as one engaged by a Neceſſity of repaying ſuch Wrongs and Affronts, doth he determine to cut them off. *Aaron* (when he was taxed by *Moſes* about the golden Calf) excuſeth the Matter by a pretended Neceſſity of doing what he did upon the violent Importunity of ſuch an heady People; and that when *Moſes* was not to be found, *Thou knoweſt the People, that they are ſet on Miſchief*, Exod. xxxii. 22. This that he urged to *Moſes*, Satan no doubt had urged to him, and he had acquieſced in it, as ſomething that he thought would excuſe, or at leaſt mitigate the Offence. Yet if the Sinner break through this Snare,

4. He comes on with a ſofter Plea of *Infirmity*; and endeavours to perſuade Men that they may yield under Pretence of *being forced*, and that their *Strivings* and *Reſiſtances*

(*a*) Vid. *Dyke* Deceitfulneſs of Heart, p. 139. &c.

Etancies will *leſſen* the Evil to an apparent *Sin of Infirmi-* ty; and thus he beſpeaks them, *Have not God's Children Infirmities? they ſin, tho' with Reluctancy, and doſt not thou reſiſt? Doth not the Fear that is in thy Heart ſhew an Unwillingneſs?* Mayſt thou not plead, *The Evil that I would not do, that do I; If thou yield, will not God account it a Rape upon thine Integrity?* If this Arrow ſtick not,

5. Then he extenuates the Offence, by propounding ſome ſmaller *Good* or Convenience that may *follow* that Evil. And this, tho' it be a way of Arguing, directly contrary to that Rule, *Do not Evil that Good may come,* yet it oft proves too ſucceſsful; and 'tis like that common Stratagem of War, when by the Propoſal of a *ſmall Booty* in View, the Enemies are drawn *out of their Hold* into a *fore-contrived* Danger. Thus Satan pleads, This *one Act of Sin may put you into a Capacity of honouring God the more.* Some have admitted Advancements and Dignities *againſt Conſcience*, upon no better Ground, but that they might *keep out Knaves*, and that they might be in a Condition to be *helpful* to good Men. Surely the Devil prevailed with *Lot* by this Weapon, when he offered the Proſtitution of his Daughters to the Luſts of the *Sodomites*, that the Strangers (as he thought them) might be preſerved; *by this Evil* (thinks he) *a greater may be avoided. Herod's* Conſcience could not at firſt conſent to the cutting off the Head of *John Baptiſt*, but when Satan ſuggeſts the Obligation of his Oath, he concludes, that in the killing of *John* he ſhould eſcape the Violation of the Oath; thus a *pretended Good* to come, becomes a *Pander* to a preſent certain Iniquity. Now if after all theſe Arguings the Conſcience carrieth an Appre-henſion of Danger, then,

6. He plainly diſputeth the *Poſſibility of the Eſcape of Danger, tho' the Sin be committed.* All the Inſinuations of Pleaſure and Advantage by which *Eve* was tempted, could not *at firſt* blot out her *Fears* of the Conſequence of that Tranſgreſſion, it did ſtick in her Mind ſtill, *leſt we* die; then Satan plainly denieth the Danger ſhe feared, *Ye ſhall not ſurely die, the Threatning* (ſaith he) *it may be was but for Trial, or without a ſtrict and poſitive Purpoſe in God to execute it, there is no Certainty that God was in good Earneſt when he ſpake ſo.* The Devil uſually urgeth the *Mercy* of God, the *Merits* of Chriſt, his *Promiſes* of Par-

don,

don, the *Infirmities* of the Saints, *their Sins*, and *Repentances*, &c. From all these drawing this Conclusion, that we may venture upon the Temptation without any apparent Hazard. *'Tis but repenting* (saith he) *and that is an easy Work to a gracious Soul, God is ready to be reconciled, even to a prodigal Son; he is not so cruel as to cast away any for a small Matter, he that waits to be gracious will not lye at Catch for Opportunities and Occasions to destroy us, he that delights not in the Death of a Sinner, will not delight to take strict Exceptions against every Failing.*

If Satan can prevail with us to *extenuate* the Sin, to *slight* the Hazard, or any Way to lessen it upon any of the forementioned Accounts; then having possessed us before with high *Apprehensions* of Delights and Satisfactions in the Sin, he quickly perswades to *accept* the Motion, as having a Conveniency and Advantage in it not to be despised: And thus doth he *indirectly pervert* our Reason, which is the second Way by which he blinds us, through the working of our Lust.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Satan's diverting our Reason, being the third Way of blinding Men. His Policies for diverting our Thoughts. His Attempts to that Purpose in a more direct Manner; with the Degrees of that Procedure. Of disturbing or distracting our Reason, which is Satan's fourth Way of blinding Men. His Deceits therein. Of Precipitancy, Satan's fifth Way of blinding Men. Several Deceits to bring Men to that.

THIRDLY; Satan blinds the Sons of Men by *diverting and withdrawing their Reason*, and taking it off from the *Pursuit* of its Discovery or Apprehensions. For sometime it cannot be induced to go so contrary to its Light, as to call Evil good, either *directly* or *indirectly*: Then is Satan put to a new Piece of Policy; and if the Frame of the Heart and the Matter of the Temptation suit his Design, he endeavours to *turn the Stream* of our Thoughts either wholly *another Way*, or to *still them* by turning them into a *dead Sea*, or by some Trick to beguile the Understanding with some *new Dress* of the Temptation. So that we may

may obſerve in Satan a *threefold*-Policy in a Subſerviency to this Deſign: For,

1*ſt*, Satan ſometimes *ceaſeth* his Purſuit and lets the Matter fall, and thinks it better to *change* the Temptation than to *continue* a Solicitation at ſo great a Diſadvantage. When he tempted Chriſt and could not prevail, he *departed for a Seaſon*, Luke iv. 13. with a Purpoſe to return at ſome fitter Time, which Chriſt himſelf was in Expectation of, knowing it to be his Manner to ly in wait for Advantages, and accordingly when his Sufferings drew nigh, which (as he ſpeaks to the *Jews*) was *their Hour and Power of Darkneſs*, Luke xxii. 53. he foretold his Return upon him, *Now the Prince of this World cometh*: However, this Attempt of his againſt the *Lord Jeſus prevailed* not, yet he ſhewed his *Art and Skill* in the *ſuſpending* of his Temptation to a more ſuitable Time. And the Succeſs of this againſt us is ſadly remarkable; for however we reſiſt, and at preſent ſtand out, yet his Solicitations are often like *Leaven*, which while 'tis hid in our Thoughts, doth not a little *ferment* and change them, ſo that at his Return, he often finds our *Luſts prepared* to raiſe greater Clouds upon our Mind. Many there are that *reſiſt* ſtrongly at preſent that which they *eaſily ſlide* into, when Satan hath given them *Time to breathe*; that ſay, *I will not*, and yet *do it afterwards*.

2*dly*, He ſometimes withdraws their Conſiderations, by *puffing them up with a Confidence that they are above the Temptation*: As a *Conqueſt* in a ſmall *Skirmiſh*, begetting an *Opinion* of Victory, makes Way for a total Overthrow over a careleſs and ſecure Army. We are too apt to triumph over Temptations, becauſe we give the firſt Onſet with *Courage* and Reſolution. Chriſt forewarned *Peter* of his Denial, he ſtoutly *deſies* it, and not improving this Advertiſement to Fear and Watchfulneſs, Satan who then was upon a Deſign to *ſift him*, took him at that Advantage of *Security*, and by a contemptible Inſtrument overthrew him. Thus while we grow ſtrong in our Apprehenſions by a Denial of a Sin, and undervalue it as below us, our Confidence makes us careleſs, and this lets in our Ruin.

3*dly*, If theſe Ways of Policy fail him, he *ſeemingly complies with us, and is content we judge the Matter ſinful, but then he profers his Service to bring us off by Diſtinctions*; and here the Sophiſter uſeth his Skill to further our Underſtanding in framing *Excuſes*, coining *Evaſions*, and ſo

doth *out-shoot* us in our *own Bow*. The *Corinthians* had learned to distinguish betwixt eating of Meat in an *Idol's* Temple in *Honour to the Idol*, and as a *common Feast* in Civility and Respect to their Friends that invited them: This presently withdrew their Consideration, and so quieted them in that Course, that the *Apostle* was forced to discover the Fallacy of it. The *Israelites* cursed him that gave a Wife to any of the Tribe of *Benjamin*: But when they turned to them in Compassion, they satisfied themselves with this poor Distinction, that they would not *give them Wives*, but were willing to *suffer them to take them*, Judges xxi. 18, 20. 'Tis a common Snare in Matters of Promise, or Oath, where Conscience is startled at a *direct Violation* thereof, by some pitiful *Salvo*, or *silly Evasion*, to blind the Eyes; and when they dare not *break* the Hedge, to *leap over* it by the Help of a *broken Reed*.

But I must here further observe, that Satan doth sometimes set aside these Deceits aforementioned, and tries his Strength for the withdrawing of our Consideration from the Danger of Sin, in a more *plain and direct* Manner, that is, *by continuing the Prospect of the Sweets and Pleasures of Sin under our Eye, and withal, urging us by repeated Solicitations to cast the Thoughts of the Danger behind our Back*: In which he so far prevails sometimes, that Men are charged with a deep *Forgetfulness* of God, his Law, and of themselves, yet usually it ariseth to this by Degrees: As

(1.) When a Temptation is before us, and our Conscience *reluctS* it; if there be any Inclination to *recede* from a Conviction, the Motion is resisted with a *secret Regrete* and Sorrow. As the young Man was said to *go away sorrowful*, when Christ propounded such Terms for eternal Life as he was not willing to hear of: So do we, our Heart is divided betwixt *Judgment* and *Affection*, and we begin to wish that it might be *lawful* to commit such a Sin, or that there were *no Danger* in it; nay, often our *Wishes* contradict our *Prayers*; and while we desire to be delivered from the Temptation, our private Wishes beg a Denial to those Supplications.

(2.) If we come thus far, we usually proceed to the next Step, which is, to *give a Dismission to those Thoughts that oppose the Sin*: We say to them, as *Felix* to *Paul*, *Go thy Way for this Time, and when I have a convenient Opportunity I will send for thee.*

(3.) If

(3.) If a plain Diſmiſſion ſerve not to repel theſe Thoughts, we begin to *impriſon the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*, Rom. i. 18. and by a more peremptory Refuſal to ſtifle it, and to keep it under, and become at laſt *willingly ignorant*, 2 Pet. iii. 5.

(4.) By this Means at laſt the Heart grows *ſottiſh and forgetful:* The Heart is *taken away*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, and then do theſe Thoughts of Conviction and Warning at preſent *periſh together*. This withdrawing of our Conſideration is Satan's third Way of blinding us. Follows next

The *fourth* Way by which our Luſt prevails in Satan's Hand to blind Knowledge, and that is by *diſtracting and diſturbing it in its Work*. This Piece of Subtilty Satan the rather uſeth, becauſe 'tis attended with a double Advantage, and like a *two edged Sword* will cut either Way. For (1.) A *Confuſion* and Diſtraction in the Underſtanding, will hinder the *even* and clear *Apprehenſions* of Things, ſo that thoſe Principles of Knowledge cannot reach ſo deep, nor be ſo firm and full in their Application: For as the Senſes, if any Way diſtracted or hindred, tho' never ſo intent, muſt needs ſuffer Prejudice in their Operations; a thick Air or Miſt not only hinders the Sight of the Eye, but alſo conduceth to a Miſrepreſentation of Objects: Thus is the Underſtanding hindred by Confuſion. But (2.) If this ſucceed not, yet by this he hinders the *Peace and Comfort* of God's Children; 'Tis a Trouble to be haunted with evil Thoughts. To work this Diſtraction.

Firſt, Satan uſeth a *clamorous Importunity*, and doth ſo follow us with Suggeſtions, that what Way ſoever we turn they follow us; we can think nothing elſe, or hear nothing elſe, they are ever before us.

Secondly, He worketh this Diſturbance in our Thoughts by *levying a Legion* of Temptations againſt us; *many at once*, and of *ſeveral Kinds*, from *within*, from *without*, on every Side, he gathers all from the *Dan* to the *Beerſheba* of his *Empire* to oppreſs us with a Multitude; ſo that while our Thoughts are *divided* about many Things, they are *leſs fixed* and obſervant in any Particular.

Thirdly, He ſometimes endeavours to *weary us out with long Solicitations*. As thoſe that beſiege a City, when they cannot *ſtorm*, endeavour to waſte their Strength and Proviſions by a *long Siege*: His Deſign in this is to come upon us (as *Achitophel* counſelled *Abſalom*) when we are *weary*

and weak handed by watching and long Reſiſtance.

Fourthly, But his chief Deſign is to take the *Advantage of any Trouble inward or outward*, and by the Help of this he dangerouſly *diſcompoſeth* and diſtracts our Counſels and Reſolves. If any have a Spirit diſtemper'd, or ly under the Apprehenſions of Wrath, 'tis eaſy for him to confound and *amaze* ſuch, that they ſhall ſcarce know what they *do*, or what they *think*. The like Advantage he hath from outward Afflictions, and theſe Opportunities he the rather takes, for theſe Reaſons.

1*ſt*, Uſually inward or outward Troubles leave ſome *Stamp of Murmuring* and Sullenneſs upon our Hearts, and of themſelves diſtemper our Spirits with a ſad Inclination, *to ſpeak in our Haſte*, or *to act unadviſedly*. *Job*'s Affliction imbittered his Spirit, and Satan miſſeth not the Advantage; then he comes upon him with Temptations, and prevailed ſo far, that he ſpake many Things in his Anguiſh, of which he was aſhamed afterward, and hides his Face for it; *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer: Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further*, Job xl. 5.

2*dly*, By reaſon of our Burden we are *leſs wieldy*, and more unapt to make any Reſiſtance. God himſelf expreſſeth the Condition of ſuch, under the Similitude of thoſe *that are great with Young*, who, becauſe they cannot be driven faſt, he *gently leads* them: But Satan knows a ſmall Matter will diſcompoſe them, and herein he deals with us, as *Simeon* and *Levi* dealt with the *Sechemites* who ſet upon them when they were *ſore* by Circumciſion.

3*dly*, Troubles *of themſelves* occaſion *Confuſion*, Multitudes of Thoughts, Diſtractions and Inadvertancies. If Men ſee a Hazard before them they are preſently at their Wits End, they are puzled, they know not what to do, Thoughts are divided, now reſolving this, then preſently changing to a contrary Purpoſe. 'Tis ſeldom but *as in a Multitude of Words there is much Folly*, ſo in a Diſtraction of Thoughts there are many Miſcarriages, and Satan with a little Labour can improve them to more; here he works unſeen; in theſe *troubled Waters* he loves to angle, becauſe his Baits are not diſcerned.

Fifthly, Our Conſiderations and Reaſonings againſt Sin are hindred by a *bold forward Precipitancy*. When Men are haſted and preſſed to the committing of Sin, and like the *deaf Adder*, ſtop their Ears againſt *the Voice of the Charmer*:

In

In this Caſe the rebellious *Will* is like a *furious* Horſe, that takes the *Bridle in his Teeth*, and inſtead of *ſubmitting* to the Government of his Rider, he carries him violently whither he would not. Thus do Men ruſh into Sin, as the Horſe into the Battle. The Devices by which Satan doth forward this, we may obſerve to be theſe among others.

First, He endeavours to *affright* Men into an *Hopeleſſneſs of prevailing againſt him*, and ſo intimidates Men, that they throw down their Weapons, and yield up themſelves to the Temptation; they conclude there is no Hope by all their Reſiſtance, to ſtand it out againſt him, and then they are eaſily perſwaded to comply with him. To help this forward, Satan uſeth the Policy of *Soldiers*, who uſually *boaſt* high of their *Strength* and Reſolutions, that the Hearts and *Courage* of their Adverſaries failing, the *Victory* may fall to them without *Stroke*. The Devil expreſſeth a Diſdain and Scorn of our weak Oppoſition, as *Goliah* did of *David*, *Am I a Dog, that thou comeſt to me with Staves? Doſt thou think to ſtand it out againſt me? 'Tis in vain to buckle on thine Armour; and therefore better were it to ſave the Trouble of ſtriving, than to fight to no Purpoſe.* With ſuch like Arguings as theſe, are Men ſometimes prevailed with to throw down their Weapons, and to over-run their Reaſon through Fear and Hopeleſſneſs.

Secondly, Sometimes he is more ſubtile, and *by threatning Men down, that they have conſented already, he puts them upon deſperate Adventures of going forward.* This is uſually where Satan hath uſed *many* Sollicitations *before*, after our Hearts have been urged ſtrongly with a Temptation; when he ſees he cannot win us over to him, then he *triumphs* and boaſts we are *conquered already*, and that our Thoughts could not have *dwelt* ſo long upon ſuch a *Subject*, but that we had a *Liking* to it, and thence would perſwade us to go on and enjoy the *Fulneſs* of that Delight, which we have already *ſtoln* privately, *over Shoes, over Boots*. Now, tho' his Arguings here be very weak, (for tho' it be granted, that by the Stay of the Temptation on our Thoughts, he hath a *little entangled* us, it cannot hence be inferred, that it is our Wiſdom to entangle ourſelves *further*,) yet are many overcome herewith, and give up themſelves as already conquered, and ſo give a Stop to any further Conſideration.

Thirdly, When Men will not be *trapaned* into the Snare

by the former Deluſions, he attempts to work them up to a *ſudden and haſty Reſolve of Sinning*; he prepares all the Materials of the Sin, puts every Thing in Order, and then carries us (as he did Chriſt) into the Mountain, to give us a Proſpect of their Beauty and Glory: *All theſe* (ſaith he) *will I give thee; do but conſent, and all are thine.* Now, albeit there are Arguments at hand, and ſerious Conſiderations to deter us from Practice, yet how are all laid aſide by a quick Reſolve. Satan urgeth us by violent *Hurry* (as Chriſt ſaid to *Judas*) *what thou haſt to do, do it quickly.* The Soul perſwaded with this, puts on a ſudden Boldneſs and Reſolution; and when Reaſon doth offer to *interpoſe, it holds faſt the Door*, becauſe *the Sound of its Maſter's Feet is behind it.* Doth it not ſay to itſelf, *Come, we will not conſider, let us do it quickly, before theſe lively Conſiderations come in to hinder us.* 'Tis loth to be reſtrained, and conceiteth, that if it can be done *before Conſcience awaken* and make a Noiſe, all is well; as if Sin *ceaſed* to be ſinful, becauſe we by a violent Haſte endeavoured to *prevent* the Admonition of Conſcience. Thus they enjoy their Sin (as the *Iſraelites* eat their Paſſover) *in haſte, and with their Staves in their Hands.*

Fourthly, When Opportunities and Occaſions will well ſuit it; he takes the Advantage of a *paſſionate and ſullen Humour*, and by this Means he turns us clearly out of our Biaſs; Reaſon is trampled under Foot, and Paſſion quite over-runs it. At this Diſadvantage the Devil takes *Jonah*, and hardens him to a ſtrange *Reſolve* of quarrelling God, and *juſtifying* himſelf in that Inſolency. The *Humour* that Satan wrought upon, was his *fretful Sullenneſs*, raiſed up to a great Height by the Diſappointment of his Expectation; and this makes him break out into a *cholerick* Reſolution, *I do well hito be angry.* Had he been compoſed in his Spirit; had his Mind been calm and ſedate, the Devil (ſurely) could not by any Arguments have drawn him up to it; but when the *Spirit* is in a *Rage*, a *little* Matter will *bind* Reaſon in *Chains*, and puſh a Man upon a *deſperate Carleſſneſs* of any Danger that may follow, ſuitable to that Expreſſion of *Job*, Chap. xiii. 13. *Let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.*

Fifthly, All theſe are but ſmall, in compariſon of thoſe *deliberate Determinations which are to be found with moſt Sinners*, who are therefore ſaid to ſin with an *high Hand*, *preſump-*

presumptuously, willfully, against Conscience, against Knowledge, and this ordinarily to be found only among those, whom a *Custom* of Sin hath hardned and confirmed into a *Boldness* of a wicked Way and Course. When the Spirits of Men are thus *harnessed* and prepared, Satan can at Pleasure almost *form* them into a *deliberate Resolve*, to *cast the Commandment behind their Back*, and *to refuse to hearken*. When any Temptation is offered them, if God say, *Ask for the old Paths, and walk therein* (as *Jer.* vi. 16.) they will readily answer, *We will not walk therein*: If God say, *Hearken to the Sound of the Trumpet*, they will reply, *We will not hearken*: When the People by a Course of sinning had made themselves like the *wild Ass* used to the Wilderness, then did they peremptorily *set up their* Will against all the *Reason* and Consideration that could come in to deter them, tho' they were told the Inconveniences, (*Jer.* ii. 25.) that this did *unshoe* their Foot, and afflicted them with *Thirst and Want*; yet was the Advice slighted, *there is no Hope* (said they) there is no Expectation that we will take any Notice of these Pleadings, for we have *fixed* our Resolve, *We have loved Strangers, and after them will we go*. So *Jer.* xliv. 16 *As for the Word that thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatsoever Thing goeth out of our own Mouth*. A plain and *full Resolve* of Will dischargeth all the *Powers of Reason*, and commands its Silence. And that this is most ordinary among Men, may appear by these frequent Expressions of Scripture, wherein God lays the Blame of all that Madness which their Lives bring forth, upon their *Will*. *Ye would not obey; ye will not come to me; their Heart is set to do Evil*, &c. It may indeed seem strange, that Satan should proceed so far with the Generality of Men, and that they should do that that should seem so inconsistent with those Principles which they retain, and the Light which must result from thence: But we must remember, that these *Wills* and *Shalls* of wicked Men, are for the most part *God's Interpretation* of their Acts and Carriage, which speaks as much, tho' it may be their Minds and Hearts do not so *formally* mould up their Thoughts into such open and *brazen fac'd* Assertions. And yet we ought also further to consider, that when the *Spirit* of God chargeth Man with *Wilfulness*, there is surely more of a *formal Wilfulness* in

the Heart of Man than lieth open to *our View*. And this will be leſs ſtrange to us when we call to mind,

Sixthly, That through the Working of Satan the Minds of Men are darkned, and the Light thereof put out by the Prevalency of *Atheiſtical Principles* (*a*). Something of *Atheiſm* is by moſt Divines concluded to be in *every* Sin; and according to the Height of it in its various Degrees, is Reaſon and Conſideration overturned: There are, it may be, few that are *profeſſed* Atheiſts in *Opinion*, and dogmatically ſo, but all *wicked* Men are ſo *in Practice*; tho' they profeſs God, yet *the Fool ſaith in his Heart, there is no God*, and in *their Works they deny him*. This is a Principle that directly ſtrikes at the Root; for if there be *no God, no Hell*, or Puniſhment, who will be *ſcared* from taking his Delight in Sin by any ſuch Conſideration? The Devil therefore ſtrives to inſtil this Poiſon with his Temptation. When he enticed *Eve* by ſecret Inſinuations, he firſt *queſtions* the Truth of the Threatning, and then proceeds to an open *Denial* of it; *Ye ſhall not ſurely die*; and 'tis plain, ſhe was induced to the Sin upon a *ſecret Diſbelief* of the Danger; ſhe reckons up the Advantages, *good for Food, pleaſant to the Eye, to be deſired to make one wiſe*; wherein 'tis evident ſhe believed what Satan had affirmed, *that they ſhould be as God*, and then it was not to be feared that they ſhould die. This Kind of *Atheiſm* is common; Men may not *diſbelieve* a Godhead; nay, they may *believe there is a God*, and yet *queſtion* the Truth of his *Threatnings*. Thoſe Conceits that Men have of God, whereby they *mould* and frame him in their *Fancies*, ſuitable to their Humours (which is a *thinking that he is ſuch an one as our ſelves*, Pſal. l.) are Steams and Vapours from this Pit, and the Hearts of the Sons of Men are *deſperately ſet within them to do Evil*, upon theſe Grounds; much more when they ariſe ſo high, as in ſome, who ſay, *Doth God know? Is there Knowledge in the moſt High?* If Men give way to this, what Reaſon can be imagined to ſtand before them? All the Comminations of Scripture are derided as ſo many *Theological Scar-crows*, and undervalued as ſo many pitiful Contrivances to keep Men in awe.

CHAP.

(*a*) *Capel.* Tempt.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Satan's maintaining his Poſſeſſion. His firſt Engine for that Purpoſe, is his finiſhing of Sin, in its Reiteration and Aggravation. His Policies herein.

HAVING explained the *five* Ways by which Satan, thro' the Power of Luſt, cauſeth Blindneſs of Mind, in tempting to Sin, I ſhall next lay open Satan's Devices for the *keeping and maintaining his Poſſeſſion*, which are theſe.

Firſt, He endeavours (after he hath prevailed with any Man to commit an Iniquity) to *finiſh Sin*, James i. 15. *After 'tis conceived* and *brought forth*, then 'tis *finiſhed*; which notes its Growth and Increaſe. This compriſeth theſe two Things, its *Reiteration*, and its *Aggravation*.

1*ſt*, Its *Reiteration* is when by frequent Acts it is ſtrengthned, and confirmed into an Habit. There are various Steps by which Men aſcend into the *Seat of the Scornful*, *Nemo repente turpiſſimus*. 'Tis not one Act that doth denominate Men *wiſe to do Evil*. In *Pſal.* i. *David* ſhews there are Gradations and Degrees of Sin, ſome *walk in the Counſel of the Ungodly*; ſome, by Progreſs and Continuance of Sin, *ſtand in the Way of Sinners*; ſome, by a Hardneſs of Heart and Fixedneſs in wicked Purpoſes, *ſit in the Seat of the Scornful*. To this Height doth he labour to bring his Proſelytes, yet he further deſigns,

2*dly*, That Sin may have its utmoſt Accompliſhments in *all the Aggravations* whereof it may be capable, he ſtrives to put Men upon ſuch a Courſe of ſinning as may be *moſt ſcandalous* to the Goſpel, *moſt enſnaring* and offenſive to others, *moſt hardning* and deſperate to ourſelves, *moſt offenſive* and provocking to God; in this he imitates the Counſel of *Achitophel* to *Abſalom*, when he adviſed him to go in unto his Father's Concubines in the Sight of all *Iſrael*, that ſo the Breach betwixt him and his Father might be widned to an Impoſſibility of Reconciliation. Thus he labours that Sinners ſhould act at ſuch a Rate of open Defiance againſt Heaven, as if they *reſolved to ly down in their Iniquity*, and were purpoſed never to think of returning, and making up their Peace with God. That Sin may be finiſhed in both theſe Reſpects, he uſeth theſe Policies:

1. After Sin is once committed, he renews his Motions and Solicitations to act it again, and then again, and so onward till they be perfect and habituated to it. In this Case he acts over again the former Method by which he first ensnared them, only with such Alterations as the present Case doth necessitate him unto; before he urged for the committing of it but once, (how little is he to be trusted in these Promises) now he urgeth them by the very Act they have already done, *Is it not a pleasant or profitable Sin to thy very Experience? Hast thou not tasted and seen? Hast thou not already consented? Taste and try again, and yet further, withdraw not thy Hand.* A little Temptation served before, but a less serves now; for by yielding to the first Temptation, our Hearts are secretly inclined to the Sin, and we carry a greater Affection to it than before: For this is the Stain and Defilement of Sin, that when once committed, it leaves Impressions of *Delight* and *Love* behind, which are still the more augmented by a further Progress and frequent Commission, till at last by a strong Power of Fascination it bewitches Men that they cannot forbear; all the Entreaties of Friends, all their own Promises, all their Resolves and Purposes, tho' never so strong and serious, (except God strike in to rescue by an omnipotent Hand) can no more restrain them than *Fetters of Straw* can hold a *Giant*. God himself owns it as a *natural Impossibility*, *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin? No more can ye do Good*; and the Reason of that Impossibility is from hence, that they are *accustomed to do Evil*. Such strong and powerful Inclinations to the same Sin again are begot in us by a Sin already committed, that sometime one Act of Sin fills some Men with as *vehement* and *passionate Desires* for a further Enjoyment, as Custom and Continuance doth others. *Austin* reports that *Alipius* when once he gave Way to the Temptation of beholding the *Gladiators*, was bewitched with such a *Delight*, that he not only desired to come again *with others*, but also *before others*. Neither is it any great Wonder it should be so, when (besides the Inclinations that are begot in us by any Act of Sin to recommit it) Sin puts us *out of God's Protection*, *debilitates* and weakens our Graces, *strengthens* Satan's Arm, and often procures him further Power and Commission against us.

2. Satan

2. Satan endeavours to make one Sin an *Engagement* to another, and to force Men to *draw Iniquity with Cords of Vanity*. *Agur* notes a Concatenation in Sins, *leſt I ſteal and take the Name of God in vain*, Prov. xxx. 9. *Adam* ſinning in the forbidden Fruit, and proclaimed guilty by his Conſcience, runs into another Sin for the Excuſe of the former, *the Woman that thou gaveſt me*, &c. *David* affords a ſad Inſtance of this, the Sin with *Bathſheba* being committed, and ſhe with Child upon it, *David*, to hide the Shame of his Offence, 1. *Hypocritically* pretends great Kindneſs to *Uriah*. 2. When that ſerved not, next he makes him *drunk*, and it may be he involved many others in that Sin as *Acceſſories*. 3. When this Courſe failed, his Heart conceives a Purpoſe and Reſolution to murder him. 4. He cruelly makes him the *Meſſenger* of his *own* Deſtruction. 5. He engageth *Joab* in it. 6. And the Death of many of his Soldiers. 7. By this puts the whole *Army* upon an *Hazard*. 8. *Exciſeth* the bloody Contrivance by *Providence*. 9. In all uſing ſtill the *Height* of Diſſimulation. Satan knows how natural it is for Men to hide the *Shame* of their Iniquity, and accordingly provides Occaſions and Provocations, to drive them on to a Kind of Neceſſity.

3. By a *perverſe Repreſentation of the State of godly and wicked Men*, he draws on Sin to an higher Compleatment. How often doth he ſet before us the Miſery, Affliction, Contempt, Croſſes, and Sadneſſes of the one, and the Jollity, Delights, Plenty, Peace, Honours, and Power of the other? It was a Temptation that had almoſt brought *David* to an *Atheiſtical* Reſolve againſt all religious Duty, and that which he obſerved had prevailed altogether with many Profeſſors, *Pſal.* lxxiii. when they obſerved *they were not in Trouble like other Men*, and that their Mouth and Tongue had been inſolent againſt God, without any Rebuke or Check from him; when in the mean Time the *Godly were plagued all the Day*, and *chaſtened every Morning*; Some (that were in Profeſſion, or Eſtimation at leaſt, God's People) returned to take up theſe Thoughts, and to reſolve upon ſuch Practices, *verſe* 10. as if God, who ſees all theſe with ſo much Silence, muſt be ſuppoſed knowingly to give ſome Countenance to ſuch Actions. This indeed (when 'tis proſecuted upon our Hearts in its full Strength with thoſe ugly Surmiſes, Jealouſies, and Miſapprehenſions that are wont to accompany it) is a ſad Step to a deſperate Neglect of

of Duty, and a Careleſſneſs in ſinning, in that it inſenſibly introduceth *Atheiſtical* Impreſſions upon the Hearts of Men, and ſuch are apt to catch Hold, even upon good Men, who are but too ready to ſay, as *David*, *I have cleanſed my Hands in vain.*

4. Satan hath yet another Piece of Policy for the Multiplication and Aggravation of Sin, which is the *Enmity and Oppoſition of the Law.* Of this the Apoſtle *Paul* ſadly complains from his own Experience, *Rom.* vii. 8. *Sin taking Occaſion by the Commandment, wrought in me all Manner of Concupiſcence.* What he laments is this, that ſuch is the Perverſeneſs of our Natures, that the Law, inſtead of *reſtraining* us, doth the more *enrage* us, ſo that *accidentally* the Law doth multiply Sin: For when the Reſtraint of the Law is before us, Luſt burns not only more inwardly, but when it cannot be kept in and ſmothered, then it breaks out with greater Violence, *Let us break their Bonds aſunder*, &c. When the Law condemns our Luſts, they grow furly and deſperate, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, &c. If any wonder that the Law (which was given of Purpoſe to repreſs Sin, and which is of ſo great Uſe in its Authority to kill it in us, and to hinder Temptations) ſhould thus be uſed by Satan to encreaſe and enrage it, they may conſider that 'tis but ſtill an accidental Occaſion, and not a Cauſe, and Sin *takes this Occaſion* without any Fault of the Law. Satan to this End (*a*) *watcheth* the Time when our Hearts are moſt earneſtly ſet upon our Luſts, when our Deſires are moſt highly engaged, and then by a *ſubtile Art* ſo oppoſeth the Law, (letting in its Contradictions in Way and Meaſure ſuitable) that our Hearts conceive a *Grudge* at Reſtraint, which, together with its *Earneſtneſs* to *ſatisfy the Fleſh*, ariſeth up to a *furious Madneſs*, and violent Striving to maintain a Liberty and Freedom to do according to the Deſires of their Heart; whereas this *ſame Law*, if it be applied to the Heart when 'tis *more cooled*, and not ſo *highly engaged* upon a Deſign of Luſt, will *break*, *terrify*, and *reſtrain* the Heart, and put ſuch a *Damp* upon Temptations that they ſhall not be able to ſtand before it. So great a Difference is there in the *various Seaſons* of the Application of this Law; in which Art, for the enflaming of the Heart to Iniquity, Satan ſhews a wonderful Dexterity.

CHAP.

(*a*) *As* Abſalom *his Servants watched when* Amnon's *Heart was merry with Wine.*

CHAP. XV.

Of Satan's keeping all in Quiet, which is his ſecond Engine for keeping his Poſſeſſion, and for that Purpoſe his keeping us from going to the Light by ſeveral Subtilities; alſo of making us riſe up againſt the Light, and by what Ways he doth that.

SATAN's next Engine, for the maintaining his Poſſeſſion, *is to keep all in Quiet*; which our Saviour notes, *Luke* xi. 21. *When a ſtrong Man armed keepeth his Palace, his Goods are in Peace.* He urgeth this againſt thoſe that objected to him, that he caſt out Devils by *Beelzebub*, which Calumny he confuteth, by ſhewing the Inconſiſtency of that, with Satan's Principles and Deſign; it being a Thing ſufficiently known and univerſally practiſed, that no Man will *diſturb* or *diſpute* againſt his own *peaceable Poſſeſſion*; neither can it be ſuppoſed Satan will do it, becauſe he acts by this common Rule of keeping down and hindring any Thing that may diſquiet Breach of Peace, is hazardous to a Poſſeſſion; an uneaſy Government occaſions Mutinies and Revolts of Subjects: Yet we might think that (the Wages of Sin, the Light and Power of Conſcience conſidered,) it were no eaſy Task for the Devil to rule his Slaves with ſo much Quiet, as 'tis obſerved he doth; his Skill in this Particular, and the Way of managing his Intereſt for ſuch an End, we may clearly ſee, in *John* iii. 20. *Every one that doth Evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, leſt his Deeds ſhould be reproved.* From which Place we may obſerve; (1.) The great Thing that doth diſquiet Satan's Poſſeſſion, is *Light.* (2.) The Reaſon of that Diſquietment is the *Diſcovery that Light makes*, and the *Shame* that follows that Diſcovery. (3.) The Way to *prevent* that Light, and the Reproof of it, is to *avoid coming to it*; and where it cannot be avoided, *to hate it.* 'Tis Satan's Buſineſs then for keeping all in Peace. 1. To keep us *from the Light*; or if that cannot be, then 2. To make us *riſe up againſt it.* I ſhall make Enquiry after both theſe Projects of the Devil.

To keep us from coming to the Light, he uſeth a great many Subtilities: As,

Firſt,

First, For his *own Part*, he forbears to do any Thing that might *diſcompoſe* or affright entangled Souls: At other Times, and in other Caſes he loves to *torment* and affright them, to cauſe their Wounds to *ſtink* and corrupt; but in this Caſe he takes a contrary Courſe, he keeps off (as much as may be) all *Reflections* of Conſcience; he *conceals* the Evil and Danger of Sin, he *ſings them aſleep* in their Folly, *till a Dart ſtrike through their Liver*, and haſtens them to the Snare, *as a Bird that knoweth not that it is for his Life*, Prov. vii. 23. They that ſhall conſider, that the Heart of a Sinner is hardned through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin; and that the greateſt Part of the Affrightment that moleſts the Conſciences of ſuch, is from Satan's *Fury* and Malice; they will eaſily conceive how much his *ſtrict* Forbearance to moleſt, may contribute to the Peace and Eaſe of thoſe that are *ſettled upon their Lees*: But beſides his Forbearance, we may expect that whatever *Clouds* or *Darkneſs* he can raiſe to exclude the Light, or to muffle the Eyes, he will not be negligent in the Uſe of that Power, whatever he can poſitively do in the raiſing up the *Confidence* of Preſumption or Security in the Minds of Men; whatever he can do to make them *ſottiſh* or careleſs, that ſhall not be wanting.

Secondly, He ſhews no leſs Skill and Diligence by *ſecret Contrivances* to *hinder* Occaſions of Reproof, and Diſcovery; how much he can practiſe upon others, that out of Pity and Compaſſion to the Souls of Men, are ready to draw a Sinner *from the Error of his Way, and to ſave a Soul from Death*. We can ſcarce imagine what Ways he hath to *divert* and hinder them, by what private *Diſcouragements* he doth defer them, who can tell? He that could diſpute with the *Angel* about the Body of *Moſes* to prevent the ſecret Interment of it, *Jude* 9. *Deut.* xxxiv. 6. He that could give a a *Stop* of One and twenty Days to the Angel that was to bring the comfortable Meſſage to *Daniel* of the hearing of his Prayers, may more eaſily *obſtruct* and oppoſe the Deſigns of a faithful Reprover. Sometime he doth this by *viſible* Means and Inſtruments, ſtirring up the Spirits of wicked Men to give Oppoſition to ſuch as ſeek to deliver their Souls from the Blood of Men, by faithful Warnings or Exhortations: The *Devil* was ſo careful to keep *Jeroboam* quiet in his ſinful Courſe of Idolatry, that he ſtirs up *Amaziah* to baniſh *Amos* from the Court, leſt his plain

Dealing

Dealing ſhould ſtartle or awaken the Conſcience of the King; *Amos* vii. 12, 13. *Go, flee thee away into the Land of Judah,* &c. *but propheſie not any more at Bethel, for it is the King's Chappel, it is the King's Court.*

Thirdly, In order to the keeping out the Light from the Conſciences of Men, he inſinuates himſelf as a *lying Spirit into the Mouths* of ſome of his *Mercenaries*; and they ſpeak *ſmooth Things* and *Deceit* to Satan's Captives; telling them, that they are in a good Condition; Chriſtians good enough, and may go to Heaven as well as the preciſeſt: 'Tis a Fault in *unfaithful Miniſters*, they do the *Devil* this Service, God highly complains of it, *Jer.* vi. 14. *They have healed alſo the Hurt of the Daughter of my People ſlightly, ſaying, Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace.* Ezek. xiii. 10. *They have ſeduced my People, ſaying, Peace, and there was no Peace: And one built up a Wall, and others daubed it with untempered Morter.* Beſides, this Stratagem is the more likely to prevail, becauſe it takes the Advantage of the *Humours* and Inclinations of Men, who naturally think *the beſt* of themſelves, and delight that others ſhould ſpeak what *they would have them*; ſo that when Men by the *Devil*'s Inſtigation propheſie Deceit to ſinful Men, 'tis moſt likely they ſhould be heard, ſeeing, they deſire ſuch Prophets, *and love to have it ſo.*

Fourthly, Satan keeps off the Light, by *catching away the Word after it is ſown.* This Policy of his, Chriſt expreſly diſcovers, *Matth.* xiii. 19. *When any one heareth the Word of the Kingdom, and underſtandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was ſown in his Heart:* Such Opportunities the *Devil* doth narrowly watch; to be ſure he will be preſent at a Sermon, or good *Diſcourſe*, and if he perceive any Thing ſpoken that may endanger his peaceable Poſſeſſion, how buſy is he to withdraw the Heart, ſometime by the *Sight* of the Eyes, ſometimes by *vain Thoughts* of Buſineſs, Occaſions, Delights, and what not; and if this come not up to his End, then he endeavours, *after Men have heard*, to juſtle all out by *impertinent Diſcourſes, Urgencies* of Imployment, and a thouſand ſuch Divertiſements, that ſo Men may not lay the Warning to Heart, nor by ſerious Meditation to apply it to their Conſciences.

Fifthly, He ſometimes *ſnuffs* out the Light by Perſecution, Thoſe Hearers, *Matth.* xiii. 20, 21. that had received the Word

Word with some Workings of Affections and Joy, are *presently offended when Persecution; because of the Word, ariseth.* By this, he threatens Men into an Acquiescency in their present Condition, that if *they depart from Iniquity, they shall make themselves a Prey*: Bonds, Imprisonments, and Hatreds (he suggests) shall abide them, and by this Means he scares Men from the Light.

Sixthly, He sometimes *smothers* and choaks it with the *Cares of the World.* As those that received Seed among Thorns; by earnest Engagements in Business, all that Time, Strength and Affection which should have been laid out in the Prosecution of heavenly Things, are wholly taken up and spent on outward Things; by this Means that Light that shines into the Hearts of Men, is neglected and put by.

Seventhly, He staves off Men from coming to the Light, by putting them upon *Misapprehensions of their Estate*, in judging themselves by the common Opinion. Satan hath so far prevailed with Men, that they are become confident of this Conceit, *That Men may take a moderate Liberty in Sinning, and yet nevertheless be in a good Condition; that Sin is not so great a Matter in God's Esteem, as in the Judgment of some rigorous Precisian, that he will not be so extream to mark what we do amiss, as some strict Professors are.* What can be of greater Hindrance to that ingenuous Search, strict Examination, and impartial Judging, or shaming our selves for our Iniquities, (which the Light of Scripture would engage us unto) than such a Conceit as this? And yet that this Opinion is not only common, but ancient, is manifest by those Warnings and Cautions given by the *Apostle* to the contrary. *Gal.* vi. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap.* Eph. v. 6. *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words, for because of these Things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience.* If it had not been usual for Men to live in Uncleanness, Covetousness, and such like Offences, (which he calls *sowing to the Flesh*) and yet in the midst of these, to think they were not under the Hazard of Wrath; or if Men had not professedly and avowedly maintained such an Opinion, it had been superfluous for the Apostle to have warned us with so much Earnestness, *Be not deceived, let no Man deceive you with such vain Words.*

Eightbly, 'Tis usual for Satan to still and quiet the stirring Thoughts of Sinners *with Hopes and Assurances of Secrecy.*

crecy. As Children are quieted and pleased with Toys and Rattles, so are Sinners put off, and diverted from prosecuting the Discoveries that the Light would make in them, by this Confidence, *That though they have done amiss, yet their Miscarriages shall not be laid open, or manifested before Men.* 'Tis incredible how much the Hopes of Concealment doth satisfy and delight those that have some Sense of Guilt. Sometime Men are impudent, that *they declare their Sin as Sodom, they hide it not,* Isa. iii. 9. But before they arrive at so great an Impudency, they usually *seek deep to hide their Counsel from the Lord, and their Works are in the Dark; and they say, who seeth us? and who knoweth us?* Isa. xxix. 15. Like those foolish Creatures that think themselves sufficiently concealed by hiding their Heads in a Bush, though all their Bodies be exposed to open View. *Isa.* xxviii. 15. Those that *made Lies their Refuge, and under Falshood hid themselves,* became as confident of their Security, as if they had *made a Covenant with Death, and were at an Agreement with Hell*; and when they have continued in this Course for some Time with Impunity, the Light is so banished, that they carry it so, as if God observed their Actions done in the Dark, as little as Men do. *Job* xxii. 13. *How doth God know?* (say they) *can he judge through the dark Clouds? thick Clouds are a Covering to him that he seeth not*; and hence proceed they to promise themselves a Safety from Judgments, *When the overflowing Scourge shall pass through, it shall not come nigh unto us, for we have made Lies our Refuge,* &c.

Ninthly, Satan keeps them from going to the Light by *Demurs* and *Delays.* If the Light begin to break in upon their Consciences, then he tells them, that there is Time enough afterward: *Oh* (saith he) *thou art young, and hast many Days before thee, 'tis Time enough to repent when you begin to be old: Or, thou art a Servant, an Apprentice under Command, thou wantest fit Opportunities and Conveniencies for serious Consideration, defer till thou becomest free, and at thine own Disposal.* That this is one of Satan's *Deceits* to hinder us from making use of the Light (besides what common Experience may teach every Man) may be clearly gathered from the Exhortations of Scripture, which do not only *shew* us, *the Way wherein we ought to walk,* but also, *press us* to a present Embracement of that Counsel; *To day To day, while it is called To-day, harden*

not your Hearts, Heb. iii. 7. *Now is the accepted Time; Now is the Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. vi. 2. *Remember thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth before the evil Day comes*, Eccles. xii. 1. *If ye will enquire, enquire, yea return, come*, Isa. xxi. 12. This hasty Urgency to close with the offered Occasions, plainly accuse us of Delays, and that it is usual with us to adjourn those Thoughts to a fitter Opportunity, which we are not willing to comply with for the present.

By these *Nine Devices* he keeps the Light from ensnared Sinners, or them from coming to the Light. But if all this cannot draw a Curtain before the Sun, if its bright Beams breaks through all, so that it cannot be avoided, but there will be a Manifestation and Discovery *of the hidden Things of Darkness*; then Satan useth all his Art and Cunning to stir up in the Hearts of Men their *Hatred against the Light*.

This is his second grand Piece of Policy to keep all in Quiet under his Command, to which Purpose.

First, He endeavours to draw on a Hatred against the Light, by raising in the Minds of Men *a prejudice against the Person that brings or offers it*: If he that warns or reproves, express himself any thing *warmly*, or *cuttingly* against his Brother's Sin, this the Devil presently makes use of; and those that are concerned think they have a just Cause to *stop their Ears*, and *harden their Necks*, because they conceive, that *Anger* or *Ill-will*, or some such *base Thing* did dictate those (though just) Rebukes. The Devil turned the Heart of *Ahab* against the faithful Warnings of *Micaiah* upon a deep Prejudice that he had taken up against him; for so he expresseth himself to *Jehosaphat*, *I hate him, for he never prophesieth Good unto me*, 1 King. xxii. 8. In this Case, Men consider not how *justly*, how *truly*, how *profitably* any Thing is spoken, but (as some Insects that feed upon Sores) they pass by what is sound and good, and fix upon that which is corrupt and putrid, either through the *Weakness* and Inobservancy of the *Reprover*, or pretended to be such, by the *Prejudice* of the *Party* which doth altogether disable him to put a right Construction upon any Thing.

Secondly, If this help not, then he seeks to get the Advantage of a *provoked*, passionate, or otherwise distempered Fit, and then Hatred is easily procured against any Thing that comes in its Way.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Satan endeavours to engage our Hatred againſt the Light, by preſenting our *Intereſt as ſhaken*, or endangered by it. If Intereſt can be drawn in, and made a Party, 'tis not difficult to put all the *Paſſions* of a Man in *Arms*, to give open Defiance to any Diſcovery it can make. That great Rage and Tumult of Kings and People mentioned in *Pſal.* ii. *combining* and *taking Counſel againſt the Lord*, and his Laws, is upon the *Quarrel of Intereſt*: Their Suſpicions and Jealouſies that the *ſetting up* of Chriſt upon his Throne would *eclipſe* their Power and Greatneſs, makes them (out of a deſperate Hatred againſt the Light) fall into Reſolves of open Rebellion againſt his Laws: *Let us break his Bands aſunder, and caſt away his Cords from us.* This Pretence of Intereſt ſtrengthned the Accuſation of *Amaziah* againſt *Amos*, Chap. vii. 10. *Amos hath conſpired againſt thee in the midſt of the Houſe of Iſrael: The Land is not able to bear all his Words.* No Wonder then if *Jeroboam*, inſtead of hearkning to the Threatning, baniſh him out of the Land. We find the like in *Aſa* (a good Man) the Devil ſtirs up his Hatred againſt the Seer, *he was wroth with him, and put him in the Priſon-houſe, for he was in a Rage againſt him*, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. The Ground of that Rage was this; the *King's Intereſt* (in his Apprehenſion) was wrapt up in that *League* with the King of *Syria*, ver. 2, 3, ſo that he could not bear ſo plain a Reproof, which directly laid the Ax to the Root of ſo great an Intereſt, as the Safety of the King and Kingdom, which ſeemed to depend ſo much upon that League.

Fourthly, Satan ſtirs up Hatred againſt the Light from the *unavoidable Effects* of Light, which are *Diſcovery* and *Manifeſtation*. Eph. v. 13. *All Things that are reproved are made manifeſt; for whatſoever doth make manifeſt, is Light.* Now the Iſſue of this Manifeſtation is *Shame*, which however it be the *Daughter* of Sin and Light, yet would it *naturally deſtroy* the Sin that bred it; and therefore Repentance is uſually expreſſed by being *aſhamed and confounded*: But that Satan might avoid this, he turns the Edge of Shame againſt the *Light*, which ſhould have been imployed againſt *Sin*. When Men therefore have ſinned, and are *as a Thief when he is taken*, Jer. ii. 26. ready to fall into the Hands of Shame; for the avoiding of that, *they rebel againſt the Light*, Job xxiv. 13. The Ground of this Hatred, Chriſt in *John* iii. 20. tells us, is, *leſt their Deeds*

should be reproved, and they forced to bear their Shame; to this End they are put upon it to hide themselves from Shame, by Lies; Pretences, Excuses, Extenuations, or by any *Fig. leaf* that comes first to Hand. And as those that live in hotter Regions *curse the Sun*, because it scorcheth them; so do these *curse the Light*: And instead of taking its Help, raise up an irreconcileable Enmity against it; and so run from it.

CHAP. XVI.

Of Satan's third grand Policy for maintaining his Possession; which is his feigned Departure. (1.) *By ceasing the Prosecution of his Design; and the Cases in which he doth it:* (2.) *By abating the Eagerness of Pursuit; and how he doth that.* (3.) *By exchanging Temptations; and his Policy therein. The Advantage he seeks by seeming to fly. Of his* (4.) *Stratagem for keeping his Possession, which is his stopping all Ways of Retreat; and how he doth that.*

BESIDES the *two* former Designs (of finishing Sin, and keeping all in Quiet) by which the Devil endeavours to maintain his Possession, he hath a *third* grand Subtilty, which is this?. *He keeps his Hold by feigning himself dispossessed and cast out.* Of this we have a full Account, *Luke* xi. 24. *When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh thorow dry places, seeking Rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my House whence I came out.* Christ had there noted that 'tis Satan's great Principle to do nothing by which his Kingdom may be divided or undermined. Satan will not be divided against himself, and yet very seasonably he tells us, that for an Advantage he will seem to quit his Interest, and upon Design he will sometimes so carry himself that he may be deemed and supposed to be *gone out of a Man*: As those that besiege Forts or walled Towns, do sometimes raise the Siege and feign a Departure, intending thereby to take a sudden Advantage of the Carelesness of the besieged. In the Explanation of this Policy, I shall, (1.) Shew how *many Ways* he feigns a Departure. (2.) *Upon what Designs* he doth it.

There are *three* Ways, whereby Satan seems to forsake his Interest.

First,

First, He frequently *ceaseth the Prosecution* of a Design, which yet he hath in his Eye and Desire, when he perceives that there are *some Things in his Way* that render it not *feasible*, nay he forbears to urge Men to their darling Sins, upon the same Score: And who would not think Satan cast out in such a Case? When a Man spits out the sweet Morsel which heretofore he kept under his Tongue, and sucked a Sweetness from it; when Men of noted Iniquities abstain from them, and become smooth and civil, who would not think but that the unclean Spirit were gone? This Way and Course he puts in Practice in several Cases.

1st, When he perceives some *extraordinary* Occasion puts any of his Subjects into a *good Mood* or Humour of Religion. Wicked Men are not *ordinarily* so highly bent upon evil Ways, but that they may be at sometimes *softned* and relaxed. *Pharaoh* (who is most eminently noted for a Heart judicially hardned) at the Appearance of the Plagues upon himself and *Egypt*, usually relented somewhat, and would confess *he had sinned*, and that Fit would continue upon him for some little Time. But very *frequently* 'tis thus with others, an extraordinary Occasion melts and thaws down the natural Affections of Men, (as a warm Day melts the Snow upon the Mountains) and then the Stream will for a Time run high and strong, at which Time Satan sees 'tis in vain to urge them. Thus Men that receive an eminent Kindness and Deliverance from God, what is more common than for such Men to say, *O! we will never be so wicked as we have been, we will never be drunk more, the World shall see us reformed and new Men*: These are indeed good Words, and yet tho' Satan knows that such Expressions are not from a good Heart, (as that of *Deut.* v. 29. implies, *They have well said; O that there were such an Heart in them*) he nevertheless thinks it not fit then to press them to their usual *Wickedness* at that Time: *For natural Affections raised high in a Profession of Religion will withstand Temptations for a Fit*, and therefore he forbears till the Stream run lower. What a Fit of Affection had the *Israelites* when their Eyes had seen that miraculous Deliverance at the *Red-sea*? What Songs of rejoicing had they? What Resolves never to distrust him again? *Psal.* cvi. 12. *Then believed they his Words, they sang his Praise*: Satan doth not presently urge them to Murmuring and Unbelief, (tho' that was his *Design*) but

he ſtays till the Fit was over, and then he could ſoon tempt them to *forget his Works*. How like a Convert did *Saul* look, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 16. and xxvi. 21. after *David* had convinced him of his Integrity, and had ſpared his Life in the Cave? He weeps and acknowledgeth his Iniquity, juſtifies *David*, owns his Kindneſs, and ſeems to acquieſce in his Succeſſion to the Kingdom. The Devil had, no Queſtion, a great Spite at *David*, and 'twas his great Deſign to ſtir up *Saul* againſt him, and yet at that Time he could not prevail with him to deſtroy *David*, tho' he might eaſily have done it; he was then in a *good Mood*, and Satan was forced to give Way to Neceſſity, and to ſeem to go out of *Saul* for the preſent.

2*dly*, He alſo ceaſeth from his *Deſign* when he ſees he cannot fit his Temptation with a *ſuitable Opportunity*. What could be more the *Devil*'s Deſign, and *Eſau*'s Satisfaction, than to have had *Jacob* ſlain? *Eſau* profeſſeth it was the Deſign of his Heart, and yet he reſolves to forbear ſo long as his Father *Iſaac* lived, *Gen.* xxvii. 41. *The Days of my Father's mourning are at Hand, then* (but not till then) *will I ſlay my Brother Jacob.* The *Devil* often ſows his Seed, and yet *waiteth and hath long Patience*, not only in *watering* and fitting the Hearts of Men for it, but alſo in Expectancy of fit Opportunities; and in the mean Time, he forbears to put Men upon that, which Time and Occaſion cannot fitly bring forth to Practice. The Prophet, *Hoſea* vii. 4. ſpeaks of that People as notoriouſly wicked, *They are all Adulterers*; but withal, he obſerves that they forbear theſe enormous Abominations for Want of fit Seaſons, *their Heart was as an Oven heated by the Baker*, ſufficiently enflamed after their *Wickedneſs*, and yet the Baker, *after he had kneaded the Dough*, prepared all the Ground work of the Temptation, *ceaſed from raiſing, ſleeping all the Night till all was leavened*; that is, tho' their Hearts were enraged for Sin, yet the Devil doth wait till Occaſions preſent themſelves, and becomes in the mean Time like one aſleep. Now while the Devil thus ſleeps, the Fire that is ſecretly in the Heart, being not ſeen, Men gain the good Opinion of Converts with others, and often with themſelves, not knowing what Spirit they are of, becauſe Satan ceaſeth (upon the want of Occaſions) to tempt and provoke them.

3*dly*, Our Adverſary is content to forbear, when he perceives that a *reſtraining Grace* doth *lock up* the Hearts and Hands

Hands of Men. When *a ſtronger than he cometh*, who can expect leſs but that he ſhould be more quiet? That God doth reſtrain Men ſometime when he doth not change them, needs no Proof; that Satan knows of theſe Reſtraints cannot be denied; who can give an Account of theſe Communings and Diſcourſes that are betwixt God and Satan concerning us? His Pleadings in Reference to *Job*, were as unknown to *Job* (till God diſcovered them) as his Pleadings concerning ourſelves are to us. Beſides, who can tell how much of God's reſtraining Grace may lie in this, of God's limiting and ſtraitning Satan's Commiſſion? Now the Devil hath not ſo badly improved his Obſervations, but that he knows 'tis in vain to tempt where God doth ſtop his *Way*, and tye up Mens Hands. *Abimelech* was certainly reſolved upon *Wickedneſs* when he took *Sarah* from *Abraham*, Gen. xx. 2. and yet the Matter is ſo carried for ſome Time, (how long we know not) as if the Devil had been aſleep, or forgot to haſten *Abimelech* to his intended *Wickedneſs*; for when God cautions him, *he had not come near her*, Verſe 4. The Ground of all this was neither in the *Devil's Backwardneſs*, nor *Abimelech's Modeſty*, but Satan lets the Matter reſt, becauſe he knew that *God with-held him, and ſuffered him not to touch her.*

4*thly*, When Men are under the Awe and Fear of ſuch as carry an *Authority* in their Countenances and Imployments, for the diſcouraging of Sin, Satan (as hopeleſs to prevail) doth not ſolicite to ſcandalous Iniquities. Much of external Sanctity, and Saint-like Behaviour ariſeth from hence; the Faces and Preſence of ſome Men have ſuch a ſhining Splendor, that Iniquity bluſheth and hideth its Head before them. Sin dare not do what it would, ſo great a Reverence and Eſteem of ſuch Perſons is kept up in the Conſciences of ſome, and ſo great an Awe and Fear is thence derived to others, that they will not, or dare not give Way to an Inſolency in Evil. The *Iſraelites* were generally a wicked People, yet ſuch an Awe they had of *Joſhua*, Jol. ii. 7. *and the Elders that outlived Joſhua, who had ſeen all the great Works of the Lord*, that Satan ſeemed to be caſt out all their Days. Who could have thought *Joaſh* had been ſo much under Satan's Power, that had obſerved his Ways all the Time of *Jehoiada* the Prieſt? 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 2. *Then he did that which was right in the Sight of the Lord*; Satan was content to let him alone, becauſe *Jehoia-*

da's Life and Authority did overawe him, but after his Death Satan returned to his Poſſeſſion, and *the King hearkened to the Princes of Judah, and ſerved Groves and Idols*, Verſe 17. The like is obſerved of *Uzziah*, 2 Chron. xxvi. 5. the Reverence that he had for *Zechariah*, who had Underſtanding in *the Viſions of God*, Verſe 16. diſcouraged the Tempter from ſoliciting him to thoſe Evils which afterward he engaged him in: Satan is willing (when he perceives the Awe and Authority of good Men ſtands in his Way) rather to ſuſpend the Proſecution of his Deſign, than by forcing it againſt ſo ſtrong a Current to hazard the Shipwreck of it.

ſtbly, He alſo makes as if he were caſt out, when he perceives the Conſciences of Men are *ſcared by threatned or felt Judgments*; he forbears to urge them *againſt the Pricks*, when God draws his Sword, and brings forth the glittering Spear. *Balaam*'s Aſs would not run againſt the Angel that appeared terribly againſt him *in his Way*. The Devil knows the Power of an *awakned Conſcience*, and ſees it in vain to ſtrive againſt ſuch a Stream; and when it will be no better, he withdraws. As great a Power as the Devil had in *Ahab*, when he was affrighted and *humbled*, he gave *Way*, and for that Seaſon drave him not on to his wonted Practice of *Wickedneſs*. He alſo carried thus to the *Ninevites*, when they were awaked by the preaching of *Jonah*, then we ſee them a *reforming* People, the *Devil* ſurceaſed to carry them into their former Provocations. How frequently is this ſeen among Profeſſors, where the Word hath a ſearching Power and Force upon them? Sin is ſo curbed and kept under, that 'tis like a Root of Bitterneſs in *Winter*, lying hid under Ground, *Heb.* xii. 15. Satan forbearing to act upon it or to improve it, till the Storms and Noiſe of Judgments ceaſe, and then uſually it will *ſpring up and trouble them*: If Satan hath *really loſt his Hold*, he ceaſeth not to *moleſt* and vex even awakened Conſciences, with urgent Solicitations to Sin; but if he perceive that his *Intereſt* in the Hearts of Men remains *ſure* to him and unſhaken, then (in caſe of Affrightment and Fear of Wrath) 'tis his Policy to conceal himſelf, and to diſſemble a Departure.

rthly, Satan is alſo forced to this, by the prevailing Power of Knowledge and Principles of Light, where the Goſpel

ſpel in Profeſſion, and Preaching, diſplays abroad his bright Beams, then whatever Shift Men make to be wicked in ſecret, yet *the Light is as the Shadow of Death to them*, and 'tis even *a Shame to ſpeak of theſe Things in publick*, Eph. v. 12. Here Satan cannot rage ſo freely, but is put to his Shifts, and is forced to be ſilent, whilſt the Power of the Goſpel cuts off *half his Garments*. Men begin to reform, ſome are *clean eſcaped from Error*, 2 Pet. ii. 18. others abandon their filthy Luſts and ſcandalous Sins, and ſo *eſcape the Pollutions of the World through the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, Ver. 20. Yet under all theſe great Alterations and Appearances of Amendment, the Devil is but ſeemingly ejected; for in the Place mentioned, when the Light declines, thoſe that were *eſcaped from Error*, and thoſe that had fled from ſinful Pollutions were both *entangled again*, and carried to the ſame Pitch (and a great deal further) of that Sin and Error in which they had been formerly engaged.

Theſe are the *ſix* Caſes in which Satan ceaſeth the Proſecution of his Deſign; which was his firſt Policy in feigning himſelf to be caſt out, but he further diſſembles a Flight, when he thinks it not fit to ceaſe wholly.

By abating his Purſuit, by ſlacking his Courſe: And this he doth,

Firſt, When he tempts ſtill, but yet *leſs than formerly*; ſo great is his Cunning and Patience, that when he cannot get what he would have, he contents himſelf with what he can get, rather than loſe all. He deſires, that Men would give up themſelves fully and freely to his Service: But if they like not this, he is willing to take them (as one ſpeaks) as *Retainers* (a), and to ſuffer them to take a Liberty, to come and go at Pleaſure. He hath *two* main Ends in tempting Men to Sin, one is to *avenge* himſelf *upon God* in open Defiance and Diſhonour of his Name; the other is the *Ruin* and Perdition *of Souls*: If he could, he would have theſe two Ends meet in every Temptation; yet he pleaſeth himſelf with the latter, when he cannot help it, and in that too, he ſatisfies himſelf ſometimes with as ſmall an Intereſt as may be, ſo that his Poſſeſſion and Intereſt be but preſerved. He knows that *one* Sin, loved and embraced, brings *Death* for its *Wages*. A *Leak* unſtopped and neglected may ſink the Ship as well as a great Storm; and therefore when

(a) *Greenham's* Works p. 793.

when he perceives the Conſciences of Men ſhy and nice, he is willing they *come to him* (as *Nicodemus* came to Chriſt) *by Night* in private, and that by Stealth they do him Service.

Secondly, He ſometimes offers Men a *Compoſition*, and ſo keeps his Hold *privately*, by giving them an *Indulgence* and Toleration, to comply with *religious Duties* and Obſervations. *Pharaoh* condeſcended, that *Iſrael* ſhould go and ſerve the Lord in the Wilderneſs, upon Condition, that their Wives, Children and Subſtance were left behind: So Satan ſaith to ſome, *Go and ſerve the Lord, only let your Heart be with me, leave your Affections behind upon the World.* That ſerious Warning of Chriſt, *Ye cannot ſerve two Maſters; ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, evidently ſhews, that the Devil uſeth to *conceal* his Intereſt in the Hearts of Sinners, by offering *ſuch* Terms; and that Men are ſo apt to think, that Satan is gone out, when they have *ſhared* the Heart betwixt *God* and *him*; that they ſtand in Need of a full Diſcovery of that Cheat, and earneſt Caution againſt it: The Devil was forced to yield, that *Herod* ſhould do many Things at the Preaching of *John*, yet he maintained his Poſſeſſion of his Heart, by fixing him in his reſolved Luſt, in the Matter of *Herodias*: And this gives juſt Ground of Complaint againſt the Generality of Sinners; *Ye return, but not to me, not with your whole Hearts: Have ye faſted to me? Have ye mourned to me? they come and ſit as my People, but their Hearts are after their Covetouſneſs.*

Thirdly, Satan hath yet another Wile by which he would cheat Men into a Belief, that he is caſt out of the Heart; and this is a ſubtile Way that he hath to *exchange Temptations*. How weak and childiſh are Sinners that ſuffer themſelves thus to be abuſed? When they grow ſick and weary of a Sin, if the Devil take that from them, and lay in the Room of it another as bad, or the ſame again, only a little changed and altered; they pleaſe themſelves that they have vomited up the firſt, but conſider not, that they have received into their Embracement another as bad, or worſe. Concerning this Exchange, we may note two Things:

Firſt, That ſometimes he attains his End, by exchanging *one hainous Sin* for *another* as hainous, only not ſo much *out of Faſhion*. As the Cuſtoms, and Times, and Places give Laws and Rules for Faſhions; according to which, the Decencies, or Indecencies of Garbs and Garments are determi-

ned:

ned: So is it ſometimes with Sin, Men and Countries have their *darling* Sins; Times and Ages alſo have their *peculiar* Iniquities, which (in the Judgment of Sinners) do cloath them with a Fitneſs and Suitableneſs. Sometimes Men grow weary of Sins, becauſe they are every where ſpoken againſt; becauſe Men point at them with the Finger, the Devil in this Caſe is ready to change with them. Drunkenneſs hath in ſome Ages and Places carried a Brand of Infamy in its Forehead; ſo hath Uncleanneſs and other Sins: When Sinners cannot practiſe theſe with Credit and Reputation, then they pleaſe themſelves with an Alteration: He that was a Drunkard, is now, it may be, grown ambitious and boaſting: He that was covetous, is become a Prodigal or profuſe Waſter; the Heart is as vain and ſottiſh as before, only their Luſts are let out another Way, and run in another Channel. Sometimes Luſts are changed alſo, with the Change of *Mens Condition* in the World; Poverty, and Plenty, a private and a publick Station have their peculiar Sins: He that of poor is made rich, leaves his Sins of Diſtruſt, Envy, or deceitful Dealing, and follows the Byaſs of his preſent State to other Wickedneſſes equally remarkable; and yet may be ſo blinded, as to apprehend, that Satan is departed from him.

Secondly, We may obſerve, that Satan exchangeth Sins with Men, in ſuch a ſecret *private Manner*, that the Change is not eaſily *diſcovered*; and by this Shift he caſts a greater Miſt before the Eyes of Men: Thus he exchanged open Profaneneſs into ſecret Sins: *Filthineſs of the Fleſh*, into *Filthineſs of the Spirit*. Men ſeem to reform their groſs Impieties, abſtaining from Drunkenneſs, Swearing, Adulteries, and then (it may be) they are taken up with *ſpiritual Pride*, and their Hearts are puffed up with high Conceits of themſelves, their Gifts and Attainments; or they are entangled with Error, and ſpend their Time in *doting about Queſtions that engender Strife rather than edifying*; Matth. xxiii. 26. or they are taken up with *Hypocriſies*: Thus the Phariſees left their open Iniquities, *waſhing the outſide of the Cup and Platter*; and inſtead of theſe, endeavoured to varniſh and paint themſelves over; ſo that in all this Change, they were but as *Graves that appeared not*, Luke xi. 44. Or they acquieſce in *Formality*, and the Outwards of Religion; like that proud Boaſter, *Lord, I thank thee I am not as other Men are*, &c. In all theſe Things the

the Devil seems cast out, and Men reformed, when indeed he may continue his Possession; only he lurks, and *hides himself under the Stuff.* These Ways of Sinning are but *finer Poisons*, which, tho' not so *nauseous* to the Stomach, nor so *quick* in their Dispatch, yet may be as surely and *certainly deadly*; such fly from the *Iron-weapon*, and *a Bow of Steel strikes them through.*

Having thus explained the *three* Ways by which Satan pretends to depart from Men, I must next shew his Design in making such a Pretence of forsaking his Habitation.

First, That all this is done by him only *upon Design*, may be easily concluded from several Things hinted to us in the forecited Place of *Luke* xi. As, (1.) He doth not say, that the Devil is *cast out*, as if there were a Force upon him, but that he *goeth out*, 'tis of Choice, a voluntary Departure. (2.) That his going out (in this sense) is notwithstanding *irksome* and troublesome to him. The Heart of Man (as one observes (*a*) is a *Palace* in his Estimation, and Dispossession (tho' upon Design) is as a *Desart* to him that affords him little Ease or Rest. (3.) That his going out, is not a quitting of his Interest, he calls it *his House* still, *I will return to my House*, saith he. (4.) He takes Care in going out to lock the Door, that it may not be taken up with better Guests; he keeps it *empty* and tenantable for himself: He tempts still, tho' not so visibly, and strives to suppress such good Thoughts and Motions as he fears may quite out him of his Possession. (5.) He goes out, *cum animo revertendi*, with a Purpose of returning. (6.) His Secession is so dexterously and advantagiously managed, that he finds an easy Admittance at his Return; and his Possession confirmed and enlarged: *They enter in, and dwell there.*

Secondly, The Advantages that he designs by this Policy, are these chiefly. 1. By this Means Men are dangerously confirmed in their *Securities.* Thus the *Pharisee* blessed himself, *Lord, I thank thee*, &c. They please themselves with this Supposition, that the Devil is cast out; and upon this, they cease their War and Watchfulness. As *Saul* when he heard that *David* had escaped, *went not out to seek after him*: So these trouble not themselves any further to enquire Satan's Haunts in their Hearts; thus he sits securely within, whilst they think he is fled from them.

2. By

(*a*) *Greenham* p. 795.

(2.) By this Means alſo he fits Men as Inſtruments *to ſerve his Turn* in *other Works* of his; he muſt have in ſome Caſes *handſome Tools* to work withal; all Men are not fit Agents in *Perſecution*; either to credit it, or to carry it through with Vigour and Zeal; for this End he ſeems to go out of ſome, that under a ſmoother and *Profeſſion like* Behaviour (when they are ſtirred up to perſecute) the Rigour might ſeem juſt. Thus *devout and honourable Women* were ſtirred up to perſecute *Paul* and *Barnabas*, Acts xiii. 50. the Devil had gone out ſo far, that they had gained the Reputation of *Devout*, and then their Zeal would eaſily take Fire for Perſecution, and withal put a Reſpect and Credit upon it; for who would readily ſuſpect that to be Evil, or Satan's Deſign, which is carried on by ſuch Inſtruments? Beſides, if he at any Time intends to *blemiſh* the good Ways of God, by the Miſcarriages of Profeſſors, he fetcheth his Arrow out of this Quiver uſually; if he brings a *refined Hypocrite* to a ſcandalous Sin, then doth the Mouth of Wickedneſs open itſelf to blaſpheme *the Generation of the Juſt*, as if none were better; ſuch Agents could not be ſo commonly at hand for ſuch a Service, if Satan did not in the Ways aforementioned ſeem to go out of Men. (3.) 'Tis another Part of his Deſign, after a pretended Departure, to take the Advantage of their *Security*, to return with *greater* Strength and Force: This Chriſt particularly notes, *Then taketh he ſeven Spirits worſe than himſelf*, &c. ſuch (as *Peter* tells us) being *again entangled*, are totally *overcome*, *and their latter End is worſe with them than their Beginning*, 2 Pet. ii. 20. How many might I name (if it were convenient) that I have known and obſerved exactly anſwering this Deſcription of the Apoſtle, that have for ſome Years left off their wicked Ways, and engaged for a Profeſſion of Religion, and yet at laſt *have returned like the Dog to his own Vomit again.* The Devil, when he fights after the (*a*) *Parthian* Manner, is moſt to be feared; when he turns his Back, he ſhoots moſt envenomed Arrows; and whom he ſo wounds, he commonly wounds them to the Death.

The *fourth* and laſt Stratagem of Satan for the keeping his Poſſeſſion, is to *ſtop the Way*; to *barricade* up all Paſſages, that there may be no Poſſibility of Eſcape or Retreat; when he perceives that his former Ways of Policy are not ſufficient,

(*a*) *Terga vertentes mollendi Partëi.*

ſufficient, but that his Slaves and Servants are ſo far enlightned in the Diſcovery of the Danger, that they are ready to turn back from him, then he beſtirs himſelf to oppoſe their Revolt; and as God ſometimes *hedgeth up the Way* of Sinners with *Thorns*, Hoſ. ii. 6. that they ſhould not follow their old Lovers; ſo doth Satan: To which Purpoſe,

1*ſt*, He endeavours to turn them off ſuch Reſolutions, by threatning to *reduce* them with a *ſtrong Hand*; here he boaſts and vaunts of his Power, and Sinners Weakneſs, as *Rabſhekah* did againſt *Hezekiah*, *What is that Confidence wherein thou truſteſt? Have the gods of Hamath and Arpad, &c. delivered their Land out of my Hand? Have thoſe that have gone before you been able to deliver themſelves from me? Have they been able to reſcue themſelves? Did I not force thoſe that were ſtronger than you? Did I not make* David *number the People? Did I not overcome him in the Matter of* Uriah? *Did I not compel* Peter *to deny his Lord, notwithſtanding his ſolemn Profeſſion to the contrary? And can you think to break away from me ſo eaſily?* By this Means he would weaken their Heart, and enfeeble their Reſolutions, that they might ſit under their Bondage, as hopeleſs ever to *recover themſelves* from his *Snare*; but if theſe Affrightments hinder not; if notwithſtanding theſe Brags, Sinners prepare themſelves to turn from Sin to God, then,

2*dly*, He *improves all he can that Diſtance which Sin hath made betwixt God and them*. Sins of ordinary Infirmity and common Incurſion do not ſo break the Peace of God's Children, as Sins of an higher Nature do: Even in the Saints themſelves we may obſerve, after notorious Tranſgreſſion, 1. That the *Acquaintance* and Familiarity 'twixt God and them is *immediately broken*. What a ſpeedy Alteration is made? How ſuddenly are all Things changed? God hides himſelf; the Sun that *ſhined* but now, and did afford a very comfortable and cheriſhing Heat, before we are aware, is now hid in *a Cloud*; our Warmth and Refreſhments are turned into Cold and Chilneſs. There is alſo a Change *on our Part*, and that ſuddenly; as in the Reſurrection we ſhall be changed *in the Twinkling of an Eye*; ſo here in a *Moment*, our Joys flag and decay, our Delights grow dull, our Activity is impaired; we are bound and frozen up, and 'tis altogether Winter with the Soul. 2. It may be noted, that this *begets an Eſtrangement* in us, and we ſo carry it, as if we had reſolved not to renew our League

with

with God: For tho' we are not altogether so desperate, as to make *formal Resolutions* of continuing in Sin, of casting off God, and bidding an everlasting Farewel to our former Acquaintance; tho' we do not say, we will now undo our selves quite, and harden our selves in our Rebellion; yet Sin hath left us in such Amaze, and filled us with so many Damps and misgiving Thoughts, that we *do not think of returning*, we are at a Stand, and *like a mighty Man astonished that cannot find his Hands.* We perceive we have lost so much, and have run into such great Unkindnesses, that, like broken Merchants, nothing is more irksome and tedious, than to *review* our Ways, or look into *our Debt-books*; instead of this, we endeavour to divert our Thoughts, to cast off Care, as if we conceived that *Time* would eat it out, and that then *of Course* we might fall into the old Channel of Freedom and Comfort. 3. When we return at last, oh! with what Bashfulness and Amazedness do we appear at our next Supplications; what Blushing, what Damps, what Apology? Nay sometimes as the Man without the Wedding-garment, *we are speechless.* How rightly doth such a Man resemble the *Publican* confessing, and the *Prodigal* supplicating, while consulting what to say for himself, he now begins to feel, with what Sense and Feeling the Prophets and holy Men of old used to express themselves in their Confessions, *We blush, we are ashamed, astonished and confounded.* This Distance Sin makes betwixt *Saints* and *God* sometimes; but betwixt *God* and the *unconverted* it is far greater. Now, when either an unconverted Sinner, or a fallen Saint puts himself to look to God for Reconciliation, then doth the Devil labour to improve this for their Hindrance: That he accuseth us *to God*, is evident by *Satan's standing at* Joshua's *right Hand*, Zech. iii. 1. how he accuseth *God to us* we know. He tells us, 'tis in vain to seek to make up our Peace after so great Provocations, urging, that he is a *jealous God, of pure Eyes*, highly resenting the Affronts we have given him, &c. Nay, he goes so high this way, that God is put to it in Scripture (of purpose to furnish us with an Answer to these Objections) to proclaim, that he is *slow to Anger*, not *easily provoked*; that if Men return from the Evil of their Ways, he will *return to them, accept* and *pity* them, &c.

2*dly*, If this divert them not, but that they still persist in their Resolves, then he follows after them with an high Hand;

Hand; sometimes (as *Pharaoh* did with *Israel*) he grows *severe* and imperious with them, and redoubles the *Tale of their Bricks*; he forceth them to higher and more frequent Iniquities; sometimes (as the same *Pharaoh*) he musters up all his Chariots and Horsemen to *pursue* after them, and in the highest Diligence imaginable he brings forth his greatest Power, besetting them on all Sides with Temptations and *Allurements* of Pleasure and Delight; where he perceives his *Time* to be *short*, and his Power shaken, he comes down in Resolves to try his utmost Strength. And hence is it that Converts complain, that when they begin in earnest to look after God, they are *most troubled* with Temptations; besides this, whatever he can do to make them *drive heavily* shall not be wanting. Sometimes he makes Attempts upon their *Thoughts* and *Affections*, which are as their *Chariot-wheels*; and if these can be *knocked off* any way, it retards them. Sometimes he casts *Stumbling-blocks* in their Way; if any Prejudice may divert them; if Threatnings or Penalties can hinder; if the Frowning of Friends, or any Thing else can put a Stop to their Proceedings, he will have them ready. Sometimes he endeavours to *retard* them by *Sollicitations* of Acquaintance, *Offers* of former Occasions and Opportunities of sinning, or whatever else may be as a *Remora* to their Intentions.

4thly, But if none of these serve, then as his last Shift, he *proclaims open War against them*, pursues them as *Enemies* and Rebels: Now he begins to *accuse* them, for that which they did by *his Advice* and Temptation. Now Sins that were called *little*, are *aggravated*. Now that *Day of Repentance*, which he was wont to say was *long*, he tells them 'tis quite *spent*, that the Sun of their Hope is set. Nothing now doth he suggest but Hell, Damnation and Wrath: He makes them (as it were) see it, hear it, and feel it in every Thing; That *Interest* in their Hearts which he *dissembled* before, now he stands upon and *asserts*, and will not be beat off, designing in all this, either to make them *weary* of these *new Resolves*, by this unusual Disquietment and Hostility, or to *precipitate* them upon some *desperate* Undertaking; or at least to *avenge* himself upon them, in venting his Malice and Rage against them: But of this more afterward.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Satan's Deceits against religious Services and Duties: The Grounds of his Displeasure against religious Duties. His first Design against Duties, is to prevent them: His several Subtilities for that End, by external Hindrances, by Indispositions, bodily and spiritual, by Discouragements; the Ways thereof, by Dislike; the Grounds thereof, by sophistical Arguings: His various Pleas therein:

OUR next Work is to take Notice of the Spite and Methods of the Serpent against the Ways of *Worship* and *Service*, that these are Things against which his Heart carries an high Fury, and for the Overthrow of them employs no small Part of his Power and Subtility, needs no Proof, seeing the Experience of all the Children of God is an irresistible Evidence in this Matter. I shall therefore *first*, Only set forth the Grounds of his Displeasure, and earnest Undertakings against them, (before I come to his particular Ways of Deceit) which are these:

First, By this Means (if he prevail) he deprives us of our *Weapons*. This is a Stratagem of *War* which we find the *Philistines* practised against *Israel*, 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 22. they took away all *their Smiths, lest the Hebrews should make them Swords or Spears*: Hence was it that in the Battle there was neither *Sword nor Spear found in the Hand of any of the People that were with Saul and Jonathan*. The *Word* of God is expressly called *the Sword of the Spirit*; Prayer is as a Spear, or rather a general Piece of Armour: If the *Devil* deprive us of these, he robs us of our *Ammunition*; for by Reason of these, the Church is compared to *a Tower built for an Armory, wherein hang a thousand Bucklers, all Shields of mighty Men*, Cant. iv. 4. and the Apostle expressly calls them *Weapons of our Warfare*, 2 Cor. x. 4. of Purpose given us, for *the pulling down of strong Holds*, and the demolishing of those Forts and Batteries of *high Imaginations* that Satan rears up in the Hearts of Men against their Happiness; if these be taken away, our *Locks* are cut, (as *Sampson's* were) our Strength is departed, and we become weak as other Men, we are open to every Incursion and Inroad that he pleaseth to make against us.

Secondly, If he hinders these, he intercepts our Food, and cuts off our Provisions. The *Word* is called *Milk*, *sincere Milk of the Word*; 'tis that by which we are born, nourished, and increase; 'tis our Cordial and Comfort; Christ indeed is *the Bread of Life*, and the *Fountain* of all our Consolations, but the *Word* and *Prayer* are the *Conduit Pipes* that convey all to us; if these be cut, we *fade as a Leaf*, we languish, we consume and waste, we become as a *Skin Bottle in the Smoak*, *our Moisture as the Drought in Summer*, our *Soul fainteth*, *our Heart faileth*, and *we become as those that go down to the Pit*; so that if the Devil gain his Design in this, he hath all; give him *this*, and give him the *Kingdom also*; this is the most *compendious Way* of doing his *Work*, and that which saves him a Labour in his Temptations. The strongest Holds (that cannot otherwise be taken) are easily subdued by Famine; and, like Fig-trees with their ripe Figs when they are shaken, *even fall into the Mouth of the Eater*, Nahum iii. 12. If our spiritual Food fail us, of *our own Accord* we yield up ourselves to any Lust that requires our Compliance.

Thirdly, Besides these, there is no Design whereby Satan can shew more Malice and Spite *against God*. He doth all he can to maintain a Competition with the Almighty: His Titles of *the God of the World*, *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, shew what in the Pride of his Heart he aspires to, as well as what by Commission God is pleased to grant him. These Duties of *Worship* and *Service* are the Homage of God's Children, by which they testify the Acknowledgments of his *Deity*; by wresting these out of our Hands, Satan robs God of that Honour, and makes the Allegiance of his Servants to cease; if he could do more against God, doubtless he would: But seeing he hath not an *Arm like God*, and so cannot pull him out of Heaven, by this Means he sets up himself as the *God of the World*, and enlargeth his Territories, and staves off the Subjects of the God of Heaven from giving him *the Honour due to his Name*; and that the Devil in these Endeavours is carried on by a Spite against God, as well as by an earnest Desire of the Ruine of Souls, may be abundantly evidenced, by his Way of Management of that Opposition that he gives to the Duties of Service and *Worship*. I shall only to make this out, instance in three Things: (1.) That where the Devil prevails to set up himself as an Object of *Worship*, there he doth it in a bold

a bold insolent presumptuous Imitation of God's Appointments in the *Ways* of his Service; he enjoins Covenants, Seals, Sacrifices, Prayers and Services to his miserable Slaves, as may appear by undoubted Histories; of which more in due Place. (2.) He never acknowledgeth the Truth of God's *Ways*, but with an evil Mind, and upon Design to bring them under Contempt; his Confessions have so much of Deceit in them that Christ would not accept them; and therefore we read that when the Devil was sometime forward to give his Testimony to Christ, (as *Mark* i. 25. *I know thee who thou art, the holy One of God*) Jesus rebuked him, and *commanded him to hold his Peace*; he clearly saw that he confessed him, not to honour him, but by such a particular Acknowledgment to stir up the Rage and Fury of the People against him. To this End Satan, in *Acts* xvi. 17. many Days together publickly owns *Paul* and *Silas*, *These Men are the Servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the Way of Salvation*: Tho' he spake Truth, yet had he a malicious Aim in it, which he accordingly brought about by this Means, and that was to raise up Persecution against them, and to give Ground to that Accusation which they afterward met withal, *Verse* 21. *That they taught Customs which were not Lawful to be received*. But (3.) His particular Spite against God, in seeking to undermine his Service, is further manifested in this, that the *Devil* is not content to root out the Service due to God, but when he hath done that, he delights to abuse those Places where the Name of God was most celebrated, with greatest Prophanations. I shall not in this insist upon the Conjecture of *Tilenus* (*a*), that *Sylva Dodonæa*, a Place highly abused by the Devil, and respected for an Oracle, was the Seat, or a religious Place of *Dodanim*, mentioned in *Genesis* x. 4. Nor upon that Supposal mentioned also by the same Author, that the Oracle of *Jupiter Hammon* was the Place where *Cham* practised that religious *Worship* which he learned in his Father's House. We have at Hand more certain Evidences of the Devil's Spite. Such was his Abuse of the Tabernacle by the prophane Sons of *Eli*, who prophaned that Place with their Uncleanness and filthy Adulteries. Such was his Carriage to the Ark while it was captivated by the *Philistines*. Of like Nature were his Attempts against the Temple itself. *Solomon* in his latter Days was tempted to give an Affront

(*a*) *Syntag.* Part 1. Disput. 2. Thes. 20, 21, 22.

to it, he built an high Place for *Chemosh, the Abomination of Moab, in the Hill that is before Jerusalem*, 1 Kings xi. 7. in the very Sight and Face of the Temple; but afterward he prevailed to defile the Temple itself. *Gilgal* and *Beth-aven* are Places of such high Prophanation, that the Prophet *Hos.* ix. 15. tells them *all their Wickedness* was *in Gilgal* (*a*), none of their Abominations were like to those; and in *Hosea* iv. 15. they are dehorted from going to *Gilgal* or *Beth-aven*, and yet both these Places had been famous for Religion before. *Gilgal* was the Place of the *general Circumcision* of the *Israelites* that were born in the *Wilderness*, there was their *first solemn Passover* kept after their entring into the Land. *Bethel* was a Place where God (as it were) kept House, *the House of God.* Here *Jacob* had his Vision. But the more famous they had been for Duties of *Worship*, the Devil sought to put higher Abuses upon them; so that *Gilgal* became *an Hatred*, and *Bethel* became a *Berhaven*, an House of Vanity.

Fourthly, Satan is the more animated to undertake a Design against the Ways of religious Service, because he seldom or never misseth, at least something of Success. This Attempt is like *Saul* and *Jonathan*'s Bow, that *returneth not empty.* In other Temptations sometimes Satan comes off baffled altogether, but in this Work (as it was said of some *Israelites*, Judges xx. 16.) *he can throw a Stone at an Hair's Breadth, and not miss*; he is sure in one Thing or other to have the better of us; his Advantage in this Case is from our Unsuitableness to our Service. What we do in the Duties of *Worship* requires a choice Frame of Spirit; our Hearts should be awed with the most serious Apprehensions of divine Majesty, filled with Reverence, animated with Love and Delight, quickened by Faith, clothed with Humility and Self-abhorency, and in all the Procedure of Duties there must be a steady and firm Prosecution under the strictest *Watchfulness.* Of this Nature is our *Work*, which at the first View would put a Man to a Stand, and out of Amazement force him to say, *Who is sufficient for these Things? Who can stand before such an holy Lord God?* But when we come to an impartial Consideration of our manifold *Weaknesses* and *Insufficiencies* in Reference to these Services, what shall we say? We find such a Narrowness of Spirit, such Ignorances, Sottishness, Carelessness of Mind, Thoughts

(*a*) *Arrowsmith Tract. Sacr.* l. 1. c. 5. § 9.

Thoughts so *confused, tumultuous, fickle, slippery,* and *unconstant,* and our Hearts generally so *deceitful* and *desperately wicked,* that 'tis not possible that Satan should altogether labour in vain, or catch nothing; this being then a sure Gain, we may expect it to be under a most constant Practice.

Fifthly, If he so prevails against us, that the Services of Worship become *grosly abused* or *neglected,* then doth he put us under the *greatest Hazards* and Disadvantages. Nothing *so poisonous* as Duties of Worship *corrupted;* for this is to abuse God *to his Face:* By this, not only are his Commands and Injunctions slighted as in other Sins, but we carry it so, as if we thought him no better than the *Idols of the Heathens,* that have *Eyes and see not, that have Ears and hear not.* To come *without* an Heart, or *with our Idols in our Heart,* Is it any Thing of less Scorn than to say, *Tush, doth the most High see?* Besides, he hath given such severe Cautions and Commands in these Matters, as will easily signify the Aggravation of the Offence. You see how sharply God speaks of those that came to enquire of the Lord, with the *Stumbling block of their Iniquity before their Face,* Ezek. xiv. 4, 7. *I will answer t'em according to the Multitude of their Idols, I will answer them by myself.* *Saul*'s Miscarriage in offering Sacrifice, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 13. was that great Offence for which God determined to take the Kingdom from him. God's Severity against *Nadab* and *Abihu,* his Stroke upon *Uzzah,* do all shew the Hazard of such Profanations. But above all, that Danger which both *Old* and *New Testament* speak of, the *hardning of the Heart, blinding the Eyes, dulling the Ears, that Men should not hear, nor see, nor be converted and saved,* but that the Word should (instead of those cordial refreshing Smells, which beget and promote spiritual Life in the Obedient) breathe forth such envenomed *poisonous Exhalations,* (when 'tis thus abused and profaned) that it becomes *the Savour of Death unto Death,* is most dreadful. No Wonder then if Satan be very busy against these holy Things, when if he catch us at an Advantage of this Nature, it proves so deadly and dangerous to us: For what can more please him, that makes it his Delight and Imployment to destroy?

All these Reasons evince that Satan hath an *aking Tooth* against religious Services, and that to weaken, prevent, or overthrow them is his great Endeavour. Here then especially may we expect an Assault according to the Advice

of *Sirach*, *My Son, when thou entrest God's Service, ſtand faſt in Righteouſneſs and Fear, and prepare thy Soul for Temptation*, Eccleſ. ii. 1, 2.

What are the Subtilties of Satan againſt the holy Things of God, I am next to diſcover. Duties and Services are oppoſed two Ways. (1.) By *Prevention*, when they are hindred (2.) By *Corruption*, when they are ſpoiled. He hath his Arts and Cunning, which he exerciſeth in both theſe Regards.

Duties oppoſed two Ways.

First then, Of Satan's Policy for the preventing of religious Services, he endeavours by various Means to hinder them. As,

1. *By Prevention, and that*

1. *By external Hindrances.*

1ſt, By *external Hindrances*: In this he hath a very great Foreſight, and accordingly he foreſees Occaſions and Opportunities at *a Diſtance*, and by a long Reach of Contrivance, he ſtudies to lay *Blocks* and Hindrances in the Way. Much he doth in the *Dark* for this End, that we know not. As God hath *Secrets of Wiſdom that are double to that which is known*, Job xi. 6. ſo alſo hath Satan many Ways and Actings that are not diſcerned by us; his *Contrivances of Buſineſſes* and *Avocations* long aforehand, are not ſo obſerved by us as they might be; where he *miſſeth* of his End, it comes *not to Light*, and often where he is *ſucceſsful* in his Preventions, we are ready to aſcribe it to *Contingencies*, and the accidental Hits of Affairs, when indeed the Hand and *Policy* of Satan is in it. *Paul* that was highly ſtudied and skilful in Satan's Devices, obſerving how his Purpoſes of coming to the *Theſſalonians* were often broken and obſtructed; he knew where the Blame lay, and therefore inſtead of laying the Fault upon *Sickneſs*, or *Imprisonments*, or the *Oppoſitions* of falſe Brethren (which often made him Trouble beyond Expectation) he directly chargeth all upon Satan, 1 *Theſ.* ii. 18. *We would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again, but Satan hindred us.* At the ſame Rate, underſtanding the *Purpoſes* of faithful Men, for the promoting the Good of Mens Souls, he often uſeth Means to *ſtop* or hinder them. Some have obſerved (having a watchful and jealous Eye over Satan) that their Devices and Endeavours of this Nature have uſually been [illegible] more *in their Birth*, when their *Purpoſes* for *worldly*

worldly Affairs and Matters go *smoothly* on without considerable Opposition.

2*dly*, He makes Use of *Indispositions* to hinder Service: And here he works sometimes upon *the Body*, sometimes upon the *Soul*, for both may be indispos'd. 2. *By Indispositions.*

(1.) Sometimes he takes the Advantage of *bodily Indispositions*: He doth all he can to *create* and frame these upon us, and then pleads them as a *Discharge* to Duty. If he can put the Body into a Fit of Drowsiness or Distemper, he will do it: And surely he can do more this Way than every one will believe, he may agitate and stir the Humours. Hence some have observed more *frequent* and *stronger* Fits of Sleepiness and Illness to come upon them, on the *Days* and *Times* that require their Attendance upon God, than *on other Days*, when they shall be lively, active, and free of Dullness upon common Occasions, at Sports, Songs, Interludes, when they shall not have the like Command of themselves in the Exercises of Worship. Surely it was more than an *ordinary Drowsiness* that befel the Apostles, *Matth.* xxvi. 41. He had told them the *Seriousness* of the Occasion, that he was *betrayed*, that his *Soul was exceeding sorrowful even to the Death*: These were Considerations that might have kept their Eyes from Slumber. When they sleep, he awakens them with a piercing Rebuke, *Could ye not watch with me one Hour?* and adds to this an Admonition of their own Danger, and the Temptation that was upon them, and yet presently they are asleep again, and after that, again: Strange Drowsiness! But he gives an Excuse for them, which also tells us the Cause of it, the *Spirit is willing*; their Hearts were not altogether unconcerned, *but the Flesh*, that is the Body, that was *weak*, that is, subject to be abused by Satan, who brought them into a more than ordinary Indisposition, as is noted Ver. 43. *their Eyes were heavy.* *Bodily Indispositions.*

(2.) The *Soul* hath also its *Indispositions* which he readily improves against Duty to hinder it. As, *Spiritual Indispositions.*

1. It is capable of a *spiritual* Sluggishness and Dulness, wherein the spiritual Senses are so bound up, that it *considers not*, minds not, hath no Lift, nor Inclination to Acts of Service. What a Stupifaction are our Spirits capable of? as *David* in his Adultery seems not to mind, nor Care what

what he had done. In like Manner are some in a *Lethargy*, as the Prophet speaks, they *care not to seek after God*. *Bernard* hath a Description of it (*a*), *Contrahitur animus, subtrahitur gratia, deferveſcit novitius fervor, ingraveſcit tepor faſtidioſus*; the Spirit is contracted, Grace withdrawn, Fervour abates, Sluggiſhneſs draws on, and then Duties are neglected.

2. The Spirit is indiſpoſed by a *Throng of worldly Affairs*, and theſe oft juſtle out Duty. Chriſt tells us, they have the ſame Influence upon Men that Gluttony and Drunkenneſs have, and theſe unfit Men for Action, *Take heed* (ſaith *Luke* xxi. 34.) *to yourſelves, leſt at any Time your Heart be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and the Cares of this Life.* Theſe then may at ſo high a Rate overcharge the Souls of Men, ſo as to make them frame Excuſes; *I have bought a Farm, or Oxen*, and therefore *I cannot attend*, and by this Means may they grow ſo neglective, that the *Day of the Lord may come upon them at Unawares.*

3. Sometimes the Soul is *diſcompoſed through Paſſion*, and then 'tis indiſpoſed, which Opportunity the Devil eſpying, he cloſeth in with it; ſometime he *blows the Fire* that the Heat of Anger may put them upon a Careleſneſs; ſometimes he *pleads their preſent Frame*, as an Unfitneſs for Service, and ſo upon a Pretence of Reverence to the Service, and *leaving the Gift at the Altar* till they be in a better Humour, many Times the Gift is *not offered* at all, 1 *Pet.* iii. 7. The Apoſtle directs Husbands to manage their Authority over their Wives with Prudence, for the avoiding of Brawls and Contentions, *Ye Husbands dwell with them according to Knowledge, giving Honour to the Wife as the weaker Veſſel*; the Reaſon of which Advice he gives in theſe Words, *that your Prayers be not hindred.* Prayers are hindred partly in their *Succeſs* when they prevail not, partly they are hindred when the Duty of Prayer is *put by* and ſuſpended: And this doubtleſs the Apoſtle aims at, to teach us that contentious Quarrellings in a Family hinder the *Exerciſe* of the Duty of Prayer. *Eliſha*, 2 Kings iii. diſcompoſed. himſelf in his earneſt Reproof of *Jeboram*, for with great Vehemency he had ſpoken to him, Ver. 13, 14. *What have I to do with thee? get thee to the Prophets of thy Father. Were it*

(*a*) *Bernard.*

not that I regard the Presence of Jehoshaphat, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. But when he set himself to receive the Visions of God he calls for a *Minstrel*, Ver. 15. the Reason whereof (as P. *Martyr* (a), and others suppose) was this, that however what he spake to *Jehoram*, proceeded from Zeal, yet being but a Man and subject to the like Infirmities of other Men, it had *distracted* and *discomposed* his Spirit, which made him unfit and *uncapable* to entertain the *Visions of God.* Musick then being a natural Means for the Composure and Quiet of the Mind, he takes that Course to calm and fit himself for that Work.

4. *Ignorance* and *Prejudice* are spiritual Indispositions, which are not neglected by the Devil. Knowledge is the Eye and Guide of the Soul; if there be Darkness there, all Acts which depend upon better Instruction must cease. The Disciples Ignorance of Scriptures brought in their Unbelief; Christ notes that as the Fountain-head of all their Backwardness, *Luk.* xxiv. 25. *O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken.* In like manner, if Men are not clear or knowing in the Ways and Necessities of Duty and Service, the Devil can easily prevail with them to forbear and neglect. *Prejudice* riseth up to *justify* the Disregard of Duty, and offers *Reasons*, which (it thinks) cannot be answered.

5*dly*, Satan endeavours to prevent Duty by *Discouragements.* If he can make the *Knees feeble*, and the *Hands hang down*, he will quickly cause Activity and Motion to cease. The Ways by which he endeavours to discourage Men from the Duties of Service, are these:

3. *By Discouragements.*

Discouragements as Duty fourfold.

(1.) He sets before them the *Toil* and *Burthen* of Duty. If a Man sets his Face toward Heaven, thus he endeavours to scar him off. *Is not* (saith he) *the Way of Religion a dull melancholy Way? Is it not a Toil? A tedious Task? Are not these unreasonable Injunctions, Pray continually, Pray without ceasing; Preach in Season and out of Season?* This Suggestion, tho' it be expresly contrary to Command, yet being so suitable to the idle and sluggish Tempers of Men, they are the more apt to take Notice

1. *From the Burthen of Duty.*

(a) *Rutherford* Divine Influences.

Notice of it; and accordingly they ſeek Ways and Shifts of accommodating the Command to their Inclinations. In *Amos* viii. 5. the Toil of Sabbaths and feſtival Services (as they thought it) makes them weary of the Duty, *When will the new Moon be gone, that we may ſell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may ſet forth Wheat?* Theſe Men thought their Services tedious, and intrenching upon their Callings and Occupations. *Mal.* i. 13. *They ſaid, Behold what a Wearineſs is it*, looking upon it as an inſufferable Burden; nay, they proceeded ſo far, as to *ſnuff* at it. Now when the Devil had ſo far prevailed with them, it was eaſy to put them upon Neglect, which (as the Place cited ſpeaks) preſently followed upon it, they *brought the torn, and the lame, and the ſick for a Sacrifice.* Satan firſt preſented theſe Services as a *weariſome* Burden, then they *ſnuffed* at them; next they thought *any* Service *good enough*, how mean ſoever, tho' to an open Violation of the Law of Worſhip. And *laſtly*, From a *Pollution* of the Table of the Lord, they proceeded to a *plain Contempt of Duty*: *The Table of the Lord is polluted, and the Fruit thereof, even his Meat, is contemptible*, ver. 12. In the Management of this Diſcouragement, the Devil hath moſt Succeſs upon thoſe that have *not yet taſted* the Sweetneſs and Eaſineſs of the Ways of the Lord, *his Yoke is indeed eaſy, his Burden is light*; his *Service* is a true *Freedom* to thoſe that are *acquainted* with God, and exerciſed in his Service. But when Men are *firſt beginning* to look after God and Duty, and are not yet filled and *ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of his Houſe*, this Temptation hath the greater Force upon them, and they are apt to be diſcouraged thereby.

2. *From Want of Succeſs.*

(2.) He endeavours to diſcourage them from the *Want of Succeſs* in the Duties of Worſhip. When they have waited long, and ſought the Lord, then he puts them upon Reſolves of declining any further Proſecution, as he did with *Joram* at the Siege of *Samaria*, *Why wait I upon the Lord any longer?* 2 Kings vi. 33. (ſaid he) after he had expected Deliverance a long Time without any Appearance of Help. When *Saul* ſaw that God *anſwered him not, neither by Dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets*, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, 7. the Devil eaſily perſwaded him to leave off the ordinary Ways of Attendance upon God, and to conſult with the Witch of *Endor*. The

prophane

prophane Persons mentioned in *Mal.* iii. 14. that had cast off all Regard to his Laws, all Respect to his Ordinances, were brought to this Pitch of Iniquity, by the Suggestions of Want of Success; they said, *It is vain to serve God; and what Profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?* It seems they were like the People spoken of in *Isa.* lviii. 2, 3. they had *fasted* and prayed, and God *delayed* to answer them, which they looked upon as a Disobligement from Duty, and that which they could peremptorily insist upon as a Reason which might justify their Neglect. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our Soul, and thou takest no Knowledge?* Neither doth this Discouragement fall heavy only upon those whose Hearts are *departed already* from God, who might be supposed to be forward to embrace *any Excuse* from his Service; but we shall find it bears hard upon the *Children of God.* *David* was ready to give over all, as a Man forsaken of God, *Psal.* xxii. 1, 2. *Why hast thou forsaken me, O my God? I cry in the Day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the Night season, and am not silent.* We may clearly gather from his Expressions, that this Temptation had sorely bruised him, and that upon God's Delay of Answer, he was ready to charge an Unrighteousness upon God's Carriage toward him; for in that he adds, that he kept his Ground, and did not consent to it (as the Words following, *But thou continuest holy*, do imply) it shewed what the Devil was objecting to him. And elsewhere in *Psal.* lxix. 3. when he had cried and was not answered, he began to be *weary*, and *his Eyes failed*; nay, his *Flesh and Heart failed*; his Spirit sunk, as a Man almost vanquished and overcome with the Temptation.

(3.) This our Adversary raiseth up Discouragements to us from the *Unsuitableness* of our Hearts to our Services. Herein he endeavours to *deaden* our Hearts, to clog our Spirits, to hinder and molest us; and then he *improves* these *Undispositions* and Discompositions against the Duty, in which he hath a double Advantage: For (1.) He deprives us of that *Delight* in Duty, which should *whet* on our Desires to undertake it; so that we come to the Lord's Table as old *Barzillai*, without a Taste or Relish of what

3. *From the Unsuitableness of the Heart in Duty.*

we

we eat or drink. When we come to hear, the Ear that *tricth Words*, as the Pallate tasteth Meat, finds no Savour in what is spoken; and this Satan can easily do, by the inward Deadness or *Disquiet* of the Heart, even as the Anguish of Diseases takes away all Pleasures which the choicest Dainties afford. As *Job* observes, *When a Man is chastned with Pain upon his Bed, his Life abhors Bread, and his Soul dainty Meat*, Job xxxiii. 20. And when a Man is brought to loath his Duties, as having nothing of that Sweetness and Satisfaction in them which is every where spoken of, a small Temptation may put him upon Neglect of them. (2.) He hath plausible and colourable *Arguments*, by which he formeth an Opinion in the Minds of Men, that in *Cases of Indisposition*, they may *do better to forbear than to proceed*. He tells them, *They ought not to pray, or present any Service, while they are so indisposed; That no Prayer is acceptable, where the Spirit doth not enliven the Heart, and raise the Affections: That they do not take his Name in vain, and increase their Sin, and that they should wait till the Spirit fill their Sails*. And to say the Truth, it is a great Difficulty for a Child of God to hold his Feet in such *slippery Places*. How many have I known complaining of this, and perswading themselves verily, that they might do far better to leave off all Service, than to perform them thus? And scarcely have I restrained them from a Compliance with Satan, by telling them, that Indispositions are no *Bar* to Duty; but that *Duty* is the Way to get our Indispositions cured. That Duty is *absolutely* required, and *Dispositions* to be *endeavoured*; and that 'tis a less *Offence* to keep to Duty *under Indispositions*, than wholly upon that Pretence to *neglect* it. And indeed, where these Indispositions are *bemoaned* and striven with, the Services are often more *acceptable to God*, than pleasing to *our selves*. The *Principle* is truly *spiritual* and excellent; *a Foundation of Sapphires* and *precious Stones*, upon which (if we patiently wait) he will *build a Palace of Silver*; for that Service is more *spiritual*, that is bottom'd and carried on by *a conscientious Regard to a Command*, when there are *no moral Motives* from Sense and Comfort *concurring*, than that which hath *more of Delight* to encourage it, while the *Power of the Command is less swaying* and influential.

(4.) Men

(4.) Men are oft discouraged from a *Sense of Unworthiness* of the Privilege of Duty, a Kind *of Excess* of Humility, which principally relates to the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and Prayer*; the Accuser of the Brethren tells them, that they have nothing to do to take the Name of God in their Mouths, that 'tis an insufferable Presumption. Hence, some, like the Woman with the bloody Issue, dare not come to Christ to *ask a Cure*, while yet they *earnestly desire it*; and would rather, if they could, privately *steal* it, than *openly beg it*. The *Publican* is presented to us in the Parable, as one that could scarce get over that Objection; he is set forth standing at a *Distance, not daring to lift up his Eyes to Heaven*; scarce attempting to speak, rather expressing his Unworthiness to pray, than setting upon the Duty: His *smiting upon his Breast*, and saying, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, argued, that much of these Discouragements lay upon him. The like we may see in the *Prodigal*, who it seems had it long *in Dispute*, whether he should go to his Father, whose Kindnesses he had so abused; and so long as he could make *any other Shift*, he yielded to the Temptation: At last he came to that Resolve, *I will arise and go to my Father, and say, I have sinned against Heaven, and thee, and am not worthy to be called thy Son*. Which shew, that the Sense of this kept him off till Necessity forced him over it. And this is a Discouragement the more likely to prevail for a Neglect of Service; because *Part of* it is *necessary*, as the Beginning of those Convictions of our Folly: To have such *low Thoughts* of ourselves, that we are not worthy to come into his Presence, nor to look toward him, is very *becoming*; but to think, that we should *not come* to him, because our Conscience accuseth of *Unworthiness*, is a Conclusion of *Satan's making*, and such as God never intended from the Premises, but the direct contrary; *come, saith God, though unworthy*. The like Course doth the Devil take to keep Men off from the Lord's Table; *Oh* (saith he) *'tis a very solemn Ordinance; he that partaketh of it unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself: How darest thou make such bold Approaches?* While the Hearts of Men are tender, their Consciences quick and accusing, the Threatning begets a Fear, and they are driven off

From Unworthiness of the Privilege.

off long, and debar themſelves unneceſſarily from their Mercies.

Duties hindered by Diſlike.

4*thly*, Satan endeavours to hinder Duty, by bringing them into a *Diſlike* and *Loathing* of Duty. This is a Courſe moſt effectual, Diſlike eaſily bringeth forth Averſation; and withal, doth ſtrongly fix the Mind in Purpoſes of Neglect and Refuſal: The *Devil* bringeth this about many Ways: As,

1. *From Reproaches.*

(1.) By *Reproaches* and ignominious Terms. It was an old Trick of the Wicked-one, to raiſe up *Nick-names* and Scoffs againſt the Ways of God's Service, thereby to beget an *Odium* in the Hearts of Men againſt them. The *Seat of the Scornful* is a *Chair* that Satan had reared up from the Beginning. By this Art, (when *God was known in Jury, and his Name was great in Iſrael*) were the *Heathens* kept off from laying hold on the Covenant of God. He rendred them, and the Ordinances of Worſhip *ridiculous* to the Nations: The *Opprobium* of Circumciſion, and their *unreaſonable* Faith (as the *Heathens* thought it) upon *Things not ſeen*, was a Proverb in every Man's Mouth; *Credat Judæus appella—non ego.* The *Jews* were ſlandered with the yearly Sacrifice of *a Grecian*. And *Apion* affirms (*a*), That *Antiochus* found ſuch an one in a Bed in the Temple; and that they worſhipped an *Aſs's Head* in the *Temple*. (*b*) *Apion* ſlandered the *Jews* with *Ulcers* in their privy Parts every ſeventh Day: Hence he derives Sabbath, of *Sabatoſis*; which with the *Ægyptians* ſignifies an *Ulcer*.

Lyſimachus ſlandered the *Jews* in *Ægypt*, as *Leprous Church-Robbers*; and that their City was hence called *Heieroſola* (*c*). When the *Gentiles* were called into the Fellowſhip of the *Goſpel*, it was aſperſed with the like Scoffs and Flouts; it was frequently called a *Sect*, Acts xxviii. 22. *a babling* and ſtrange and uncouth Doctrine, *Acts* xvii. 18, 20. Beſides, a great many Lies and Forgeries that were invented to make it ſeem odious; and by this Means it was *every where ſpoken againſt*. *Machiavel*, that propounded the Policy of full and violent Calumniations to render an Adverſary odious (knowing that how unjuſt ſoever they were, yet ſome Impreſſion (*d*) of Jealouſy and Suſpicion

(*a*) Joſ. *contra* Apion. (*b*) Joſ. *contra* Apion, *lib.* 6, 2. (*c*) Joſ. *contra* Apion, *lib.* 1. (*d*) *Calumniare fortiter aliquid adhærebit.*

ſpicion would remain) had learned it of this old Accuſer, who had often and long experienced it to be a prevalent Courſe, to bring the Services of God under Diſlike. *Davĕd* ſpeaking of what befel himſelf, in this Kind, *Pſal.* lxix. 9, 10, 11, 12. That his Zeal lay under *Reproach*; his *Weeping* and Faſting became a *Proverb*: And that in all theſe, he was the *Song of the Drunkard*. He expreſſeth ſuch Apprehenſions of the Power of this Temptation upon the Weak; that he doth earneſtly beg, that Satan might not make it a Snare to them. *Ver.* 6. *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of Hoſts, be aſhamed for my Sake; let not thoſe that ſeek thee, be confounded for my Sake.* And further declares it, as a wonderful Preſervation and Eſcape of this Danger; that notwithſtanding theſe Reproaches, he had not declined his Duty. *Ver.* 13. *But as for me, my Prayer is unto the Lord.* *Paul* ſeems to ſpeak his Senſe of this Piece of Policy; his Impriſonment adminiſtred Matter of Reproach to his Profeſſion: Though his Cauſe were good, yet he ſuffered Trouble as *an evil Doer*, 2 Tim. ii. 9. this he knew the *Devil* would improve to a Shame and Diſgrace unto the Service of God, and therefore he chargeth *Timothy* to be aware of that Temptation, 2 *Tim.* i. 8. *Be not thou therefore aſhamed of the Teſtimony of our Lord, nor of me his priſoner.* And *ver.* 16. He takes notice of *Oneſiphorus*, that had eſcaped that Snare, and was not *aſhamed of his Chain.* And we have the greater Reaſon to fear the Danger of this Art, when we find that the Tempter made uſe of it, to turn away the Affections of the *Capernaumites* from Chriſt himſelf, *Matth.* xiii. 57. When he had preached in their Synagogues, to the Applauſe and Aſtoniſhment of all his Hearers; the *Devil* fearing the Prevalency of his *Doctrine*, finds out this Shift, to bring them to a Diſlike of him, and his Preaching; *Is not this the Carpenter's Son? And they were offended in him.*

(2.) Duties are brought under Diſlike by the *Hazards* that attend them: The *Devil* leaves it not untold, what Men ſhall meet with from the World, if they *run not with them into Exceſs of Vanity* and Neglect; if Bonds, Impriſonments, Baniſhments, Hatreds, Oppoſitions, Spoiling of Goods, Sufferings of all Kinds will divert them, he is ſure to ſet all theſe Affrightments before them: Which though

2. *From Hazards.*

though they do not move some from their Steadfastness; such as *Daniel*, whose Constancy in Duty was not pierced by the Feat of *Lions*: And the *three Children*, who would not decline the Ways of the Lord for the Terror of a *fiery Furnace*. Yet these Considerations prevail with most, as Christ notes, in those that received Seed in stony Places, whose Joy in the Word was soon blasted, and they offended at the Ways of Duty. *When Tribulation and Persecution because of the Word arose*, Matth. xiii. 21. Christ pronouncing him blessed, that should *not be offended* in him, *Matth.* xi. 6. because of the Dangers of his Service, shews, that the Escape of such a Temptation is not a common Mercy. And if we shall observe *Paul*'s Practice, upon his first Undertaking of the Ministry, when *it pleased God to call him* to preach his Son Christ among the *Heathen*, Gal. i. 16. we shall see, 1. That he was aware of such Objections as these. 2. That *Flesh* and *Blood* are apt to comply with them, and to take notice of them. 3. And that the best Way to avoid them is, to stop the Ears against them, and not to hearken to them, or *consult* with them. 4. And that he that must do it to Purpose, must without Delay, *immediately* resolve against such Hinderances; it being most difficult for Men that will be inclining to such Motions, and hearkning to what the Devil offers, under Pretence of Self-preservation, to disingage themselves after they have suffered their Souls to take the Impression.

3. *From the outward Meanness of Services.*

(3.) The *Meanness* of religious Appointments (as to the outward View) is also made use of, to beget a loathing of them. In this the Devil hath this Advantage, that however they are all *glorious within, and as the Curtains of Solomon*; yet are they as to their outward Appearance like the *Tents of Kedar*, without any of that Pomp and Splendor, which the Sons of Men affect and admire. Christ himself when he had vailed his Glory by our Flesh, was of no exterior *Form or Beauty*. The Ministration of his Word, which is *the Scepter of his Kingdom*, seems contemptible, and a very *Foolishness* to Men; insomuch, that *Paul* was forced to make an Apology for it, in that it wanted those outward Braveries of *Excellency of Speech and Wisdom*, 1 Cor. ii. 1, 4, 6. by shewing it was *glorious in its Power*, and was indeed an *hidden Wisdom* (which though not like that *Wisdom which the Princes*

Princes of Wisdom, and Philosophy affected) *among such as were perfect.* The *Sacraments* both of the *Old* and *New Testament* seemed very low and contemptible Things to a common Eye; neither need we any other Evidence to shew, that Men are apt to disrelish them, and to entertain strange Thoughts of them upon this very Account, than this, that some raise up Batteries against these Ordinances upon this Ground, that because they seem *low* and *mean* to them, therefore they think it *improbable*, that God should have indeed appointed them to be used in the literal Sense, or that at best they are to be used as *the first Rudiments* of Christianity, and not enjoyned upon the more *grown Christians*. Neither may I altogether pass over that *remarkable Humour*; that is in some, to give *additional Ornaments* of outward Garb and Form, for the greater Honour and Lustre of these Injunctions of Christ; so that while they endeavour to shew their *greatest Respects* to them, they betray their *inward Thoughts* to have carried some *Suspicion* of their Reality because of their *Plainness*; and by this Means whilst they endeavour to put an *Honour* upon Christ's Institutions, they really despise them, and shew their Respects to their *own Inventions*. But that we may be further satisfied, that Satan works by this Engine, let us consider that of 1 *Cor.* 1. 23. The *Jews* were *for Signs* from Heaven, to give a Credit and Testimony to that Doctrine which they would receive. The *Greeks* (who were then the only People for Learning) were for *philosophical* Speculations, and Disputes. Now (saith the Apostle) the Doctrine of the Gospel (which is the Preaching of Christ crucified) because it came not within the Compass of what both these expected, therefore the *Devil* so wrought upon this Advantage, that both contemned it, *It was to the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* Of this also he speaks more fully, 2 *Cor.* xi. 3. where he shews, that the *Minds* of the *Corinthians* were ready to be *corrupted* with Error, against the plain Import of the Gospel; and that which they took Offence at, was its *Simplicity*. They looked upon it as contemptible, because not containing such *gorgeous* Things as might suit a *soaring* and wanton Fancy. Now he resolves all this into a Cheat of Satan, taking the *Advantage* of this, (as he did upon *Eve* from the seeming Inconsiderableness of the Prohibition of eating a little Fruit) to persuade them, that so mean a Thing as the Gospel could not be of God. *I fear* (saith he) *lest by any*

of Actions and Postures of such as dance, being out of the Sound of their Musick, shall think them a Company of mad Men, and frantick People. Such *perverse Prospects* doth he sometimes afford to those, that come rather to observe what others do, than to concern themselves in such *Duties*; that, not seeing their *private Influences*, nor the *secret Spring* that moves them, they judge them *foolish*; and from thence they contract an inward loathing of the *Duties* themselves.

The fifth Way to hinder Duty, by sophistical Arguings; as,

5thly, In order to the hindring or preventing of *Duty*, Satan useth to impose upon Men, by *fallacious Arguings*: And by a Piece of his Sophistry, he endeavours to cheat them out of their Services. I shall note some of his remarkable Dealings in this Kind: As,

1. *By heightning the Dignity of God's Children.*

(1.) He *heightens the Dignity of God's Children, upon a Design to spoil their Duty.* He tells them, they are *Partakers of the Divine Nature.* That they are *in God and Christ*, and have the *Communications* of his Spirit; and therefore they need not now drink of the *Cistern*, seeing they enjoy the *Fountain*; and that these Services (in their Attainments) are as useless, as *Scaffolds* are when once the House is *built*. To prosecute this he takes Advantage, 1. Of the *natural Pride* of their Hearts (*a*); he puffs them up with Conceits of the Excellency of their Condition; a Thing which all Men are apt to catch at with Greediness, upon the least imaginary Grounds: If a Man have but a little Knowledge, or have attained to any vain Speculations, he is presently apt to be vainly *puffed up by his fleshly Mind*, Col. ii. 18. The same Hazard attends any conceited Excellency, which a Man apprehends he hath reached unto. Those *Monsters* of Religion, mentioned by *Peter* and *Jude*, that made no other use of the *Grace of God*, but to *turn it into Wantonness*, Jude *ver* 4. yet were they so tumified with the Apprehensions of their Privileges, that whilst they designed no other Thing, than plain *Licentiousness*, and a Wantonness in the Lusts of the Flesh; yet (it seems) they encouraged themselves, and allured others, from a supposed Liberty which their Privileges gave them; and to this Purpose had frequently in their Mouths

(*a*) 1 Cor. viii. 1.

Mouths, *great ſwelling Words of Vanity*, 2 Pet. ii. 18. even whilſt *they walked after their own Luſts*, Jude V. 16. (2.) To ſtrengthen their proud Conceits, the Devil improves what the Scriptures ſpeak, of the *Differences* of God's Children; that ſome are *ſpiritual*, ſome are *carnal*; ſome *weak*, others *ſtrong*; ſome *perfect*, ſome *leſs perfect*; ſome *little Children*, ſome *young Men*, ſome *Fathers*, 1 Cor. ii. 1. The End of all this, is to make them apprehend themſelves Chriſtians of an *higher Rank*, and Order, *Phil.* iii. 15. which alſo makes Way conſequently for a further Inference, (*viz.*) That there muſt needs be *Immunities and Privileges* 1 John ii. 12, 13. ſuitable to thoſe Heights and Attainments. To this Purpoſe, (3.) he produceth theſe Scriptures that are deſign'd by God, to raiſe up the Minds of Men, to look after the *internal Work and Power* of his Ordinances, and not to center their Minds and Hopes in the bare *formal Uſe* of them, without applying their Thoughts to God and Chriſt; unto whom they are appointed to lead us. Such as theſe Scriptures, *Rom.* ii. 28. *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that Circumciſion which is outward in the Fleſh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter.* And *Rom.* vi. 7. we ſhould *ſerve in Newneſs of Spirit, and not in the Oldneſs of the Letter*, 2 Cor. v. 16. *Wherefore henceforth know we no Man after the Fleſh, yea tho' we have known Chriſt after the Fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.* Eph. iv. 13. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets*, &c. *for the perfecting of the Saints—till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect Man.* By a perverſe Interpretation of theſe, and ſome other Scriptures of like Import, he would perſwade them, That the great Thing that Chriſt deſigned by his Ordinances, was, but to *train up the weaker Chriſtians by theſe Rudiments* (as the *A, B, C,* to Children) to a more *ſpiritual* and *immediate* Way of living upon God: And that theſe become *altogether uſeleſs*, when Chriſtians have gotten up to any of theſe *imaginary Degrees* of a ſuppoſed Perfection. Enough of this may be ſeen in the Writings of *Saltmarſh*, *Winſtanly*, and others, in the late Times. How great a Trade Satan drove by ſuch Miſapprehenſions not long ſince, cannot eaſily be forgotten; ſo that God's Worſhip did almoſt *lye waſte*; and in many Places, *the Way to Sion did mourn.*

2. *By pleading an Inequality of Duty.*

(2.) He will sometimes confess an *Equality of Privilege* among the Children of God, and yet plead an *Inequality of Duty*, that God is as good and strong to us, and that we have all an equal Advantage by Christ, he will readily acknowledge. But then when we should propound the *Diligence* of the Saints in their Services for our *Pattern* (a) (as of *David's praying seven Times a Day*, Daniel's *three Times*, Anna's *serving God with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day*, &c.) He tells us, these were *extraordinary* Services, and (as it were) Works of *Supererrogation*, more than the Command of God laid upon them. So that we are not *tied to such Strictness*; and we being naturally apt to indulge ourselves in our own Ease, are too ready to comply with such Delusions. And by Degrees Men are thus brought to a confident Belief, that they may be *good enough*, and do *as much as is required*, tho' they *slacken* their Pace, and do not fast, pray, or hear so often, as others have done.

3. *By heightning one Duty above others.*

(3.) Another Sophism of his, *is to heighten one Duty to the Ruin of another.* He strives to make an *intestine War* among the several *Parts* of the Services we owe to God; and from the *Excellency of one*, to raise up an Enmity and *undervaluing Disregard of another.* Thus would he sever, as inconsistent, those Things that God hath joined together. As among false Teachers, some say, *Lo here is Christ*; and others, *Lo he is there.* So we find Satan dealing with Duties, he puts some upon such high Respects to *Preaching*, that (say they) Christ is to be found *here*, most frequently, rather than in *Prayer*, or other Ordinances; others are made to have the like Esteem for *Prayer*: And they affirm, in this is Christ *especially* to be met withal. Others say the like of *Sacraments*, or Meditation. In all these Satan labours to beget a Dislike and Neglect of other Services. Thus (in what relates to the Constitution of Churches) he endeavours to set up *Purity* of Churches, to the Destruction of *Unity*; or *Unity* to the Ruin of *Purity.* A notable Example hereof we have in the *Euchytæ*, (a Sect of *praying Hereticks*, which arose in the Time of *Valentinian* and *Valens* (*b*)) who upon the Pretence of the Commands of *Christ* and *Paul*, for *praying continually*, or *without ceasing* and *fainting*,

(a) *Greenham* p. 35. (*b*) *Theod.* Eccles. Historiæ.

fainting, owned no other Duty as neceſſary; vilifying Preaching and Sacraments, as Things (at beſt) uſeleſs and unprofitable. The like Attempts he makes daily upon Men, where tho' he prevail not ſo far, as to bring ſome neceſſary Duties of Service into *open Contempt*; Luke xviii. 1. yet he carries them into too much *ſecret Neglect*, 1 Theſ. xv. 17. and Diſregard.

(4.) He improves the *Grace of the Goſpel*, to infer an *Unneceſſarineſs of Duty*; and this he doth, not only from the Advantage of a *profane* and careleſs Spirit in ſuch as *preſumptuouſly* expect Heaven, tho' they mind not *the Way* that leads to it: For with ſuch it is uſual (as one obſerves (*a*)) for Satan to *ſever the Means from the End*, in Things that are *good*, to make them believe, they *ſhall have Peace, tho' they walk in the Imaginations of their Heart*; to make them lean upon the Lord for Heaven, in the apparent Neglect of Holineſs and Duty. As in *evil Things* he ſeyers *the End from the Means*, making them confident they ſhall *eſcape Hell* and Condemnation, tho' they *walk* in the Path that leads thither. But beſides this, he abuſeth the Underſtandings and Affections of Men, by ſtrange and *uncouth* Inferences; as *that God hath received a Satisfaction, and Chriſt hath done all*; ſo that nothing *is left for us to do*. The Apoſtle *Paul* was ſo much aware of this Kind of arguing, that when he was *to magnify the Grace of God*, he always took Care to *fence* againſt ſuch perverſe Reaſonings; ſeverely *rebuking* and refelling ſuch *Objections*: As in *Rom.* iii. 7, 8. where ſpeaking, that *our Unrighteouſneſs did commend the Righteouſneſs of God*, he falls upon that Reply, *Why then am I judged as a Sinner*? Which he ſharply refells, as an Inference of ſlanderous Imputation to the Goſpel, which hath nothing in it to give the leaſt Countenance to that Concluſion, *Let us do Evil that Good may come*. And adds, That *Damnation* ſhall *juſtly* overtake ſuch as practiſe accordingly. The like we have, *Rom.* vi. 1, *Shall we continue in Sin that Grace may abound*? which he rejected with the greateſt Abhorrency, *God forbid!* From both which Places we may plainly gather, that as unſound as ſuch Arguings are, yet Men (through Satan's Subtilty) are too prone upon ſuch Pretences, to diſpute themſelves to a careleſs Neglect of Duty. This might be enlarged in many other Inſtances, as

4. *By ſevering the Means from the End.*

(*a*) *Greenham* p. 35.

as that of *Maximus Tyrius*, who disputed all Duties unnecessary upon this Ground, *That what God will give, cannot be hindred; and what he will not give, cannot be obtained*; and therefore were needless to seek after any Thing. Much to the same Purpose do many argue, If they be *predestinated to Salvation they shall be saved, tho' they do never so little; if they be not predestinated, they shall not be saved tho' they do never so much.* In all which Inferences the Devil proceeds upon a false Foundation, of severing the Means, and the End, which the *Decree* of God hath joined together. But the Main of the Design, is to hide the Necessity of Duty from them.

5. *By suspending and remitting Duties.*

(5.) By urging a Necessity or Conveniency for *suspending* or *remitting* Duties. In Temptations to Sin, he doth from a little, draw on the Sinner to more; but in Omissions of Duty, he would *entice us, from much to little; and from little to nothing.* Very busy he is with us, to break, or interrupt our *constant Course* of Duty. Duties in Order and Practice, are like so many *Pearls* upon one String, if the *Thread* be broken, it may hazard the *scattering* of all. If we be once put out of our Way, we are in Danger to rove far before we be set in our Rank again. To effect this, (1.) He will be sure to *straiten* or hinder us in our *Opportunities* if he can, and then to plead Necessity for a Dispensation. 'Tis true indeed, *Necessities*, when unavoidable (as the Issue of *Providence*, rather than our *Negligence*) may excuse an Omission of Duty. Because in such Cases, *God accepting the Will for the Deed, will have Mercy and not Sacrifice.* But Necessity is, most-what a Pretence or Cover to the Slothfulness of Professors; and the Devil will do all he can to gratify them in that Humour, and to prepare Excuses for them, from such Hindrances or Interruptions, as Business, or Disturbances can make; yet if these be not in Readiness, he will, (2.) Endeavour to take off our Earnestness, by suggesting to us our *former Diligence*, that we at other Times have been careful and active. Or (3.) By setting before us the *greater Negligence* of those that are below us; the Meaning of both which Insinuations is to this one Purpose, that we may make *bold* with some Omissions, without any great *Hazard* of our religious Intentions, or Scandal and Offence to others. Now, if he can by any of these Ways, bring us to any *Abatement* of

of our wonted Care and Exercise, he will then still *press for more*, and from *Pervency* of Spirit to a *cold* Moderation; from thence he will labour to bring us down to *seldom Performances*; from thence to *nothing*. The spiritual *Sluggard*, that will be overcome to some Neglects, shall be found a *Companion at last to a Waster*, Prov. xviii. 9, and will be brought to a total Neglect of all. The Church of *Ephesus*, Rev. ii. 4, 5. may sadly give Proof of this, they *left their first Love*; and from thence declined so far, that at last God was provoked to *remove the Candlestick out of its Place*.

(6.) Satan puts Tricks upon Men (in order to the hindring of Duty) by putting us from a Service *presently needful*, with the *Proposal of another*, in which at that Time we are not *so concerned*. In several Duties of Christianity, there is a great deal of Skill required to make a right Choice, for present or *first* Performance; and to have a right Judgment to discover the *Times* and Seasons of them, is Matter of necessary Study. Our Adversary observing our Weaknesses in this (when no other Art will prevail) endeavours to put us upon an *inconvenient Choice*, when he cannot make us neglect all: As (1.) By engaging us in a less *Duty*, that we may neglect a *greater*; he is willing that we (as the *Pharisees*) should *tithe Mint and Anise*, upon Condition that we *neglect the greater Things of the Law*. This was the Fault of *Martha*, Luk. x. 41. who busied herself in making Entertainment for Christ's Welcome, and in the mean time neglected to hear his Preaching, which, as he notes, was the only necessary Duty of that Time; *one Thing* is necessary. She is not blamed, for doing that which was *simply evil* in itself (for the Thing she did was a Duty) but for not making *a right Choice* of Duty; for that Rebuke, *Mary hath chosen the better Part*, is only *a comparative Discommendation*, as *Austin* interprets, *Non tu malam, sed illa meliorem*; the Thing thou dost is not evil, if it had not put thee upon a Neglect of a greater Good. (2.) He sometimes puts Men upon what is *good* and necessary; but such as *they cannot come at without Sin*. Thus Sacrificing in itself was a necessary Duty; and such was *Saul's* Condition, that it concerned him at that Time to make his Peace with God, and to enquire his Mind; yet when the Devil upon that Pretence put him upon *offering a Sacrifice*, 1 Sam. xiii. 13. he put him upon no small Transgression. The like Game Satan sometimes plays with private

Christians,

Chriſtians, who are perſwaded *beyond their Station* and Capacity, in reference to ſome Ordinances of God. (3.) He ſometimes puts Men upon *dangerous Undertakings* in Purſuit of their Fancy, of gaining *an Advantage* for ſome Service; and ſo are they turned out of the Way of preſent Obedience, in graſping at Opportunities of Duty *out of their Reach*. Saul *ſpared the Sheep and Oxen of the* Amalekites for Sacrifice, 1 *Sam.* xv. 15, 22. when *Obedience* had been *more acceptable* than Sacrifice. (4.) There is a further Cheat in the Choice of Duty, when Satan imploys them *to provide for Duties to come*, to the Neglect of Duties *preſently incumbent* upon them; whereas we are more concerned in that which *at preſent* is neceſſary, than in that which may be ſo for the *future*; which is a Miſtake, like that of *caring for the Morrow*, while we uſe not what God puts in our Hand *for to Day*.

CHAP. XVIII.

Satan's ſecond grand Deſign againſt Duties, is to ſpoil them, (1.) *In the Manner of undertaking; and how he effects this.* (2.) *In the Act or Performance, by diſtracting outwardly and inwardly. His various Ways therein, by vitiating the Duty itſelf. How he doth that.* (3.) *After Performance; the Manner thereof.*

2. *Satan's Deſign to ſpoil Duties.*

THE chief of Satan's Ways for the hindring and preventing of Duty have been noted; what he comes ſhort in this Deſign, he next labours to make up, by *ſpoiling* and *depraving* them; and this he doth endeavour *three* Ways.

1. *In the Manner of putting us upon them.*

Firſt, By putting us upon Services *in ſuch a Manner*, as ſhall render them *unacceptable* and diſpleaſing unto God, and unprofitable to us: As (1.) By a *careleſs and raſh undertaking* of Service. We are commanded *to take heed* to ourſelves, *how we hear* or pray, and to *watch* over our Hearts, that they be in a fit Poſture for meeting with God, becauſe the Heart in Service is that which God moſt looks at, and our Services are meaſured accordingly. If then by a heedleſs Undertaking we adventure upon them,

them, not keeping *our Foot when we go into the House of God*, Eccles. v. 1. we offer no other than the *Sacrifice of Fools*; and give Occasion to God to complain, that we do but *draw near to him with our Lips, while our Hearts are far from him.*

Secondly, The like Spoil of Duty is made, when we adventure upon it in *our own Strength*, and not in the *Strength of Christ.* Satan sees the Pride of our Heart, and how much our Gifts may contribute to it, and how prone we are to be confident of a right Performance of what we have so *often* practised before; and therefore doth he more industriously catch at that Advantage, to make us forget that our *Strength is in God*; and that we cannot come to him acceptably, but by his own Power. Christians are often abused this Way; when their Strength is to seek, Duty is oft *perversly* set before them, that they act as *Sampson* did, when his Locks were cut, who thought to *shake himself*, and to *go out as at other Times*, and so fell into the Hands of the *Philistines.*

Thirdly, If he can substitute *base Ends* and *Principles*, as *Motives* to Duty, instead of these that God hath commanded, he knows the Service will become stinking and lothsome to God. Fasting, Prayers, Alms, Preaching, or any other Duty may be thus tainted, when they are performed upon no better Grounds, than *to be seen of Men*, or *out of Envy*, or to satisfy *Humour*, or when from *Custom* rather than *Conscience.* How frequently did the *Prophets* tax the *Jews* for this, that they *fasted to themselves*, and brought *forth Fruit to themselves*? How severely did Christ condemn the *Pharisees* upon the same Account, telling them, that in hunting the Applause of Men by these Devotions, they had got all the Reward they were like to have.

Fourthly, When we do our Services *unseasonably*; not only the Grace and *Beauty* of them is spoiled, but often are they render'd *unprofitable.* There are Times to be observed, not only for the right Management of common Actions, but also for Duties. What is Christian Reproof, if it be not rightly suited to Season and Opportunity? The same may be said of other Services.

Fifthly, Services are spoiled, when Men set upon them *without Resolutions of leaving their Sins.* While they come with their *Idols in their Heart*, and *the Stumbling-block of their Iniquity before their Face, God will not be enquired*

enquired of by them, Ezek. xiv. 3. He requires of those that present their Services to him, that (at least) they should not affront him, with *direct Purposes* of continuing in their Rebellions against him; nay, he expects from his Servants, that look for a Blessing in their Duties, that they come with their *Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and their Bodies washed with pure Water*, Heb. x. 22. If they come to hear the Word, they must *lay aside all Filthiness and Superfluity of Naughtiness*, Jam. i. 21. If they pray, they must *lift up pure Hands*, 1 Tim. ii. 8. If they come to the Lord's Supper, they must eat that Feast *with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth*, 1 Cor. v. 8. And albeit he may accept the Prayers of those, that are so far convinced of their Sins (tho' they be not yet sanctified) that they are *willing* to lay down their Weapons, and are touched with a Sense of *legal Repentance* (for thus he heard *Ahab*, and regarded the Humiliation of *Nineveh*) yet while Men *cleave* to the Love of their Iniquity, and are not upon *any Terms* of parting with their Sins, God will not look to their Services, but abhor them. For thus he declares himself, *Isa.* i. 11. *To what Purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices? Bring no more vain Oblations.——I cannot away with them, it is Iniquity, even the solemn Meeting.——My Soul hateth them, they are a Trouble to me, I am weary to bear them: When you spread forth your Hands, I will hide mine Eyes from you; yea, when you make many Prayers, I will not hear.* The Ground of all this is, that their Heart was no Way severed from the Purposes of sinning, *Your Hands are full of Blood*, Verse 15. Satan knowing this so well, he is willing that they engage in the Services of God; if they will keep up their Allegiance to him, and come with Intentions to continue wicked still: For so while he cannot prevent the actual Performance of *Duty*, (which yet notwithstanding he had rather do, because he knows not but God may by that Means some Time or other rescue these Slaves of Satan out of his Hand) he makes their Services nothing worth, and renders them abominable to God.

Sixthly, In the Manner of undertaking, Duties are spoiled, when Men have not a *submissive Ingenuity* in them, by giving themselves up to the *Direction* and *Disposal* of the Almighty; but rather confine and limit God to *their Wills* and Desires. Sometimes Men by attempting of Services

to

to God, think thereby to engage God to humour them in their *Wills* and *Ways*. With such a Mind did *Ahab* consult the Prophets about his Expedition to *Ramoth-Gi'ead*; not so much seeking God's Mind and Counsel for Direction, as thinking thereby to engage God to confirm and comply with his Determination. With the same Mind did *Johanan* and the rest of the People consult the Lord, concerning their going down to *Egypt*, Jer. xlii. 5. Tho' they solemnly protested Obedience to what God should say, *whether it were Good or Evil*; yet when the Return from God suited not with their Desires and Resolutions, they denied it to be the Command of God; and found an Evasion to free themselves of their Engagement, *Jer.* xliii. 2. Such Dealings as these being the evident Undertakings of an hypocritical Heart, must needs render all done upon that Score, to be presumptuous Temptings of God, no Way deserving the Name of Service.

Secondly, Not only are Services thus spoiled, in those wrong Grounds and Ways of attempting, or setting about them, but in the very Act, or Performance of them, while they are *upon the Wheel*, (as a Potter's Vessel in the Prophet) they are often marred; and this Satan doth two Ways. 1. By disturbing our Thoughts, which should be attentive and fix'd upon the Service in Hand. 2. By vitiating the Duty itself.

2. *In the Act of Performance.*

Two Ways.

1. By distracting or disturbing our Thoughts. This is an usual Policy of Satan. Those Fowls which came down upon *Abraham*'s Sacrifice, *Gen.* xv. 12. are supposed (by learned Expositors) to signify those Means and Ways by which the Devil doth disorder and trouble our Thoughts in religious Services. And Christ himself compares the Devil stealing our Thoughts from Duty, to the *Fowls of the Air*, that gather up the Seed as soon as it is sown, *Matth.* xiii. 4. There are many Reasons that may persuade us, that this is one of his Master-pieces of Policy. As (1.) In that the Business of Distraction is oft *easily done*; our Thoughts do not naturally delight in spiritual Things, because of their Depravement; neither can they easily brook to be *pent* in, or confined so strictly, as the Nature of such Employments doth require; so that there is a Kind of *preternatural Force* upon our Thoughts, when they are religiously imployed; which, as it is in itself laborious, (like the stopping of a Stream,

1. *By Distraction.*

Stream, or driving *Jordan* back) ſo upon the leaſt relaxing of the Spring, that muſt bend our Thoughts heavenward, they incline to their natural Bend and Current: As a Stone rolled up a Hill hath a *renitentia*, a ſtriving againſt the Hand that forceth it; and when that Force ſlackens, it goes down-ward. How eaſily then is it for Satan to ſet our Thoughts off our Work? If we ſlacken our Care never ſo little they recoil, and tend to their *old Byas*; and how eaſy is it for him to take off our Hand, when 'tis ſo much in his Power to inject Thoughts and Motions into our Hearts; or to preſent Objects to our Eyes, or Sounds to our Ears, which by a natural Force raiſeth up our Apprehenſion to act: For in ſuch Caſes, *non poſſumus non cogitare*; we cannot reſtrain the Act of thinking, and not, *without great Heedfulneſs*, can we reſtrain the *Purſuit* of thoſe Thinkings and Imaginations. (2.) Satan can alſo do it inſenſibly; our Diſtractions, or Rovings of Thoughts, creep and ſteal upon us ſilently, we no more know oft, when they begin, than when we begin to ſleep; or when we begin to wander in a Journey, where oft we do not take ourſelves to be out of the Way, till we come to ſome remarkable turning. (3.) And when he prevails to *divide* our Thoughts from our Duty, he always makes great Advantage; for thus he hinders (at leaſt) the Comfort and Profit of Ordinances. While we are buſied to *look to our Hearts*, much of the Duty goeth by, and we are but as thoſe, that in publick Aſſemblies are employed to ſee to the Order and Silence of others, who can be ſcarce *at Leaſure* to attend for their own Advantage. Beſides, much of the Sweetneſſes of Ordinances are abated by the very Trouble of our Attendance. When we are put to it (as *Abraham* was) to be ſtill driving away thoſe Fowls that come down upon *our Sacrifice*, the very Toil will eat out, and eclipſe much of the Comfort. Thus alſo he (at leaſt) provides Matter to object againſt the Sincerity of the Servants of God; and will aſſuredly find a Time, to ſet it home upon them to the Purpoſe, that their Hearts were wandring in their Services. Thus he further gets Advantage for a Temptation to *leave off* their Duty, and will not ceaſe to improve ſuch Diſtractions (as we have heard) to an utter *Overthrow* of their Services. Nay, if he prevail to give us ſuch Diſtractions as wholly *takes away our Minds*, and ſerious Attentions from the Service, then is the Service become nothing worth, tho' the *outward* Circumſtan-

ces

ces of Attendance be never so *exact* and Saint-like. Who could appear in a more religious Dress than those in *Ezek.* xxxiii. 31. who came and *sat*, and were pleased with divine Services (as to all outward Discovery) *as God's People*; yet was all spoiled with this, that their *Hearts were after their Covetousness.*

Now this Distraction Satan can work *two Ways.*

1*st*, By *outward Disturbances.* He can present Objects to the Eyes, on Purpose to entice our Thoughts after them. The closing of the Eyes in Prayer, is used by some of the Servants of God, to prevent Satan's Temptations this Way. And we find in the Story of Mr. *Rothwel* (*a*), that the *Devil* took Notice of this in him, that *he shut his Eyes to avoid Distraction in Prayer*; which implies, a Concession in the *Devil*, that by *outward* Objects he useth to endeavour our Distraction in Services. The like he doth by Noises and Sounds. Neither can we discover how much of these Disturbances, (by Coughings, Hemmings, Tramplings, *&c.* which we hear in greater Assemblies) are from Satan, by stirring up others to such Noises. We are sure the *Damsel* that had an unclean Spirit, *Acts* xvi. that grieved and troubled *Paul* (going about these *Duties*) with her Clamours, was set on by that Spirit within her, to distract and call off their Thoughts from the Services, which they were about to undertake. Besides the common Ways of giving Trouble to the Servants of God in *outward Disturbances*, he sometimes (tho' rarely) doth it in an *extraordinary* Manner: Thus he endeavoured to hinder Mr. *Rothwel* from praying for a possessed Person, by *Rage* and *blaspheming*. The like Hinderance we read he gave *Luther* and others: And truly *so strict* an *Attendance* in the Exercise of our Minds, spiritual Senses, and Graces is required in Matters of *Worship*: And so *weak* are our Hearts in making a Resistance, or beating off these *Assaults*, that a very *small Matter* will *discompose* us, and a *smaller Discomposure* will prejudice and blemish the *Duty.*

1. *Outward Disturbances.*

2*dly*, He distracts or disturbs us also, by *inward Workings*, and Injections of Motions and Representations of Things to our Minds: And as this is his most general

2. *Inward Distractions.*

(*a*) Vid. *Clark's Lives.*

neral and usual *Way*, so doth he make Use of greater Variety of Contrivance and Art in it. As,

First, By the troublesome Impetuousness and Violence of his Injections, they come upon us as thick as Hail. No sooner do we put by one Motion, but another is in upon us: He hath his Quiver full of these Arrows, and our Hearts (under any Service) *swarm* with them, we are incessantly infested by them, and have no Rest. At other Times, when we are upon worldly Business, we may observe a *great Ease* and Freedom in our Thoughts; neither doth he so much press upon us: But in these *Satan* is continually knocking at our *Door*, and calling to us, so that it is a great Hazard, that some of other of these Injections may stick upon our Thoughts, and lead us out of the Way; or if they do not; yet 'tis a *great Molestation* or Toil to us.

Secondly, He can so order his *Dealings* with us, that he provokes us sometimes *to follow him out of the Camp*, and seeks to ensnare us, by improving *our own spiritual Resolution* and Hatred against him; even as Courage whetted on and enraged, makes a Man *venturesome* beyond the due Bounds of Prudence or Safety. To this End he sometimes casts into our Thoughts *hideous*, *blasphemous* and *atheistical* Suggestions, which do not only *amaze* us, but oftentimes engage us to dispute against them; which, at such Time, is all he seeks for: For whereas in such Cases we should send away such Thoughts with a *short Answer*, *Get thee behind me Satan*; we, by taking up the *Buckler* and *Sword* against them, are drawn off from minding our present Duty.

Thirdly, He doth sometimes seek to allure, and draw our Thoughts to the Object, by representing what is *pleasant* and taking. (1.) He will adventure to suggest *good Things impertinently*, and unseasonably, as when he puts us upon praying, while we should be hearing; or while we are praying, he puts into our Hearts Things that we have heard in Preaching: These Things, (because good in themselves) we are not so apt to startle at, but give them a more quick Welcome. (2.) He also can allure our Thoughts, by the *Strangeness* of the Things suggested; sometimes we shall have Hints of Things which we *knew not before*, or some *fine* and excellent *Notions*, so that we can scarce forbear *turning aside* after them, to *gaze* at them: And yet when all is done, except we wholly neglect the Duty for them, they will so vanish, that we can scarce remember them when the Duty is over. (3.) Sometimes he suits our

Desires

Defires and Inclinations with the *Remembrances* of Things that are, at other Times, much in our *Love* and Affection; and with theſe we are apt to comply: The Pleaſure of them making us forget our preſent Duty. Thoughts of Eſtates, Honours, Relations, Delights, Recreations, or whatever elſe we are ſet upon at other Times, will more eaſily prevail for Audience now.

Fourthly, He hath a Way to betray and circumvent us, by heightning our *own Jealouſies* and Fears againſt him; and here he *outſhoots us in our own Bow*: And by a Kind of *overdoing*, makes us *undo* our deſired Work. For where he obſerves us *fearful*, and watchful againſt wandring, he doth *alarm* us the more: So that (1.) inſtead of looking to the *preſent* Part of Duty; we reflect upon what is *paſt*, and make Enquiries, *Whether we performed that aright?* Or whether we did not wander *from the Beginning?* Thus our *Suſpicions* that we have miſcarried, bring us into a *Miſcarriage*: By this are we deceived, and put off from minding what we are doing at preſent. Or (2.) An *eager Deſire to fix* our Thoughts on our preſent Service, doth amaze and aſtoniſh us into a *ſtupid Inactivity*, or into a ſaying, or doing, *we know not what*; as ordinarily it happens to Perſons, that out of a great *Fearfulneſs to offend* in the Preſence of ſome great Perſonages, become *unable to do any Thing right*; or to behave themſelves tollerably well: Or as an *over-ſteady* and earneſt fixing the Eye, *weakens* the Sight, and renders the Object leſs truly diſcernible to us.

Fifthly, Sometimes the *Exerciſe of Fancy* acting or working according to ſome Miſtake which we have entertained; as to the Manner of Performance, doth *ſo hold our Thoughts doing*, that we embrace a Cloud or Shadow, when we ſhould have looked after the *Subſtance*. I will give an Inſtance of this, in Reference to Prayer; which (I have obſerved) hath been a Snare and Miſtake to ſome, and that is this; Becauſe in that Duty, the Scripture directs us to go to God, and to ſet *him before us*: Therefore they have thought it neceſſary to frame an *Idea* of God in their Thoughts, as of a *Perſon preſent* to whom they ſpeak. Hence their Thoughts are buſied, to conceive ſuch a *Repreſentation*; and when the Shadow of Imagination *vaniſheth* their Thoughts are again *buſied* to enquire, Whether their Hearts are upon God? Thus by *playing* with Fancy, they are really *leſs attentive* upon their Duty.

Sixthly, Satan can lay *Impreſſions* of Diſtraction upon Men, *before they come* to religious Services, which ſhall then work, and ſhew their Power to diſturb and divide our Hearts; which is by a ſtrong *Prepoſſeſſion* of the Heart, with any Thing that we fear, or hope, or deſire, or doth any Way trouble us: Theſe will ſtick to us, and keep us Company in our Duties, tho' we ſtrive to keep them back. And this was the Ground of the Apoſtle's Advice, to the unmarried Perſons, to continue in a ſingle Life, (Times of Perſecution and Diſtreſs nearly approaching) that they might *attend upon the Lord without Diſtraction*, 1 Cor. vii. 35. Implying, that the *Thoughtfulneſs*, and more than ordinary Carefulneſs, which would ſeize upon the Minds of Perſons under ſuch *Straits* and Hazards, would unavoidably follow them in their Duties, and ſo diſtract them.

2. *Duties ſpoiled in the Performance, by vitiating the Duty.*

2dly, The other Way, (beſides this of Diſtraction) by which Satan ſpoils our Duties in the Act of Performance, is, by *vitiating Duty itſelf*: And this he commonly doth three Ways.

3. *Ways of vitiating the Duty.*

(1.) When he puts Men upon *greater Care* for the *outward Garb* and Dreſs of a Service, than for the *inward Work* of it; he endeavours to make ſome Devotionaries deal with their Duties, as the *Phariſees* did with their Cups, *waſhing* and adorning the *outſide*, while the *inſide* is altogether neglected. Thus the *Papiſts* generally are for the *outward Pomp* and Beauty of Services; being only careful, that all Things ſhould have their external Bravery: As the *Tombs* of the Prophets were *painted* and beautified, which yet were full of *Rottenneſs*. And the Generality of Chriſtians are more taken up with this, than with the Service of the Heart: *Paul* was ſo ſenſible of this Snare, in the Work of Preaching, (where ordinarily Men cared for *Excellency of Speech*, or *Wiſdom*) 1 Cor. ii. 2. that he determines another Courſe of Preaching; not *Notions*, or Rhetorick, and *enticing Words*, but the Doctrine of Chriſt crucified in *Sincerity* and *Plainneſs*. 'Tis not indeed the outward Coſt and Fineneſs of Ordinances that God regards; *Incenſe from Sheba, and the ſweet Cane, from a very far Country*, Jer. vi. 20. are not to any Purpoſe, where the Heart doth not moſt deſign *a ſpiritual* Service; for theſe are rather a Satisfaction to the Humours

of

of Men, than to please God: An Offering to themselves rather than to him. And therefore is it, that what *Jeremiah* confessed they did, (*Chap.* vi. 20.) in buying Incense and the sweet Cane, *Isaiah* (Chap. xliii. 24.) seems to deny, *Thou hast bought me no sweet Cane with Money*; that is, tho' thou didst it, yet it was to *thyself* rather than *to me*: I accepted it not, and so was it all one as if thou hadst not done it.

(2.) Duties and Services are more apparently vitiated by *humane Additions*: A Thing expressly contrary to the *second Commandment*, and yet is there a strange Boldness in Men this Way, which sometimes riseth to such an Height, that the plain and clear Commands of God are violated, under the specious Pretence of *Decency*, *Order*, and *Humility*; and nothing doth more take them, than what they devise and find out. Satan knows how displeasing this is to God, and how great an Inclination there is in Men to be forward in their Inventions, and self devised Worship; that he can easily prevail with the Incautious. This was the great Miscarriage of the *Jewish* Nation all along the *Old Testament*: And of the *Pharisees*, who tho' they declined the Idolatries of their Fathers; yet were so *fond* upon their *Traditions*, that they made their *Worship vain*, as Christ tells them. And this Humour also in *Paul's* Time was insinuating itself into Christians; managed by a great deal of Deceit, *Col.* ii. 8. and *Shew of Wisdom*, Ver. 23. which accordingly he doth earnestly forewarn them of. There are indeed several Degrees of corrupting a Service or Ordinance by humane Additions; according to which, 'tis more or less defiled: Yet, the least Presumption this Way, is an Offence and Provocation.

(3.) Duties are vitiated in their *Excess*. *Natural* Worship, which consists in Fear, Love, Faith, Humility, &c. can never be too much: But *instituted* Worship may; Men may preach too much, and pray too long, (a Fault noted by Christ in the *Pharisees*, they made *long Prayers*) even in Duties; a Man may be righteous overmuch. *Timothy* was so, in his great Pains and over-abstemious Life, in the wasting of his Strength, which the Apostle takes notice of, and adviseth against it, *Drink no longer Water*, &c. The *Corinthians* were so, when out of a high Detestation of the Miscarriage of the incestuous Person, they were backward to forgive him, and to receive him into the Church again. *Peter* is another Instance to us of Excess, *John* xiii. 8. *first*.

In a *modeſt Humility*, he refuſeth to ſet Chriſt *waſh his Feet*: But after, underſtanding the Meaning of it, then he runs to the other Extream, and offers not *only his Feet*, but *his Hands and his Head*. When the Servants of God are *conſcious* of Defects in their Services, (as if they would make *amends* for theſe, by the *Length* and Continuance of their Services) they are eaſily drawn into an Exceſs, every Way diſadvantagious to themſelves, and the Service.

3. *Duties ſpoiled after Performance.*

3*dly*, When Satan's Deſigns do not take to ſpoil the Duties, either by the *Manner* of the Attempt, or in *the Act*; he then ſeeks to play an After-game, and endeavours to ſpoil them, by ſome *After-miſcarriage* of ours, in Reference to theſe Services. As

Firſt, When he makes us *proud* of them: We can ſcarce perform any Service with a *tollerable Suitableneſs*, but Satan is at Hand to inſtil Thoughts of *Applauſe*, vain Glory, and Boaſting; and we readily begin to think highly of ourſelves, and Performances; as if we were better than others, whom we are apt to cenſure, as low and weak in Compariſon of ourſelves. Tho' this be an apparent Deceit, yet 'tis a Wonder how much the Minds, even of the beſt, are apt to be tainted with it; even where there are conſiderable *Endeavours* for *Humility*, and Self denial, theſe Thoughts are apt to get *too much* Entertainment. Now, tho' we run well, and attain ſome comfortable Strength, and Watchfulneſs in the Services of God: Yet, if they be afterward *fly-blown* with Pride, or if we think to *embalm* them with Praiſes, or reſerve them as Matter of *Oſtentation*; tho' they be *Angels Food*, yet (like the *Manna* of the *Iſraelites*, when kept too long) they will *putrify and breed Worms*, and ſo be good for nothing, after that we have been at the Pains of gathering it.

Secondly, When well-perform'd Services are perverted to *Security*, then are they alſo ſpoiled; we are ready to ſay of them, as the rich Man of his Abundance, *Soul take thine Eaſe, thou haſt much laid up for many Years*. Satan is willing (for a further Advantage) that we think ourſelves ſecure from him; and as after a full Meal, we are apt to grow drowſy: So after Services, we are apt to think ourſelves out of Harm's Way. The Church after an high Feaſt with Chriſt, *Cant.* v. 2. preſently falls aſleep, and highly miſcarries in Security, and Neglect: By this Means do the beſt of Saints ſometimes loſe the Things they have wrought, and throw down what they formerly built up.

DEMO-

DÆMONOLOGIA SACRA:

OR, A

TREATISE of *Satan's Temptations.*

PART II. Containing the manifold Subtilties and Stratagems of Satan, for the corrupting of the Minds of Men with Error; and for the Deſtruction of the Peace and Comfort of the Children of God.

CHAP. I.

That it is Satan's grand Deſign to corrupt the Minds of Men with Error. The Evidences that it is ſo. And the Reaſons of his Endeavours that Way.

NExt to Satan's Deceits in *tempting to Sin* and *againſt Duty*, his Deſign of *corrupting the Minds of Men by Error* calls for our Search; and indeed this is one of his principal Endeavours, which takes up a conſiderable Part of his Time and Diligence. He is not only called in Scripture an *unclean Spirit*, but alſo a *lying Spirit*, and there are none of theſe curſed Qualifications that lie idle in him: As by his Uncleanneſs we may eaſily conjecture his Attempts upon the Will and Affections to defile them by Luſt; ſo by his lying we may conclude that he will certainly ſtrive to blind the Underſtanding by Error. But a clear Diſcovery of this we may have from theſe Conſiderations.

First, From God's Intereſt *in Truth*, in Reference to his great Deſigns of Holineſs and Mercy in the World. Truth is a Ray and Beam of him who is the Father of

Lights (*a*). All *revealed* Truths are but *Copies* and Tranſcripts of that *Eſſential, Archetypal* Truth. Truth is the *Rod of his Strength*, Pſal. cx. 2. the *Scepter of his Kingdom*, by which he doth ſubdue the Hearts of Men to his Obedience and Service in *Converſion*. Truth is that *Rock* upon which he hath *built his Church*, the Foundations are the *Prophets and Apoſtles*, Epheſ. ii. 20. that is, the *Doctrine* of the *Prophets and Apoſtles* in the Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*. Truth is that great *Depoſitum* committed to the Care of his Church, which is therefore called the *Pillar of Truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. becauſe as Princes or Rulers put their Proclamations on Pillars for the better Information of their Subjects, ſo doth his Church hold out Truth to the World, *John* xvii. 17. Holineſs is maintained by Truth, our Ways are directed by it, and by it are we *forewarned* of Satan's Devices. Now the *Prince of Darkneſs* carrying himſelf in as full an Oppoſition to the *God of Truth* as he can in all his Ways; God's Intereſt in Truth will ſufficiently diſcover the Devil's Deſign to promote Error; for ſuch is his Hatred of God, that (tho' he cannot deſtroy Truth, no more than he can tear the Sun out of the Firmament, yet) he will endeavour by *corrupting the Copy*, to *diſgrace the Original*; tho' he cannot *break* Chriſt's Scepter, yet, by raiſing Error, he would hinder the *Encreaſe* of his Subjects; tho' he cannot *remove* the Rock upon which the Church is built, he will endeavour to *ſhake* it, or to *interrupt* the Building, and to *tear down* God's Proclamation from the Pillar on which he hath ſet it to be *read of all*; and if we can conceive what an *Hatred* the *Thief* hath to the Light, as it contradicts and hinders his Deſigns, we may imagine there is nothing againſt which the Devil will uſe greater Contrivances than againſt the Light of Truth: He neither can, nor will make a *League* with any, but upon the Terms that *Nahaſh* propounded to the Men of *Jabeſh-Gilead*, 1 Sam. xi. 2. that is, that he may *put out their right Eye*, and ſo *lay it for a Reproach upon the Iſrael of God*. 'Tis the Work of the Holy Spirit to *lead us into Truth*, and by the Rule of Contrarieties 'tis the Devil's Work to *lead into Error*.

Secondly, Tho' the Scripture doth charge the Sin and Danger of Deluſion and Error upon thoſe Men that *promote*

(*a*) Deus eſt primâ veritas eſſentialis, Verbum Dei prima veritas nominalis. *Mac. Divine. Theol.* cap. 1.

mote it, to the Deception of themselves and others, yet doth it chiefly blame Satan for the great Contriver of it, and expresly affirms him to be the grand Deceiver: Instruments and Engeniers he must make Use of to do him Service in that Work, but still it is the Devil that is a lying Spirit in their Mouths; 'tis he that teacheth and prompts them, and therefore may be called (as *Elymas* was by *Paul*, Acts xiii. 10.) the Children of the Devil, (as *Corinthus* of old (*a*)) the First born of Satan.

The Church of *Corinth*, among other Distempers, laboured under dangerous Errors, against which when the *Apostle* doth industriously set himself, he doth chiefly take Notice, 1. Of the *false Teachers* who had cunningly wrought them up to an Aptitude of declining from the *Simplicity of the Gospel*; these he calls *false Apostles*, as having no Commission from God, and *Satan's Ministers*, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 15. thereby informing us who it is that sends them out and employs them upon this Errand. 2. He especially accuseth Satan as the great Contriver of all this Evil; if any shut their Eyes against the Light, he gives this for the principal Cause, that *the God of the World blinded their Minds*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. If any stumbled at the *Simplicity of the Gospel*, he presently blames the *Subtility of the old Serpent* for it, 2 *Cor.* xi. 3. When false Doctrine was directly taught, and varnished over with the glorious Pretexts of Truth, still he chargeth Satan with it, *Verse.* 14. *No Marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light*; where he doth not only give a Reason of the corrupting or the adulterating the Word of God by *false Apostles*, as Vintners do their Wines by Mixtures, (a Metaphor which he makes Use of (*b*), *chap.* ii. 17.) that they learned it of Satan, *who abode not in the Truth, but was a Liar from the Beginning*: But also, he further points at Satan, to furnish us with a true Account of the Ground of that cunning Craft which these *deceitful Workers* used, while they metamorphosed themselves, by an Imitation of the *Way* and Manner, Zeal and Diligence of the *Apostles of Christ*; they were taught by one who had exactly learned the Art of Imitation, and who could, to all Appearance, act to the Life the Part of *an Angel of Light*. And to take away all Objection or Wonder, that so many with such seeming Earnestness and Zeal, should

(*a*) πρωτοτοκον του Σατανα. (*b*) καπηλευοντα.

give up themſelves to deceive by falſe Doctrine: He tells us that this hath been the *Devil's Work*, from the firſt *beguiling of Eve*, Verſe 3. and that as he then made Uſe of a Serpent for his Inſtrument, ſo ever ſince in all Ages he hath made ſo often, and ſo much Uſe of *Men* as his Emiſſaries, that it ſhould now neither ſeem a *Marvel* (*a*), nor a *great Matter* to ſee the Devil at this *Work* by his Agents.

Thirdly, That this is Satan's great Deſign, may be further cleared from the conſtant Courſe of his Endeavours. The Parable of the Tares, *Mat.* xiii. 25. ſhews, that Satan is as *buſie* in ſowing *Tares*, as the Maſter of the Field is in ſowing *Wheat*; that by Tares, not Errors, in the *Abſtract*, but *Men* are to be underſtood, is evident from the Parable itſelf; but that which makes Men to be Tares, is Sin and Error: So that in a complex Senſe we are taught how diligent the *Devil*, (who is expreſly ſignified by the Enemy, *ver.* 39.) is in that Employment, much of his Time hath been taken up that *Way*. *There were falſe Prophets*, (ſaith *Peter*, 2 Epiſt. ii. 1.) and *there ſhall be falſe Teachers*; that is, ſo it was of old, and ſo it will be to the End. The ſhorteſt Abſtract of Satan's Acts in this Matter, would be long and tedious; judge of the reſt by a few Inſtances.

In the *Apoſtles Times*, how quickly had the *Devil* broached falſe Doctrine? That it was *neceſſary to be circumciſed*, was early taught, *Acts* xv. 1. In *Coloſ.* ii. 8. the vain *Deceit* of *Philoſophy*, *Traditions*, and *the Elements of the World* (which were the Body of *Moſaical* Ceremonies) are mentioned as dangerous Intruſions; and in *ver.* 18. the *worſhipping of Angels* (as it ſeems) was pleaded for, with no ſmall Hazard to the Church. The *Denial of the Reſurrection* is expreſly charged upon ſome of the *Corinthian* Church, 1 *Cor.* xv. 12. and that *the Reſurrection is paſt already*, 2 Tim. ii. 18. is affirmed to have been the *Doctrine* of *Hymeneus*, *Philetus*, and others; but theſe are comparatively little, to that groſs Error of *denying Chriſt*, Jude *v.* 4. or that *Jeſus is the Chriſt*, 1 John ii. 22. or *Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh*, 1 John iv. 3. which are branded for *Antichriſtian* Errors, and were boldly aſſerted by many falſe Prophets that were then *gone out into the World*; and to ſuch a Height came they at laſt, that they taught the Lawfulneſs of *committing Fornication*, *and to eat Things offered to Idols*, Rev. ii. 20. All theſe Falſhoods took the Boldneſs

(*a*) *Compare* 1 *Joh.* iii. *ver.* 13, 14, 15.

Boldneſs to appear, before all the Apoſtles were laid in their Graves: And if we believe what *Auſtin* tells us from *Epiphanius* and *Euſebius* (*a*), there were no leſs than ten Sorts of *heretical Antichriſts* in the Apoſtle *John*'s Days, the *Simonians*, *Menandrians*, *Saturnilians*, &c. This was an incredible Increaſe of falſe Doctrine in ſo *ſhort* a Time, and in the Times and Preachings of the *Apoſtles themſelves*, whoſe Power and Authority (one would think) might have made Satan *fall before them as Lightning*. What Progreſs then in this Work of Deluſion might be expected, when they were all removed out of the World? They left indeed behind them ſad *Predictions* of the Power of Deluſion in After-times, *Of your ſelves ſhall Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe Things. After my departing ſhall grievous Wolves enter*, &c. *Acts* xx. 30. *The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly, that in the latter Times ſome ſhall depart from the Faith*, 1 Tim. iv. 1. and *Paul* (2 Theſſ. ii. 3.) propheſies of a *general* Apoſtacy, upon the revealing of the *Man of Sin*, and the *Myſtery of Iniquity*, and that theſe ſhould be *perilous Times*, 2 Tim. iii. 1. To the ſame Purpoſe, *John* mentions the Coming of the *great Antichriſt*, as a Thing generally known and believed, 1 *John* ii. 18. But before all theſe, Chriſt alſo had fully forewarned his Servants of *falſe Chriſts*, the Power and Danger of their Deluſion, and of the ſad Revolt from the Faith which ſhould be before his ſecond Coming, *Matth.* xxiv. 24. And as we have *heard*, ſo have we *ſeen*; all Ages ſince the Apoſtles can witneſs that Satan hath anſwered the Prophecies that were concerning him: What a ſtrange Increaſe of Errors hath been in the World ſince that Time? *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* made Catalogues long ſince, after them *Epiphanius*, and *Euſebius* reckoned about *eighty* Hereſies; *Auſtin* after them brings the Number to *Eighty eight*. Now, though there be juſt Exceptions againſt the *Largeneſs* of their Catalogues, and that it is believed by many, that there are ſeveral branded in their Rolls for Hereticks, that meerly ſuffer upon the Account of their *Name* and *Nation* (for *Barbariſm*, *Scythiſm*, *Helleniſm* are muſtered in the Front) and others alſo ſtand there, for very ſmall Matters (as the *Quartodecimani*, &c.) and that ſome ought altogether to be croſſed out of their Books; yet ſtill it will appear that the Number of Errors is great, and that all thoſe hard Names have this gene-

(*a*) De Hæreſ.

general Signification, that the *Devil* hath made a great Stir in the World by Error and Opinion: After-times might alſo be ſummoned in to ſpeak their Evidence, and our own Knowledge and Experience might without any other Help, ſufficiently inſtruct us (if it were needful) of the Truth of this, that Error is one of Satan's great Deſigns.

Secondly, Let us next look into the Reaſons which do ſo ſtrongly engage Satan to theſe Endeavours of raiſing up Errors. If we ſet theſe before us, it will not only confirm us in our Belief, that this is one of his main Imployments, (for if Error yield him ſo many Advantages for the Ruin of Men, and the Diſhonour of God, there can be no Doubt of his Readineſs to promote it.) This alſo may be of Uſe to put us in Mind, *who it is* that is at Work *behind the Curtain*, when we ſee ſuch Things acted upon the Stage, and conſequently may beget a cautious Suſpicion in our Minds againſt his Proceedings; the Reaſons are ſuch as theſe.

First, Error is *ſinful*, ſo that if Satan ſhould be hindred in his Endeavours for any further Miſchief, than the corrupting of any particular Perſon, yet he will reckon, that he hath not altogether loſt his Labour. Some Errors, that overturn *Fundamentals* of Faith, are as *deadly Poiſon*, and called expreſly *damnable* by the *Apoſtle*, 2 Pet. ii. 1. Theſe Hereſies are by *Paul*, Gal. v. 20. recounted among the *Works of the Fleſh*, of which, he poſitively affirms, that *they that do ſuch Things cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*: Thoſe that are of a lower Nature, that do not ſo *extreamly* hazard the Soul, can only be capable of this Apology, that they are *leſs evil*; yet as they are Oppoſitions to Truth (propounded in Scripture for our Belief and Direction) they ceaſe not to be Sins, though they may be greater or leſs Evils, according to the *Importance* of thoſe Truths which they deny, or the *Conſequences* that attend them; and if we go yet a Step lower, to the Conſideration of thoſe *raſh* and bold Aſſertions, about Things not *clearly revealed*; though they may poſſibly be true, yet the Poſitiveneſs of Avouchments and Determinations in ſuch Caſes, where we want ſufficient Reaſon to ſupport what we affirm, (as that of the *Pſeudo Dionyſius* for the *Hierarchy of Angels*, and ſome *adventurous* Aſſertions concerning God's *ſecret Decrees*, and many other Things of like Nature) are by the Apoſtle, *Col.* ii. 18. moſt *ſeverely* taxed for an

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unwarrantable and unjust Presumption, in setting *our Foot* upon *God's Right*; as if such Men would by Violence thrust themselves into that which God hath reserved for himself, (for so much the Word * *intruding* imports,) the Cause of this he tells us, is the *Arrogancy* of corrupt Reason, the *fleshly Mind*, (suitable to that Expression, *Matth* xvi. 17. *Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it*;) the Bottom of it is *Pride*, which swells Men to this Height; and the Fruit (after all these swelling Attempts) is no other than (as the Apples of *Sodom*) Dust and *Vanity*, *intruding into those Things which he hath not seen, vainly puft up by his fleshly Mind*: If then Satan do but gain this, that by Error (though not diffused further than the Breast of the infected Party) Truth is *denied*, or that the Heart be *swelled* into Pride and Arrogancy, or that he hath Hope so to prevail, 'tis enough to encourage his Attempts.

Secondly, But Error is a Sin of an *encreasing* Nature, and usually stops not at one or two Falshoods, but is apt to *spawn* into many others, (as some of the most *noxious* Creatures have the most *numerous* Broods:) For one Error hath this mischievous Danger in it, that it *taints* the Mind to an *Instability* in every Truth; and the *Bond of Stedfastness* being once broken, a Man hath no Certainty where he shall stay: As a wanton Horse once turned loose, may wander far. This Hazard is made a serious Warning against Error, 2 *Pet.* iii. 17. *Beware lest ye being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own Steadfastness.* One Error admitted, makes the Heart unsteady; and besides this Inconvenience, Error doth unavoidably *branch* itself *naturally* into many more, as *Inferences* and Conclusions resulting from it, as Circles in Water multiply themselves; grant *but one Absurdity* (*a*) *and many will follow upon it*, so that 'tis a Miracle to find a *single* Error. These *Locusts* go forth by *Bands*, as the Experience of all Ages doth testify, and besides the *immediate* Consequences of an Error, which receive Life and Being together with itself, as *Twins* of the same Birth. We may observe a *Tendency* in Errors, to *others* that are more *remote*, and by the *long Stretch* of multiplyed Inferences, those Things are *coupled* together that are not very *contiguous*. If the *Lutherans*

* ἐμβατεύειν. (a) ἕνος δοθέντος ἅπαντες τ' ἀλλαπόλλα συμβαίνει.

Lutherans ('tis (*a*) Dr. *Prideaux* his Observation) *admit universal Grace, the* Huberians *introduce universal Election, the* Puccians *natural Faith, the* Naturalists *explode Christ and Scriptures* at *last* as unnecessary: This is then a fair Mark for the *Devil* to aim at, if he prevails for one Error, 'tis an Hundred to one but he prevails for more.

Thirdly, Satan hath yet a further Reach in promoting Error, he knows 'tis a *Plague* that usually infects all *round about*; and therefore doth he the rather labour in this Work, because he hopes thereby to corrupt others, and infected Persons are commonly the most busy Agents (even to the *compassing of Sea and Land*) *to gain Proselites* to their false Persuasions. This *Harvest* of Satan's Labour, is often noted in Scripture; *They shall deceive many*, Matth. xxiv. 24. *Many shall follow their pernicious Ways*, 2 Pet. ii. 2. How quickly had this Leaven spread itself in the Church of *Galatia*, even to *Paul*'s Wonder? *Gal.* i. 6. '*I marvel, that you are so soon removed from him, that called you into the Grace of Christ, into another Gospel.* Instances of the spreading of Error are frequent. *Pelagianism* rose about the Year 415, but presently spread itself in *Palestine, Africa, Greece, Italy, Sicily, France*, and *Britain*. *Arianism*, like Fire in Straw, in a little Time brought its Flame over the Christian World, and left her *wondring at herself*, that she was so suddenly become *Arrian*. *Socinianism* had the like Prevalency; *Lælius* privately had sowed the Seeds, and after his Death *Faustus Socinus* his Nephew did so bestir himself, that within *ten Years* (after his confident appearing) whole Congregations in *Sarmatia* submitted themselves to his Dictates, as *Calovius* affirms (*b*), and within *twenty* or *thirty* Years more several *Hundreds* of Churches in *Transilvania* were infected, and within a *few Years* more, the whole *Synod* was brought over to subscribe to *Socinianism*. We have also Instances nearer home; after the Reformation, in the Reign of *Edward* the *Sixth*, how soon did Popery return in its full Strength when Queen *Mary* came to the Crown? which occasioned *Peter Martyr* (when he saw young Students flocking to Mass) to say (*c*), *That the tolling of the Bell overturned all his Doctrine at* Oxford.

(*a*) Si *Wittenbergenses* admittant universalem gratiam, *Huberiani* introducere universalem electionem, *Puciani* fidem naturalem, naturalistæ explodent Christum & Scripturas. *Prid. Lect.* 3. p. 34. (*b*) *Consid. Th. Soc. Præmial.* p. 62. (*c*) Hæc una notula omnem meam doctrinam evertit.

ford. And of late we have had the ſad Experience of the Power of Error to infect; no Error ſo abſurd, ridiculous or blaſphemous, but (once broached) it preſently gained conſiderable Numbers to entertain it.

Fourthly, Error is alſo eminently ſerviceable to Satan, for the bringing in *Diviſions*, *Schiſms*, *Rents*, *Hatreds*, *Heart-burnings*, *Animoſities*, *Revilings*, *Contentions*, *Tumults*, *Wars*, *and whatſoever bitter Fruits*, *Breach of Love*, *and the Malignity of Hatred can poſſibly produce.* Enough of this might be ſeen in the Church of *Corinth*; the Diviſions that were among themſelves were occaſioned by it, and a great Number of Evils the Apoſtle ſuſpected to have been already produc'd from thence, as *Debates*, *Envyings*, *Wraths*, *Strifes*, *Backbitings*, *Whiſperings*, *Swellings*, *Tumults*, 2 Cor. xii. 20. He himſelf eſcaped not from being evilly intreated by thoſe among them that were turned from the Simplicity of the Goſpel; the quarrelſome Exceptions that they had raiſed againſt him he takes Notice of: They charged him with Levity, in neglecting his Promiſe to come to them, 2 *Cor.* i. 17. They called him *carnal*, one that *walked according to the Fleſh*, chap. x. 2. They taunted him as a contemptible Fellow, *ver.* 10. They undervalued his Miniſtry, which occaſioned (not without great Apology) a Commendation of himſelf; nay, they ſeemed to call him a falſe Apoſtle, and were ſo bold as to challenge him for a *Proof of Chriſt ſpeaking in him*, 2 Cor. xiii. 3.

If the Devil had ſo much Advantage from Error that was but in the *Bud*, and that in *one* Church only, what may we imagine hath he done by it, when it broke out to an open *Flame* in *ſeveral* Churches? What Work do we ſee in Families, when an Error creeps in among them? *The Father riſeth up againſt the Son; the Son againſt the Father, the Mother againſt the Daughter, the Daughter againſt the Mother.* What ſad divided Congregations have we ſeen? What Fierceneſs, Prejudices, Slanders, evil Surmiſes, Cenſurings and Diviſions hath this brought forth? What Bandying of Parties againſt Parties, Church againſt Church, hath been produced by this Engine? How ſadly hath this poor *Iſland* felt the Smart of it; the bitter Conteſts that have been betwixt *Presbyterian* and *Independent*, betwixt them and the *Epiſcopal*, makes them look more like factious Combinations, than Churches of Chriſt. The preſent Differences

ferences betwixt Conformists and Nonconformists, (if we take them where they are loweſt) they do daily produce ſuch Effects, as muſt needs be very pleaſing and grateful to the Devil, both Parties mutually objecting Schiſm, and charging each other with Crime and Folly. What Invectives and Railings may be heard in all Companies, as if they had been at the greateſt Diſtances in Point of Doctrine? But whoſoever loſeth, to be ſure the Devil gains by it. Hatreds, Strife, Variance, Emulations, Lyings, Railings, Scorn and Contempt, are all againſt the known Duty of *brotherly Kindneſs*, and are undoubted Provocations againſt the God of Love and Peace: What can we then think of, that can be ſo uſeful to Satan as Error, when theſe above-mentioned Evils are the inſeparable Products of it? The moſteſt Errors that ever were among good Men are ſtill accompanied with ſomething of theſe bitter Fruits. The Differences about Meats and Days (when managed with the greateſt Moderation) made the *Strong to deſpiſe the Weak*, as filly, wilful, factious Humoriſts; and on the contrary, the *Weak judged the Strong*, as prophane, careleſs, and bold Deſpiſers of divine Inſtitutions; for ſo much the Apoſtle implies, *Rom.* xiv. 3. *Let not him that eateth, deſpiſe him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth.* But ſhould we trace Error thorough the *Ruines* of Churches, and view the *Slaughters* and Bloodſhed that it hath occaſioned; or conſider the *Wars* and Deſolations that it hath brought forth, we might heap up Matter fit for Tears and Lamentations, and make you ceaſe to wonder, that Satan ſhould ſo much concern himſelf to promote it.

Fifthly, The greateſt and moſt ſucceſsful Stratagem for the hindering a *Reformation*, is that of raiſing up an Army of Errors. Reformation of Abuſes, and Corruptions in Worſhip or Doctrine (we may well ſuppoſe) the Devil will withſtand with his utmoſt Might and Policy, becauſe it endeavours to pull that down, which coſt him ſo much Labour and Time to ſet up, and ſo croſſeth his End. They who are called out by God to *jeopard their Lives in the high Places of the Field*, Judg. v. 18. undertake an hard Task, in endeavouring to check the Power of the Mighty, whoſe Intereſt it is to maintain thoſe Defilements, which their *Policy* hath introduced, to fix them in the Poſſeſſion of that Grandeur and Command, which ſo highly gratifies

their

their Humours and self-seeking aspiring Minds: But Satan knowing the Strength of that Power which hath raised them up to oppose with spiritual Resolution the Current of prevailing Iniquity, usually provides himself with this Reserve, and comes upon *their Backs* with a *Party* of deluded erroneous Men, raised up from among themselves; and by this Means, he hopes either to *discourage* the Undertakers for Reformation, by the Difficulty of their Work (which must needs drive on heavily, when they that should assist prove Hinderers) or at least to *straiten* and limit the Success: For by this Means (1.) He *divides the Party*, and so weakens their Hands. (2.) He *strengthens their Enemies*, who not only gather Heart from these Divisions (seeing them so fair a Prognostick of their Ruin) but also improves them, by retorting them as an Argument, that they are all out of the Way of Truth. (3.) The erroneous Party in the *Rear* of the Reformers, do more *gall them* with their Arrows (even bitter Words of cursed Reviling) and more hazard them with their Swords and Spears of Opposition, than their Adversaries in the *Front* against whom they went forth. In the mean while, they that stand up for Truth, are as Corn betwixt two Milstones, oppressed with a double Conflict, beset before and behind.

This hath been Satan's Method in all Ages. And indeed Policy itself could not contrive any Thing that would more certainly obstruct Reformation than this. When the Apostles (who in these last Days were first sent forth) were imployed to reform the World, to throw down the Ceremonies of the *Old Testament*, and Heathen-worship, Satan had presently raised up *Men of corrupt Minds*, to hinder their Progress; what Work these made for *Paul* at *Corinth*, and with the *Galatians*, the *Epistles* to those Churches do testify. The Business of these Men was to draw Disciples after them from the *Simplicity* of the Gospel, nay *to another Gospel*; and this they could not do, but by setting up themselves, boasting of the Spirit, carrying themselves *as the Apostles of Christ*, and contemning those that were really so, insinuating thereby into the Affections of the Seduced, as if they *zealously affected* them; and that *Paul* was but *weak* and *contemptible*, nay their very *Enemy*, *for telling them the Truth*. What unspeakable Hindrance must this be to *Paul*? What Grief of Heart? What Fear and Jealousy must this produce? He professeth he was afraid, lest he

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had *beſtowed upon them Labour in vain*, Gal. iv. 11. and that he did no leſs than *travel of them in Birth the ſecond Time*, ver. 19. If *one Alexander* could do *Paul* ſo much Evil, by *withſtanding his Words*, 2 Tim. iv. 24. that he complains of him, and cautions *Timothy* againſt him: If *one Diotrephes*, by *prating* againſt *John* with *malicious Words*, prevailed with the Church, that they *received not him nor the Brethren*, 3 Jo. *ver.* 10. what Hurt might a Multitude of ſuch be able to do?

In the *primitive* Times of the Church, after the Apoſtles Days, when thoſe Worthies were to conteſt with the *heathen* World, the *Serpent caſt out of his Mouth Water as a Flood after the Woman* (which moſt interpret to be a Deluge of Hereſies; and ſome particularly underſtand it of the *Arian* Hereſy) that he might hinder the Progreſs of the Goſpel; which Deſign of his did ſo take, that many Complaints there were, of hindring the Converſion of the Heathens, by the Errors that were among Chriſtians. *Epiphanius* tells us, That *Pagans* refuſed to come near the *Chriſtians*, and would not ſo much as hear them ſpeak, being affrighted by the wicked Practices and Ways of the *Priſcillianiſts*. *Auſtin* complains to the ſame Purpoſe, that looſe and laſcivious Hereticks adminiſtred Matter of Blaſpheming to the idolatrous *Heathens*.

In After-times, when Religion grew ſo corrupt by *Popery*, that God extraordinarily raiſed up *Luther*, *Calvin*, and others, in the *fifteenth* and *ſixteenth Centuries*, to diſcover thoſe Abominations, and to bring back his People from *Babylon*. The Devil gave them no ſmall Trouble by a Growth of Errors; ſo that they were forced to fight againſt the *Papiſts before*, and thoſe *Philiſtines behind*, inſomuch that Reformation attained not that Height and Univerſality, which might rationally have been expected from ſuch bleſſed Undertakings. This was the Conjecture of many, particularly of our Countryman Dr. *Prideaux* (*a*), That if thoſe *Fanatick Enthuſiaſts* (which with ſo great a Scandal to the Goſpel, then brake forth) *had not retarded and hinder'd thoſe glorious Proceedings, that apocalyptical Beaſt of* Rome *had been not only weakned and wounded, but utterly overthrown and ſlain.* In particular Cities, where any

(*a*) Excitata a *Luthero* beſtia apocalyptica, & non irritata tantum ſed fauciata multorum venabulis, ultimum fere omnium bonorum judicio, efflaſſet Spiritum niſi ſpiritus iſti inauſpicati tam heroicos diſtraxiſſent & retardaſſent impetus. *Prid.* Orat. de Spir. Seduct. p. 95.

any of the faithful Servants of Christ endeavoured to detect the Errors of *Popery*, these Instruments of Satan were ready to join with the common Adversary in Reproaches and Disturbances. How they opposed *Musculus* at *Augusta*, and with what Fierceness they called him *Viper*, *false Prophet*, *Wolf in Sheeps Cloathing*, &c. you may see in those that write his Life. How these Men hindred the Gospel at *Limburg* against *Junius*, at *Zurich* against *Zwinglius*, at *Ausburg* against *Urbanus Regius* (*a*), you may also see in their Lives. In all which, and others of like Nature, you will still find, (1.) That there was *never* a Reformation begun, but there were *erroneous* Persons to *hinder* and distract the Reformers. (2.) That these Men expressed *as great Hatred* against the *Reformers*, and oftentimes more, than against the *Papists*; and were as spitefully bitter in Lies, Slanders and Scorns against them, as the *Papists* themselves.

Sixthly, Satan can also make use of Error, either to *fix* Men in their present mistaken Ways and *careless* Course, or as a Temptation to *Atheism*; Varieties of Opinions and Doctrines do amuse and amaze Men, while one cries, *Lo here is Christ*; and another, *Lo he is there*. Men are so confounded, that they do not know what to *chuse*. 'Tis one of the greatest Difficulties to *single* out Truth, from a *Crowd* of specious confident Pretences, especially seeing Truth is *modest*, and oftentimes *outnoised* by *clamorous* bold Error; yea, sometimes *outwyed* by the *Pretensions* of Spirit and Revelation in an antiscriptural Falshood. At what a Loss is an unskilful Traveller, where so many Ways meet, while one Party cries up this, another that, mutually charging one another with Error? They whose Hearts are any Thing *loosened* from a Sense and Reverence of Religion, are easily tempted to *disbelieve* all. Thus Error leads to *Atheism*, and lays the Foundation for all those slanderous Exceptions against Scripture, by which godless Men usually justify themselves in their Religion. Now, tho' all wicked Men are not brought to this, because the Consciences of some do so strongly retain the Sentiments of a Deity, that all Satan's Art cannot obliterate those Characters; yet the Consideration of the *Multitude* of Errors doth rivet them in the Perswasion of the Truth and Goodness of *that Way* of Religion wherein they had been educated. *Papists* are hardned by this; and tho' they have no Reason to boast of their

(*a*) *Melch.* Adam. *in vita* Theol.

Unity among themſelves, as they have been often told, and now of late by Dr. *Stillingfleet* (*a*), (who hath manifeſted, that their Diviſions among themſelves are as great, and managed with as great Animoſity as any amongſt us) yet are their Ears ſo beaten with the Objection of Sects and Schiſms elſewhere, that they are generally confirmed to ſtay where they are. Beſides, this is a Stumbling block which the Devil throws in the Way of poor *ignorant* People; if they are urged to a ſerious Strictneſs in Religion, they are *affrighted* from it by the Conſideration of *Sects* and Parties, and the woful *Miſcarriages* of ſome erroneous Perſons, that at firſt pretended to Strictneſs, imagining that Strictneſs in Religion is an unneceſſary dangerous Thing; and that the ſober godly Chriſtians are but a Company of giddy, unſettled, conceited, preciſe Perſons, who will in a little Time run themſelves into Madneſs and Diſtraction, or into Deſpair. And thus out of *Fear of Schiſm* or Error, they dare not be *Religious* in good *Earneſt*, but content themſelves with *drawing near to God with their Mouths*, and *confeſſing him with their Lips*, *whilſt their Hearts are far from him*, and *in their Works they deny him*.

There is ſuch a Propenſity in the Hearts of Men to be ſtaggered by the Multitude and Boldneſs of Errors, that the *Apoſtle Paul* expreſſeth a Senſe of it, and ſeems tenderly careful to avoid that Blow (which he knew Satan would readily give through that Conſideration) by the *Apology* that he makes for God in his holy, wiſe, providential Permiſſion of them, 1 *Cor.* xi. 19. *There muſt be Hereſies among you*. His Intent is not barely to put them off with this, *That Hereſies are unavoidable*; but to ſatisfy them, that there is a *Neceſſity* of them, and that they are *uſeful*, as God's *Furnace* and *Fan*, to purify and to cleanſe, that *they which are approved may be made manifeſt*. The like Care he hath in 2 *Tim.* ii. 19, 20. upon the Mention of the Error of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, where he obviateth the Offence that might ariſe by reaſon of their *Apoſtacy*, partly by removing the *Fears* of the Upright, in affirming their Safety, whatever became of other Men, ſeeing *the Foundation of God ſtandeth ſure*; and partly, by declaring it no more ſuitable or diſhonourable for God to permit the Riſe of Errors in his Church, than for great Men to

(*a*) Diſcourſe of the Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*.

to have in their Houſes *not only Veſſels of Gold and Silver, but alſo of Wood and of Earth; ſome to Honour, and ſome to Diſhonour.* By theſe very Apologies it appears, that Satan by this Device of Error deſigns to ſhake Mens Faith, and to drive them from their Religion.

Seventhly, Neither can this, *That corrupt Doctrines bring forth corrupt Practices*, be of any leſs Weight with Satan, or leſs engaging for the Purſuit of this Deſign, than any of the forementioned Reaſons.

Corrupt Doctrines are embraced as the *very Truth* of God by the Deluded, and one Way or other, *directly* or *conſequentially*, they lead on *Practice*; and that with the higheſt Security and Confidence, as if they were very Truths indeed.

The Devil then hath this great Advantage by Error, that if he can but corrupt the Minds of Men, eſpecially in the more *weighty* and fundamental Points of Religion, then by a great Eaſe, and without any more Labour, he hath gained them to the *Practice* of whatſoever theſe *corrupted* Principles will *lead* unto. No Courſe can be taken, that with greater Expedition and Prevalency can introduce prophane Debaucheries than this. Thus he conquers *Parties* and *Multitudes*, as a victorious General takes Cities and whole Countries by *Surrender*; whereas his particular Temptations to Sin are but inconſiderable, leſs ſucceſsful, *Picqueerings* in Compariſon; and when he hath once corrupted the *Underſtandings* of Men, he hath by that Means a Command over their *Conſciences*, and doth not now urge to Evil, in the Notion of *a Devil* or Tempter; but as an *Angel of Light*, or rather as an *Uſurper* of Divine Authority, he requires, he commands theſe wicked Practices, as *neceſſary Duties*; or at leaſt gives a Liberty therein, as being harmleſs Allowances. This Difference was of old obſerved in Satan's Management of Perſecution and Error, That in the former he did *compel* Men to deny Chriſt; but by the latter he did *teach* them (*a*).

That the *Lives* and Practices of Men are ſo concerned by *corrupt Doctrines*, may appear to any that are but indifferently acquainted with Scripture or Hiſtory. We are told by the Apoſtle *Paul*, that *Faith* and *Conſcience* ſtand ſo related to each other, that they live and die together; and that when the one is *ſhipwrecked*, 1 Tim. i. 19. the other is *drown'd* for Company. In *Phil.* iii. 2. he ſeems ſeverely

(*a*) In perſecutione cogit homines negare Chriſtum, nunc docet.

ſeverely harſh againſt thoſe of the *Conciſion*, he calls them Dogs; *Beware of Dogs, beware of evil Workers.* The Reaſon of which Expreſſion (I apprehend) lyes not ſo much in theſe Reſemblances, that Dogs *ſpoil* the Flock by *devouring*, or that they are *fawning* Creatures; or that they are *induſtrious* in Proſecution of their Prey (tho' in all theſe Particulars falſe Teachers may be compared to Dogs; for they ſpare not the Flock, they compaſs Sea and Land to gain Diſciples, and they entice them with fair Speeches) but rather he intends the Similitude to expreſs the *profane* Life and Carriage of theſe Seducers; for Dogs are *filthy* Creatures, to a Proverb, *The Dog to his Vomit.* And common Proſtitutes, for their Uncleanneſs, were called *Dogs* in the *Old Teſtament*; ſo ſome expound *Deut.* xxiii. 18. The *Hire of a Whore, or the Price of a Dog.* And we have full and clear Deſcriptions of Seducers, from their wicked and abominable Practices, 2 *Pet.* ii. 10. *They that walk after the Fleſh in the Luſt of Uncleanneſs, and deſpiſe Government; preſumptuous are they, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak Evil of Dignities.* Ver. 14. *Having Eyes full of Adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from Sin; an Heart exerciſed with covetous Practices; curſed Children.* Ver. 18. *They allure through the Luſts of the Fleſh, through much Wantonneſs.*— Jude ver. 4. *There are certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation; ungodly Men, turning the Grace of God into Laſciviouſneſs.* Ver. 16. *Theſe are Murderers, Complainers, walking after their own Luſts,* &c. 2 Tim. iii. ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. *Men ſhall be Lovers of their own ſelves, Covetous, Boaſters, Proud, Blaſphemers, diſobedient to Parents, Unthankful, Unholy, without natural Affection. Truce breakers, falſe Accuſers, Incontinent, Fierce, Deſpiſers of thoſe that are Good, Traitors, Heady, High-minded, Lovers of Pleaſures more than Lovers of God. Of this Sort are they which creep into Houſes.*— All which do ſet forth heretical Perſons as the moſt ſcandalous wicked Wretches that we ſhall meet with, groſly filthy in themſelves, corrupted in all the Duties of their Relations natural and civil; defiled in all the Ways of their Converſe with Men.

Neither are theſe wicked Practices iſſuing from groſs Errors, to be looked upon as rare, accidental, or *extraordinary* Effects thereof, but as the natural and *common* Fruits of them;

them: For Christ makes this to be the very *special* Property and Note, whereby false Prophets may be discovered, *Matth.* vii. 16. *Ye shall know them by their Fruits: Do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles?* &c. These Fruits were not their *Doctrines*, but their *Lives*: (For to know *false Prophets* by *false Doctrines* is no more, than to know *false Doctrine* by *false Doctrine.*) If any object, That many false Teachers appeared in the Shape of *seeming Holiness*, and Strictness of Life; they may be answered, from Christ's own Words: For there he tells us, (to avoid Mistakes) That their *first Appearance*, (and it may be the *whole Lives* of some of the first Seedsmen of any Error) is under the Form of *Sanctity*: *They come to you in Sheeps-cloathing*; in an outward Appearance of Innocency, and plausible Pretences: But then he adds, That their *Fruits* afterward will discover them. A Tree at its first Planting, is not discovered what it is; but give it Time to grow to its proper Fruitfulness, and then you may know of what Kind it is: So that we need not affirm, that damnable Doctrines produce wicked Lives *in all* that entertain them at the *very first*; 'tis enough for Discovery, if there be a *natural* consequential Tendency in such Doctrines, to *practical Impieties*; or that at last, they produce them, tho' not in all, yet in many.

And that this Matter hath been always found to be so, all History doth confirm. Such there were in the Apostles Days, as is evident by their Complaints. Such there were in the Church of *Pergamos*, Rev. ii. 14. *Thou hast there that hold the Doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a Stumbling block before the Children of Israel; to eat Things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit Fornication.* There were also the *Nicolaitans*, of whom Christ declares his Abhorrency, *Ver.* 15. In the Church of *Thyatira*, there was the *Woman Jezebel, who taught and seduced many* of that Church, to the like abominable Doctrines and Practices, *Ver.* 20. Besides these, the Apostle *John* was troubled with the abominable *Gnosticks*. The filthy *Carpocratians*, who taught, That Men *must sin*, and do the Will of all the Devils, or else they *could not evade* Principalities and Powers; who would *no otherwise* be pleased to suffer them to escape to the *superior* Heavens. Of these Men, and their licentious Doctrine doth he speak, 1 *John* iii. 6. *&c.* that *they that are born of God* indeed, must not, dare

not, *cannot* give themſelves up to a Liberty in ſuch Abominations.

The ſame Fruits of corrupt Doctrine appeared after the Apoſtles Days. What was *Montanus* but an impure Wretch? What were his two Companion Propheteſſes, *Priſcilla* and *Maximilla*, but infamous Adultereſſes? The *Priſcillianiſts*, the *Manichees*, and Abundance more, left the Stink of their Profaneneſs behind them; by reaſon of whom, (according to *Peter*'s Prophecy, 2 *Pet.* ii. 2.) *the Way of Truth was evil ſpoken of*

Later Times have alſo given in full Evidence of this Truth. How ſhameful and abominable were the Lives of *John* of *Leyden*, and the reſt of thoſe *German Enthuſiaſts*? Who reads the Story of *Hicker*, and *Coppinger*, without Deteſtation of their wicked Practices? What better have the *Familiſts*, and *Libertines* of *New* and *Old England* been? Some were turned off to higheſt *Ranting*, in all Profaneneſs of Swearing, Drinking, Adultery, and the defying of a godly Life (*a*): And this, under the *unreaſonable Boaſt* of Spirit and Perfection. The Heavens may bluſh, and the Earth be aſtoniſhed at theſe Things! But in the mean Time, Satan huggs himſelf in his Succeſs; and encourageth himſelf to further Attempts in propagating Error, ſeeing it brings in ſo great an Harveſt of Sin.

Eighthly, In this Deſign of falſe Doctrine, Satan is never altogether out: If he cannot thus defile their Lives, yet 'tis a Thouſand to One, but he *obſtructs their Graces* by it. What greater Hindrance can there be to Converſion, than Error? The Word of Truth is the Means by which God, through his Spirit, doth beget us; 'tis Part of that Image of God that is implanted in us: 'Tis God's Voice to the Soul, to awaken it. It cannot then be imagined, that God will give the Honour of that Work to any Error: Neither can Truth take Place, or have its Effect upon a Soul *foreſtalled* with a contrary Falſhood. Falſhood in Poſſeſſion, will keep Truth at the Door. Neither is Converſion only hindred, by ſuch Errors as directly contradict converting Truths; but alſo by *collateral non fundamental Errors*. As they fill the Minds of Men with Prejudice againſt thoſe that profeſs another Perſwaſion; ſo that for their own beloved Errors-ſake, Men will not entertain a Warning, or Conviction from thoſe that diſſent from their Opinions: They firſt account them

(*a*) See the Story of Mr. *Copp*.

them *Enemies*, and then they *despise* their Message. 'Tis no small Matter in Satan's Way, to have such an Obstruction at Hand, in the grand Concern of Conversion. Yet this is further serviceable to him, to hinder, or weaken the Graces of the Converted already: If he can set God's Children a *madding* upon Error, or make them fond of *Novelties*; he will by this Means *exhaust* the Vigour and Strength of their Hearts; so that the *Substantials* of Religion will be neglected. For as hurtful Plants *engross* all the Moisture and Fatness of the Earth where they stand, and impoverish it into an Inability, for the Nourishment of those that are of greater Worth: So doth Error possess itself of the *Strength* of the Spirit; and in the mean Time, *neglected* Graces dwindle into Emptiness, and *fade as a Leaf*. The most curious *Questions* and Opinions that are, contribute nothing to the *Establishment* of the Heart; 'tis only Grace that doth that. *Heb.* xiii. 9. *The Heart is established with Grace*, and not with Disputes about *Meats*: Nay, they do Grace a Prejudice, in that they make it *sick* and languishing: For to that Sense is the *Original* (a), in 1 *Tim.* vi. 4. *Doting about Questions*, or growing diseased, because of the earnest Prosecution of Opinions.

Ninthly, Error hath yet another Mischief in it, which makes it not a little desirable to Satan; and that is the *Judgment*, or Punishment that it brings; so that it every Way answers the Devil's Hatred against both Soul and Body. The Blessings of *Prosperity* and *Peace* do attend the triumphal Chariot of *Truth*. Psal. lxxxv. 11, 12. *Truth shall spring out of the Earth, and Righteousness shall look down from Heaven.* And then it follows, That *the Lord shall give that which is good, and our Land shall yield her Increase.* But on the contrary, Error doth more *provoke* God than Men are aware. How often did God desolate the *Israelites*, set a Fire in their Cities, and gave them into the Hands of their Enemies, because of their changing the Truth of God into a Lie; and worshipping and serving the *Creature more than the Creator*? God left not the Church of *Pergamos* and *Thyatira* without severe Threatnings for the Error of the *Nicolaitans*, Rev. ii. 16. *Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly.* Ver. 22. *I will cast them into great Tribulation, except they repent of their Deeds, and I will kill her Children with Death.* And accordingly,

(a) Νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις.

ly, God fulfilled his Threatning upon them, by bringing in the *Saracens* to desolate them, and to possess their Land: As he also brought the *Goths* upon the *Empire*, for the *Arian* Heresy. How is Satan pleased to labour in a Design that will kindle the Wrath of the Almighty?

CHAP. II.

Of the Advantages which Satan hath, and useth, for the Introduction of Error. As (1.) *From his own Power of Spiritual Fascination. That there is such a Power, proved from Scripture, and from the Effects of it.* (2.) *From our Imperfection of Knowledge; the Particulars thereof explained.* (3.) *From the Byass of the Mind. What Things do byass it; and the Power of them to sway the Understanding.* (4.) *From Curiosity.* (5.) *From Atheistical Debauchery of Conscience.*

THAT Satan may the better speed in his Design, he carefully takes Notice of, and diligently improves all Advantages. Indeed all his Stratagems are Advantages taken against us, (for so the Apostle in his Caution to the *Corinthians* calls his Devices, lest Satan should get an *Advantage* of us, 2 *Cor.* ii. 11.) but here, I only understand those that are more *general*, which are the Grounds and Encouragements to his particular Machinations against Men, and which also direct him in his Procedure. These are

First, Satan's own Power of *Spiritual Fascination*, by which he infatuates the *Minds* of Men, and deludes them, as the *external Senses* are deceived by Inchantments or *Witchcraft*.

That Satan is a cunning Sophister, and can put Fallacies upon the Understanding; that by subtile Objections or Arguments he can obtrude a Falshood upon the Belief of the Unskilful and Unwary; that he can betray the Judgment by the Affections, are Things of common Practice with him. But that which I am now to speak of, is of an higher Nature, and tho' it may (probably) take in much of his common Method of ordinary Delusion, yet in this it differs, (at least) that 'tis more *efficacious* and prevalent; for as his Power over the Children of Disobedience is so great, that he can *lead them Captive at his Will* (except

cept when he is countermanded by the Almighty,) ſo hath he (by ſpecial Commiſſion) a Power to lead thoſe to Error *effectually*, (without miſſing his End) that have prepared themſelves for that ſpiritual Judgment by a ſpecial Provocation; and for ought we know, as he hath an *extraordinary Power* which he exerts at ſuch Times, ſo may he have an *extraordinary Method* which he is not permitted to practiſe daily, nor upon all.

That ſuch a Power as this the Devil hath, is believed by thoſe, whoſe Learning and Experience have made their Judgments of great Value with ſerious Men; and thus ſome do deſcribe it, *'Tis a Deluſion with a Kind of magical Inchantment*; ſo *Calvin*, Gal. iii. 1. *A Satanical Operation, whereby the Senſes of Men are deluded*; thus *Perkins*, Gal. iii. 1. Who after he had aſſerted that Satan can corrupt the Fantaſy or Imagination, he compares this ſpiritual Witchcraft to *ſuch Diſeaſes* of Melancholly, that make Men believe that they are, or do, what they are not, or do not, (as in the Diſeaſe called *Lycanthropia:*) And to the Inchantments of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, who deluded the Senſes of *Pharaoh*. Others more fully call it (*a*), *A more vehement Operation of the great Impoſtor, whereby he obtrudes ſome noxious Error upon the Mind, and perſuades with ſuch Efficacy, that it is embraced with Confidence, defended ſtrenuouſly, and propagated zealouſly.*

A particular Account of the Way and Manner by which the Devil doth this, is a Task beyond ſober Enquiry; it may ſuffice us to know that ſuch Power he hath, and this I ſhall confirm from *Scripture*, and from the *Effects* of ſuch Deluſion.

Firſt, There are ſeveral Scriptures which aſſert a Power in Satan to *bewitch* the Minds of Men into Error, from which I ſhall draw ſuch Notes as may confirm, and in part explain this Truth in Hand.

And I ſhall begin with that of *Gal.* iii. 1. *O fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the Truth*, &c. The Word (*b*) which the Apoſtle here uſeth for

(*a*) Faſcinatio eſt Spiritus impoſtoris vehementior operatio, qua noxium aliquem errorem in dogmate vel praxi (doctrinæ ſanæ contrarium, ſed ſophiſticis præſtigiis depictum) pro veritate in cautis hominibus obtendit, iiſque efficaciter perſuadit, ut errorem eum confidenter amplectantur, ſtrenuè defendant, & zelo, non ſecundum Deum propagant. *Dickſon. Therapeut. Sacra.* lib. 3. cap. 7.

(*b*) Βασκαίνω, Grammaticis dictum eſſe placet quaſi φασκαίνω, id eſt φῶς φαεσιμάνειν quo pertinet illud *Virg.* Neſcio quis teneros, &c. Vid. *Picaet.* in loc. and *Leigh. Crit. Sac.*

for bewitching, (as *Grammarians* and *Criticks* note) is borrowed from the Practice of *Witches* and Sorcerers, who uſe by ſecret Powers to bind the Senſes, and to effect Miſchiefs. 'Tis true he ſpeaks of falſe Apoſtles, but he intends Satan as the chief Workman; and this he transfers to ſignify Satan's Power upon the Mind, in blinding the Underſtanding for the Entertainment of Error. Neither can any Thing be objected why this Place ſhould not prove a faſcinating Power in Satan (ſuch as we have been ſpeaking of) but this, that it may be ſuppoſed to intend no more than an *ordinary* powerful *Perſuaſion* by *Arguments*: Yet this may be anſwered (*a*), not only from the *Authority* of learned Interpreters, who apprehend the Apoſtle and his Expreſſion to intend more, but alſo from ſome *concomitant* Particulars in the Text. He calls them *fooliſh Galatians*, as we tranſlate it, but the Original goes a little higher, to ſignify a *Madneſs*; and withal, he ſeems to be ſurprized with *Wonder* at the Power of Satan upon them, which had not only prevailed againſt the *Truth*, but againſt ſuch *evident* Manifeſtations of it as they had, when they were ſo plainly, fully and efficaciouſly inſtructed; for *before their Eyes Jeſus Chriſt had been evidently ſet forth*: Which Expreſſions and Carriage cannot rationally be thought to befit a *common* ordinary Caſe.

Next to this, let us a little conſider that famous Scripture, in 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 9, 10, 11. *Whoſe coming is after the working of Satan, with all Power——and for this Cauſe, God ſhall ſend them ſtrong Deluſions, that they ſhould believe a Lie——*. I ſhall from this Place obſerve a few Things, which, if put together, will clear the Truth we ſpeak of: As *firſt*, In this Deluſion here mentioned, the Apoſtle doth not only ſet down *extraordinary outward* Means, (as *Signs*, and *Lying Wonders*) but alſo ſuits theſe extraordinary Means with a ſuitable concomitant *inward Power*; for, *by Power* I do not underſtand (as ſome) a Power of ſhewing Signs, and doing Wonders (*b*); as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων, *with the Power of Signs and Wonders*, for the Words will not well bear that without ſome unnatural Straining: But I underſtand by it, a Power *diſtinct* from the Signs and Wonders by which he moves their

(*a*) Neque tantum quod ſe decipi paſſi fuerint eos arguit, ſed quadam veluti magica incantatione deludi. *Calvin* in *loc.* Ἀφόνητοι mente alienati: Eorum lapſum magis dementiæ eſſe quam ſtultitiæ arguens. *Calvin.* (*b*) *Piſcator & Sclater.*

their Hearts to believe, by an *inward working* upon their Minds, *striking in* with the *outward Means* of lying Miracles propounded to their Senſes. And we may the better ſatisfy our ſelves in this Interpretation, if we compare it with *Rom.* xv. 19. where not only the Power of doing Wonders is expreſſed by a Phraſe, proper and *different* from this of the Text in Hand, *through mighty Signs and Wonders*, or in the Power of Signs and Wonders, but it is alſo *clearly diſtinguiſhed* from the *Power* of the *Spirit* of God (*a*) in working upon the Hearts to make thoſe Wonders efficacious and perſuaſive; ſo that, as in the Spirit of God we obſerve a Power *to do Wonders*, and a Power to *work upon the Heart* by theſe Wonders, we may conclude that this wicked Spirit hath alſo (in order to Sin and Deluſion) this *twofold* Power. But, *Secondly*, I note further, that this Power is called a *ſpecial Energy* (*b*) of peculiar Force and Efficacy in its working, the ſtrange inexpreſſible Strength of it ſeems to ſtand in need of many Words for Explanation: He calls it (*c*) *all Power* (which as well notes the *Degree* and Height, as the *Variety* of its Operations,) and then the *Energy*, the Virtue, Operativeneſs, and Strength of Power. *Thirdly*, 'Tis alſo to be obſerved, that Satan's Succeſs and Exercile of this Power of Deluſion depends upon the *Commiſſion of God*, and that therefore 'tis *extraordinary*, and not permitted to him but upon ſpecial Occaſions and Provocation, *for this Cauſe God ſhall ſend*, &c. *Fourthly*, The *Succeſs* of this Power when exerciſed, is *certain*. They are not only ſtrong Deluſions in regard of the Power from whence they come, but alſo in regard of the *Event*, thoſe upon whom they come cannot but believe. *Infatuation* and *Pertinacioufneſs* are the certain Fruits of it (*d*). *Fifthly*, The Proof of all is manifeſt in the *Quality* of the Errors entertained, for they are palpable groſs *Lies*, and yet believed as the *very Truths of God*, and they are in ſuch *weighty* Points as do evidently determine the Soul to Ruin, *lies to be damned*, which two Things are ſufficient Proofs of ſpiritual Faſcination. It being unimaginable that rational Men (and eſpecially ſuch as were inſtructed to a Belief of a contrary Truth) ſhould ſo far degenerate from the Light of Reaſon, as to be deluded by groſs and *apparent* Lies, and of ſuch *high Importance*, except their Minds had been

blinded

(*a*) ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος Θεοῦ.
(*b*) καθ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ σατανᾶ. (*c*) ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει. (*d*) Sclater in loc.

blinded in ſome extraordinary Way. Some further Confirmation may be added to this Truth from 1 *Kings* xxii. 21. *And there came forth a Spirit and ſtood before the Lord, and ſaid, I will perſuade him—I will go forth, and I will be a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all his Prophets; and he ſaid, thou ſhalt perſuade him, and prevail alſo.* I might here take notice of Satan's *Readineſs* in this Work, as wanting neither Skill nor Will, if he were but always furniſhed with a Commiſſion; as alſo the powerful *Efficacy* of ſpiritual *Witchcraft*, where it pleaſeth the Lord to permit to Satan the Exerciſe of his Power, *Thou ſhalt perſuade, and prevail alſo.* But that which I would obſerve here, is ſomething relating to the *Manner* of his proceeding in theſe Deluſions: He attempted to deceive the *falſe Prophets*, and by them to delude *Ahab*; and both, by being a *lying Spirit in the Mouth of the Prophets*: Which neceſſarily, (as *Peter Martyr* (*a*) obſerves) implies, (1.) That Satan had a Power ſo ſtrongly to fix upon their *imaginary Faculty*, the *Species*, Images, or Characters of what was to be ſuggeſted, that he could not only make them apprehend what he *preſented* to their Minds; but alſo, make them *believe*, that it was a *Divine Inſpiration*, and conſequently true; For theſe falſe Prophets did not ſpeak *hypocritically* what they knew to be falſe, but what they confidently apprehended to be true; as appears by the whole Story. (2.) He could *irritate*, and inflame their *Deſires* to *publiſh* theſe their Perſuaſions to the King, after the Manner of Divine Prophecies. (3.) He had a further Power of perſuading *Ahab*, that his Prophets *ſpake Truth*.

That Paſſage of *Rom.* i. 28. *God gave them over to a reprobate Mind,*—doth give ſome Account *how* Men are brought by the *Devil* into theſe falſe Perſuaſions. A reprobate Mind, is a Mind *injudicious*; a Mind that hath loſt its Power of (*b*) diſcerning. 'Tis plain, then, that he can ſo *beſot* and blind the Mind, that it ſhall not be ſtartled at Things of greateſt *Abſurdity*, or Inconveniency.

If

(*a*) Licet ei (Deo concedente) ſpecies, imagines & ſimulacra rerum falſarum effingere in imaginaria hominum facultate, ità ut falſa pro veris eis demonſtrentur; deinde poteſt incendere atq; inflammare appetitum eorum ad ea incredibili alacritate prædicanda, *&c. Pet. Martyr* in loc. *Reynold* Treat. of Paſſions, *Chap.* 4, p. 27. (*b*) Νὸς ἀδοκίμος.

If any yet further enquire, How he can do these Things? We must answer, That his particular Ways and Methods in this Case, we know not; only it may be added, that *Eph.* iv. 17. *Paul* tells us, he can make their *Minds vain*, and *darken* their *Understandings*. By Mind, the Seat of *Principles* is commonly understood (*a*). By Understanding, the *Reasoning*, or discursive Faculty, which is the Seat of Conclusions (*b*): So that his Power seems to extend to the *obliterating of Principles*; and can also *disable* them to make *right Inferences*; insomuch that he wants nothing, that may be necessary to the begetting of strong Persuasions of any Falshood, which he suggests; according to what is intimated, *Gal.* v. 3. *This Persuasion cometh not of him that called you*; that is, not of God, but of the Devil.

From all these Scriptures then it appears, that this spiritual Fascination *is a Power in Satan which he exerts, by special Commission, upon those that receive not the Truth in the Love of it, by which he can so strongly imprint Falshoods upon their Minds, that they become unable to discern betwixt Truth, and a Lie; and so by darkning their Understanding, they are effectually persuaded to believe an Error.*

Secondly, There is yet another Proof of this spiritual *Witchcraft*, from the Consideration of the Effects of it upon the deluded: And the uncouth, strange, unnatural Way of its Proceeding. Let all Particulars of this Kind be put together, and it will not be found possible to give any other rational Account of some Errors, than that of extraordinary Delusion.

1*st*, Let us take Notice of the Vileness and Odiousness of some Errors that have prevailed upon Men; some have been plainly *sottish*; so evidently foolish, that it cannot be imagined, that Men that entertained them, had at that Time the Use of Reason, or any competent Understanding. This very Consideration, the Prophet *Isaiah* insists upon largely, *Chap.* xliv. from *Verse* 9. to *Verse* 21. where he taxeth them smartly for the senseless Doltishness of their Error, in worshipping Idols: He tells them, the Matter of it is the Work of Nature; a *Cedar*, *Oak*, or *Ash*, that they themselves (possibly) had planted, and the Rain did nourish it. *Verse* 14. he tells them also, that the Form of it was from the Art of the Workman, the *Smith*, or *Carpenter*.

(*a*) Νοῦς. (*b*) Διάνοια.

ter. Verse 12, 13. *The Smith with the Tongs, both worketh in the Coals, and fashioneth it with Hammers, and worketh it with the Strength of his Arms.—The Carpenter stretcheth out his Rule, he marketh it out with a Line, he fitteth it with Planes, and he marketh it out with a Compass.*—He further minds them, that without any Reverence, they make Use of the Residue of the Materials, out of which they formed their Idol, to common Services, of dressing their Meat, and warming themselves; *He burneth part thereof in the Fire, with part thereof he eateth Flesh, he roasteth Roast, and is satisfied; yea, warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the Fire,* Verse 16. Then he accuseth them of Sottishness in that, *The Residue thereof he maketh a God, even his graven Image, he falleth down to it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my God,* Verse 17. And from all this he concludes, that seeing this is so directly contrary to common Reason and Understanding, (which in the ordinary Exercise of it, would easily have freed them from such a Dotage: For if they had but *Knowledge or Understanding to say, I have burnt part of it in the Fire; I have baked Bread, and shall I make the Residue an Abomination?*—Verse 19. they could not have been so foolish) it must then, of Necessity, be a spiritual Infatuation. *Their Eyes were shut that they cannot see, and their Hearts, that they cannot understand*—Ver. 18. *A deceived Heart hath turned him aside*——Verse 20. Other Errors there are, that lead to *beastly*, and unnatural Villanies; such as directly cross all the sober Principles of Mankind, the natural Principles of Modesty, the most general and undoubted Principles of Religion and Holiness: As when, Adulteries, Swearing, Ranting, going naked, Cruelties, Murthers, outragious Confusions, and Madness, are cloathed with Pretences of Spirit, Revelation, Freedom in the Use of the Creature, Exercise of Love, and having *all Things common*, &c. (of which sad Instances have been given more than once.) Let any sober Man consider, how it could come to pass, that Men that have *Reason enough* to defend them against such Furies, and the *Knowledge of Scripture*, which every where (with the greatest Happiness imaginable, and highest Earnestness) doth prohibite such Practices as most abominable, and doth direct to a sober, just, modest, humble, inoffensive

fenſive Life, ſhould entertain notwithſtanding, ſuch Errors, as transform Men into Beaſts, Monſters, or rather Devils; and Religion into the groſſeſt Impieties: And all this, as the Perfection and Top of religious Attainment, commanded in the *Word* of God, or by his Spirit; and well-pleaſing to moſt holy and pure Divine Majeſty? Let it (I ſay) be left to the Conſideration of Men, how it ſhould be, without ſome ſuch extraordinary Cauſe, as hath been mentioned?

2*dly*, Let it be obſerved alſo, That ſome Errors bring with them ſome *extraordinary, ſtrange, unnatural, unuſual Actions*; and put Men into ſuch *odd Garbs*, Poſtures, and Behaviours, that it is eaſy to ſee they are acted by Force or Power, not *human*. Some have been carried to do Things, beyond whatſoever might have been expected from the Age and Capacities of the Parties; as Extaſies, Trances, and Quakings of little Children; their propheſying, and ſpeaking Scripture-threatnings after ſuch Fits. Some have been acted in a Way of *extatical Fury*; as (*a*) *Montanus*, of whom *Euſebius* witneſſeth, that ſometimes he would be ſeized upon by a Kind of *malignant Spirit*, and would ſuddenly break forth into a *Rage* and Madneſs; and preſently utter *raſh and bold Speeches, ſtrange unuſual Voices, with Propheſyings; inſomuch that he was judged by thoſe that ſaw him, to be acted by the Devil*. Others have been as in a more *ſober ſpiritual Rapture*; an Inſtance whereof I ſhall give you from Mr. *Baxter* in theſe Words*; *I have heard from an ancient godly Man, that knew* Arthington *and* Coppinger, *that they were poſſeſſed with the Spirit of the* Grundletonians. *The ſame Man affirmed, That he went but once among them himſelf, and after Prayer they breathed on him, as giving him the Holy Ghoſt; and he was ſo ſtrangely tranſported for three Days, that he was not the ſame Man; and his Family wondred what was the Matter with him: He had no Confeſſion of Sin, but an elevated Strain in Prayer, as if he had been in ſtrange Raptures. And after three Days he was as before, and came no more at them.* Some have

(*a*) Ferunt quendam nomine *Montanum* : : : Spiritu quodam maligno abripi, & de repente furore & mentis inſania exagitatum bacchari: atq; mox non ſolum timere garrire: ſed peregrinas quaſdem voces fundere & Prophetare : : : Nonnulli illum tanquam inſano Spiritu preditum, Dæmonio agitatum : : : increpabant ita *Chriſtopher* interp. *Euſeb.* Hiſt. *Eccleſ.* Lib. 5. Cap. 15. * *Baxter's* Confeſſion of Faith, *page* 3. in the Margin.

have been carried into *childish*, and ridiculous Actions; such was the Behaviour of *John Gilpin* †, in his Delusion at *Kendal* in *Westmorland*; as his going to the Fidler's House, playing upon a Base-viol, in Token of spiritual Melody; his creeping up the Streets upon his Hands and Knees, in Token of bearing his Cross; his making Marks on the Ground, and beating it, as his Mortification of Sin: And a great many more Things of like Nature.

Such Things as these, are as spiritual Marks and *Characters* engraven upon Errors, by which a diabolical Power, moving and acting such deluded Creatures, (like so many Puppits) is evidently discovered.

3*dly*, When we see not only Idiots, and those whose Defect of Understanding might put them under the Power of an ordinary Cheat, thus imposed upon; but Men, otherwise *intelligent*, rational and serious, blinded with Follies, taken with apparent Dotages, admiring Trifles, and carried away with Things which common Reason would teach them to abhor: 'Tis more than suspicious, that 'tis not any *Probability* of Truth, or *Excellency* in the Error, that prevails with them, but a *spiritual Power* that doth bewitch them. When we consider that such a learned Man as *Tertullian* begins to admire such a Wretch as *Montanus*; or such an one as *Arthington*, led away with *Hacket* and *Coppinger*; or such a Man as *Kneperdollin*, seduced by *John* of *Leyden*, and especially, such Numbers of wise, and seemingly *sober and religious* Persons going down the Stream, after *irrational* and plainly *irreligious* Errors; what else can be apprehended to be the Cause, but a powerful satanical Delusion.

4*thly*, Add we to these, the Consideration of the *Suddenness* of the Prevalency of such Errors, against plain and evident Truths, (which is a Circumstance taken Notice of by the Apostle, *Gal.* i. 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the Grace of Christ, unto another Gospel.*) In which Case we may observe, it usually falls out, That Mens *Affections* prevent their *Discoveries*; at the first View they are taken, before they understand what the Error is; and they are *persuaded before they know*.

5*thly* and *lastly*, That the *Earnestness* of the Prosecution, by which they maintain and propagate the Error, is a Kind

† See his Story called *the Quaker shaken*.

Kind of *unnatural Fury*, which hurries Men with Violence into an unyielding Stifneſs, to the ſtifling of all Kind of Charity and Conſideration. Theſe Things put together, (I ſay) makes the Matter in Hand evident; when Men, otherwiſe *rational*, are at *firſt Touch*, *highly* enamoured with, and *violent* in the Purſuit of Errors, that are *ſottiſh*, or *deviliſh*; we can reſolve it into nothing leſs, than into that of the Apoſtle, *Who hath bewitched you?* The Improvement of this firſt, and great Advantage for the Introduction of Errors, is more than can be well expreſſed; but he hath beſides, other Advantages which he no Way neglects: Among which,

Secondly, Our *Imperfection in Knowledge*, is none of the leaſt; if our Knowledge had been perfect, it would have been a Task too hard for the Devil, to make us erroneous; for Men do *not err*, but ſo far as they are *ignorant*: To impoſe upon Men againſt clear and certain Knowledge is impoſſible. Men cannot *believe* that to be *true*, which they *know* to be *falſe*. It would be as ſilly for Satan to make ſuch Attempts, as for a Jugler to endeavour the Deception of thoſe, that know and ſee the Ways of his Conveyances as well as himſelf. That our Knowledge is imperfect, I ſhall prove and explain in the following Particulars.

1ſt, The Scripture plainly aſſerts it, the greateſt Number of Men (which are in an *unregenerate* Eſtate) are expreſſly called *fooliſh*, blind, ignorant, Men that are in Darkneſs, Men that do not know, nor conſider, that periſh thro' Ignorance. Others, that (in Compariſon to theſe) are called *Children of the Light*; and ſuch as *ſee with open Face*, are notwithſtanding (when compared to a State of Perfection) repreſented to be in the *Non age* of their Knowledge, unripe, imperfect; the Apoſtle doth ſo expreſs it, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. *We know in Part, we propheſy in Part.* In the Explanation of this, he compares our Attainments in this World, to the *Underſtanding, Thoughts*, and *Speakings* of Children, *v.* 11. concludes *v.* 12. That all our Knowledge gives us but a dark imperfect Reflection of Things; *we ſee through a Glaſs darkly.*

2dly, Men that have had the *cleareſt Heads*, and have been at the greateſt *pains* in their Enquiries to find out Truths, have brought back the clear *Conviction* of their own Ignorance. *Auſtin* confeſſeth, That in the Scriptures,

(which he made his chief Study) the Things *which he knew not, were more than the Things he underſtood* (*a*). *Chytræus*, in humble Modeſty goes a little further, *My deareſt Knowledge* (ſaith he) *is to know, that I know nothing*: And it will be a clear Demonſtration of that Man's Ignorance, that boaſts of his Knowledge; his own Mouth will prove againſt him, that *he knows nothing as he ought to know*

3*dly*, The Conſideration of the *Nature* of the Things, which are the Objects upon which we employ our Search, will ſufficiently convince us, that we do comprehend but very little. For tho' the Scripture hath expreſſed the *main Concerns* of eternal Life ſo fully, that they are as *clear as Light*, and need no ſuch Stretch of the Brain, but that the meaneſt Capacities may as certainly underſtand them, as they underſtood any Thing of common Buſineſs; as, *That Chriſt died for Sinners; that without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; that without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee his Face*, &c. Yet (as *Peter* ſpeaks, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16.) *There are many Things that are hard to be underſtood* (*b*); there are Difficulties, Depths, and Myſteries. Some Things (whereof we have but dark Touches in Scripture; tho' enough to let us know, that ſuch Things there are; and to humble us for our Ignorance) are in their *own Nature*, ſublime, bounded on all Sides with Rocks and Precipices, where our near and bold Approaches are prohibited: Such are thoſe Things, that concern the Decrees of God, the Trinity, *&c.* Other Things are dark and uncertain to us, from their very *Proximity* to us, (as ſome are pleaſed to fancy the Reaſon;) ſuch are the Nature, Faculties, and Workings of our own Souls within us; which we cannot *directly* ſee, (as the Eye ſees not itſelf) and do but as it were gueſs by dark *Reflections*. Some Things in Scripture are *accidentally* obſcure *to us*, that were *plain* to thoſe that heard them *firſt*, to whom they were ſpoken and written: For now, to the Underſtanding of a great many Paſſages, there is neceſſary the *Knowledge of the Tongues*, in which they were dictated, of the *Hiſtories* of thoſe Times to which they ſeverally related; as alſo, of the particular *Cuſtoms* of the *Jewiſh* Nation, which gave a *Mold* and Form to a great many Scripture-aſſertions: All which

(*a*) Plura neſcio quam ſcio. *Epiſt.* 119. *c.* 21. *Melch. Adam* in vita.
(*b*) Δυσνόητά τινα.

which are eaſy, and familiar to thoſe that knew the exact Propriety of ſuch Languages, were acquainted throughly with ſuch Hiſtories, Cuſtoms, Uſages, and Manner of Speakings: And beſides all theſe, the *Application* of *general Rules*, to *particular* Caſes, (where a little Circumſtance may make a great Alteration) is full of Puzzle and Intricacy. Inſomuch, that ſome have thought*, that there are ſeveral Caſes of Conſcience, that are not yet *fully* determined, and that are like ſo to remain.

4*thly*, Neither is the *Nature of Knowledge* itſelf, without an Argument to prove the Inſufficiency of our Knowledge; to know, is properly to underſtand Things by their *Cauſes*, or at leaſt, by their *Effects*: And to make a right *Reſult* of Particulars from a general Maxim. Such a Kind of Knowledge is neceſſary in Religion; for ſetting aſide ſome Particulars of *myſterious* Height, (about which God hath ſet Bounds, leſt Men in preſumptuous Boldneſs ſhould adventure to *break thro' unto the Lord to gaze.*) And ſome Things which are the *Principles of Nature*, or their *next Reſults*, (which are upon that Score, beyond all Need of Enquiry) in all which 'tis enough to believe, that what the Scripture ſaith is true, without asking a further Account: Yet in other Things, the Scripture gives us the *Grounds*, *Reaſons*, and *Proofs* of what it declares or aſſerts; as may appear by infinite Examples: So that to know *Chriſt died*, or that we are *juſtified by Faith*, or that *Chriſt ſhall come to Judgment*; without a Knowledge of the Grounds, and Reaſons of theſe Things, is indeed but *groſs Ignorance*. The like may be ſaid of the Knowledge of general Precepts, without the Knowledge of their neceſſary Application.

But how few are there that do thus know? The greateſt Part of Men ſatisfy themſelves with the bare Affirmations of Scripture, and they reſolve all into this, that the *Word of God ſaith ſo*; or, *That it is the Will of God it ſhould be ſo*, without further Enquiry.

And as for others, tho' they may know the Reaſons of many Things, yet are there a vaſt Number of Particulars, whoſe Reaſons we know not, tho' the Scripture may contain them: And as for Conſequences, and the *Application* of general Rules, their juſt *Limitation*, and the *Enumeration* of the Caſes wherein they are *true*, or *falſe*: It is that that keeps the Wits of Men upon the *Rack* perpetually.

* *D'Eſpagne* popular Errors, § 2, *Chap.* 12.

5thly, The *Unſuitableneſs* of our Capacities, to thoſe *Objects* of Knowledge, may be particularly conſidered as a further Confirmation of our Ignorance. The Incapacity of the Vulgar, is generally obſerved; ſome we find ſo groſly ignorant, that they are uncapable to comprehend the eaſieſt Matters; and this makes their Perſuaſion to ſome plain Truths ſo very difficult, that when they are (as it were) *brayed in a Morter* by a Multitude of unreaſonable Arguments; yet their Ignorance *departs not from them:* But they will ſtubbornly hold the Concluſion of their own Fancy, whatever become of the Premiſes. Thoſe that are of an higher Form, and ſeem to underſtand a *great many* Particulars in Religion, are (ordinarily) unable to conjoin all Truths *into one intire proportionable Body*; they heap up ſeveral Notions that they hear here and there, but know not their *Conſiſtencies*; inſomuch, that they either are like Children, who know all the Letters of the Alphabet, without the Skill to frame Words or Sentences out of them, being unable to give an Account how their Notions are related *one to another*, or *to the whole*; or if they attempt ſuch a Thing, they hang *inconſiſtent* Things on the ſame *Thread*, and do but *humano capitĭ, cervicem jungere equinam*. If theſe Inſtances (and a great many more of like Kind) were not at Hand, yet the very *Condeſcenſions* of our great Prophet the Lord Jeſus, and of his Diſciples in their Ways of teaching, do evince, that the Capacities of Men are low; that they are dull of hearing, Children in Underſtanding. The Courſe they took, was to inſtruct them in a plain familiar Way, by *Parables* and *Examples:* Thus were they *fed* as *Babes in Chriſt* (according to the Apoſtle's Similitude, 1 *Cor.* iii. 1.) *with Milk, and not with ſtrong Meat, becauſe they were not able to bear it.* And yet Chriſt ſometimes complained, that this would not do: For ſo he ſpeaks, *John* iii. 12. *If I have told you earthly Things*, (that is divine Truths, in earthly and common Similitudes) *and ye believe not*, (*i. e.* cannot apprehend them) *how ſhall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly Things*? How unable then would you be to underſtand theſe Truths, if I ſhould ſpeak in Language and Expreſſion properly ſuitable to their Natutes? A great Check to our Slowneſs of Apprehenſion.

But poſſibly ſome may expect higher Matters, from thoſe that are exalted above the *common Rank* of Men, by the Repute

Repute they have of Learning. And indeed it cannot be denied, but such have very great *Advantages* for the widening of their Capacities: Yet are they not such as wholly take away the Distemper, but still so much Incapacity may be seen in them, as will sufficiently justify the Charge of Imperfection in Knowledge against the most Learned. Let us bring in some Instances, and it will be evident,

1. The *greatest* Errors that have most disturbed the Church in all Ages, have had their Rise from *learned* Men; the Names of their *Authors* are marked upon their *Foreheads*. These known Errors are so many, that they fill whole Volumes. The Result of which Consideration, will be this, That learned Men have often been very dangerously mistaken. 2. The *present Contentions* and Disputes of Men, managed on all Hands with so much Earnestness, wherein one Party triumphs over another, and *all* (in their own Apprehensions) *are victorious*; instead of *Conquests*, by Arguments and Answers, *each Party* is but more *confirmed* in its own Apprehensions, and yet the *one Half* is *certainly wrong*, and perhaps in many Things both Parties are mistaken. This (I say) sufficiently shews the Incapacities of the Learned: For if every *Capacity* were truly *correspondent to Truth*, there would be no more Disputes nor Differences. 3. The most Learned, find the Business of their *own Persuasion* and Satisfaction in many Truths (in which common People have no Scruple nor Doubt) *very difficult*, because they see more Objections to be answered, and more of the Weakness of Arguments than others do; but this shews their Capacities are not so large as some would think. 4. Let us once for all, consider that which seems to be the *highest Evidence* for Knowledge and Understanding in the Learned; and we shall find upon just Examination, 'tis no more than an *Argument* of their *Ignorance*: What is there wherein they seem more acute, and Eagle-ey'd, than in their *Distinctions*, by which they would give us the most *minute Differences* of Things; and appear so exact, as if they would *divide an Atom*, and give every Thing its *just Weight and Measure*. But let us consider, that (though all Distinctions are not unprofitable) their *Multitude* is become oppressive and troublesome, and more Time must be spent in learning *Terms* and Words of Art, than *Things*; and their *Nicety* and Subtilty so great, that they rather *darken Truth*, and give Occasion to bold Spirits, to

undertake the Defence of any Paradox. Nay, if we could ſever theſe clearly from their Abuſes, yet ſeeing 'tis certain there are more Diſtinctions of *Terms* than *Things*; they will evince, That our Knowledge is more *verbal* than *real*, and that often for a *Mountain* of Words, we have but a *Mole hill* of ſubſtantial Matter. Nay, ſeeing we make but a ſorry Shift, at beſt, by theſe Artifices to come to ſome *rude Conceptions* of Things, which otherwiſe we cannot in any tolerable Manner comprehend; it is as great a *Proof* of our Imperfection in Knowledge, as the neceſſary Uſe of *Staves and Crutches* is an Evidence of *Lameneſs*. If I ſhould paſs from this, to the Conſideration of the Multitude (beyond all Number) of *Books* that are written, we ſhall find them but ſo many *Proclamations* of our Ignorance; for if we could believe *them all* to contain ſo many wholeſome Precepts of *neceſſary* Truth (which yet we cannot rationally imagine) this would imply, that the *greateſt part wanted* theſe Informations; and that common Ignorance is not only a *general Diſtemper*, but alſo a Diſtemper *hard* to be cured, that ſtands in need of ſuch *Multitudes* of Inſtructors, and ſuch *Varieties* of Helps. But if we believe, that among this infinite Number of Volumes there are *Thouſands of Lies*, Millions of unproved *Conjectures*, Millions of Millions of idle unprofitable *Fancies*; then do we in expreſs Terms pronounce them guilty of Ignorance, and of Ignorance ſo much the more *dangerous*, by how much the more *bold* it is, to avouch itſelf in the Light, and to obtrude itſelf upon the Belief of others, who inſtead of being better informed by it, ſhall but encreaſe their own Blindneſs: Were there nothing to be ſaid but this, That there are ſuch a vaſt Multitude of *Commentators* upon the Bible, which do all pretend to expound and explain it, it would of Neceſſity admit of theſe Concluſions. (1.) That the Bible hath in it Things ſo *dark*, or at leaſt, our *Capacities* are ſo *dull*, that there is need of great Endeavours to explain the one, or aſſiſt the other. (2.) That the Knowledge of Men is *imperfect*: For if all, or moſt Men could *certainly interpret* the Scripture, there needed not ſo many Volumes, but that *one or two* might have ſignified as much, as now whole *Libraries* can do.

The Imperfection of our Knowledge, being thus laid open, 'tis eaſy to ſee, what Advantages the *Devil* may make out of it, for the promoting of Error; for it muſt now become

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our Wonder, not that *any Man errs*, but that *all do not*. We find it easy to impose any Thing upon Children, 'tis an easy Matter for a Trifle to cheat them out of all they have. Surely then Satan may do as much by Men, who are but *Children in Understanding*. The Apostle, *Ephes.* iv. 14 puts us in Mind of this Hazard, under that very Similitude, *That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine.* How fitly doth he resemble us to Children? Their Weaknesses are, 1. Want of *discerning*, they see not the true Worth of Things 2. *Credulity*, they believe all fair Speeches, and specious Promises; and the Hazard of both these is in this, That it makes them *unconstant*, *uncertain*, and *fickle*; and such are we made by our Ignorance: So *little* do we truly discern, so apt are we to *believe* every Pretence (for *the Simple believes (a) every Word*, Prov. xiv. 15.) That (as the Apostle's Metaphors do tell us) we are easily *tossed* from one Conceit or Opinion to another (*b*), as a *Ship* is by the *Waves*, or a *Feather* in the *Wind*.

Thirdly, A third Advantage which the *Devil* takes against us in his Design of Error, is the *Byass* of the Mind; were our Understandings purely free, in a just and *even Balance* toward all Things propounded to its Deliberation and Assent, though it were imperfect in its Light) the Danger were the less; but, now in regard of the *Bent* and Sway it is under; 'tis commonly *partial*, and inclined to one Side more than to another, and yet the Matter were the less, if only *one* or *two* noted Things had the Power of setting up a false Light before the Mind; but there are many Things that are apt to do us this Mischief, which have the *same* Effect upon us, that *Bribes* have upon Persons interested in Judgment, which not only tempts them to do Wrong, but so blinds their Eyes, that they know not they do so, or at least, not in so great a Measure. The Mind is byassed,

First, *Naturally* to *Error*, rather than Truths; the Corruption of our Nature is general, and doth not only dispose the *Will* and *Affections* to *practical* Iniquities, but doth also incline the *Understanding* to *Error* and Misapprehension. And that seems to be the Ground of Christ's Assertion against the *Jews*, John v. 43. *I am come in my Father's Name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own*

(*a*) Κλυδωνιζόμενοι. (*b*) Περιφερόμενοι.

own Name, him ye will receive. Which implies, That Men are naturally more prone to believe an *Impostor*, than one that speaks the most certain and profitable Verities: And besides this general Inclination to Vanities and Lies, there are (if some think right) some Errors that are *formally* engraven in the *Nature of fallen Man (a)*; as that Opinion, *To be saved by Works.* For not only do all (Men that have any Apprehensions of a future eternal State) resolve that Question of obtaining Salvation into Works, as the proper Cause, (and indeed no other could have been imagined, if the Scripture had not revealed the Redemption by the Blood of Jesus.) But the *Jews* in *John* vi. 28. (When they propound that Question, *What shall we do, that we might work the Works of God?*) take it for granted, That Works (of some Kind or other) are the Causes of Happiness. Possibly some Impression of that Notion (while it was a Truth, as in the State of Innocency it was,) may yet remain upon our Natures, though by the Fall, the Case is altered with us.

Secondly, The Mind is byassed by *bodily Temper*, and *complectional Inclination*; the Varieties of Complections, introduce Varieties of Humours, and Dispositions: And the Understanding (being necessitated to look through these, as so many *coloured Glasses*,) is apt to judge, (that is, to misjudge) according to the Misrepresentation of Objects.

Thirdly, Sometimes *habitual Acquirements* have the same Influence upon the Understanding, that natural Humours have. The Arts and Sciences we study, our Ways of Education and Imployment, are but so many *prejudicate Prepossessions* that do secretly taint the Mind.

Fourthly, There are also *accidental Inclinations*, which (though not customary) have the Force of a second Nature, because their working is violent and impetuous, and these which are from a *wounded Conscience*, or *Excesses of Melancholly*, have a Byass more than ordinary; they lay violent Hands upon the Understanding, and with a mighty Torrent run it down. So that if an Error be offered, that is suitable to such Fears or Misapprehensions, it can scarce miss of Success. The extraordinary *Turbulencies* of some other Passions; as Anger, Love, &c. have the like Effect.

Fifthly, *Vitious Habits* do so much byass the Mind, that the Understanding must needs be defiled by them. Nothing

(a) D' *Espagne*'s popular Errors, § 2. *Chap.* 4.

thing can more prepare the Mind to a *wicked Error*, than a *wicked Life*. An Error of *Indulgence* (being so grateful to Corruption) may readily find Favour with the Understandings of those that *know not to do Good*, because *they have accustomed themselves to do Evil*.

Sixthly, There are *external Things* that have no less Power on the Understanding, than any of the foregoing; and these are *Custom*, *Education*, and *Interest*; these stick so close, and work so subtilly, that tho' there are few that are not (in disputable Cases) *influenced* by them, yet none are able, or willing to take Notice, *how*, and by *what Steps* they do engage them to pass Sentence against Truth. And indeed, that Man must have a singular Measure of suspicious Watchfulness, and clear Integrity, that is not deceived by them. And the best Way to keep clear of the Mischief that these may do us, *is to be severe in our Suspicions on that Side to which Custom and Interest have their Tendencies*.

Seventhly, I might note, that there is something considerable to this Purpose, in the *Nature of Spirits*. Some Spirits are *unfixed*, and *volatile*; and these are soon altered by their own *Unsteadiness*. Others are *tenacious* and unflexible; and if such be first set wrong, 'tis not an easy Thing that will reduce them to Truth. Others are *soft and ductile*, perswaded by *good Words* as soon as *strong Arguments*. And again, some are of such a rough, sowre, *contradictious Temper*, that they will sooner chuse to run wrong, than comply with the Perswasions of those that offer Truth, even for that Reason, *because they are perswaded to it*; so that the Truth which (if none had minded them) they of themselves would have embraced, they will now refuse when 'tis prest upon them, out of a cross and thwarting Humour, because they hate nothing more *than to do as they are bidden*.

To come a little nearer, Let us consider how these Things shew their Power upon the Mind, to sway and incline it. 'Tis indeed true, That in Things that are *clearly* and *strongly* propounded to the Understanding, it cannot but judge according to the Evidence of Truth; and cannot be guided by the Will, to judge contrary: Nay, the Will (tho' in Things purely *speculative*, it may retain its *Averseness*; as also in Things *practical*, while they are considered only, as what *may* be done, before the Understanding hath come up to its *final Resolve*, determining that such Things *must*,

or *ought* to be done) cannot but follow the *Light* and Information of the Understanding, and that according to the *Proportion* of its Conviction (*a*); so that tho' in some Cases, a Man would have Things otherwise than he believes them to be: Yet, he cannot believe *what he will*, neither can he *refuse* to will what is *certainly* represented to be good and necessary. Notwithstanding all this, the forementioned Particulars may so byass the Mind, that it shall not act truly and steadily; as we may see in these *three* Particulars.

First, In Things *clearly* demonstrated to the Understanding; tho' the Will cannot *directly* oppose, nor prevail to have them judged false, yet it can *indirectly* hinder the Procedure of the Understanding (*b*), and divert it from fixing its *Consideration* upon the Truth; or from working itself into *positive Determinations*, for bringing it into Practice. Thus many that cannot but believe there is a God, and that his Law is true; being byassed by their Lusts, the Power of Pleasures, or Interest, *&c.* do prevail upon their Understandings, to take up *other Objects* of Consideration; so that they are said to forget God, and to cast his Commandments behind their Backs: As also, not to remember their latter End, tho' they cannot but believe, that they shall die. Truth may be *imprisoned*, and fettered, where it cannot be *slain*. We read of *holding the Truth in Unrighteousness*, Rom. i. 18. Which was this, That those *Heathens* (of whom the Apostle speaks) by reason of their vitious Inclinations and Practices; tho' they could not obliterate those Notices of Equity and Religion that were imprinted on their Minds; yet they kept them at under, (as Captives in a Dungeon) and suffered them not to rise up in a just practical Improvement. Now the Wrong that is done to Truth this Way, is not only, by rendring it *unfruitful* and useless at present, but hereby the Devil hath his Advantage in the *gaining of Time*, to gather togerher more Forces against that Truth; and by frequent Onsets of *contrary* Arguings; (especially upon the Advantage of the Mind's *Indifferency*, and Remissness, begot by long and often Diversions) to set *another Face* upon it, and by Degrees to overturn former Perswasions. This was the very Case of the *Heathens*, in the Place last cited; who being

(*a*) Tantum quisque vult, quantum intelligit se velle debere. (*b*) Intellectus sequitur voluntatem quoad exercitium, non quoad specificationem.

ing first swayed by their Impieties, became unwilling to give Way to those Dictates of Light and Justice which they had; and having thus gratified their Lusts, the Devil further prevailing with them, to find *Evasions* from the Power of those Truths, they began to make *unsuitable Inferences* from these Premises, which they could not deny, and so became *sottish* and *vain* in their Reasonings, *changing the Glory of the uncorruptible God, into an Image made like unto corruptible Man.* And by such Practices against Truth, they at last *changed the Truth into a Lie,* Ver. 25. and at Long-run *obliterated* the Knowledge of God out of their Minds. This is Satan's old Method of overturning Truth at last, by diverting the Mind from receiving the present powerful Impressions of those Principles.

Secondly, But in Things doubtful, where there is not a clear Certainty, what is Truth? but contrary Opinions strive with such *equal Confidence,* that 'tis difficult to determine which hath the *Conquest*; there the Mind may be so swayed by its Byass, that it may give *Approbation* to Error: Nay, where upon a fair and *indifferent Trial,* Truth hath the *greater Appearance* of Strength; and Error nothing else, than little *Shadows* or Appearances of Reason to shelter itself under; yet, that Way may the Mind be inclined by the aforesaid Things. We have a more easy and facile Belief for what we *would have,* than for what we *would not.* Tho' there is nothing more noted by common Experience than this, that Men are usually drawn aside by Humours, Inclinations, Interests, and Education, &c. to judge well of that which an unprejudiced Person would easily see to be weak, unjust, ridiculous, or unreasonable: Yet, how these Considerations and Tempers do exert their Force upon the Understanding to draw it into a Compliance; or by what *secret Art* they can *heighten* Probabilities, and *lessen* Objections; or by what *insensible Progress* they move, that Men thus carried do not perceive that they are under such a Force, is not so very discernible. How often may we observe, Men (that are rational enough, to discover the pitiful Shifts, and poor Allegations of others) with such *Gravity* and Confidence (where their own *Interests* are concerned) to offer such *low* Reasonings, and *extravagant* Impertinences, that all that hear them, are ready to laugh at their Folly; and yet they themselves entertain no less than Perswasions of the *Invincibleness* of their Arguings? they so eagerly de-

fire

fire what they would eſtabliſh, that they think any Thing is enough to juſtify it; and are apt to imagine, that their Shifts and Excuſes appear *as ſtrong* to others, as to themſelves. I have known ſome, that by the Sway of *Intereſt*, have changed their Opinions in religious Matters, and have really become otherwiſe perſwaded, than they had been formerly, (and not as ſome, who for Advantage will *knowingly* take up what they cannot believe to be true) and have not been able to ſay, That they have met with new Arguments, or new Anſwers to Objections; but, I know not how, Arguments, which they had *contemned*, and laid by for weak, began to look *big* upon them: The Arguments by which their former Perſwaſion was upheld, grew inſenſibly *feeble* in their Hands; the one *revived*, gathered Strength, after they had a little cheriſhed them, by thinking there might be ſomething in them, tho' before they knew all the Particulars, and could not inſtance in any Thing which they had not formerly notified and anſwered; and the other Sort of Arguments grew weaker and weaker, till at laſt they parted with all good Conceit of them; ſo that ſuch a Change was but as the *turning of the Tables*: That which acted behind the *Curtain*, and wrought this Change of the *Fancy*, could be no other than ſome of the forementioned Things that byaſſed their Mind; for where the *Arguments*, *pro* and *con* were the *ſame*, the *Alteration* of Opinion (where Men are not ſo wicked as to go directly againſt their own Light) muſt of Neceſſity be imputed to the *different Poſitions* of external Things, and the *different Humours* and Inclinations begot by them: Even as the *different Stations* of Men in the Proſpect of ſome Pictures, repreſent them *variouſly*, one Way they give the Shape of a beautiful Face; another Way, they expreſs the ugly Deformity of a Devil: Or as *different Reflections* of the Sun-beams upon the ſame Object, cloath it with *ſeveral Colours*. The Scripture doth alſo give us Notice of this Advantage which the Devil takes from the Inclinations of Men, to lead them into Miſtakes. That of *Micah* ii. 11: (*If a Man walking in the Spirit of Falſhood, do lie, ſaying, I will prophecie unto thee of Wine, and of ſtrong Drink, he ſhall even be the Prophet of this People*) hath this for its Foundation, that let the Error be never ſo groſs and palpable (as if a

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Man ſhould propheſy a Liberty for Drunkenneſs) if it be ſuitable to the *Sway of Peoples Humours*, it will readily enough be embraced; *He ſhall be a Prophet to this People*, that is, ſuch a Prophet will eaſily prevail with ſuch a People, their vitious Inclinations fit them for any Impreſſion of a ſuitable Error. The Apoſtle *Paul* alſo found this too true in the Hereſies of his own Times; for he tells us, that Seducers had learned that Cunning from the Devil, to draw Men to Error by the Sway of their *Luſts*, 2 Tim. iii. 6. *They creep into Houſes, and lead captive ſilly Women laden with Sins, and led away with divers Luſts.* As alſo, 2 *Tim.* iv. 6. he propheſies of the future Uſe of this Stratagem, *After their own Luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves Teachers.* So that the uſual Prevalency of Error was and is from the Under-ground Working of Luſts, Humours, Habits and Inclinations, which make Men willing to entertain an Opinion, which can but gratify them with a Suitableneſs or Fitneſs.

Thirdly, Where the forementioned Particulars of Inclination natural, or acquired Humours, Cuſtom, Education, *&c.* do neither *divert* the Underſtanding, nor *engage* it to cloſe with Error, yet often do they diſcover how powerfully they can biaſs the Mind, in that theſe prevail with Men to *modify and mould a Truth according to the Bent or Form of their Inclinations.* As a Bowl which is skillfully aimed at a *Mark*, goes nevertheleſs by a *Compaſs* which its Biaſs forceth it unto, according to the Riſings or Fallings of the Ground it meets with in the Way. Men may arrive at real Truth in the main, and yet may *ſhape* it according to their Humours: For Inſtance, let us conſider the different *Modes* or Forms, in which the *ſame Truth* is repreſented under the Workings of *different* Tempers. A *melancholy* Perſon conceives of all Things under ſuch Reflections, as Fear and Sadneſs do uſually give; if he conſider God, he looks upon him in the Notion of *greateſt Severity and Juſtice*; if upon the Ways of *Duty*, he colours them all *in black*, and can ſcarce account any Thing *Piety*, which is not accompanied with *Sadneſs* and *Mourning*; if he calls his *Soul* to a Reckoning, his Concluſions concerning himſelf are *ſad*, doleful, or at beſt *ſuſpicious*. On the contrary, an *hilarous* cheerful Temper, cenſures all *Sadneſs* for *Sullenneſs*, and is apt to accuſe thoſe that go mourning in their Way,

for

for *unthankful Murmurers* and *unbelieving Complainers*; it interprets God's favourable *Condescension* to the Weak in the greatest *Latitude*, and is easily perswaded to those Things that are upon the *utmost Brink* of Liberty, to which others of a *more timorous* Disposition dare not *approach*, for fear of offending. This puts an higher Excellency upon the Duties of *Praise*, as the other upon *Fasting* and *Mourning*. Those Men that are *morose* and severe, they are apt to think that *God is such an one as themselves*; and tho' they acknowledge there is such a Grace as Charity, yet under a Pretence of *Strictness*, they cannot believe they are bound to exercise it towards any that are under *any Failing*, of which they judge themselves to be free; and therefore such Men are usually very *difficult*, in all Cases wherein Condescension is to be used, they are hard to be *reconciled*; and after the Miscarriage of any Person, are not *easily satisfied* of their Repentance; and in Cases of *Dissent* from their Way and Practice of Religion, they are commonly *censorious*, and conclude the worst. They again that are naturally *mild and gentle*, under a Pretence of Charity and Meekness, are apt to become *remiss* in their Carriages towards any Brother; and because *Charity thinks not Evil*, they *model* their acknowledged Duty into the Form of their *own Disposition*, and so think they *must see, and yet not perceive*; and instead of covering the *Infirmities* of a Brother, they have a Mantle to cast over every *Transgression*. At the same Rate also do they frame their Conceptions of *God*, as if he was so *merciful*, that he would scarce reckon any Abomination to be above the Height of an *ordinary Infirmity*. These are apt to think, that the *Mercies* of God (so much praised in Scripture) signify *little less* than an *Indulgence* in Transgression, far above what *Precisians* are apt to imagine; and that it is as *easy* to obtain *Forgiveness* from God for any Offence, as it is to say, *The Lord be merciful to me a Sinner*. Those that accustom themselves to the *Delights of the Senses*, are apt to bend the *Way* of their Religion to that *Humour*, and think, that nothing can be *solemn* in Worship, that is not set out with *Garnishings* that may please the Eye or Ear. Nay, 'tis observable enough, that Religion borrows some *Taint* or *Shape* from the various *Studies* and *Sciences* of Men; in some (as in many of the *Fathers*) we may see Religion dipt in *Platonism* or *Peripateticism*. Some introduce the *Distinctions*

and

and *Definitions* of Philoſophy; others compel all Scriptures to ſubmit to the Laws of ſtrict *logical Analyſis.* Thus according to the various *Mediums* that Men look through, are Truths diſcoloured, and dreſſed up in ſeveral Shapes: 'Tis eaſy from theſe Inſtances to imagine, that Satan muſt have a great Advantage againſt us in Point of Error, from the Biaſs of the Mind.

Fourthly, Adventurous Curioſities is another general Advantage by which he works. This ariſeth partly from a *Deſire* of Knowledge, and partly *from Pride;* and both theſe make way for his Deſign.

A Deſire after Knowledge is natural, and withal very bewitching. To know hath ſomething more in it than ordinary (*a*). This is noted in *Job* xi. 12. *Vain Man would be wiſe, though Man be born like a wild Aſs's Colt;* tho' he be fooliſh, yet he *affects* Wiſdom; and the very Delight of knowing doth engage Men to *curious prying Searches,* tho' with much Labour and Hazard. Of this Temper were the *Athenians,* Acts xvii. 21. *They ſpent their Time in nothing elſe, but either to tell, or to hear ſome new Thing;* not barely in telling News, but in Enquiries after *new Notions* and Diſcoveries; and this made them willing to hear *Paul,* as *a Setter forth of ſtrange gods,* and a *new Doctrine.*

When this Deſire after Knowledge is animated with Pride (as oft it is, for *Knowledge puffeth up*) then 'tis more dangerous. When Men are upon a Deſign to ſeem higher than others, to be *ſingular,* to ſee more than what all Men ſee, to be admired, to out talk their Neighbours, what *Adventures* will they not make? How fair do they ly open to any Conceit that may ſerve this End?

That Satan labours to improve this Curioſity is without Doubt; he carefully affords Feuel to this Burning, and diligently blows it up into a Flame. The firſt Temptation had that Ingredient in it, *Ye ſhall be as gods, knowing Good and Evil;* and we may ſee it was a great Enticement to *Eve, That which would make one wiſe,* was therefore deſirable. The Blame of *Iſrael's* firſt Idolatry ſeems to be laid at this Door, *Deut.* xxxii. 17. *They ſacrificed—to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up,* implying, that they were drawn aſide from their old eſtabliſhed Way of Worſhip, by a Curioſity to *try the new Ways* of the *Heathens.* And ſo great an Hand hath this generally in Errors,

(*a*) Divinum eſt ſcire quamplurima]

Errors, that *Paul*, 2 Tim. iv. 3. makes this Itch after Novelty the great Ground of that Defection from Truth, which he foresaw was coming, *They shall heap to themselves Teachers having itching Ears.* This *Itch of the Ear* is the usual Forerunner of a *Scab in the Church* (*a*), because it doth dispose Men to receive any *Kind* of Teacher. God indeed doth sometimes take the Advantage of our *natural Curiosity* for our *Good*; by this Means many of *John*'s Hearers, who went out into the Wilderness to him, as to a *strange Sight* (as those Words imply, *What went ye out into the Wilderness to see?*) were converted. By this Means the Gospel afterwards made a large Progress, as we see commonly *new Teachers* affect most at *first*; for when Men grow acquainted with their Gifts, their Admiration decays, and the Success of their Labours is not so great many Times. The Devil also observing the Prevalency of Curiosity; and that Men are more pleased with *new Notions*, than with *old Truths*; he endeavours also to plow with this Heifer, and oft makes a great Harvest by it. There is yet another Advantage more that he sometimes useth; and that is,

Fifthly, *Atheistical Debauchery*, when Men by long Custom in sinning, have arrived to habitual Carelessness and Presumption, then they become *practical Atheists*; their *vitious Habits* work upon their Understanding, to *obliterate all Principles:* When Men are gone so far, they are fit Engineers for Satan; for while they disbelieve all Things, they can (to serve a *Design*, or to head a *Party*) take up any *Opinion*, and pretend the greatest Seriousness in the propagating it; tho' in the mean Time, they *secretly laugh* at the Credulity of the Vulgar.

These Men *let out themselves*, and all their Parts to the Devil, and he knows how to make Use of them, to bring on the Delusion, and Deception of others. Many Ages have given Examples of such: Those Seducers mentioned in the *New Testament*, were (some of them) of this *Rank*, and therefore called *deceitful Workers.* Such as were not *really* under those Persuasions, which they thought to fix upon others; but upon *Design*, *transformed themselves into the Apostles of Christ; such as served not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies:* And yet *by good Words and fair Speeches, deceived the Hearts of the Simple,*

Rom.

(*a*) Plurimus aurium est scabies Ecclesiarum.

Rom. xvi. 18. Who, *through Covetouſneſs, with feigned Words, made Merchandize* of Men, 2 *Pet.* ii. 3. *Balaam* was ſuch, and the *Woman Jezebel that called herſelf a Propheteſs*, Rev. ii. 20. Such was the *Arch-biſhop* of *Spalato*, who for Advantage could at Pleaſure take up, and lay down his Religion. Such an one was the *falſe Jew* (not ſo long ſince) diſcovered in this Place (*a*), who (being a *Romiſh* Emiſſary) pretended to be a *Jew converted*; and ſeeking a pure Church, under that *Vizor*, deſigning to overthrow (*by private Inſinuations*,) the Faith of the Simple, uncautious Admirers! By ſuch Inſtruments Satan works, where he hath Opportunity.

CHAP. III.

Of Satan's improving theſe Advantages for Error. (1.) *By deluding the Underſtanding directly: Which he doth* 1. *By countenancing Error from Scripture. Of his Cunning therein.* 2. *By ſpecious Pretences of Myſteries; and what theſe are. Of perſonal Flatteries.* 3. *By affected Expreſſions. Reaſon of their Prevalency.* 4. *By bold Aſſertions. The Reaſons of that Policy.* 5. *By the Excellency of the Perſons appearing for it, either for Gifts or Holineſs. His Method of managing that Deſign.* 6. *By pretended Inſpiration.* 7. *By pretended Miracles. His Cunning herein.* 8. *By Peace and Proſperity in Ways of Error.* 9. *By Lies againſt Truth, and the Profeſſors of it.*

WHAT are the *general Advantages* which Satan hath to forward his Deſign of Error we have ſeen. It now remains, that we take an Account of the various Ways, by which he improves thoſe Advantages, and thoſe may be referred to *two* Heads. 1. They are ſuch Stratagems, as more *directly* work upon the Underſtanding to *delude* and blind it. Or, 2. They are ſuch as *indirectly* by the Power of the *Will* and *Affections* do *influence* it.

1. Thoſe Stratagems, that more immediately concern the Underſtanding, are the Uſe of ſuch *Arguments*, which carry in them a Probability to confirm an Error; though indeed they are but *Fallacies*, *Sophiſms*, or *Paralogiſms*:

(*a*) *See the Narration, called,* The falſe Jew.

Of which the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, *Col.* ii. 4. *Leſt any beguile you*,—that is, leſt they impoſe upon you, by *falſe Reaſonings*. His uſual Way of proceeding in this Caſe is,

Firſt, When he hath to do with Men that are brought up with Profeſſion and Belief of Scripture; he is then careful to give an Error ſome Countenance or Pretence from *Scripture*: It is not his Courſe to *decry* the Scriptures with ſuch Men, but to *ſuppoſe* their Truth and Authority, as the moſt plauſible Way to his Deſign: For by this Means he doth not only *prevent* a great many ſtartling Objections, which would otherwiſe riſe up againſt him, (ſeeing Men brought up with Scripture, cannot eaſily be brought to call them falſe,) but with conſiderable Advantage, he doth thereby *authorize* and juſtify his Error: For nothing can give more Boldneſs or Confidence to a Miſtake, than a Belief that it is backed with Scripture.

That this is one of his grand Stratagems, may be ſufficiently evinced from the infinite Number of Errors that pretend to *Scripture-warrant*. Thoſe that are above, or beyond Scripture, (which acknowledge no Dependance upon it) are but few, and rare: And indeed, among *Chriſtians*, Error cannot well thrive without a Pretence of Scripture. Men would have enough to do to perſuade *themſelves* to ſuch Errors, but it would be impoſſible to make a *Party* or perſuade others; ſuch Errors would preſently be hiſſed out of the World. Upon this Account is it, that *Atheiſm* ſculks and conceals itſelf, (except where generally tolerated Profaneneſs gives it more than ordinary Encouragement,) which is not to be aſcribed to any *ſhamed faced Modeſty*, that *Atheiſm* can be ſuppoſed to nouriſh; but to the *general Diſlike* of others, who ſo ſtick to the Authority of the *Bible*, that they reject all direct Contradictions to it with great Abhorrency. Hence alſo it is, that ſome erroneous Perſons are forced to *Contradictions* in their Practice againſt their profeſſed Principles, becauſe they find it impoſſible to propagate their Errors, without ſome Pretence or other to Scripture. They that would undermine thoſe ſacred Records, are forced to make uſe of their Authority for Proof of what they would ſay. The Papiſts have a *Quarrel* at them, and envy them the Title of *Perfection* and *Perſpicuity*, upon Deſign to introduce *Traditions*, and to ſet up the Pope's judicial Authority in Matters of Faith; and when they have ſaid all they can, to ſubject the Scriptures

to

to the Pope's Determination, they are forced at laſt to be beholden to the *Scriptures* to prove the *Pope's Determination*: They would prove the *Scriptures* by the *Church*; and then the *Church* by the *Scriptures*: Which is a *Circle* they have been often told of, and of which, ſome of the wiſer Sort among themſelves are aſhamed. Others alſo, that will not allow the *Scriptures* to be a *general ſtanding Rule*, are yet forced to make it (in ſome Caſes) a *Rule* to *themſelves*, and eagerly plead it to be ſo to *others*. They that pretend to be *above Ordinances*, and decry *outward Teachings* as unneceſſary, or hurtful: Yet, they *teach outwardly*, becauſe they ſee they are not able to enlarge the *Empire* of Error without ſuch Teaching. Thoſe very Errors that make it their chief Buſineſs, to render the *Scriptures* no better than *an old Almanack*; they yet ſeek to *Scripture* to countenance their blaſphemous Aſſertions; and if they get any Scrap or Shread of it, that may by their *unjuſt Torture* be wreſted to ſpeak any ſuch Thing, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. or any Thing toward it, they think all their Follies are thereby *patronized*; and commonly, ſuch Men either fix upon ſuch Places as give Warning of the neceſſary *concomitancies* of the Spirit and *Heart*, with the outward *Act* of Service; (and from hence, ſeparating what God hath joyned together, they ſet up *ſpiritual* Sabbaths, *ſpiritual* Baptiſm, *ſpiritual* Worſhip, to cry down, and caſhier the *external Acts* of ſuch Ordinances:) Or they pretend *Kindred* to *Scripture*, as propheſying, or foretelling thoſe *new* Adminiſtrations which they *are about to ſet up*. Let *H. Nicholas* be an Inſtance of this, who though he decried the Service of the *Law* under God the Father, and the Service of the *Belief* under Chriſt; and in the Room of both theſe, would ſet up another Adminiſtration, under the Spirit; yet, (that he might be the better believed) he applied ſeveral *Scriptures* to his Purpoſe, as *propheticdlly* foretelling *H. Nicholas*, and his Services; and would have Men imagine, that he was *that Angel flying in the midſt of Heaven with the everlaſting Goſpel*, Rev. xiv. 6. *And that Prophet enquired after by the Jews*, John i. 21. *Art thou that Prophet?* And *that Man ordained to judge the World*, Acts xvii. 31. And that the Times of his Diſpenſation, were the Times of Perfection, and Glory ſpoken of in 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. and *Heb.* vi. 1. The like Pretences for new Adminiſtrations had *Saltmarſh*, and ſeveral others.

Satan fixing his Foot upon this Design, and taking Advantage of Mens Ignorance, Curiosity and Pride, *&c.* it is impossible to tell what he may do; he hath introduced many Heresies already, and none knows what may be behind; many Passages of Scripture are *dark*, to the *wisest* of Men: A great many more are so to the *common* Sort of Christians. A great many Wits are imployed by him, as *Adventurers* for *new Discoveries*; and a small Pretence is Ground enough for a bold Undertaker to erect a new Notion upon; and a new Notion in Religion, is like a new Fashion in Apparel, which bewitcheth the Unsteady with an Itch to be in it, before they well understand what it is: So that 'tis alike impossible to *stint* the just *Number* of Errors, as to *adjust* the various *Pretences* from Scripture upon which they may be countenanced. Leaving therefore this Task to those that can undertake it, I shall only note a Particular or two of Satan's Cunning in affixing an Error upon Scripture.

1. In any grand Design of Error, he endeavours to lay the *Foundation* of it as *near to Truth* as he can; but yet so, that in the *Tendency* of it, it may *go as far from it* as may be. As some Rivers whose first *Fountains* are *contiguous*, have notwithstanding a direct *contrary* Course in their Streams. For Instance, in those Errors that tend to overthrow the Doctrine of the Gospel, concerning *Christ* and *Ordinances* (and these are Things which the *Devil* hath a great Spite at) he begins his Work with plausible Pretences of *Love* and *Admiration* of *Christ* and *Grace*; he proceeds from thence to the Pretence of *purer Enjoyments*, from thence to a *Dislike* of such Preachers and Preaching, as *threaten Sin*, and speak out the *Wrath* of God against Iniquity, and these are presently called *legal Preachers*, and the Doctrine of Duty a *legal Covenant*; having them once at this Point, they easily come to *immediate Assistances* and *special Gifts*, which they pretend to have above others; being thus set up, they are for free Grace, and the Enjoyment of God *in Spirit*; from thence they come to *Christian Liberty*, and by Degrees Duties are *unnecessary*, there is *no Christ* but *within them*, and being *freed* from the Law, whatever they do is *no Transgression*. This is a Path that Satan hath trodden of old, though now and then he may vary in some Circumstances, and be forced to stop before he come to the utmost of his Journey. You may observe this Method in the *late*

Errors

Errors of *New England* (a), in the *Familists* of *Germany*, and in those of *Old England*; in all which at the long-run Men are led as far from Scripture, as Darkness is from Light. Now this is not only to be seen in a *progressive Multiplication* of Errors, but often may we perceive the same Subtilty of Satan in a *simple Error*, as when he takes up *Part* of a Truth which should stand in *Conjunction* with another, and sets it up *alone* against its own *Companion*, where we shall have the *Name* and Pretence *kept up*, but the *Thing* quite *destroyed*. God requires *Services* of Men, and prescribes to their Use, Prayer, Hearing, Sacraments, but because in these God is dishonoured when Men only draw near with their Lips, he further tells us, *That he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that Circumcision which is of the Flesh*, &c. This Part are some Men so fixed upon, that they think they are discharged of the other, and in Practice go quite from *these Duties*, and yet still they profess they are *for Ordinances* and the *Worship of God*; just so are some Men *for Christ*, but then 'tis but the *Name*, not the *Thing*; they own Christ they say, but then 'tis *Christ in them*, and *Christ come in their Flesh*, but not that Christ *that died at* Jerusalem, as a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men.

2*dly*, Satan takes great Care that an Error be (in all the Ways of its Propagation) *cloathed with Scripture-phrases*; and the less the Error can pretend to any plausible Ground of Scripture, the more doth he endeavour to adorn it with Scripture-*Language*, (I understand this chiefly of such Errors, as are designed for the *Multitude*) so that tho' Scripture be not used to prove the Error, yet are Deceivers taught to *express* their *Conceptions* by it, and to *accommodate* the Words and Sentences of it to their Purposes; for besides Pride and Confidence, *scriptural Eloquence* is a necessary Ingredient to make a *powerful Deluder*. Observe the *Ringleaders* of Errors, and you shall find that ordinarily, such have at first been *studious* of the Scriptures; and tho' never able to *digest* them, yet when they *turned their Ears from Truth*, they have carried their *Scripture-Language* (which they had before brought themselves unto by long Custom) away with them, and still retain it, and express their Opinions by it.

Now this is a great Advantage to Satan. For *first*, By this Means the *ignorant* Multitude are often caught without

any more ado; if they hear Scripture Expreſſions they are apt to think that *all is Truth* which is ſpoken *by them*; and they the rather believe it, becauſe they will imagine ſuch Teachers to be *well verſed* in Scripture, and conſequenely either ſo *honeſt*, or ſo *knowing* that they neither *can*, nor *will* delude them. *Secondly*, There is a *Majeſty* in Scripture which (in ſome Senſe) doth *ſtick* to the very *Expreſſions* of it; Men may perceive that generally Hearers are more *affected* with *Scripture-Eloquence*, than with *Play-book Language*; it hath (as it were) a Charm in the Words, which makes the Ear attentive, more than a quaint Diſcourſe, ſtarched up in the Dreſs of common Rhetorick: One gives us an Obſervation to that Purpoſe of his own Preaching (*a*), and ſo may many others. While then Men hear ſuch Language, they have a Reverence to it. And as Phyſicians cover their Pills with Gold that the Patient might more willingly take them; ſo do Men often ſwallow down Error without due Conſideration, becauſe conveyed to them in a Language which they reſpect.

Secondly, Satan's ſecond Care for the Advancement of Error, (after he hath given it all the Countenance he can from Scripture) is to gild it over with *ſpecious Pretences*: he ſets it off with all the Bravery he can, and then urgeth that as an Argument of its Truth. Men are apt to judge that what doth *better* their ſpiritual Condition cannot be a Lie or Deluſion; and the Argument were the more conſiderable, if the Advantages were *ſuch* as he *pretends* them to be: But the very *Noiſe* and Boaſt of Advantages *pleaſe* the Unwary, without a due Enquiry into their Reality. The Apoſtle in *Rom.* xvi. 18. reduceth all this Policy of the Deceiver to two Heads: (1.) *Good Words*, χρηστολογία; Words that ſet out the *Profit* and *Advantage* of the Thing (2. And *fair Speeches* εὐλογίας, Speeches that flatter the *Condition* of the Party. His Art, as to the *firſt* of theſe, is to tell them that the Notions offered to them are *ſpecial Diſcoveries*, *rare Myſteries*, which have been hidden from others; and thence infers, that it muſt of Neceſſity conduce much to their *Happineſs*, and ſpiritual *Perfection* to know and embrace them. Thoſe that troubled the Church in *Paul's* Days with falſe Doctrines, uſed this Slight of boaſting, as appears by that Expreſſion in 1 *Tim.* vi. 20. *Oppoſitions of Science*; it ſeems they called their Opinions, (tho' they were but

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(*a*) Savonarola triumph. Crucis, *l.* 2. *c.* 2.

profane and *Vain-bablings*) by the Name of *Science* or *Knowledge*, implying that all others, even the Apoſtles themſelves were *in the Dark*, and came ſhort of their *Illumination*. The like we have in *Rev.* ii. 24. of that abominable Propheteſs *Jezebel*, who recommended her blaſphemous filthy Doctrines, under the Name of *Depths*, Profundities, or hidden Knowledge, tho' the Spirit of God told that Church they were not ſuch; but *if Depths*, they were *Depths of Satan*, (as 'tis added there by Way of Correction) and not of the Spirit of God. We may trace theſe *Footſteps* of Satan in all *conſiderably* prevailing Errors: For what hath been more common than to hear Men ſpeak of the Deſigns they have been carrying on, under the ſpecious Titles *of Chriſt's coming to ſet up a righteous Kingdom; the Churches coming out of* Babylon, *and out of the Wilderneſs; the Dawning of the Day of the Lord; the Day of Reformation, the Time of the Reſtitution of all Things*; with Abundance of Brags of the ſame Kind. I ſhall add no particular Inſtance of this Nature; but a few Strains of *H. Nicholas*, with whom ſuch high promiſing Vaunts were ordinary. His Service of Love, he compares to the *moſt Holy*, (whereas *John*'s Doctrine of Repentance was but a Preparation to the *Holy*; and the *Service of Chriſt* he allowed to be no more than as the *Holy* of the Temple) this his Service he calls, *the Perfection of Life, the Completion of Prophecies, the perfect Concluſion of the Works of God, the Throne of Chriſt, the true Reſt of the Choſen of God, the laſt Day, the ſure Word of Prophecy, the New* Jeruſalem, and what not?

If we make further Enquiry into the *Nature* of theſe fair promiſing Myſteries, we ſhall find that Satan moſt frequently pitcheth upon theſe *Three*. *Firſt*, He befools Men into a Belief, that the Scriptures do, under the *Vail* of their Words and Sentences, contain ſome *hidden Notions*, that are *of Purpoſe* ſo diſguiſed, that they may be *locked up* from the Generality of Men, at leaſt from *learned* and wiſe Men; and that theſe Rarities cannot be diſcerned from the *uſual Significations* of the Words and Phraſes, (as we underſtand other Books of the ſame Language) but they fancy theſe ſacred Writings to be like the Writings of the *Egyptians* (a), by which they abſconded their Myſteries, eſpecially like that Kind of Writing, whereby under Words of *common known Senſe*, they intended Things

(a) *As* Ibis a Scarabeo accipitris pulchritudinem participat: *By which they ſignified the Moon borrowing its Light from the Sun.*

which the *Words themselves could not signify*; and that which occasions this Imagination is this, that we read frequently of *Mysteries* in Scriptures, and *hidden Wisdom*, and the *special Revelation* of them to God's Children, which are very great Truths, but yet not to be so understood, as this Delusion supposeth: For these Expressions in Scripture intend no more than this, that the *Design* of God to *save Man by Christ* is in itself a *Mystery*, which never would have been *found out* without a *special Revelation*; and that tho' this Mystery is *now revealed* by the Gospel, yet as to the *Application* of it to the Hearts of Men in *Conversion*, by the Operation of the Spirit, it is *yet a Mystery*. But none of these intend any such Suggestion, that there are private Notions of *Truth* or *Doctrine* that are lying *under Ground* (as it were) in Scripture-words, which the Words in the *common Language* will *not acquaint* us withal; nay, the contrary is expressly affirmed, when we are told that all is *plainly* laid open to the very *Simple*, so that from the Scriptures they may as well understand the *fundamental* Principles of Religion, as they may understand *any other* Thing which their Language doth express to them.

However in this Satan takes Advantage of Mens *Pride* and *Curiosity*, to make them forward in the *Acceptation* of such Offers, especially when such Things are represented, as the *only saving Discoveries* which a Man cannot be ignorant of but with Hazard of Damnation.

Secondly, In this Boast of Mystery, Satan sometimes takes another Course somewhat differing from the former, and that is to put Men upon *allegorical Reflections* and Allusions, by which the *historical* Passages of Scripture are made (besides the Import of the History) *Resemblances* of spiritual Truths; which supposeth the *Letter* of Scripture to be *true* (but still as no better than the *first Rudiments* to train up Beginners withal) yet withal, that the *spiritual Meaning* of it raiseth the Skilful to a higher Form in Christ's School. At this Rate all are turned into Allegorics. If they fall upon the *first of* Genesis, they think they then truly understand it, when they apply the *Light* and *Darkness*, and God's *separating* of them, with such other Passages, to the *Regeneration* of the Soul. The like Work make they with the *Sufferings* of Christ. But then the crafty Adversary at last enticeth them on to *let go the History*, as if it were nothing but a *Parable*, not really acted, but only fitted to *represent* Notions to us. *Allegories* were a *Trap* which the Devil had for the

the *Jews*, and wherein they wonderfully pleased themselves. How much *Origen* abused himself and the Scriptures by this Humour is known to many; and how the Devil hath prevailed generally by it upon giddy People in later Times, I need not tell you.

The Pretence that Satan hath for this Dealing is raised from some Passages of the *New Testament*, wherein many Things of the *Old Testament* are said to have had a *mystical* Signification of Things expressed or transacted then, and some Things are expresly called *Allegories*. Hence *Papists* determine the Scriptures to have, besides the *grammatical* Sense, (which all of us do own) and besides the *tropological* Sense (which is not divers or distinct from the Grammatical; as when from Histories, we deduce Instructions of holy and sober Carriage) an *allegorical* and *analogical* Sense: In which dealing Men consider not, that the *Spirit* of God his interpreting a *Passage or two* allegorically, will never justify any Man's *Boldness* in presuming to do the like to any *other Passage* of Scripture; and beside, when any hath tried his Skill that Way, another may with *equal Probability* carry the same Scripture to a *different Interpretation*, and by this Means, the Scripture shall not only become *obscure*, but altogether *uncertain* and doubtful, and unable to prove any Thing; so that this doth extremely dishonour Scripture, by making it little less than ridiculous. *Porphyry* and *Julian* made themselves Sport with it, upon the Occasion of *Origen*'s allegorizing (*a*), and no Wonder, seeing that Humour (as One calls it) is no better than a *learned Foolery*. Notwithstanding this, Men are sometime transported with a strange Delight in turning all into Allegories, and *picking* Mysteries out of some *By-passages* and Circumstances of Scripture, where one would least expect them: Which I can ascribe to no second Cause more, than to the Working and Power of *Fancy*, which as it can frame *Ideas* and Images of Things, out of that that affords no real Likeness or Proportion, (as Men that create to themselves *Similitudes* and Pictures in the *Clouds* or in the *Fire*) so doth it please itself in its *own Work*, and with a Kind of natural Affection, it doth kiss and hug its *own Baby*. It hath been my Wonder sometimes to see how fond Men have been of their own Fancies, and how extreamly they have *doted* upon a very *Babble*. I might

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(*a*) *Whitaker* de Sc. Lit. sententiâ adv. Duræum, *lib.* 2. *p.* 88. Partim a doctâ quadam insania discrepat.

note to you Examples of this, even to Nauseousness, in all Studies, as well as in this of Religion. Those that affect the *Sublimities of Chymistry*, do usually by a strange Boldness stretch all the sacred Mysteries of Scripture (as of the *Trinity*, of *Regeneration*, &c.) to represent their *Secrets* and *Processes*, as may be seen sufficiently in their Writings: One of them I cannot forbear to name, and that is *Glauber* (a); who doth so please himself with some idle *Whims* about *Sal* and *Sol*, that at last he falls in with *Bernardinus Gomesius*, (whom he cites and approves) who in this one Word ἅλς (which signifies *Salt*) finds the *Trinity*, the *Generation* of the Son, the *two Natures* of Christ, the *calling* of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the *Procession* of the Spirit, and the *Communications* of the Spirit in the *Law* and *Gospel*, and all this he gathers from the *Shapes*, *Strokes* and *Positions* of these three Letters: A very subtile Invention! Not unlike to this, were some of the Dotages of the *Jewish Cabala*, which they gathered from the *different Writing* of some Letters in the sacred Text, from the *transposing* of them, and from their *mystical Arithmetick*. *R. Elias* from the Letter *Aleph*, mentioned six Times in *Gen.* i. 1. collected his Notion of the World's Continuance for 6000 Years, because that Letter *Aleph* stands for *a Thousand* in the *Hebrew* Computation. Another *Rabbi* (mentioned by *Lud. Cappellus* (a)) hath a profound Speculation concerning the *first Letter of* Genesis, which, (as he saith) doth therefore begin with *Beth*, and not with *Aleph*, to shew the *unexceptionable Verity of God's Word*, against which no Mouth can justly open itself; and this he gathers from the Manner of the Pronounciation of that Letter; *Beth*, which is performed by the Closure of the Lips. It were not possible to imagine, that *wise* Men should be thus carried away with *childish* Follies, if there were not some Kind of *Inchantment* in Fancy, which makes the *Hit* of a *Conceit*, (tho' never so silly) intoxicate them into an *Apprehension* of a *rare Discovery*. And doubtless this is the very Thing that doth so transport the Allegorizers and Inventers of Mysteries, that they are ravished either with the Discovery of a *New-nothing*, or with the rare Invention of an *Ænigmatical* Interpretation.

Thirdly, The Devil hath yet another Way of *coining* Mysteries, and that is a Pretence of a *more full* Discovery of Notions

(*a*) Vide Lumen Chymicum. Crollii Basil. Chymic. in prefatione. Glauber de figuratura Salium. *p.* 31, 38. (*b*) Lud. Cappelli Spec. in *Eph.* vi. 19.

tions and Ways, which (as he tells those that are willing to believe him) are but *glanced* at in the Scriptures; and this doth not only contain his Boast of *unfolding Prophesies*, and the dangerous Applications of them to Times and Places that are no Way concerned, which hath more than once put Men upon dangerous Undertakings) but also his *large Promise of teaching the Way of the Lord more perfectly*, and of leading Men into a *full Comprehension* of those *tremendous Mysteries*, wherein the Scripture hath *as industriously* concealed the *Reasons, Way, and Manner of their Being*, as it hath *fully asserted* that they are, (such are the *Decrees* of God, the *Trinity*, &c.) as also of unfolding and teaching *at large* those Things that the Scripture seems only to *hint at*. In all which Points we have Instances enough at Hand, which will shew us how the Devil hath played his Game, either by making Men *bold* in Things *not revealed*, or by drawing Men to *dislike solid* Truths, and by puffing them up with Notions, till at last they were prepared for the Impression of some grand Delusion. All this while I have only explained the *first Head* of Satan's specious Pretences (*a*), which consists in the Promise of Discoveries and Mysteries.

The next Head of Pretences (*b*), are those that relate to the *Persons* inamoured with these supposed Mysteries. With these he strokes their Heads, and causeth them to hug themselves in a Dream of an imaginary Happiness. For if they have the Knowledge of Mysteries, which are locked up from other Men, they cannot avoid this Conclusion, *That they are the only Favourites of Heaven; that they only have the Spirit, are only taught of God*, &c. Such swelling Words of Vanity have ever accompanied Delusion. And indeed we shall find the Confidence of such Men *more strong*, and their false Embracements *more rapturous*, than *ordinarily* the Ways of Truth do afford, upon this Account; that in such Cases, Fancy is *elevated*, and the Delights of a *raised Fancy* are *excessive*, and *Enthusiastical*. 'Tis a Kind of spiritual *Frenzy*, which extends all the Faculties to an extraordinary Activity; the Devil doing all he can to further it, by his utmost Contributions Joy, Delight, Hope, Love, are all raised to make an *Hubbub* in the Heart; whereas on the contrary, *Truth is modest, humble, sober*, and affords a *more silent Joy*, though more *even* and *lasting*.

Here

(*a*) χρησολογίαι, good Words. (*b*) ἐυλογίαι, fair Speeches.

Here might I set Error before you in its *Rant*, and give you a Taste of the *high flown Strains* of it. *Montanus* (as vile as he was) had the Confidence to call himself the *Comforter*. *Novatus* and his Brother would be no less than *Moses* and *Aaron*. The *Gnosticks* called themselves the *Illuminati*. The *Swinkfieldians* assumed the Title of the *Confessors of the Glory of Christ*. The *Family of Love* had their *Evangelium Regni*, the Gospel of the Kingdom. The *Fratricelli*, distinguished themselves from others by the Term *Spiritual*. *Muntzer* asserted, That all of his Opinion, were *God*'s *Elect*: and that all the Children of their *Religion* were to be called *the Children of God*; and that all others were *ungodly*, and designed to *Damnation*. *H. Nicholas* affirms, That there was *no Knowledge of Christ nor Scripture, but in his Family*. To this Purpose most of them speak, that forsake the Ways of Truth; and though these Swellings are but *Wind* and *Vapour*, yet those *Heights* are very *serviceable* to the Devil's Purposes: Who by this Means *confirms* those whom he hath already *conquered*, and then fits them out with the greater Confidence to allure others; and Men are apt enough to be drawn by fair Shews, and confident Boastings. But I proceed.

The *third* Stratagem of Satan for promoting Error, is *to astonish Men with strange Language, and affected Expressions*. It was an old Device of Satan to coin an *unintelligible Gibberish*, as the proper *Vehicle* of strange *Enthusiastick* Doctrine, and this he artificially suits to his pretended Mysteries; without this his rare Discoveries would be too flat and dull to gain upon any Man of competent Understanding. For if these *Dotages* were cloathed in *plain Words*, they would either appear to be *direct Nonsense*, or *ridiculous Folly*. It concerns him when he hath any Feats of Delusion in Hand, to set them off with a *canting Speech*, as Juglers use their hard Words, of *Abif*, *Casyl*, *Zazo*, *Presto*, *Millat*, &c. to put their ignorant Admirers into a Belief of some unknown Power by which they do their Wonders. And this is in some Sort necessary; extraordinary Matters are above Expression, and such *uttered Expressions* put Men into an Expectation of Things *substantial*. This *Knack* Satan hath constantly used. *Montanus* had his strange Speeches. And all along downward to our Times, we may observe, That Error hath had this gaudy Dress; the *Familists* especially abound with it, you may read whole Books

full of such a Kind of speaking, as the Book called *Theologia Germanica*, or *German Divinity*; the Books of *Jacob Behmen*, *The bright Morning-star*, &c. Neither are the *Papists* free; one (*a*) of late hath taken the Pains to shew them this, and other Follies: Among them you may find such Talk as this, of being *beclosed in the Mid head of God, and in his Meek-head; of being substantially united to God, of being oned to God; as also of the Abstractedness of Life, of passive Unions, of the Deiform Fund of the Soul; of a State of Introversion; of a super-essential Life, a State of Nothingness*, &c. Just like the Ravings of *H. Nicholas*, *David George*, and others, who confidently discourse of being *godded with God*, of being *consubstantiated with the Deity*, and of *God's being manned with them*.

I have oft considered, what Reason might be given for the *Takingness* of such Expressions, and have been forced to satisfy myself with these: *First*, Many mistake the Knowledge of *Words*, for the Knowledge of *Things*. And well may poor ignorant Men believe, they have attained, no Man knows what, by this Device; when among learned Men, the Knowledge of *Words* is esteemed so great a Pitch of Learning, and they nourish a great many Controversies that are only *verbal*. *Secondly*, Some are pleased to be accounted *Understanders* by others, and rest in such high *Words*, as a *Badge* of Knowledge. *Thirdly*, Some are delighted with such an hard Language upon an Hope, that it will lead them to the Knowledge of the *Things* at last: They think *strange* Expressions are a Sign of *deep* Mysteries. I knew one that set himself to the reading of *Jacob Behmen's* Books, (tho' at present he confessed he was scarce able to make common Sense of three Lines together) upon a secret Enticement that he had from the Language to come to some *excellent* Discovery, by much Pains and reading. *Fourthly*, Some that have their Fancies heated (*b*), have by this Means broken *confused Impressions* of strange Things in their Imaginations, and conceive themselves to know Things beyond what common Language can express; as if with *Paul*, rapt up into the third Heaven, *they hear and see Wonders unutterable*. But what Reason soever prevails with Men to take up such a Way of

(*a*) Dr. Stillingfleet *Idolatry of the Church of* Rome. (*b*) Dicas eos mera somnia fonare, nam somnium sermone spreto, exoticum nescio quod idioma sibi fingunt, vix sunt suos discipulos supra cœlum rapere. *Calvin* in *Jud.* 13.

of ſpeaking, Satan makes them believe, that it contains a rich *Mine* or Treaſury, not of common Truths, but of extraordinary *Profundities*.

Fourthly, Inſtead of Argument to confirm an Error, ſometimes we have only *bold Aſſertions*, *that it is Truth*, and a confident condemning the contrary as an Error, urging the Danger of Mens rejecting it, *backed with threatning of Hell and Damnation*; and all this in the Words Scripture. To be ſure they are right, and all other Men are wrong. This Kind of Confidence and Fierceneſs hath been ſtill the Complexion of any remarkable *Way* of Deluſion; for that commonly confines their Charity to their own *Party*, (which is a great Token of an Error) not only may you obſerve in ſuch extraordinary *Proclamations of Wrath* againſt thoſe that will not believe them; (a Practice uſed by the mad *Fanaticks* of *Munſter*, who (as our *Quakers* were wont to do) go up and down the Streets, crying, *Wo, wo; Repent, repent; come out of* Babylon; *the heavy Wrath of God*; *the Ax is laid to the Root of the Tree*,) but in their more ſettled Teaching, they pronounce all to be *Antichriſt*, and of the *carnal Church*, that do oppoſe them: Take for this *H. Nicholas* his Words, *All Knowledge* (beſides his) *is but Witchery and Blindneſs*; *and all other Teachers, and Learners, are a falſe Chriſtianity, and the Devil's Synagogue; a Neſt of Devils, and wicked Spirits; a falſe Being, the Antichriſt, the Kingdom of Hell, the Majeſty of the Devil*, &c. This Piece of Art, not only our *Quakers*, (to whom nothing is more familiar, that to ſay to any Oppoſer, *Thou art damned, thou art in the Gall of Bitterneſs, the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone is prepared for thee*, &c.) but alſo the *Papiſts* commonly practiſe, who *ſhut all out of Heaven* that are not of *their Church*; and when they would affright any from *Proteſtantiſm*, they make not nice to tell him, that there is no *Poſſibility of Salvation* but in their *Way*.

The Reaſons of this Policy are theſe, 1. The Heart is apt to be *ſtartled* with Threatnings, and *moved* by Commands; eſpecially thoſe that are of a more *tender* and frightful Spirit: And tho' they know nothing by themſelves, yet theſe beget Fears, which may *ſecretly* betray Reaſon, and make Men leave the right *Way* becauſe of Affrightment. 2. The Confidence of the Aſſerters of ſuch Things hath alſo its *Prevalency*; for Men are apt to think that they

they would not ſpeak ſo, if they were not *very certain*, and had not *real Experience* of what they ſaid; and thus are Men *threaped* out of their own Perſwaſions. 3. The *native Majeſty* of Scripture, in a Buſineſs of ſo great *Hazard*, adds an inexpreſſible Force to ſuch Threatnings; and tho' (being *miſapplied*) they are no more *Scripture Threatnings*; yet, becauſe God hath ſpoken his Diſpleaſure in *thoſe Words*, Men are apt to *revere* them; as Men cannot avoid to fear a Serpent or Toad, tho' they know the Sting and Poiſon were taken out) becauſe Nature did furniſh them with a Sting or Venom.

Fiftbly, 'Tis an uſual Trick of Satan to derive a Credit and Honour to Error, from the Excellencies (ſuppoſed or real) of the *Perſons* that more eminently appear for it: So that it fetcheth no ſmall Strength from the Qualities of thoſe that propagate it. The Vulgar (that do not uſually dive deep into the Natures of Things) content themſelves with the moſt *ſuperficial* Arguments, and are ſooner won to a good Conceit of any Opinion, by the Reſpects they carry to the Author, than by the *ſtrongeſt Demonſtration*.

The Excellencies that uſually move them, are either their *Gifts* or their *Holineſs*. If the Seedſmen of an Error be *learned*, or *eloquent* and *affectionate* in his ſpeaking, Men are apt to ſubſcribe to any Thing he ſhall ſay, from a blind *devotional Admiration* of the Parts wherewith he is endowed. And often where there is no Learning, or where Learning is decryed, (as ſavouring too much of Man) if there be *natural Fluency* of Speech, with a ſufficient Meaſure of Confidence, it raiſeth them ſo much the higher in the Eſteem of the common Sort, who therefore judge him to be immediately taught of God, and divinely furniſhed with Gifts. At this Point began the Diviſions of the Church of *Corinth*, they had ſeveral Officers ſeverally gifted; ſome were taken with one Man's Gift, others with another Man's; ſome are for *Paul*, as being profound, and nervous in his Diſcourſes; others for *Apollo*, as *eloquent*; a third Sort were for *Cephas*, as (ſuppoſe) an *affectionate* Preacher; thus upon perſonal *Reſpects* were they divided into Parties. And if theſe ſeveral Teachers were of different Opinions, their Adherents imbraced them upon an *affectionate Conceit* of their Excellencies. And generally Satan hath wrought much by ſuch Conſiderations as theſe. This he urgeth againſt Chriſt himſelf, when he ſet up the

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Wiſdom and Learning of the Rulers and Phariſees, as an Argument of Truth in their Way of rejecting ſuch a *Meſſias*, John vii. 48. *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Phariſees believed on him?* There is no Inſinuation more frequent than this; theſe are *learned, excellent, able Men*, and therefore what they ſay, or teach, is not to be disbelieved; and tho' this be but *argumentum ſtultum*, a fooliſh Argument, yet ſome that would be accounted wiſe, do make very great Uſe of it. The Crack of *learned Doctors* among the Papiſts, is one *Topick* of Perſuaſion to Popery, and ſo to other Errors, as appears by this, that all Errors abound with large Declamations of the Praiſes of their Founders and Teachers: And the moſt illiterate Errors uſually magnify the excellent Inſpirements, and Gifts of Utterance of their Leaders.

But the other Excellency of Holineſs in the Teachers of Error, is more generally and more advantagiouſly improved by Satan, to perſuade Men, that all is true Doctrine which ſuch Men profeſs. Of this Deluſion Chriſt forewarned us, *They ſhall come in Sheeps Clothing*; that is, under the Mask of ſeeming Holineſs; (at leaſt at firſt) notwithſtanding *beware of them*, Matth. vii. 15. Thoſe complained of by *Paul*, 2 Cor. xi. 15. tho' they were *Satan's Miniſters*, yet that they and their Doctrine might be more plauſibly entertained, they were *transformed as the Miniſters of Righteouſneſs*; this Cunning we may eſpy in Hereticks of all Ages. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* uſed a Pretence of *Sanctity* as a main Piece of Art, to draw others to their *Way*; their Alms, Faſtings, long Prayers, ſtrict Obſervations, *&c.* were all deſigned as a *Net* to catch the Multitude withal. The lying Doctrines of *Antichriſt* were foretold by *Paul*, to have their Succeſs from this Stratagem; all that Idolatry and Heatheniſm which he is to introduce, muſt be, (and hath been) through the Hypocriſy of a painted Holineſs, 1 *Tim.* iv. 2. and where he intends moſt to play the *Dragon*, Rev. xiii. 11. he there moſt artificially counterfeits the Innocency and Simplicity of the *Lamb*. *Arch-hereticks* have been *Arch-pretenders* to Sanctity; and ſuch Pretences have great Influence upon Men: For Holineſs and Truth are ſo near of Kin, that they will not readily believe that it can be a *falſe Doctrine* which an *holy Man* teacheth; they think that God that hath given a Teacher *Holineſs* will not deny him *Truth*: Nay, this

this is an eaſy and plauſible *Meaſure*, which they have for Truth and Error. To enquire into the Intricacies and Depths of a Diſputation, is too burdenſome and difficult for ordinary Men, and therefore they ſatisfy themſelves with this Conſideration, (which hath little Toil in it, and as little Certainty) *That ſurely God will not leave holy Men to a Deluſion.* It would be endleſs to give all the Inſtances that are at Hand in this Matter; I ſhall only add a few Things of Satan's Method in managing this Argument, as,

Firſt, When he hath a Deſign of *common*, or prevailing Deluſion, he mainly endeavours to *corrupt* ſome Perſon of a more *ſtrict*, ſerious and religious Carriage, to be the Captain and Ringleader; ſuch Men were *Pelagius*, *Arius*, *Socinus*, &c. He mainly endeavours to have fit Inſtruments. If he be upon that Deſign of *blemiſhing* Religion, and to bring Truth into a Diſ-eſteem, then (as (*a*) one obſerves) he perſuades ſuch into the Miniſtry, as he fore-ſees are likely to be *idle*, *careleſs*, *prophane*, and *ſcandalous*; or doth endeavour to *promote* ſuch Miniſters into more *conſpicuous Places*, and provokes them to Miſcarriage, that ſo their Example may be an Objection againſt Truth, while in the mean Time, he is willing that the Oppoſers of Truth ſhould continue their ſmooth Carriage; and then he puts a *two-edged Sword* into the Hands of the Unſtable: Can that be Truth where there is ſo much Wickedneſs? And can this be Error, where there is ſo much Holineſs?

Secondly, In Proſecution of this Deſign, he uſually puts Men upon ſome more than *ordinary Strictneſs*, that the Pretence of Holineſs may be the more augmented; in this Caſe a Courſe of ordinary Sanctity is not enough, they muſt be above the common Practice; ſome ſingular *Additions* of Severity and Exactneſs above what is written, are commonly affected to make them the more remarkable. Chriſt notes this in the *Phariſees*, concerning all their Devotions, and the Ways of expreſſing them; their *Phylacteries* ſpoken of, *Matth.* xxiii. 5. (as ſome (*b*) think) were not intended by that Text of *Deut.* vi. 8. but only that they ſhould remember the Law, and endeavour not to forget it; as they do that tie a Thread, or ſuch-like Thing about their Finger for a Remembrancer; according to *Prov.* iii. 3. *Bind them about thy Neck, write them upon the Table*

(*a*) *Acontius* Stratagem. Satanæ. *Lib.* 8. Page 406. *Oxon.* (*b*) *Jer.* P. *Theoph. Lyra*, &c.

of thine Heart. However, if they were literally enjoined, they would have them (as Chriſt tells them) *broader* than others, as an Evidence of their greater Care. The *Cathari* boaſted of Sanctity and good Works, and rejected ſecond Marriages; the *Apoſtolici* were ſo called, from a pretended ſtricter Imitation of the ſingular Holineſs of the Apoſtles. The *Valeſians* made themſelves *Eunuchs* (according to the Letter) *for the Kingdom of God.* The *Donatiſts* accounted that no true Church, where any Spot or Infirmity was found. The *Meſſalians*, or *Euchytæ* were for conſtant praying. The *Nudipedales* for going barefoot, *&c.* The *Papiſts* urge canonical Hours, Whippings, Pennances, Pilgrimages, voluntary Poverty, Abſtinence from Meats, and Marriage—in their Prieſts and Votaries. In a Word, all noted Sects have ſomething of ſpecial *Singularity*, whereby they would difference themſelves from others, as a peculiar *Character* of their greater Strictneſs; and for want of better Stuff, they ſometimes take up affected Geſtures, devotional Looks, and outward Garbs; all which have this Note, That what they moſt ſtand upon, God hath leaſt, or not at all *required at their Hands*; their *voluntary Humility*, or *neglecting of the Body*, being but *Will-worſhip*, and a ſelf-deviſed Piece of Religion.

Thirdly, When once Men are ſet in the Way of exerciſing Severities, Satan endeavours (by working upon their Fancies) to preſs them on further to a *Delight* and *Satisfaction* in theſe (*a*) Ways of Strictneſs, ſo that the Practiſers themſelves are not only *confirmed* in theſe Uſages, and the Opinions that are concomitant with them; but others are the more eaſily drawn to like and *profeſs* the ſame Things. Any *ſerious* Temper under any Profeſſion of Religion, eaſily comes to be *devout*, and readily complies with Opportunities of evincing its Devotion by Strictneſs: And therefore we ſhall find among *Heathens*, a great devotional Severity, and ſuch as far exceeds all of that Kind, which the *Papiſts* do uſually brag of; the *Magi* abſtained

(*a*) Atq; hac ratione ſeducta eſt, aſtu Satanæ, innumera hominum multitudo, quæ ut viam vitæ ambularet, arctam illam ingreſſa eſt, quæ inſtinctu Satanæ per humanas eſt ad inventionis inducta, poſteaquam vidit Satan viam ſuam quæ ad mortem ducit, traduci, eo quod ſit lata, & quod multi per illam ambulent, cæperintq; quidam arctam & ſtrictam quærere, quæ non teneretur à multis, callido ſuo conſilio effeci, ut pro vera via vitæ, arriperetur ea, quæ quidam eſſet ſtata via, vero vitæ non eſſet, *&c.* Muſculus in *Mat.* 7. 13.

ed from Wine; eat not the Flesh of living Creatures, and professed Virginity. The *Indian Brachmans* did the like and besides used themselves to incredible Hardship; they laid upon Skins, sustained the Violence of the Sun and Storms, and exercised themselves therewith; some spending thirty seven Years in this Course, others more. We read strange Things of this Nature concerning the *Egyptian* Priests, and others. The *Mahometans* are not without their religious Orders, which pretend a more holy and austere Life than others; and tho' of some (as of the *Torlachs* and *Dervizes*) several private Villanies are reported, yet of others, (as of the Order of *Calender*) we are assured from History, that they profess Virginity, and expose themselves to Hardship; and a stricter Devotion in their Way; and generally 'tis said, of all of them, that they go meanly clad, or half naked; some abstinent in eating, and drinking, professing Poverty, renouncing the World: Some can endure cutting and slashing, as if they were insensible; some profess perpetual Silence, tho' urged with Injuries and Tortures; others have Chains about their Necks and Arms, to shew, that they are bound up from the World, &c. If such Things may be found among *Heathens*, no wonder that Error boasts of them; for in both there is the same Reason of Mens *pleasing themselves* in such Hardships, (which is from a natural Devotion, assisted by Satan's Cunning) and the same Design driven on by it; for the Devil doth confirm *Heathens* and *Mahometans* in their false *Worship*, by the Reverence and Respect they carry to such Practices.

Fourthly, Because religious Holiness hath a Beauty in it, and is very lovely; he doth all he can to affect Men with the highest Reverence for these Pretences of religious Strictness: So that they that will not be at Pains to practise them, can bestow an excessive Respect and Admiration upon those that are grown famous in the Use of such Things; and by that Means, being almost adored, they are without doubt persuaded, that all they teach or do is right, and in a doting Fondness they multiply superstitious Errors. *Idolatry* is supposed to have a great Part of its Rise from this: While Men endeavoured to express their thankful and admiring *Remembrances* of some excellent Persons, by setting up their Pictures, their Posterity began to worship them as Gods; Pilgrimages were first set on Foot by the

Reſpects that Men gave to Places that were made famous by Perſons and Actions of more than ordinary Holineſs *: And becauſe the Devil found Men ſo very apt to pleaſe themſelves in paying ſuch devotional Reverences, he wrought upon their ſuperſtitious Humour to multiply to themſelves the Occaſions thereof, and by fabulous Traditions ſent them to Places no otherwiſe made *memorable* than by Dreams and *Impoſtures*. Much of this you might ſee if you would accompany a *Caravan* from *Cairo* to *Mecca* and *Medina*, where you would ſee the zealous (*a*) Pilgrims with a great many Oriſons and Prayers *compaſſing Abraham*'s Houſe; *kiſſing* a Stone, which (they are told) fell from Heaven, bleſſing themſelves with a *Relique* of the old Veſture of *Abraham*'s Houſe; *waſhing* themſelves in the Pond, which (as their Tradition goes) the *Angel* ſhewed to *Hagar*; *ſaluting* the Mountain of Pardons; throwing Stones in Defiance of the Devil, as (their Legend tells them) *Iſmael* did; their Prayers on the *Mountain of Health*, their Viſit to the *Prophets Tomb* at *Medina*, &c. The like might you obſerve among the *Papiſts*, in their Pilgrimages to *Jeruſalem* and the *Sepulchre*, to the Lady of *Loretto*'s Chappel and other Places. By ſuch Devices as theſe the unobſervant People are tranſported with a *Pleaſure*, inſomuch that they not only perſuade themſelves they are very devout in theſe Reverences, but they alſo become unalterably fixed to theſe Errors that do ſupport theſe delightful Practices, or as Conſequences do iſſue from them.

Sixthly, A more plauſible Argument for Error (than the Learning and Holineſs of the Perſons that profeſs it) is that of Inſpiration, in which the Devil ſoars aloft, and pretends the higheſt divine Warrant for his Falſhoods: For *God is Truth*, and *we know that no Lie is of the Truth*. Now to make Men believe that God by his Holy Spirit doth in any Manner dictate ſuch Opinions, or certainly reveal ſuch Things for Truths, is one of the higheſt Artifices that he can pretend to, and ſuch a Confirmation muſt it be (to thoſe that are ſo perſuaded) that all *Diſputes* and *Doubtings* muſt neceſſarily be ſilenced.

That the *Devil* can thus *transform himſelf into an Angel of Light*, we are aſſured from Scripture, which hath particularly cautioned us againſt this Cheat. The Apoſtacy of the

* *Purchas* Pilg. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 19. out of *Euſebius*. (*a*) Vide *Purchas* Pilg. 3. *Chap.* 5.

the later Times, 1 *Tim.* iv. 1. the Apoſtle foretells ſhould be carried on by the Prevalency of this Pretence, *Some ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits.* That by *Spirits* there, *Doctrines* are intended rather than *Doctors*, is Mr. *Mede's* Interpretation (*a*): But it will come all to one, if we conſider that the Word *Spirit* carries more in it, than either *Doctrine* or *Doctor*; for to call either the one or the other *a Spirit* would be intolerably harſh, if it were not for this, that that *Doctor* is hereby ſuppoſed to pretend an *Infallibility* from the *Spirit of God*, or (which is all one) that he received his *Doctrine* by ſome *Immediate Revelation* of the Spirit; ſo that by *ſeducing Spirits* muſt be, *Men or Doctrines that ſeduce others to believe them, by the Pretence of the Spirit, or Inſpiration.* And that Text of 1 *John* iv. 1. doth thus explain it, *Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God*; which is as much as if he had ſaid, believe not every *Man* or *Doctrine* that ſhall pretend he is *ſent of God*, and hath *his Spirit*; and the Reaſon there given makes it yet more plain, becauſe many *falſe Prophets are gone out into the World*: So that theſe *Spirits* are *falſe Prophets*, Men that pretend Inſpiration. And the Warning, *believe not every Spirit*, tells us, that Satan doth with ſuch a Dexterity *counterfeit* the Spirit's Inſpirations, that holy and good Men are in no ſmall *Hazard* to be deceived thereby. Moſt full to this Purpoſe is that of 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 2. *That ye be not ſoon ſhaken in Mind, or be troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by Word, nor by Letter as from us, as that the Day of Chriſt is at Hand*; where the ſeveral *Means* of Seduction are particularly reckoned, as diſtinct from the *Doctrine* and *Doctors*, and by Spirit can be meant no other than a Pretence of Inſpiration or Revelation (*b*).

'Tis evident then that Satan by this Artifice, uſeth to put a Stamp of Divine Warrant upon his adulterate Coin; and if we look into his Practice, we ſhall in all Ages find him at this Work. Among *Heathens* he frequently gained a Repute to his ſuperſtitious idolatrous Worſhip by this Device: The Men of greateſt Note among them feigned a *Spiritual Commerce* with the Gods. *Empedocles* endeavoured to make the People believe that there was a Kind of *Divinity* in him, and affecting to be eſteemed more than a Man, caſt himſelf into the Burnings of *Mongebel*, that they might

(*a*) Apoſtacy of the latter Times, *p.* 7. (*b*) *Prideaux* Orat. X. de ſpir. ſeduct.

might ſuppoſe him to have been *taken up to the Gods*. *Pythagoras* his Fiction of a Journey to Hell was upon the ſame Account. *Philoſtratus* and *Cedrenus* report no leſs of *Apollonius*, than that he had *familiar Converſes* with their ſuppoſed Deities: And the like did they believe of their *Magi* and Prieſts; inſomuch that ſome cunning *Politicians* (obſerving how the Vulgar were under a deep Reverence to ſuch Pretences) gave it out that they had received their *Laws* by *Divine Inſpirations*. *Numa Pompilius* feigned he received his Inſtitutions from the *Nymph Ægeria*: *Lycurgus* from *Apollo*: *Minos* the Law-giver of *Candy*, boaſted that *Jupiter* was his Familiar. *Mahomet* alſo ſpeaks as high this Way as any, his *Alcoran* muſt be no leſs than a *Law* received *from God*, and to that End, he pretends a ſtrange Journey to Heaven, and frequent Converſe with the Angel *Gabriel*.

If we trace Satan in the Errors which he hath raiſed up under the Profeſſion of the Scriptures, we may obſerve the ſame Method, the *Valentinians*, *Gnoſticks*, *Montaniſts*, talked as confidently of the Spirit, as *Moſes* or the Prophets could do, and a great Deal more; for ſome of them blaſphemouſly called themſelves the *Paracletc*, or Comforter. Among the Monſters which later Ages produced, we ſtill find the ſame Strain; one ſaith he is *Enoch*, another ſtiles himſelf the *great Prophet*, another hath Raptures, and all immediately inſpired. The Papiſts have as much of this Cheat among them as any other, and ſome of their learned Defenders avouch their *lumen propheticum*, and *miraculorum gloria*, *Prophecies* and *Miracles*, to be the *two Eyes*, or the Sun and Moon of their Church; nay by a ſtrange Tranſpottment of Folly, (to the Forfeiture of the Reputation of Learning and Reaſon) they have ſo *multiplied* Revelations, that we have whole *Volumes* of them, as the Revelations of their *Saint Brigit* and others; and by wonderful Credulity they have not only advanced apparent *Dreams* and Dotages to the Honour of *Inſpirations* or Viſions, but upon this *ſandy Foundation* they have built a great many of their Doctrines, as *Purgatory*, *Tranſubſtantiation*, *auricular Confeſſion*, &c By ſuch Warrants have they inſtituted *Feſtivals*, and *founded* ſeveral Orders; the Particulars of theſe Things you may ſee more at large in Dr. *Stillingfleet* and others And that there might be nothing wanting that might make them ſhameleſly impudent, they are not content to *equal* their *Fooleries* with the Scriptures of God, as that the *Rule* of their St. *Francis* for

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I shall only instance in him, omitting others for Brevity's Sake) was not composed *by the Wisdom of Man*, but by *God himself*, and *inspired by the Holy Ghost*; but they advance *their* Prophets *above the Apostles*, and above *Christ* himself. Their St. *Benedict* (if you will believe them) was wrapt up to the *third Heavens*, where he saw God *Face to Face*, and heard the Choir of Angels; and their St. *Francis* was a *none such* for Miracles and Revelations. Neither may we wonder that Satan should be forward in urging this Cheat, when we consider,

1. What a *Reverence* Men *naturally* carry to Revelations, and how apt they are to be surprized with an *hasty* Credulity. An *old Prophecy*, pretended to be found in *a Wall*, or taken out of an *old Manuscript* (of I know not what uncertain Author,) is usually *more doted on*, than the plain and infallible *Rules* of Scripture: This we may observe daily, and Foreigners do much blame the *English* for a facile Belief of such Things; but it is a general Fault of Mankind, and we find even wise Men forward in their Persuasions upon meaner Grounds, than those that gain Credit to old Prophecies. For their *Antiquity* and *Strangeness* of Discovery, especially at such Times wherein the present Posture of Affairs seem to *favour* such Predictions with a *Probability* of such Events, are more likely to get Credit, than these *artificial Imitations* of the Ways and Garbs of the old Prophets, and the cunning *Legerdemain* of those that pretend to Inspirations, by *seeming Extasies*, Raptures, and confident Declarations, &c. nevertheless arrant Cheats, have by these Ways deceived no mean Men. *Alvarus* acknowledgeth (*a*) that he honoured a Woman as a Saint, that had Visions and Raptures, as if really inspired (and the same Apprehensions had the *Bishop* and *Friers*) who was afterward discovered to be a *naughty Woman*: Who shall then think it strange that the unobservant Multitude should be deluded by such an Art?

2. Especially if we consider that God himself took *their Course* to signify his Mind to Men; his Prophets were *divinely inspired* (*b*), and the Scriptures were not of *any private Interpretation*: The *Words* that the Penmen of Scriptures wrote, were not the *Interpretations* of their own *private Thoughts*; *for the Prophecy came not in old Time by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. Now tho' the Prophecies of Scripture are *sealed*, and no more is to be *added* to them upon any Pre-

(*a*) Lib. 2. cap. 45. p. 87. (*b*) ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως.

Pretence whatsoever; yet seeing there are Promises left us, of the *giving of the Spirit*, of *being taught* and *led by the Spirit*; it is an easy Matter for Satan to beguile Men into an Expectation of prophetick *Inspirations*, and a Belief of what is pretended so to be: For all Men do not, or will not understand, that these Promises of the Spirit have no Intendment of *new* and *extraordinary* immediate *Revelations*, but only of the *efficacious Applications* of what is *already revealed* in Scripture. This *Kind* of Revelation we acknowledge and teach, which is far enough from *Enthusiasm*, (that is, a pretended *Revelation* of *new* Truths) and we have Reason to assert (*a*), *that internal Persuasions without the external Word, are to be avoided as Satan's Cozenages.* But for all this, when Mens Minds are set a gadding, if they meet with such as magnify their own *Dreams*, and call their Fancies, *Visions*, the Suitableness of this to their Humour, makes them to reject our *Interpretations* of these Promises as false, and to persuade themselves that they are to be understood of such Inspirations *as the Prophets of old had*; and then they presently conclude they are to *believe* them, lest otherwise they should *resist the Holy Ghost.*

3. But the *Advantage* which the Devil hath to work *Delusion* upon by this Pretence, is an high Motive to him to practise upon it. For Inspirations, Visions, Voices, Impulses, Dreams and Revelations are Things wherein wicked *Impostors* may by many Ways and Artifices play the *Counterfeits* undiscovered; 'tis *easy* to prophesy *false Dreams, and to say, thus saith the Lord*, when yet *they do but lie, and the Lord never sent them, nor commanded them*, Jer. xxiii. 31. nay 'tis easy by *Tricks* and *Illusions*, to put that Honour and Credit upon their *Designs*, which they could not by their bare *Assertions*, backed with all their Art of seeming Seriousness: The *Inventions* of Men (that have been formerly successful in this Deceit) being now *laid open* to our Knowledge, may make us more wary in our Trust. Among the *Heathens* you may find notable Ways of Deceits of this Nature. The Story of *Hanno* and *Psappho* is commonly known, they tamed Birds, and learned them to speak, *Hanno and Psappho are Gods*; and then set them at Liberty, that Men hearing such *strange Voices* in the Woods from Birds, might imagine that these Men were declared *Gods* by special Discovery. *Mahomet's* Device of making a *Dove* to come frequently to his Ear, (which

(*a*) *Whitaker* de Author. Script contra Stapletonum, l. 1, c. 10. p. 131.

(which he did, by training her up to an Uſe of picking Corn out of it) ſerved him for an Evidence (among the vulgar Beholders, who knew not the true Cauſe of it) of his immediate Inſpiration by the Angel *Gabriel*, who (as he told them) whiſpered in his Ear in the *Shape of a Dove*. The like Knavery he practiſed for the Confirmation of the Truth of his *Alcoran*, by making a Bull (taught before to come at a Call or Sign) to come to him, with a Chapter upon his Horns. *Hector Boetius* tells us of a like Stratagem of a King of *Scots*, who (to animate his fainting Subjects againſt the *Picts* that had beaten them) cauſed a Man cloathed in the *ſhining Skins of Fiſhes*, and with rotten Wood (which as a Glow-worm in the Night, repreſents a faint Light) to come among them in the Dark, and through a *Reed* or hollow Trunk (that the Voice might not appear to be humane) to encite them to a vigorous Onſet: This they took to be an *Angel*, bringing them this Command from Heaven, and accordingly fought and prevailed. Crafty *Benedict*, (who was afterward *Pope* under the Name of *Boniface* VIII.) made ſimple *Celeſtine* V. give over the *Popedom*, by conveying to him a Voice through a Reed to this Purpoſe: *Celeſtine, Celeſtine, renounce the Papacy, give it over, if thou wouldſt be ſaved, the Burden is beyond thy Strength*, &c. The ſilly Man taking this for a Revelation from Heaven, quitted his Chair, and left it for that crafty Fox *Benedict*. Not very many Years ſince, the ſame Trick was played in this Country to *a Man of Revelations* (a), who called himſelf *David in Spirit*, when he had wearied his Entertainer with a long Stay, he quitted himſelf of his Company, (as I was credibly informed) by a Policy which he perceived would well ſuit with the Man's Conceitedneſs; for through a *Reed* in the *Night time* he tells him, that he muſt go into *Wales*, or ſome ſuch Country, and there preach the Goſpel; the next Morning the Man *avouches a Revelation from God* to go elſewhere, and ſo departs. Theſe Inſtances ſhew you how cunningly a cheating Knave may carry on a Pretence of Revelation or Viſion. And yet this is not all the Advantage which the Devil hath in this Matter, tho' it is an Advantage which he ſometime makes Uſe of when he is fitted with ſuitable Inſtruments. But he works moſt *dangerouſly* when he ſo acts upon Men, that they *themſelves* believe they have Viſions, Raptures and Revelations, for ſome are *really*

(a) *Paul Hobſon.*

really perſwaded that it is ſo with them. Neither is it ſtrange, that Men ſhould be deluded into an Apprehenſion that they hear and ſee what they do not; in *Fevers*, *Frenzies*, and *Madneſs*, we clearly ſee it to be ſo: And who can *convince* ſuch Perſons of their *Miſtakes*, when with as high a Confidence as may be, they contend *that they are not deceived*? Shall we think it ſtrange that Satan hath Ways of conveying falſe Apprehenſions upon Mens Minds? No ſurely, do we not ſee that the *Senſes* may be cheated, and that the *Fancies* of Men may be corrupted? Is it not eaſy for him to convey *Voices* to the Ear, or *Shapes* and Repreſentations to the Eye? And in ſuch Caſes, what can ordinarily hinder a Belief that they hear or ſee ſuch Things? But he needs not always work upon the Fancy by the Senſes. If he hath the Advantage of a *crazy diſtempered Fancy* (as commonly he hath in *melancholly Perſons*) he can ſo *ſtrongly fix* his Suggeſtions upon them, and ſo *effectually* ſet the Fancy on work to *embrace* them, that without any Appearance of Madneſs, they will perſwade themſelves that they have *Diſcoveries* from God, *Impulſes* by his Spirit, *Scriptures* ſet upon their Hearts, and what not? And becauſe they *feel* the Workings of theſe Things within them, it is impoſſible to make them ſo much *as ſuſpect* that they are decieved. Do but conſider the Power of *any Fancy* in a *melancholick* Perſon, and you may eaſily apprehend how Satan works in ſuch Deluſions. Melancholly doth ſtrangely *pervert* the Imagination, and will beget in Men wonderful Miſapprehenſions, and that ſometimes doth bewitch them into peremptory *uncontroulable* Belief of their Fancy; 'tis a vehement, confident Humour, what Way ſoever it takes, the Imagination thus corrupted hath an enormous *Strength*, ſo that if it fix upon Things never ſo abſurd or irrational, 'tis not reducible by the ſtrongeſt Reaſons. If ſuch a Man conceits himſelf *dead*, or that he is *tranſformed* to a *Wolf* or Cat, or that he is made of *Glaſs* (as many in this Diſtemper have done;) there is no Perſwaſion to the contrary, that can take Place with him. Now if this Humour be taken up with *divine Matters* (as uſually it doth, for it hath a *natural Inclination to religious Things*) it ſtill acts with *Fierceneſs* and *Confidence*, and there are many Things often concomitant to ſuch Actings, that if it miſconceit Inſpiration or Prophecy, the *Parties* themſelves are not only *bound up* under that Perſwaſion, but even *unwary Specta-*

Spectators are deluded. For ſometime a melancholy *Imagination* is not *wholly* corrupt, but only in reſpect of ſome *one* or *two* Particulars, whilſt in *other* Things it acts *regularly*, and then neither they nor others (that are unacquainted with ſuch Caſes) are ſo apt to ſuſpect that they are *miſtaken* in theſe Things while they act *rationally* and *ſoberly* in *other* Matters. Sometime they have vehement *Fits of Surpriſal* (for the Humour hath its Ebbings and Flowings) and this gives them Occaſion to apprehend that ſomething doth *ſupernaturally* act or raiſe them, and then when the Things they ſpeak, are for the *Matter* of them, of *religious Concern*, and *odd Notions* (for the Humour flies high, and bounds not itſelf with ordinary Things) and withal uttered in *Scripture-Rhetorick* and with *Fervency* and Urgency of Spirit, when theſe Things *concur*, there is ſuch an Appearance of *Inſpiration*, that the Parties themſelves and others reſt fully perſwaded that it is ſo.

Seventhly, Pretended and counterfeit *Miracles* the Devil makes much Uſe of, to countenance Error, and this is alſo one of his Strong-holds; for he ſuggeſts that God himſelf *bears Witneſs* by theſe Signs, Wonders, and Miracles to ſuch erroneous Doctrine, as ſeems to be concerned by them.

That the Devil cannot work a *true* Miracle(*a*) hath been diſcourſed before, but that he can perform many *ſtrange* Things, and ſuch as may beget Admiration, none denies; and that by ſuch unwonted Actions, he uſually endeavours to *juſtify* falſe Doctrines, and to ſet them off with the Appearance of divine Approbation, we are ſufficiently forewarned in the Scriptures. *Jannes* and *Jambres* reſiſted *Moſes* by falſe Miracles. In *Deut.* xiii. 1. God ſpeaks of the *Signs* and *Wonders* of falſe Prophets, who would by that Means ſeek to ſeduce the People to follow after other Gods. Chriſt alſo in *Matth.* xxiv. 24. foretels that *falſe Chriſts and falſe Prophets ſhall ariſe, and ſhew great Signs and Wonders, inſomuch that if it were poſſible they ſhall deceive the very Elect*, and puts a ſpecial Note of Caution upon it, *Behold, I have told you before.* And to the ſame Purpoſe is that of *Paul* concerning *Antichriſt*, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 9. where he tells us of powerful *Signs* and *Wonders* by the *Working of Satan*; who doth all the while only lie and cheat, that he may draw Men to Error.

If

(*a*) Miraculum voco, quicquid arduum aut inſolitum, ſupra ſpem aut facultatem mirantis apparet, *Aug. de utilitat. cred. contra Manich.* cap. 16.

If we make Enquiry how Satan hath managed this Engine, we ſhall obſerve not only his Diligence in uſing it, on *all Occaſions* to countenance all Kind of Errors both in *Paganiſm* and *Chriſtianity*, but alſo his ſubtile *Dexterity* by cheating Men with Forgeries and Falſhood.

Heatheniſh Idolatry among other Helps for its Advancement, wanted not this, the *Oracles* and Reſponſes (which were common before the coming of Chriſt) were eſteemed as miraculous Confirmations of the Truth of the Deities which they worſhipped; the *Movings* and *Speakings* of their *Statua's* were Arguments that the operative Preſence of ſome celeſtial *Numen* was affixed to ſuch an Image. In ſome Places the *ſolemn* Sacrifices are never performed without a *ſeeming Miracle*. As in *Nova Zembla* where the Prieſts *Trances* (a), his running a *Sword* into his Belly, his making his Head and Shoulder *fall off* his Body into a *Kettle* of hot Water by the drawing of a Line, and then his *reviving* again perfect and entire without Maim or Hurt, are all ſtrange aſtoniſhing Things to the Beholders. But beſides ſuch Things as theſe which are ſtanding conſtant Wonders, we read of ſome that have had as it were a *Gift* of Miracles, that they might be eminently inſtrumental to promote and honour *Paganiſm*. All Hiſtories agree that *Simon Magus* did ſo many ſtrange Things at *Rome* (as the cauſing an Image to walk, turning Stones into Bread, tranſforming himſelf into ſeveral Shapes, flying in the Air, *&c.*) that he was eſteemed a God. *Philoſtratus* and *Cedrenus* report great Things of *Appollonius*, as that he could deliver Cities from *Scorpions*, *Serpents*, *Earthquakes*, &c. and that many Miracles were wrought by him; this Man Satan *raiſed up* in an extraordinary Manner to revive the *Honour* of *Paganiſm*, that it might at leaſt *vie* with *Chriſtianity*. And tho' few ever attained to that Height which *Appollonius* and *Simon Magus* reached unto, yet have we ſeveral Inſtances of great Things done now and then, by ſome ſingular Perſons upon a *ſpecial* Occaſion, which Satan improved to his Advantage. *Veſpaſian* cured a lame and blind Man (*b*): *Adrianus* cured a blind Woman, and which is more, after he was dead by the *Touch* of his Body, a Man of *Pannonia* who was *born blind* received his Sight. *Valerius Maximus* tells of many ſtrange Things (*c*), and particularly.

(*a*) Johnſon's relat. *in Hackuit Tom.* 1. (*b*) Cornel. Tacit. Hiſtor. *lib.* 4. (*c*) Aelius Spartianus in vit *Adriani*.

ticularly of a *Veſtal* Virgin that drew Water into a Sieve. As *Livy* tells of another (*Claudia* by Name (*a*)) who with her Girdle drew the Ship to the Shore which carried the Mother of their Gods, when neither Strength of Men nor Oxen could do it.

Errors under Profeſſion of *Chriſtianity* have been ſupported and propagated by the Boaſt of Miracles. A clear Inſtance for this we have in *Popery*, that Religion being a perpetual *Boaſt* of Wonders. To let paſs their great Miracle of *Tranſubſtantiation* (which as one hath lately demonſtrated (*b*), is a Bundle of Miracles, or *Contradictions* rather) becauſe it appears not to the *Senſes* of any Man, and conſequently is not *capable* of being an *Argument* to prove any of their Opinions. We have Abundance of ſtrange Things related by them, as *Proofs* of ſome *Doctrines* of theirs in particular, as Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, Tranſubſtantiation, &c. and of their Profeſſion in the general, *Devils caſt out*, *Blind and Lame cured*, *Dead raiſed*, and what not; it would be endleſs to recite Particulars; it would take a long Time to tell what their St. *Francis* hath done, how he fetched Water out of a Rock, how he was homaged by Fowls and Fiſhes, how he made a Fountain in *Marchia* run Wine, and how far he *exceeded* Chriſt himſelf in wonderful Feats (*c*); *Chriſt did nothing which St.* Francis *did not do, nay, he did many more Things than Chriſt did: Chriſt turned Water into Wine but once, but St.* Francis *did it thrice*: *Chriſt was once transfigured, but St.* Francis *twenty Times*: He and his Brethren raiſed above a Thouſand to Life, caſt out more than a thouſand Devils, &c. Their *Dominicus* raiſed three dead Men to Life. Their *Zevcrius* while he was alive did many Miracles, and after he was dead, his Body lay fifteen Months ſweetly ſmelling, without any Taint of Corruption. 'Tis irkſome to repeat their Stories; Abundance of ſuch Stuff might be added out of their own Writings: The Deſign of all which is to prove, (to thoſe that are ſo prodigal of their Faith as to believe them) that they *only* are the *true Church*, and that by this Note (among others) they may be known to be ſo.

But

(*a*) De ſecundo bello Punico. (*b*) Mr. Baxter, *full and eaſy Satisfaction*, c. 4. (*c*) Nihil fecit Chriſtus quod Franciſcus non fecit, imò plura fecit quam Chriſtus. *Bartbol.* de piſis lib. conformitat. *Fol.* 1149.

But let us turn aside a little to observe Satan's Cunning in this Pretence of Miracles; let Things be soberly weighed, and we may see enough of the Cheat. This great Boast is (as *Austin* hath it) resolved into one of these *Two*, either the Figments of *lying Men* or the Craft of *deceitful Spirits (a)*.

As to the first of these, 'tis evident, that a great many Things that have been taken by the Vulgar for mighty *Wonders*, were nothing but the *Knaveries of Impostors*, who in this Matter have used a *threefold* Cunning.

First, By mere Jugling and Forgery in Confederacies and private Contrivances they have set upon the Stage *Persons (before instructed* to act their Parts) or *Things aforehand prepared*, to pretend to be what they were not, that others might seem to do what they did not, and all to amaze those that know not the Bottom of the Matter. Of this Nature was *Mahomet's* ove and Bull, who were *privately trained up* to that Obedience, and Familiarity which they used to him. The *Pagan* Priests were not altogether to seek in this Piece of Art. *Lucian* tells us of one *Alexander*, who nourished and tamed a Serpent, and made the People of *Pontus* believe that it was the God *Æsculapius*; and doubtless the Idol Priests improved their private artificial Contrivances: As of the *Movings* of their Images (as that of *Venus* made by *Dædalus (b)*, which by the Means of *quicke Silver* inclosed, could stir itself) their eating and drinking (as in the Story of *Bel* in the *apochryphal* Adjections to the Book of *Daniel*) their Responses, and several other Appearances, (as of the *Paper Head* of *Adonis* or *Osirzs*) which (as *Lucian* reports) comes swimming down the River every Year from *Egypt* to *Byblos*, &c. these and such like they improved as Evidences of the Power, Knowledge, and Reality of their Gods. And tho' in the Prevalency of Idolatry, where there was no considerable Party to *oppose*, their Cheats were not always discovered, yet we have no Reason to imagine, that the Priests of those Days were so *honest*, that they were *only* deceived by the Devil's Craft, and did not in a *villanous Design* purposely endeavour the Delusion of others. If we had no other Grounds for a just *Suspicion* in these Cases, the famous Instances of the Abuse of *Paulina* at the Temple of *Isis* in *Rome*,

(a) Vel figmenta hominum mendacium vel portenta fallacium spirituum.
(b) *Arist. lib.* 1. de anima

Rome, in the Reign of the *Emperor Tiberius*, by the Procurement of *Mondus*, who corrupted the Prieſt of *Anubis* to ſignify to her the Love of their God, and under that Coverture gratified the Luſt of *Mondus*, mentioned by *Joſephus* (a). And that of *Tyrannus* Prieſt of *Saturne* in *Alexandria*, who by the like Pretence of the Love of *Saturne*, adulterated moſt of the faireſt Dames of the City, mentioned by *Ruffinus*. Theſe would ſufficiently witneſs that the Prieſts of thoſe Times were apt enough to abuſe the People at the Rate we have been ſpeaking of. In *Popery* nothing hath been more ordinary; who knows not the Story of the *holy Maid of* Kent, and the *Boy of* Bilſon? How common is it with them to play Tricks with Women troubled with *hyſterical* Diſtempers? and to pretend the caſting out of Devils, when they have only to deal with a natural Diſeaſe? Not very many Years ſince they practiſed upon a poor young Woman at *Durham*, and made great Boaſts of their *Exorciſms*, *Reliques*, and *holy Water* againſt the Devil (with whom they would have all believe ſhe was poſſeſſed) when the Event diſcovered, that her Fits were only the Fits of the *Mother*. I myſelf (and ſome others in this Place) have ſeen thoſe Fits allayed by the Fume of Tobacco blown into her Mouth, to the Shame and apparent Detection of that Artifice. I might mention the *Legerdemain* of *Antonius* of *Pádua*, who made his *Horſe* adore the *Hoſt*, for the Converſion of an Heretick; the finding of the Images of St. *Paul* and St. *Dominick* in a Church at *Venice* with this Inſcription for *Paul*, *By this Man you may come to Chriſt*; and this for *Dominick*, *But by this Man you may do it eaſilier*: And the Honour put upon *Garnet*, by his *Image* on *Straw*, found at his Execution, (in all Probability) by him that *made it* and threw it down, or by his *Confederate*: But theſe are enough to ſhew the Honeſty of theſe Kind of Men.

Secondly, They have alſo a Cunning of aſcribing *Effects* to wrong *Cauſes*, and by that Means they make theſe Things Wonders that are none. *Mahomet* called his Fits of *Falling-ſickneſs*, *Extaſies* or Trances. *Auſtin* tells us the Heathens were notable at this: The burning Lamp in the Temple of *Venus* (b), tho' only the Work of Art, was interpreted to be a conſtant Miracle of that Deity. The Image which (in another Temple) hung *in the Air*, by ignorant Gazers was

(a) Antiquitat. Judæi. *l.* 18. *c.* 14. Eccleſ. Hiſt. *l.* 11. *c.* 25. (b) De civitat. Dei *l.* 21. *c.* 6.

was accounted a Wonder, when indeed the *Loadſtone* in the Roof and Pavement (though unſeen) was the Cauſe of it. The *Sydonians* were confirmed in their conſtant annual Lamentations of *Adonis* (*a*), by a *mock Miracle* of the Redneſs of the River *Adonis*; at one Time of the Year conſtantly, they take it to be *Blood*, when it is nothing elſe but the *colouring* of the Water by the Duſt of *red Earth* or *Minium* (*b*), which the Winds conſtantly at that Time of the Year from Mount *Libanus* do drive into the Water.

Neither are the *Papiſts* out in this Point. I will only inſtance in that Obſervation of Dr. *Jeniſon* (*c*), to confirm the Doctrine and Practice of *Invocation*: They take the Advantage of ſovereign *Baths* and Waters, and where they eſpy any Fountain good againſt the Stone, or other Diſeaſes, preſently there is the *Statue* or Image of ſome Saint or other erected by it, by whoſe *Vertue* the Cure and Miracle muſt ſeem to be done, or ſome *Chappel* is erected to this or that *Saint*, to whom Prayers before, and Thanks after Waſhings muſt be offered.

Thirdly. Where the two former fail, Men that devote themſelves to this Kind of Service, imitate their Father the Devil, and fall to plain *Lying*, and *deviſed Fables*. *Idolatry* was mainly underpropped by *fabulous* Stories; and no Wonder, when they eſteemed it a pious Fraud, to nouriſh Piety towards the Gods, in which Caſe (as *Polybius* (*d*) ſaith) though their Writers ſpeak *Monſters*, and write childiſh, abſurd, and impoſſible Things, yet are they to be pardoned *for their good Intent*. Among the Papiſts what leſs can be expected, when the ſame Principle is entertained among them? *Canus*, and *Ludovicus Vives* mentioned by him (*e*), (as alſo ſome few others) do exceedingly blame that blind Piety of *coining Lies* for Religion, and feigning Hiſtories for the Credit of their Opinions; but while they with great Freedom and Ingenuity do *tax* the Fables of their own Party, they do plainly acknowledge that they are too much *guilty* of feigning, inſomuch that not only the Author of the *Golden Legend* is branded with the Characters of a *Brazen Face*, and a *Leaden Heart*, but alſo *Gregory*'s *Dialogues*, and *Bede*'s Hiſtory are blamed by him (*f*), as containing Narrations of Miracles taken *upon Truſt*

(*a*) Purchas Pilg. Aſia, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 17. (*b*) Heylin's Coſmography, *pag.* 689. (*c*) *Height of* Iſrael's *Idolatry*, c. 12. (*d*) Hiſt. *lib.* 16. (*e*) Loc. *l.* 11. c. 4. (*f*) Vid. Chamier *panſtra*, *Tom.* 5. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 15.

Truſt from the Reports of the *Vulgar.* And indeed the Wonders they talk of, are ſo *ſtrange*, ſo *unlikely*, ſo *ridiculous*, and *abſurd* ſome of them, that except a Man offer Violence to his Reaſon, and wilfully ſhut his Eyes againſt the clear Evidences of *Suſpicion*, he cannot think they are any thing elſe than Dreams and Fables, no better than *Æſop*'s; you may meet with ſeveral Catalogues of them in Proteſtant Writers (*a*). As their St. *Swithins* making whole a Basket of broken Eggs by the Sign of the Croſs. *Patricius* his making the ſtoln Sheep to bleet in the Thief's Belly after he had eaten it. Their St. *Briget*'s Bacon, which in great Charity ſhe gave to an hungry Dog, was found again in her Kettle; *Dionyſius* after he was beheaded carried his Head in his Hand three *French* Miles. St. *Dunſtan* took the Devil by the Noſe with his Tongs till he made him roar. *Dominicus*, made him hold the Candle till he burnt his Fingers. St. *Lupus* impriſoned the Devil in a Pot all Night. A Chapel of the Virgin *Mary* was tranſlated from *Paleſtine* to *Loretto*. A conſecrated Hoſt (being put into a *Hive of Bees* to cure them of the Murrain) was ſo devoutly entertained, that the Bees built a *Chapel* in the Hive, with Doors, Windows, Steeple and Bells, erected an Altar, and laid the Hoſt upon it, ſung their canonical Hours, and kept their Watches by Night as Monks uſed to do in their Cloiſters, *&c.* Who would ever imagine that Men of any *Seriouſneſs* could ſatisfy themſelves with ſuch *childiſh Foppperies*? Theſe are the uſual Ways by which Men of Deſign have raiſed the *Noiſe* of Miracles.

The other Part of Satan's Cunning relates to himſelf and his *own Actions* (b): When his Agents can go no further in the Trade of Miracle making, he, as a Spirit, doth often make Uſe of his Power, Knowledge, and Agility, by which he can indeed do Things incredible, and to be wondred at. 'Tis nothing for him by his Knowledge of Affairs at a Diſtance, of the private Endeavours, or expreſſed Reſolves of Princes, to *prognoſticate* future Events: By his Power over the *Bodies* of Men, he can with the Help of *Inclinations* and Advantages do much to bring a Man into a *Trance*, or take the Opportunity of a Fit of an *Apoplexy*, and then like a cunning Jugler, pretend (by I know not what, nor whom) to

(*a*) Prideaux orat. de impoſt. mendaciis, *Rome's Triumphs*. *&c.* Baker's *Jeſu Religion*, p. 168. (*b*) Porten a fallacium ſpiritum.

to raise a Man from Death. He knows the secret Powers and *Virtues* of Things, and by *private Applications* of them may easily supply Spirits, remove Obstructions, and so cure Lameness, Blindness, and many other Distempers; and then give the Honour of the Cure to what Person or Occasion may best fit his Design; so that either by the *officious Lies* of his Vassals, or the *exerting* of his own Power on suitable Objects at fit Times, he hath made a great Noise of Signs and Wonders in the World. And this Stratagem of his, hath ever been at Hand to gain a Repute to false Doctrine. And the rather doth he insist upon this,

First, Because true Miracles are a *divine Testimony* to Truth. As *Nicodemus* argued, *John* iii. 2. *No Man could do these Miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* And there were *solemn* Occasions wherein they were *necessary*; as when God gave publick Discoveries of his Mind *before* the Scriptures were written; and also when he *altered* the Oeconomy of the *Old Testament*, and settled that of the *New*. In these Cases it was necessary that God should confirm his Word by Miracles. But now, tho' these Ends of Miracles are ceased, tho' God hath so settled and *fixed* the Rule of our Obedience and Worship, that no *other Gospel* or Rule is to be expected, and consequently no *Need* of new Miracles, where the *certain* Account of the *old* Miracles are sufficient *Attestations* of old and unalterable Truths; nay, tho' God has expresly told us, *Deut.* xiii. 1. that no Miracle (tho' it should *come to pass*, and could not be discovered to be a Lie) should prevail with us to forsake the established Truths and Ways of Scripture, or to entertain any Thing contrary to it; yet doth Satan exercise herein a *proud Imitation* of the supream Majesty, and withal doth so *dazle* the Minds of the weaker Sort of Men, (who are more apt to consider the Wonder, than to suspect the Design) that (without due Heed given to the Cautions which God hath laid before us in that Particular) they are ready to interpret them to be God's Witness to this or that Doctrine to which they seem to be appendant.

Secondly, Because Satan hath a more than ordinary Advantage to *feign* Miracles, he doth more industriously set himself to pretend them, and to urge them, for the Accomplishment of his Ends. 'Tis an easy Work to prevail with Men that are wholly devored to their own Interest under the Mask of Religion, to say and do any Thing that

may

may further their Design; and the Business of Miracles is so imitable *by Art*, through the *Ignorance* and *Heedlessness* of Men, that with a small Labour Satan can do it at Pleasure. The secret Powers of Nature (such as that of the *Loadstone*) by a dexterous Application brought into Act, in a fitly contrived Subject, will seem miraculous to those that see not the *secret Springs* of those Actions. There have been *artificial* Contrivances of Motions, which had they been disguised under a *religious Form*, and directed to such an End, might have passed for greater Miracles than many which we have mentioned. Such was the *Dove* of *Archytas*, which did fly in the Air (*a*), as if it had been a living Creature. Such was the *Flee* of *Regiomontanus*, and the *Eagle* presented to the Emperor *Maximilian*, which in the Compass of their little Bodies, contained so many Springs and Wheels as were sufficient to give them Motion, and to direct their Courses as if they had been animated. *Albertus Magnus* his artificial Man, and the silver *Gally*, and *Tritons* made by a Goldsmith at *Paris*, were rare Pieces of Art, their Motions so certain and steady, that they seemed to have Life and Understanding. If Art can do all this, how much more may we suppose can Satan do? How easily can he make Apparitions, present strange Sights to the Eye, and Voices to the Ear? And by putting out his Power do a thousand Things astonishing and wonderful?

Eightly, Sometime Satan pleads for Error, from the *Ease*, *Peace* or other *Advantages* which Men pretend they have received, since they engaged in such a Way, or received such a Perswasion. This is an Argument from the *Effect*, and frequently used to confirm the Minds of Men in their Opinions. Hence they satisfy themselves with these Reasonings: *I was before always under Fears and Uncertainties, I never was at Peace or Rest in my Mind, I tried several Courses, followed several Parties, but I never had Satisfaction or Comfort till now; and by this I know that I am in a right Way.* Others argue after the same Manner from their Abundance and outward Prosperity: *I met with nothing but Crosses and Losses before; but now God hath blessed me with an Increase of Substance, prospered my Trade and Undertakings*, &c. These, tho' apparently weak and deceitful Grounds, are reputed strong and conclusive, to those that are *first resolved* upon an Error. For Men

(*a*) Heylin Cosmography. p. 399.

are so willing to justify themselves in what they have undertaken, that they greedily catch at any Thing that hath the least Appearance of Probability to answer their Ends.

This Plea of Satisfaction is commonly from one of these two Things.

First, From *inward Peace*, and Contentment of Mind. Satan knows that Peace is the Thing to which a Man sacrificeth all his Labours and Travel; this he seeks, (tho' often in a wrong Way, and by wrong Means:) He knows also that true Peace is only the Daughter of Truth, (*the Ways* whereof *are Pleasantness*, and the *Paths* whereof *are Peace*;) neither is he ignorant of the Delights which a Man hath, by enjoying himself in the sweet Repose of a contented Mind, that he may charm the Hearts of the erroneous into a Confidence and Assurance that they have taken a right Course, he doth all he can to further a false Peace in them, and to this Purpose he commonly useth this Method:

1*st*, He doth all he can to *unsettle* them from the Foundation of Truth upon which they were bottomed; he labours to render Things *suspicious*, doubtful or uncertain: This some have noted from 2 *Thes.* ii. 2. (*a*) where Satan's first Attempts are to *shake* their *Minds*, not only by Disquiet, (of which we are next to speak) but by *Alteration* of their Judgment,) (for *Mind* is sometimes taken for *Sentence*, *Opinion*, *Judgment*,) as 1 *Cor.* ii. 16. *We have the Mind of Christ*, and 1 *Cor.* i. 10. *In the same Mind, and in the same Judgment.*

2*dly*, His second Approach is to raise a Storm of restless *Disquiet* upon that Uncertainty; and in order to his intended Design, he usually fills them with the utmost *Anxiety* of Mind, and makes their Thoughts (like a tempestuous Sea) dash one against another. This Piece of his Art is noted in the forecited Place (*b*), *that ye be not shaken in Mind or troubled*; the Word signifies a *great Perplexity*. And this is an usual Method which the false Teachers among the *Galatians* practised, they first troubled them, and then endeavoured by the Advantage of that Trouble to pervert the Gospel of Christ, *Gal.* i. 7. and v. 12. To effect both these, he doth amuse them with all the Objections that can be raised. If he can say any Thing of the Antiquity of the Error, the Number, Wisdom, Learning or Authority

(*a*) *Schaer* in loc. σὺς for γνώμη. (*b*) σαλευθῆναι.

rity of thoſe that embrace it, they are ſure to hear of theſe Things to the full; the Danger of continuing as they were, and the Happineſs of the new Doctrine, are repreſented with all aggravating Circumſtances; and theſe ſo often, that their Thoughts have no Reſt: And if this Reſtleſneſs does wound or weaken them, he purſues with an high Hand. Theſe Ways of diſturbing the unſettled Mind, are hinted to us in the aforeſaid Place, *Spirit*, *Word*, *Letter*, any Thing that carries a ſeeming Authority to unſettle, or Power to amaze and diſtreſs. And we may here further note, that where the Minds of Men are diſcompoſed with *other* Fears or Diſquiets, Satan is ready to improve them to this Uſe, ſo that commonly when the Word of God begins to work at firſt upon the Conſciences of Men, to awaken them to the Conſideration of their Sin and Danger, the Adverſary is then very buſy with them to inveagle them into ſome Error or other.

3*dly*, Having throughly prepared the Mind with reſtleſs Fears, he then advanceth forward with the *Proffers of Peace and Comfort* in the Way of Error which he propoſeth; and in this Caſe Error will boaſt much, *Come to me, and ye ſhall find Reſt for your Souls.* How grateful and welcome the confident Proffers of Eaſe and Satisfaction are to a toſſed and diſquieted Mind any Man will eaſily imagine: 'Tis uſually thus, Men that are tired out, will eaſily embrace any Thing for Eaſe. A Man in this Caſe may be wrought upon like Wax to receive any Impreſſion; he will faſten on any Thing true or falſe that doth but promiſe Comfort.

4*thly*, The Compleatment of his Method is to pleaſe the Man in the *Fruition* of the Peace promiſed: And this he labours to do, not only to fix the Man in his Deluſion, but to make that Man *brag* of Eaſe to be a Snare to others. And 'tis eaſy for the *Devil* to do this: For, 1. The *Novelty* of a new Opinion doth naturally pleaſe, eſpecially if it give any ſeeming Commendation for Diſcovery or Singularity. We ſee Men are fond of their own Inventions, and delighted to be lifted up above others. 2. Satan can eaſily *allay* the Storm which he himſelf *raiſed*: He gives over to moleſt with anxious Thoughts; on the contrary he ſuggeſts Thoughts of Satisfaction. 3. And whatever he can do in a *natural Way* to raiſe up our Paſſions of Joy and Delight, he will be ſure to do it now, to *Raviſhment* and Exceſs if he can; and then he not only makes theſe Men ſure, (for

what Argument can ſtand before ſuch a Confidence?) but hath an active Inſtrument for the Allurement of ſuch as cannot diſcover theſe Methods.

Secondly, *Outward Proſperity* is the other common Plea for Error. Though Succeſſes, Plenty and Abundance of worldly Comforts, argue of themſelves neither Love nor Hatred, Truth nor Falſhood, becauſe the wiſe Providence of God, for holy Ends and Reaſons (often undiſcerned by us) permits often the *Tabernacles of Robbers to proſper*, and permits thoſe *that deal treacherouſly* with the Truths of God, *to be planted, to take Root, to grow, yea to bring forth Fruit*; nevertheleſs if in a Way of Error they meet with outward Bleſſings, they are apt to aſcribe all to their Errors, and to ſay as *Iſrael*, Hoſ. ii. 5. *I will go after my Lovers, that gave me my Bread and my Water, my Wool and my Flax, mine Oil and my Drink*, without any ſerious Conſideration of God's common Bounty, which upon far other Accounts, *gives them Corn, and Wine, and Oil, and multiplies their Silver and Gold, which they prepared for Baal*, ver. 8. I ſhall not need to add any Thing further for the Proof and Explanation of this, than what we have in *Jer.* xliv. 17. where the *Jews* expreſly advance their idolatrous Worſhip as the right Way, and confirm themſelves even to *Obſtinacy* in the Purſuit of it, upon this Reaſon; *We will certainly do whatſoever Thing goeth out of our own Mouth, to burn Incenſe to the Queen of Heaven—for then had we Plenty of Victuals, and were well, and ſaw no Evil: But ſince we left off to burn Incenſe to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out our Drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all Things, and have been conſumed by the Sword, and by the Famine.*

Ninthly, Inſtead of better Arguments, Satan uſually makes *Lies his Refuge*: And theſe reſpect either the *Truth* which he would cry down, or the *Error* which he would ſet up.

Thoſe Lies that are managed againſt Truth, are of two Sorts; Miſtakes and Miſrepreſentations of its *Doctrines*, or *Calumnies* againſt the *Perſons* and *Actions* of thoſe that take Part with it.

Thoſe Lies that are proper to beſpatter a *Truth* withal, are ſuch as tend to render it *unlovely*, *inconvenient*, or *dangerous*. Satan hath never been awanting to raiſe up Miſts and Fogs to eclipſe the ſhining Beauty of Truth. Sometime he perſuades Men that it is a *Novelty*, and contrary *to the Tradition of the Fathers*: And then if an Error had been

once

once upon the Stage before, and had again been hiſſed out of the World, when it peeps out again into the World, its former Impudency is made an Argument for its Antiquity, and Truth is decried as Novel. Or, if it be but an Error of Yeſterday, and hath only obtained an Age or two, then the *Ghoſts* of our Forefathers are conjured up as Witneſſes, and the Plea runs current, *What is become of your Fathers? Or, are you wiſer than your Fathers? Are they all damned?* Theſe were inſiſted on by the *Heathens*: The Gods of the *Country*, and the Worſhip of their *Fathers*, they thought ſhould not be forſaken for Chriſtianity, which they judged was but a *Novelty* in Compariſon of *Paganiſm.* Of the ſame Extract is that *old Song* of the Papiſts, *Where was your Religion before* Luther? And to this Purpoſe they talk of the Succeſſion of their *Biſhops* and *Popes.* And other Errors grow a little *pert* and confident, if they can but find a *Pattern* or Sample for themſelves among the *old Hereſies.* Sometime he endeavours to bring Truth into Suſpicion, by rendring it a dangerous *Encroachment* upon the *Rights* and Privileges of Men, as if it would turn all upſide down, and introduce Factions and Confuſions. This Clamour was raiſed againſt the Goſpel, that it would *ſubvert* the Doctrine of *Moſes and the Law.* Sometimes he cloaths the Opinions of Truth with an *ugly Dreſs*, and miſrepreſents it to the World, as guilty of ſtrange Inferences and *Abſurdities*, which only ariſe from a *wrong ſtating* of the Queſtions: And where it doth *really* differ from Error, he endeavours to *widen* the Differences to an inconvenient Diſtance, ſo that if it go *a Mile* from Error, Satan will have it to *go two*; if Truth teach *Juſtification by Faith*, Error repreſents it as *denying* all Care of *Holineſs* and *good Works*; if Truth ſay, *bare moral Virtues* are not ſufficient *without Grace*, Error preſently accuſeth it, as denying any *neceſſary Uſe of Morality*, or affirming that *moral* Virtues are *Obſtructions* and Hindrances to Salvation. It were eaſy to note Abundance of ſuch Inſtances

As for Calumnies againſt the *Perſons* and Actions of thoſe that are Aſſertors of Truth, 'tis well known for an old threed bare Deſign, by which Satan hath gained not a little. *Machiavel* borrowed the Policy from him, and formed it into a Maxim, for he found by Experience that where ſtrong Slanders had ſet in their Teeth, though never ſo unjuſtly, the Wounds were never *throughly healed*: For ſome that heard the Report of the *Slander*, never

heard the *Vindication*, and thoſe that did, were not always ſo *unprejudiced* as to free themſelves from *all Suſpicion*, but ſtill ſomething remained uſually upon their Spirits for ever after; and that, like a ſecret Venom, poiſons all that could be ſaid or done by the Perſons, that (wrongfully) fell under their Prejudice, and did not a little derogate from the Authority and Power of the Truths which they delivered.

The Friends of Truth have always to their Coſt found it ſo. Chriſt himſelf eſcaped not the Lies and Cenſures of Men when he did the greateſt Miracles; they raiſed this Calumny againſt him, *That he caſt out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils*, John viii. 48. When he ſhewed the moſt compaſſionate Condeſcenſions, they called him *a Man gluttonous, a Wine bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners*; And at laſt upon a Miſinterpretation of his Speeches, (*I will deſtroy this Temple, and in three Days I will build it up*, Matth. xxvi. 61.) they arraigned and condemned him for *Blaſphemy*: And his Servants have (according to what he foretold) drunk of the ſame Cup; the more eminent in Service, the greater Draught. *Paul* a choſen Veſſel met with much of this unjuſt Dealing; he was accuſed, *Acts* xxi. 28. as ſpeaking againſt the *People*, the *Law*, and the *Temple*; and, *Chap.* xxiv. 5. called *a peſtilent Fellow, a Mover of Sedition, a Profaner of the Temple*. Neither can we wonder at this, that the greateſt Innocency, or higheſt Degree of Holineſs, is no Armour of Proof againſt the ſharp Arrows of a lying Tongue: When we read this as one of Satan's great Characters, that he is *the Accuſer of the Brethren*, and that his Agents are ſo perfectly inſtructed in this Art, that they are alſo branded with the ſame Mark of *falſe Accuſers*, Jude *ver.* 10. 'Tis well known how the primitive Chriſtians were uſed, they were accounted *the Filth and Off ſcouring of all Things*; there could be nothing that could render them odious or ridiculous but they were aſperſed with it, as that they *ſacrificed Infants, worſhipped the Sun*, and *uſed promiſcuous Uncleanneſs*; nay, whatever Plague or Diſaſter befel their Neighbours, they were ſure to carry the *Blame*. And we might trace this Stratagem down to our own Days. *Luther* in his Time was the common Butt for all the poiſoned Arrows of the Papiſts Calumny; which ſo exceeded all Bounds of Sobriety and Prudence, that they deviſed a *Romance* of his Death, how he was choaked of the Devil; that before he died, he deſired his Corps might be

carried

carried into the Church, and adored with divine Worship, and that after his Death the exceſſive Stench of his Carcaſe forced all his Friends to forſake him. All this, and more to this Purpoſe, they publiſhed *while he was alive*, whoſe Slanders (worthy only of Laughter) he refuted by his own Pen. The like Fury they expreſſed againſt *Calvin*, by their *Boſſeous*, whom they ſet on Work to fill a Book with impudent Lies againſt him: Neither did *Beza*, *Junius*, or any other of Note, eſcape without ſome Slander or other. How unjuſtly the *Arians* of old accuſed *Athanaſius* of Uncleanneſs, and of bereaving *Arſenius* of his Arm, is ſufficiently known in Hiſtory (*a*).

But the *Devil*'s Malice doth not always run in the dirty Channel of odious Calumnies, he hath ſometimes a more *cleanly Conveyance* for his Lies againſt holy Men. In Proſecution of the ſame Deſign, 'tis a fair Colour for Error, if he can abuſe the Name and Credit of renowned Champions of Truth, by *fathering* an Error upon them which they never owned. By this Means he doth not only *grace* a falſe Doctrine with the *Authority* of an eminent Perſon, whoſe Eſtimation might be a Snare to ſome well-meaning Perſons, but weakens the Truth, by bringing a faithful Aſſertor of it into Suſpicion of holding (at leaſt in ſome Points) dangerous Opinions; by which many are affrighted from entertaining any Thing that they write or preach: For, tho' they may be confeſſedly ſound in the moſt weighty Doctrines, yet if it be once buzzed abroad that they are in any Thing unſound, this *dead Fly ſpoils all the precious Ointment*: And the Matter were yet the leſs, if there were any juſt Cauſe for ſuch a Prejudice; but ſuch is Satan's Art, that if a Man explain the ſame Truth but in *different Words*, and Forms of Speech, than thoſe that others have been uſed unto; or if he caſts it into a *more convenient Mould*, that (by laying aſide doubtful or flexible Expreſſions) it may be more ſafely guarded from the Exceptions of the Adverſaries, eſpecially if he carefully chuſe his Path betwixt the *Extreams* on either Hand; this is enough for Satan to catch at, and preſently he beſtows upon him the Names of the *very Errors* which he moſt ſtrenuouſly *oppoſeth*; nay, ſometimes if he mention any Thing above the *Reach* or Acquaintance of thoſe that hear him, 'tis well if he eſcapes the Charge of Hereſy, and that he

meets

(*a*) *Theod. Hiſt.* lib. cap 30.

meets not with the Lot of *Virgilius* Biſhop of *Saltzbury*, who was judged no leſs than heretical, for venting his Opinion concerning the *Antipodes* (*a*). I know Men do ſuch Things in their Zeal, but while they do ſo, they are concerned to conſider how Satan doth abuſe their good Meaning to the Diſſervice of Truth.

As Satan's Deſign in beſpattering the Actions and Doctrines of good Men, is to bring the Truth they profeſs into a Suſpicion of Falſhood, and to advance the contrary Errors to the Place and Credit of Truth; ſo doth he uſe a Skill proportionable to his Deſign. And tho' he be ſo *impudent* that he will not bluſh at the Contrivance of the moſt groſs and malicous Lie, yet withal he *is* ſo *cunning*, that he ſtudiouſly endeavours ſome probable Riſe for his Slanders, and commonly he takes this Courſe:

Firſt, He doth all he can to *corrupt* the Profeſſors of Truth; if Riches or Honours will tempt them to be proud, high-minded, contentious, or extravagant, he plyes them with theſe Weapons; if the Pleaſures of the Fleſh and World be more likely to beſot them, or to make them ſenſual, earthly or looſe, he inceſſantly lays thoſe Baits before them; if Fears and Perſecutions can affright them out of Duty, if Injuries and Provocations may prejudice them into a froward or wayward Temper, he will certainly urge them by ſuch Occaſions, and when he hath prevailed in any Meaſure, he is ſure to aggravate every Circumſtance in its utmoſt Height, and upon that Advantage to make Additions of a great many Things beyond what they can be juſtly accuſed of. This old Device *Paul*, in *Rom.* ii. 24. takes Notice of concerning the *Jews*, whoſe Breach of the Law ſo diſhonoured God, that *the Name of God was blaſphemed among the Gentiles thro' them.* The *Jews* lived wickedly, and their wicked Lives was a current Argument among the *Gentiles*, to confirm them in *Paganiſm*; for they judged the Law of God could not approve itſelf to be better than their own, when the Profeſſors of it were ſo naught. To prevent this Miſchief, we are ſeriouſly warned to be carefully ſtrict in all our Stations, *that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed*, 1 Tim. vi. 1. Tit. ii. 5.

Secondly, Whatever Miſcarriages *any Profeſſor* of Truth is guilty of, Satan takes Care that it be preſently charged upon *all the Profeſſion*. If any *one* offend, it is Matter of

(*a*) *Vide Harvai Præfat.* in Sang. Circulo, & *Heylin Coſmogr.* p. 399.

of *publick* Blame; much more if any *Company* or Party shall run into Extravagancies, or do Actions strange and unjustifiable, those that agree with them in the *general Name* of their Profession (tho' they differ as far from their wild Opinions and Practices as their Enemies do) shall still be upbraided with their Follies. We see this practised daily by differing Parties, according to what was foretold in 2 *Pet.* ii. 2. *False Prophets* seduce a great Number of Christians to follow *their pernicious Ways*, and by Reason of their wild ungodly Behaviour, *the* whole *Way of Truth was evil spoken of.*

Thirdly, The least Slip or *Infirmity* of the Children of Truth the Devil is ready to bring upon the Stage; and they that will not charge *themselves* as Offenders for very *great* Evils, will yet object to the Disparagement of Truth the smallest Mistakes of *others*; a *Mote* in the Eye of the Lovers of Truth shall be espyed, when a *Beam* in the Eye of Falshood shall pass for nothing.

Fourthly, Slanderous Aspersions are sometimes raised from a simple *Mistake* of Actions, and their *Grounds* or *Manner* of Performance, and sometimes from a malicious *Misrepresentation.* The Devil seldom acts from a simple Mistake, but he will either suborn the passionate Opposers to a *wilful perverting* of the true Management of Things, or will by a *false Account* of Things take the Advantage of their Prejudice, to make Men believe that such Things have been said or done, which indeed never were. The Christians in the primitive Times were reported to be bloody Men, and that they did kill Men in Sacrifice, and did eat their Flesh and drink their Blood; and this was only occasioned by their *Doctrine* and *Use* of the *Sacrament* of the Body and Blood of Christ. They were accused for *promiscuous Uncleanness* with one another, and this only because they taught that there was no Distinction of *Male and Female* in Respect of *Justification*, and that they were all *Brethren* and *Sisters* in Christ. This Account *Tertullian* gives of the Calumnies of those Times (*a*), and others have noted the like Occasions of other Abuses of them. They were reported to worship the Sun, because they in Times of Persecution were forced to meet *early* in the Fields, and were often seen undispersed at Sun rising. They were reported to worship *Bacchus* and *Ceres*, because of the Ele-

(*a*) *Apolog.* cap. 7, 8, 9, 39.

Elements of *Bread* and *Wine* in the Lord's Supper. If they met in *private Places*, and in the *Night*, it was enough to occasion Surmises of *Conspiracy* and Rebellion: So ready is Satan to take Occasion where none is given.

Fifthly, But if none of these are at Hand, then a *downright Lie* must do the Turn; according to that of *Jerem.* xviii. 18. *Come and let us devise Devices against Jeremiah:* And when once the Lie is coined, Satan hath officious Instruments to spread it, *Jer.* xx. 10. *Report, say they, and we will report it.*

These were the Lies raised against Truth; but besides this Endeavour, he useth the same Art of *lying* to inhance the *Credit of Error. Lying Inspirations, lying Signs* and Wonders we have spoken of; I shall only mention another Sort of lying, which is that of *Forgery*, an Art which Error hath commonly made Use of. Sometimes *Books* and Writings erroneous have been made to carry the Names of Men that *never knew* or saw them. The Apostles themselves escaped not these Abuses; you read of the counterfeit Gospels of *Thomas* and *Bartholomew*, the Acts of *Peter* and *Andrew*, the *Apostolical* Constitutions, and a great many more. Later Writers † have by the like hard Usage been forced to father the Brats of other Mens Brains. I might be large in these, but they that please may see more of this in Authors, that have of Purpose discovered the Frauds of *spurious, supposititious Books*; the Design is obvious; Error would by this Means adorn itself with the excellent Names of Men of Renown, that so it might pass for good Doctrine with the Unwary.

† Coci censura Patrum, Dr. *James* de corrupt. Scrip. concilior. *Prideaux* de Pseudo Epigraphis.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Satan's second Way of improving his Advantages, which is by working upon the Understanding indirectly by the Affections. This he doth, 1. *By a silent insensible Introduction of Error. His Method herein.* 2. *By entangling the Affections with the external Garb of Error, a gorgeous Dress, or affected Plainness.* 3. *By fabulous Imitations of Truth. The Design thereof.* 4. *By accommodating Truth to a Compliance with Parties that differ from it. Various Instances hereof.* 5. *By driving to a contrary Extream.* 6. *By bribing the Affections with Rewards, or forcing them by Fears.* 7. *By engaging Pride and Anger.* 8. *By adorning Error with the Ornaments of Truth.*

THE usual Arguments by which Satan doth directly blind the Understanding to a Persuasion to accept Darkness for Light, we have now considered. It remains that some Account be given of the *second* Way of prevailing upon the Understanding, and that is by *swaying* it through the Power and Prevalency of the *Affections*. In order to this he hath many Devices, the principal whereof are these:

First, By silent and insensible Procedure he labours to introduce Errors; and lest Men should *startle* at a sudden and full Presentment of the whole, he thinks it Policy to insinuate into the Affections, by offering it in *Parcels*. Thus he prevents Wonderment and Surprisal, (lest Men should boggle and turn away) and doth by Degrees *familiarize* them to that, which at first would have been rejected with Abhorency. We read in the Parable of the Tares, that the envious Man which sowed them (who was Satan) took his Opportunity *while Men slept*, and then went away in the dark; insomuch that the Discovery was not made *at the sowing*, but *at their coming* up. In pursuance of this Policy, we find the principal Instruments of Satan have followed the Footsteps of their Master; they *creep in unawares*, Jude 4. they *privily bring in damnable Heresies*, 2 Pet. ii. 1. and as if they were guilty of some modest Shamefastness, they *creep into Houses*, 2 Tim. iii. 6. The Steps by which the Devil creeps into the Bosoms of Men to plant Error in the Heart, are these:

1*st*, He endeavours to gain the Heart by the *ingenious* sweet and delightful *Society* of those that are corrupted already. Error hath a peculiar Art to *woo the Good with* before it disclose itself; it first *steals* the Ear and Affections to the *Person*, and thence insensibly drives it to the *Opinion*. Truth is Masculine, and perswades *by teaching*, but Error doth often *teach by perswading*. 'Tis very difficult to affect the Person, and not to bestow upon the Error better Thoughts than it deserves. Those therefore that are cunning in the Art of Seduction, make extraordinary Pretences of *affectionate Kindness*, (and as the Apostle noted concerning the Seducers of his Time, *Gal.* iv. 17.) *they zealously affect* (those whom they would delude) *but not well*: Their Art doth also teach them not to be *over-hasty* in *propounding* their Opinions, nor so much as to touch upon them till they perceive they have gained a firm Perswasion of their Amity, and of the Reality of those Kindnesses which they have made Shew of. But when they have once gained this Point of Advantage, they take Opportunity more freely to propound and press their Doctrines. Thus are Men at last beguiled *with enticing Words*.

'Tis also Part of the same Design, that Satan sometimes makes Use of *Women Seducers*: For, (1.) They are more apt to be deluded themselves; *silly Women* are soon *led captive*. (2.) Being deceived, they are most earnestly forward in the Heat of Zeal to propagate their Opinions. (3.) And by the Advantage of their Nature they are most engaging, their affectionate Perswasions usually have a *peculiar Prevalency*. The *Daughters of* Moab (through *Balaam*'s Counsel) were made Choice of, as the fittest Instruments to seduce *Israel* to Idolatry. *Solomon*, tho' a wise Man, was prevailed with by the Importunity of his Wives, against his former Practice and Knowledge, to favour false Worship. The Woman *Jezebel*, Rev. ii. 20. was Satan's Under-agent, *to teach and seduce* God's Servants *to commit Fornication, and to eat Things sacrificed to Idols*. (4.) Besides, they have a greater Influence upon their Children, to leaven them with their own Opinions.

2*dly*, Satan also observes a *graddal Motion* in fixing any particular Error. If he attempt it *immediately* without an external Agent, he first puts Men upon the *reading* or Consideration of some *dark Passages* that seem to look favourably upon his Design; then he *starts the Notion* or Objection;

on; then begets a *Scruple* or Questioning. Having once proceeded thus far, he follows his Design with *probable Reasons*, till he have formed it into an *Opinion*. When 'tis come to this, a little more begets a *Perswasion*, that Perswasion he ripens into a *Resolutenes* and Obstinacy, and then at last fires it with *Zeal* for the deluding of others. Having thus laid the Foundation by *one* Error, he next endeavours to *multiply* it, and then brings in the *Inferences* that unavoidably follow; for as one Wedge makes way for another, so from one Falshood another will easily force itself; and from two or three, who knows how many? And tho' the Consequences are usually *more absurd* than the Principles, yet are they with a small Labour brought into Favour, where the Principles are first *confidently* believed; so that those Errors, which because of their ugly Look, Satan durst not at first propound, lest he should scar Men off from their Reception, he can now with an undaunted Boldnes recommend. It cannot be imagined, that ever Men would *at first* have entertained Opinions of *Contempt of Ordinances* and *Libertinism*, and therefore we may observe they usually come in the *Rear* of *other* Opinions, which by a larg Tract of Art prepare their Way.

Yet may we note, that tho' Satan usually is forced to *wait the Leasure* of some Mens Timorousnes and Bashfulnes, and therefore cannot ripen Error to an hasty Birth as he desires, (hence is it, that one Man often doth no more for his Time but only *brew* it, or it may be, makes only the *rude Draught* of it, and another *vents* and adorns it; for so it was betwixt *Lelius* and *Faustus Socinus*, betwixt *David George* and his Successors:) And tho' he be so confined to the *first Principles* of Error, which he hath instilled, that he cannot at present enlarge them beyond their own just Consequences; yet there are some *choice* Principles of his, which if he can but fasten upon the Mind, they presently *open the Gap* to all Kind of Errors imaginable; they are like the firing a Train of Gunpowder, which in a Moment blows up the whole Fabrick of Truth. Such are the Delusions of *Enthusiasm*, *Inspirations* and *prophetick Raptures*; let these be once fixed, and then there is nothing so inhumane, irreligious, mad or ridiculous, but Satan can with Ease perswade Men to it; and also under the highest Pretences of *Religion* and *Certainty*, the Experience

of all Ages, hath made any further Proof of this altogether needless.

This is his Way when he *acts alone*. But if he use *Instruments*, tho' he is also gradual in his Procedure, yet 'tis in a *different Method*: For there he sometimes proceeds from the Abuse of something innocent and lawful (by the Help of a long *Tract of Time*) to introduce the grossest Falshood. Thus may we conceive he brought *Idolatry* to its Height: First Men *admired* the Wisdom or famous Acts of their Progenitors, or Benefactors; next, they *erected Pillars*, or Images of such Persons, to perpetuate the Names, Honour and Memory of them and their Actions. Another Age being at a *greater Distance* from the Things done, and consequently greater Strangers to the *true Ends* and Reasons of such Practices, which being (as it usually falls out in such Cases) abused by false Reports or Misrepresentations of Things, (for Time covers Things of this Nature with so thick a Mist, that 'tis difficult to discover the true *Mettal* of an *original Constitution*) they in a devout Ignorance gave the Images a *greater Respect* than was at first intended; then did they slide into a Conceit they were not of the *ordinary Rank* of Mortals, or at least they were *exalted* to a Condition which ordinary Mortals were not capable of; thus they supposed them *Deities*, and gave them *Worship* of Prayers and Sacrifices: Hence they went further, and *multiplied Gods*, and that of several Sorts, according to the Natures of Things that were good or hurtful to them; and then at last, consulting *how mean* their Offerings were, and how unlikely to please their *Godships*, they concluded *human Sacrifices* most suitable, especially to expiate greater Provocations, and in Times of great Calamity.

The burdensome Heap of ceremonious Superstitions in *Popery* was the Work of several Ages, they were not brought in all at once. One in a devotional Heat fancied such a Ceremony as a fit Testimony of Zeal, or a proper Incitement of his Affections; another deviseth a second, and so all along; as the Minds of Men were *best pleased* with their *own Inventions*, and had so much *Credit* or Authority to recommend them to others, they encreased the Sum by *new Additions*, till at last they are become a Burden not to be born; and still as they receded from the *primitive Purity*, and became more careless and corrupt in their Lives,

(for

(for from *good Biſhops* they declined to be but *tolerable Arch-biſhops*, till at laſt they are become *incurable Babylonians*(*a*)) ſo they departed gradually from the Simplicity of the Goſpel, and *abounded* in Contrivances of Ceremonies.

Thirdly, In corrupting *eſtabliſhed Truths.* Satan's Proceedings are not by ſudden and obſervable Leaps, but by lingring and ſlow Motions; as Flowers and Plants grow inſenſibly, and as Men gradually wax old and feeble. Violent and *haſty* Alterations he knows would beget *Obſervation*, Diſlike, and Oppoſition; neither will he make ſuch Attempts, but where he is ſure of a *ſtrong prevalent* Party, which by Force and Power is able to carry all before it: In this Caſe he is willing to enforce Error *by Fire and Sword.* Thus he propagated *Mahometiſm* at firſt, and ſtill continueth to do ſo by the conquering Arms of the *Turks*; but where he hath not this Advantage, he betakes himſelf to another Courſe, and ſtudieth to do his Work ſo that he may not be obſerved. The *Poſſibility* of ſuch a Change, with the *Manner* of effecting it, we may obſerve in many Churches, that have declined from the Doctrine which they *at firſt* received, but moſt of all in the Church at *Rome*, which at firſt was a *pure Church*, as the Apoſtle teſtifieth, but now ſo changed from the Truths upon which they were bottomed in their *firſt Conſtitution*, as if ſhe had not been the ſame Church. They boaſt indeed, that as they were at firſt, ſo they are now; but nothing is more evident than the contrary: And the Poſſibility of their *inſenſible* Corruption is as demonſtrable as the *Alteration* of Doctrine in *any other* Church. The manifold Ways that Satan takes in this Matter in the *Abuſe* of Scripture, by raiſing *perverſe* Interpretations, and *unnatural* Inferences, and the *Advantages* of a *long Succeſſion* in Authority; of the *Negligence* and *Ignorance* of the common People; of the *crafty Subtility* of the Teachers, eſpecially when Religion began to be abuſed to *ſecular* Intereſt, is deſcribed by *Acontius* and others (*b*). If we ſhould *ſingle* out any of their noted Errors, and follow up the Hiſtory of it to its *firſt Original*, we ſhall find, that whatever ſtrong *Current* it hath now gotten, it was very ſmall and inconſiderable in the *Fountain.* The *Invocation* of Saints, tho' it be now an eſtabliſhed Article among them, yet its *firſt Riſe* was from the *unwary Proſopopœa's* of the Anci-

(*a*) *Matth. Prideaux* Introduct. to Hiſtory. (*b*) *Stratagem. Satanæ*, lib. 4.

cents, and the Liberty of their *oratorical declamatory Stile*; these gave Occasion to some *private Opinions*, these Opinions to some *private* devotional *Liberty* in Practice, and from *private Opinions* and Practices, at last it obtain'd so strong a Party, that it procured a *publick Injunction*. The like Method was used for the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, whose Beginning was from the Abuse of such *Sentences* as this in ancient Writers, *That after Consecration it was no more Bread and Wine, but the Body and Blood of Christ*; by which Expression the Authors intended no more than this, that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament were *relatively altered*, and were more than *ordinary Bread and Wine*, because they were *Representatives* of the Body and Blood of Christ: However, this gave them Courage to interpret *literally* and strictly these Words of Christ, *This is my Body*: And thus by Degrees from the *Opinion* of a *few* it became the Judgment of many, and from the Toleration of a *private Opinion* of some Doctors and *unimposed*, it obtained at last a *Canon* to make it authentick, *publick Doctrine*.

Thirdly, This insensible Proceeding is in nothing more evident than in the Power of *Custom* and *Education*; Custom doth by Degrees take off the *startling* of Conscience: And those Opinions or Practices which at first Look affright it, are by a little Familiarity made more smooth and tolerable. The Dissents of Men by frequent seeing and hearing, become tame and gentle; but the Force of Education is incomparably great, for this makes an Error to become as it were *natural*; they suck it in with their Milk, and draw it in with their Air. This general Advantage the Devil hath over all the *Children* of erroneous Parents, especially where *Countries* or Nations are of the same Persuasion, insomuch that *Turks* have as great Belief of their *Alcoran* as we of the *Bible*, and think as reverently of *Mahomet* as Christians do of *Christ*: The Children of idolatrous *Pagans* have as great a Confidence of the Truth of their Way of *Heathenish Worship*, as we have of *God's Ordinances* and Institutions.

Lastly, We may see something of this Stratagem of silent Intanglement in Satan's *Surprisals*; for sometimes he inveagles Men at *unawares*, and engageth them in Error while they know not what they are doing. Weak Heads cannot see the far End of a smooth-faced Doctrine; and they usually embrace it by *whole sale*, for *some Particular*

that

that ſtrikes upon their Fancy, or gratifies their Humour. If they read a Book that hath ſome good Things in it, or is affectionate, for the Sake of *theſe* they *ſwallow* all the reſt (tho' never ſo dangerous Doctrine) without further Examination. The like Advantage he hath from Actions that are bad or tolerable, according to the various Reſpects which they have to the Ends or Conſequences that ly before them; for he frequently doth intereſt Men in an erroneous Conſequence, by *concerning* them in Actions that lead that Way; and having thus beguiled them into an evil Miſtake, inſtead of drawing their Foot out of the Snare, he puſheth them forward to maintain their Ground, and to juſtify their Proceedings. This was the Caſe of ſome of the *Corinthians*, when the Heathens had offered a Sacrifice to an Idol; Part of the Sacrifice was reſerved; and either ſold at the *Shambles*, or uſed in *a Feaſt*, to which the Heathens ſometimes invited their *Chriſtian Acquaintance* or Relations. Thoſe that went, *(knowing that an Idol was nothing)* eat what was ſet before them, *without* any Regard to the Idol, and *making no Queſtion for Conſcience Sake*: By their Example others *that had not that Knowledge*, 1 Cor. viii. 7. *were emboldned*, not only to eat againſt their Scruples and Doubts of Conſcience, (which is all that many Interpreters think to be intended in that Place) but alſo (as the Words make probable) with ſome *poſitive Regard* to the Idol; ſo that by the Examples of thoſe that ſat in the Idol's Temple, eating what was ſet before them as *common Meat*, others *miſinterpreting* their Actions, proceeded to eat with *a Conſcience of the Idol*, as if the Idol had been ſomething indeed, and deſerving a *conſcientious Regard*. Not unlike to this was that Art of *Julian*, mentioned by *Sozomen* (*a*), whereby he endeavoured to *twiſt* ſomething of *Paganiſm* with Actions and Things that were lawful or neceſſary: He cauſed the Images of *Mars* and *Mercury* to be placed by his *own*, ſo that the Reſpects that were paid to the Emperor's *Picture*, ſeem to carry a *Concomitancy* of Reverence to thoſe *Idols*: He alſo (in Proſecution of the ſame Policy) cauſed their Meats and Drinks to be ſprinkled or mixed with the *luſtral Water*; that ſo every one that eat them, might be inured to give ſome Regard to his Idols; and that ſome, at leaſt, might be engaged to a Juſtification of that and ſuch other Practices.

(*a*) *Sozomeni* Eccl. Hiſt. *l.* 5. *c.* 16.

All these are but Instances of Satan's silent Insinuation, by which he secretly steals the Affections, and through these, taints the Judgment. Next follows.

A *second* Plot upon the Affections, which is an Endeavour to entangle them by the *external Garb* of Error In this he works by two *contrary Extreams*, that he may the better prevail with Mens different Dispositions:

First, He sometimes cloaths a false Doctrine with the most *pompous*, *gorgeous*, *delightful* Attire, that like *Solomon*'s Harlot it may entice those that are pleased with the highest Gratifications of the Senses, *I have decked my Bed with Coverings of Tapestry, with fine Linnen of Egypt*, &c. Most Men that are given up to an *animal Life*, cannot be pleased with any Religion but such as may most *please the Senses*; they so distrelish the *Simplicity* of the Gospel (which is, notwithstanding, its particular *Mark* and *Honour*, 2 Cor. xi. 3.) that they cannot perswade themselves they do any Thing in religious Worship, except they abound in *costly ceremonious Observances*. Thus do some interpret that *Fear* of the Heathens (*a*), which first put them upon *Images* and outward Representations of their Gods; they were afraid they should not have any Religion to their *own Satisfaction*, except they proceeded in such a Course as might make their Senses sure that they were doing something: The *Devil* knowing well the Force of *external Beauties* in Religion, prepared the Way to Idolatry by it. They had their *costly Temples*, some of them admirable for Antiquity and Magnificence, enriched with Gifts and Offerings, excellent for Matter and Workmanship, adorned with Images, Lamps, Beds, and Tables of Gold, beautified by Art, and natural Pleasantness of Situation; they had also their Groves in the most pleasant and delightful Places, as that of the *Daphne* besides *Antiochia*, which was inviroued with tall Cypress Trees, ten Miles about, and within adorned with the sumptuous Temples of *Apollo* and *Diana*'s Sanctuary; in these Places they had their Musick and solemn Festivals, which were sometimes extraordinary, for Cost and Continuance. *Antiochus* at *Daphne* continued an incredible Solemnity, with a vast Train and costly Preparation for thirty Days together; and that nothing might be wanting, they had their annual Feasts, Sacrifices, Rites, the Adornments of their Priests, their white Garments, their

(*a*) Primus in orbe Deos timor fecit,

their Coars of divers Colours, their Miters, *&c.* in a Word, nothing was lacking that might pleaſe the Eye or Ear. And doubtleſs the *Devil* found this Courſe very ſucceſsful to win the Affections of Men to *Gentiliſm*. And if it were not for *this* Conſideration, it might be admired that the *Jews* (who were inſtructed in the true Worſhip of God) ſhould, notwithſtanding, be ſo *prone* to Idolatry, and ſo *hardly* drawn from it: But, ſurely their ſtrong Inclinations that Way proceeded from a natural Delight that Men have in a *ſenſual* Religion, which by a powerful Witchcraft doth inchant them to an Exceſs of Love. The ſame Method the *Devil* takes in *Popery*, the chief Intiſement lies in its glorious *external Appearance*; all their religious Places are dreſſed up in the higheſt Bravery, they are beautified with Images and Pictures, with Lights and coſtly Adornments; they abound in Rites, Ceremonies, Geſtures, and Obſervances, and all this is but to dazle the Eyes, and to win a Reverence in Men to their Worſhip; and accordingly they practiſe in theſe exterior Things on purpoſe to raviſh Mens Affections; their Children are brought up to a confirmed Delight and Reſolution for Popery, by pleaſing them with Shews, Pictures, Repreſentations, Proceſſions, and grateful Obſervances. If a Stranger of another Religion come among them, then, as their firſt Eſſay, they ſhew them all their Play things, that their Affections may be tickled with the outward Pomp and Ornament of their Way, for they know by Experience, that a *glittering Out ſide*, and *a great deal ado* of bodily Labour, is the All of moſt Mens Religion; if it have but *Body* enough, they never enquire whether it have *Spirit* or Life within: A dead *Carcaſe in Robes*, that may put them to the Exerciſe of their *Poſtures*, and ceremonious Compliments, doth make up a *more grateful* Religion for a carnal Man, than a *living ſpiritual* Service, that neceſſarily will put them upon *inward* Care and Watchfulneſs in the *conſtant* Exerciſe of holy *ſpiritual* Graces, without affording any conſiderable *Gratification* to the Senſes: Hence is it truly more difficult, (and yet inwardly more beautiful and glorious) to *pray in Faith and Humility*, even in ſhort Breathings after God, than to ſay a *thouſand Ave Maria's*, or to perform a Task of ordinary *Penance*. But as thoſe that have no Children of their own, delight themſelves in playing with a *Monkey* or *Baboon*, ſo thoſe that know

not how to worſhip God *in Spirit and Truth*, ſeek to ſatisfy themſelves in the Performance of *external Geſture* and Ceremony.

Secondly, On the other Hand; he ſometimes is willing that an Error ſhould affect an *Exceſs of Plainneſs* and Simplicity. In this he takes Advantage of thoſe Expreſſions in Scripture, wherein the Goſpel is commended for its *Simplicity*, and the Inventions of Men under the Pretences of *Wiſdom*, *Humility*, and *neglecting of the Body* are condemned. Upon this Ground, he runs Men upon ſuch an Exceſs of Dotage, that they never think the Things of God are rightly managed, but when they are brought down to a *contemptible Sillineſs*. By this Means he arms conceited ignorant Men with Exceptions againſt *Learning*, and the neceſſary *Decencies* of Language in Preaching; and with them they are the *only* Preachers, and moſt likely to be *inſpired*, that uſe *leaſt* Study and Preparation for their Work. 'Tis indeed very true, that the affected *Fooleries* of a *bombaſt* Stile, or *ſtarcht Diſcourſe*, and needleſs *Citations* of Sentences for Oſtentation, without any true Advantage to the *Matter* in Hand, are Things very *pedantick*, and exceedingly unſuitable to the *Gravity* of the Work of the Miniſtry, and renders it very ungrateful to a pious Mind: But this *contrary Folly* makes the ſolemn Ordinances of God ſo *nauſeous* and contemptible, that it often makes Way (by Satan's cunning Improvement of the Temptation) to an *atheiſtical* Rejection of all Worſhip. In the mean Time 'tis wonderful to obſerve, how ſome Perſons pleaſe themſelves with this Conceit, that their Way of Worſhip is plain, and that they ſpeak what *immediately* comes into their Mind; and though it be *Nonſenſe* or Contradictions (which ſufficiently evidenceth that 'tis nothing of *Kin* to the *Spirit's Inſpiration*) which they utter, yet 'tis Argument enough to them, that their Opinions and Ways are right, becauſe they proceed in a *deſigned* Neglect of all neceſſary Order, and under Pretence of the Simplicity of the Goſpel, they reduce all they do to childiſh Sillineſs. Neither is this all the Miſchief which the *Devil* raiſeth out of this Conceit, for the Contempt and Diſuſe of the Sacraments, may in great Part be aſcribed to it. Thoſe erroneous Ways of worſhip that are moſt noted for decrying thoſe Inſtitutions of Chriſt, have this for their Plea, that the Worſhip which God is beſt pleaſed with, is *ſpiritual*, and that all

bodily

bodily Services and *external* Observations are Things that God ſtands not upon, ſuch as *profit little*, and were no further in uſe, but to *recommend* an internal ſpiritual Communion with God; ſo that the more they *reject* theſe Things, they perſwade themſelves they have a more *true Underſtanding* of the Deſign of God in Religion. Either o theſe Ways Satan makes uſe of for the befooling of Men into an Humour of pleaſing themſelves with Error. But,

Thirdly, He hath of old endeavoured to cloud and enervate the Doctrine of the Bible by *traditionary Fables*. We meet with many Paſſages to this Purpoſe: Sometimes he ſets up *unwritten* Traditions, not only of *equal* Authority to the written Word, but as *Completions* and Perfections of it. This he practiſed among the *Jews* with ſuch Succeſs, that the *Traditions of the Elders* were of greater Force with them than the *Commands* of God, as Chriſt himſelf noted of them, *Matth.* xv. 3. Of theſe unwritten Traditions, which they called *the Law by the Word of Mouth*, feigned by them to be given to *Moſes* when he was in the Mount, and ſo delivered from Hand to Hand; the Apoſtles gave many Warnings, and ſignified the Hazards that Truth ſtood in by them, through the Cunning of Satan, as *Col.* ii. 8. *Beware leſt any Man ſpoil you—through the Traditions of Men*— 1 Tim. i. 4. *Neither give heed to Fables, and endleſs Genealogies.* Tit. i. 14. *Not giving heed to Jewiſh Fables, and Commandments of Men.*—2 Tim. iv. 4. *And they ſhall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and ſhall be turned unto Fables.*

The *Papiſts* at this Day give the ſame Entertainment to this Device that the *Jews* did of old, they boaſt as high of their *Traditions*, and are every Whit as *fabulous* and fooliſh in them as they were. Satan in his Attempts upon the *Gentiles* to confirm them in their falſe Worſhip, though he kept up the *Subſtance* of this Deſign, yet he was neceſſitated to alter the *Scene* a little, that he might more handſomely accommodate it to their Condition; and therefore he ſet up amongſt them *fabulous Imitations* of the Truths and Ordinances of the Scripture, inſomuch that there is ſcarce any grand Myſtery, or remarkable Hiſtory, or Ordinance mentioned in the Scripture, but we may find ſomething among the Heathens in Tradition or Practice that doth allude to it. What traditionary *Initiations* had they of

the *Creation* recorded in the Book of *Geneſis*? That of *Ovid* concerning the *Chaos* and firſt Beginning of Things, is known to every School-boy. The *Phenicians* in their Theology give an odd Account of it from their *Taautus* to this Purpoſe (*a*), *That the firſt Beginnings of all Things were a dark diſordered Chaos, and the Spirit of the dark Air; hence proceeded* Moth, *that is Mire; from thence iſſued the Seeds and Generation of all Creatures in Earth and Heaven*, &c. The Wickedneſs of Men before the Flood (mentioned in *Gen.* vi. 1, 2.) is fabulouſly related in an ancient (*b*) Book (falſly aſcribed to *Enoch*) wherein the *Watchmen or Angels are reported to take them Wives of the Daughters of Men, and that from thence was the Race of Giants.* For the Deſcription of Paradiſe, the Heathens had the *poetical Fiction* of the *Elyſian Fields*, as they had the Story of *Deucalion*, inſtead of *Noah*'s Ark and the Deluge. The Story of *Lot's Wife* was abuſed by the Fiction of *Orpheus* his Wife, ſuddenly ſnatched from him for looking back. The Hiſtory of *Sampſon* was turned into their Story of *Hercules* and his ten Labours. From the Sun ſtanding ſtill in *Joſhua* and *Hezekiah*'s Time, came that Fiction of *Jupiter*'s doubling the Night, that he might enjoy *Alemena*. In ſome of theſe Diſguiſes of ſacred Story, they go ſo near in Name and Circumſtances, that 'tis paſt Doubt they imitated the true Hiſtory which they corrupted: For Inſtance, *Herodotus* relates, that *Setbon* King of *Egypt* and Prieſt of *Vulcan*, was helped by his God *from Heaven againſt Senacherib* (*c*), which plainly relates to *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*, and the Wonders that God did for him. So in Imitation of *Uriah*'s Letter to *Joab* for his own Deſtruction, we have in *Homer* and others the Story of *Proetus* ſending Letters to *Jobates* by *Bellerophon*, wherein his Death was commanded. The near Affinity of the Names *Joab* and *Jobates*, ſhews with what Heifer the Devil plowed. The Hiſtory of *Abraham*'s offering up *Iſaac*, is by *Porphyry* applied to *Saturn*, who ſaith, he was by the *Phenicians* called *Iſrael*; he had by *Anobreth* one only Son, called *Jeud* (an evident Alluſion (ſaith *Goodwin*, Antiq. *lib.* 4. *cap.* 3.) to *Gen.* xxii. 2. where *Iſaac* is in the Hebrew called *Jehid*, that is, an only begotten) him he offered up upon an Altar purpoſely prepared; here not only the *Matter*, but the *Names*

do

(*a*) *Purchas Pilg.* l. 1. c. 17. (*b*) Vid. *Scaligeri* notas in *Euſeb. Chron.* p. 144. (*c*) Lib. 2. *mentioned alſo by* Joſephus *Antiq. Jud.* l. 10. c. 1.

do clearly ſhew, that *Abraham*'s Story is imitated in this. The like Imitation I might ſhew to have been among the Heathen of *doctrinal* Truths, as of the ſacred Myſtery of the *Trinity.* In *Peru* (*a*) they worſhip the *Father*, *Son* and *Brother*; as alſo their *Tangatauga*, which they ſay was *one* in *three*, and *three* in *one.* But their Imitation of *Ordinances* is every where remarkable, ſo that I need ſay nothing of their Temples, Prieſts, Sacrifices, and other religious Rites; only the Devil's Imitation of the *Sacraments* of the *New Teſtament* deſerves particular Obſervation: Inſtances of an apiſh Imitation of *Baptiſm* are every where obvious; and that of the *Lord's Supper* or Chriſtian Communion was frequently reſembled in the chief *Peruvian* Feaſts (*b*), where they carried *ſmall Loaves* of Bread in great Platters of Gold, of which all preſent received, and eat little *Pieces*, and this as a *Sign* of Honour and Profeſſion of Obedience to their gods and the *Ingua.* Not unlike to this were thoſe *Morſels* of Paſte, which the *Mexicans* uſed in their religious Feaſts, which they laid at their Idol's Feet, conſecrating them by Singing and other Ceremonies, and then they called them *the Fleſh and Bones* of their god *Vitziliputzli* (alluding directly to that of our Saviour, *This is my Body*, &c. inſomuch that (*c*) *Acoſta* thought the Devil mocked their *Tranſubſtantiation* by it;) this was diſtribute among all, and was eaten with a great deal of Reverence, Fear and Devotion.

We may ſee by thoſe Inſtances, that in theſe fabulous Imaginations of Truth, the Devil hath induſtriouſly traded, and that which he aimed at in this Deſign may eaſily be conjectured to be:

1. The *deſpiting and diſcrediting* of Truth; he renders it (by this Means) *ſuſpicious* of ſome Forgery, as if the Scripture were no better than an uncertain Tradition; as if (at the beſt) it were doubtful, whether Scripture or theſe traditionary Fables had better Authority.

2. He further intends the *Intanglement* of the Affections to Error by this Device; for he doth as it were take the *Spoils* of the *Tabernacle* to adorn his *Dagon* withal, and without doubt, the *Heathens* were very much *hardned* in *Gentiliſm* by theſe traditionary Stories. Hence one (*d*) obſerves,

(*a*) *Purchas Pilg. Americ.* l. 9. c. 12. (*b*) *Purchas* ibid. (*c*) *Purchas* l. 8. c. 13. (*d*) Ita Diabolus hoc egit, ut divinum miraculum in *Judea* editum vilefceret, fidem & authoritatem amitteret & tanti operis gloria ad turpiſſima idola pediret. *Bucholcer.*

ſerves, the Devil imitated the Hiſtory of the Miracle done in Favour of *Hezekiah*, that the Scriptures might loſe their *Credit* and Authority, and that the *Glory* of ſuch a Wonder might be transferred to their *Idols*; and the Conſequence of both theſe is,

3. To *deprive* the Truth of its *convincing Power* upon the Conſciences of Men. The Principles of Scripture *convince* by the *Evidence* of their Truth; if that Truth be *queſtioned* by the Subſtitution of another *Competitor*, it preſently loſeth its Force, and the Commands thereof are diſregarded, upon a Suppoſition of its *Uncertainty*.

4. Another of his Ways to betray the Underſtanding by the Affections, is by putting Men upon *an Accommodation* of Truth, to a *Compliance* with Parties differing from it. And this hath been ſo much the more ſucceſsful, becauſe it hath begun, and been carried on upon the moſt *ſpecious* Pretences The *avoiding* of Offences, the *ſmoothing* of the way of Religion, for the gaining of the contrary minded, the *Preſervation* of Peace and Unity, are Pleas very plauſible; and really upon the Account of theſe Things, the Scripture (both by its Precepts and Examples) hath recommended to us *Condeſcenſions* and brotherly *Forbearances*. The *Jews* (who were diſſatisfied at the firſt Publication of the Liberty from the Yoke of *moſaical* Ceremonies, purchaſed for us by Chriſt) were *indulged* in the Uſe of Circumciſion, and Obſervance of the Difference of Meats for a long Time, till they might be the better ſatisfied in the Truth. Theſe Pretences the Devil makes Uſe of to undermine Truth. And pleaſing his Agents with the Honour of a *pious Deſign*, (and it may be at firſt really *ſo intended* by them) he prevails with them, not only for a *preſent Condeſcenſion* to Men of contrary Practice, but to caſt the Principles of Truth into ſuch a *fixed Mould* that they may carry a more *near Reſemblance* to thoſe Opinions which they do moſt *directly* oppoſe. The *Appearance* of Sanctity, Peaceableneſs, Prudence, and Succeſsfulneſs in ſuch an Undertaking, doth exceedingly animate the *well meaning* Deſigners, which Satan in the mean time carries them beyond all Bounds, and ſo dangerouſly fixeth an *unnatural Repreſentation* of Truth, that it loſeth its own Splendor, and ſettles at laſt upon *unſafe* Notions. Thus by the *Continuance* of ſuch a *Compliance*, Error begins to *recruit* its Forces, and is as likely to *draw over* Truth wholly to its Side (by the Argument of *Reſemblance*,

Resemblance, and the Consequences following thereupon), as Truth is wholly to *extirpate* and conquer Error; and if it do not that, succeeding Ages (that minded not the first Design) finding Things so continued to them, in deep *Reverence* to their Predecessors, form their *prudential Condescensions* into *perverse Opinions*.

If we follow the *Tract* of Time from the first preaching of the Gospel, we may find Satan's *Footsteps* all along. In the Apostles Times, when the believing *Jews* were tolerated *necessarily* (till Time and Experience might fully convince them) in their Observation of the Law of *Moses*, (which was certainly given of *God*, and so might very easily occasion an Opinion of the Continuance of it, *Acts* xv. 1, 5.) tho' the Apostles did not at all *accommodate* the *standing* Precepts of the New Testament to carry a *perpetual Resemblance* of that Opinion; neither did they *still* countenance that Practice, but did *seasonably* and *fully* declare against it, exhorting Christians *to stand in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free*, Gal. v. 1, 2. yet Satan was busy to take *Advantage* of the present Forbearances, which the Holy Ghost had directed them unto, insomuch, that instead of *convincing* all the Dissenters by that *Lenity*, some Dissenters waxed *bold* to perswade the Christians *to another Gospel*. But after their Days, the Devil pursued this Design with greater Scope: For Instance, in *Constantine*'s Time, when the *Gentiles* flocked into the Church with *dirty Feet*, and in their *old Rags*, they were tolerated in some *old Customs* of Gentilism; and upon a design to win them, they made bold to *bend* the *Doctrine* of the Gospel toward their *former Usages*. They thought indeed it was best to wink at Things, and not to bear too hard upon them at first, but that tolerating a *lesser* Evil, they might avoid a *greater* Inconvenience; and withal, they deemed they had done great Service to the Church and Christian Religion, if they could any way divert the Heathen from worshipping their *Idols*: And to effect this the easilier, they seemed to cherish *their* Customs and Rites of Worship, as consonant in the *general* to the Principles of Christianity, only they excepted against the *Object* of their Worship as unlawful; so that upon the Matter they did no more than change *the Name*. The manifold Inconveniencies that followed this Kind of Dealing, they did not discover at first; but besides the *infecting* the Simplicity of Christian Religion with the *Dirt* and Dregs

of *Paganism* (which they might eaſily have ſeen) Time hath ſince diſcovered, that here the Devil ſecretly laid the chief Foundations of *Popery*.

Whoſoever ſhall impartially compare the Rites, Cuſtoms, Uſages and Garbs of *Popery*, with thoſe of *Paganiſm*, will, to his Admiration, find ſuch an exact *Agreement* and Conſonancy, that he muſt neceſſarily conclude, that either *Paganiſm* imitated *Popery*, or *Popery* imitated *Paganiſm*; but the latter is true, and that theſe Corruptions in Religion by *Popery* came in by *a Deſignment of conforming Chriſtianity to Heathenism* (tho' it may be upon *pious* Intentions at firſt) is no difficult Thing to evince; for (beſides that the Rites of Paganiſm were more *ancient*, and ſo could not be borrowed from Popery which came *long after*) the Scripture did foretel a great *Defection* from Truth, which ſhould be in the *laſt Days*, and this *under a Profeſſion* of Religion; and the Things *particularized* are ſuch, as ſhew, that the Defection ſhould carry an *Imitation* of Paganiſm; for no leſs ſeems to be ſignified by 1 *Tim.* iv. 1. *The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly, that in the latter Times ſome ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils*; that is, as Mr. *Mede* (whoſe Interpretation I follow) doth prove (*a*) Doctrines *concerning* Devils or *Dæmons* (as in *Heb.* vi. 2. we have the Phraſe of *Doctrines of Baptiſms*, which muſt needs ſignify *Doctrines concerning Baptiſms*) the Gentile *Theology* of *Dæmons* is the Thing which *Paul* propheſies ſhould be introduced into Chriſtianity. How clearly this relates to *Popery*, may be evident to any that doth not wilfully blind himſelf by Prejudice. Their Doctrine of *Dæmons* was this: They ſuppoſed *two Sorts* of Gods, *ſupreme* and *inferior*. The ſupreme they ſuppoſed did dwell in the *Heavenly Lights*, Sun, Moon, and Stars, without *Change* of Place: Theſe they judged were ſo *ſublime* and pure, that they might not be profaned with the Approach of earthly Things; and that *immediate* Approaches to them were *derogatory* to their Sovereignty. The inferior Order of Gods they imagined were of a *middle Sort*, betwixt the *ſupreme* Beings and Men, as participating of *both*: Theſe they called *Mediators* and Agents, and ſuppoſed their Buſineſs was to *carry up Mens Prayers to God*, and to *bring down Bleſſings* from God upon Men: Theſe were in Scripture called

(*a*) Apoſtacy of the latter Times.

called *Baalim*, and by the *Greeks Dæmons*: To this Purpose *Austin* and others speak (*a*).

Now these *Dæmons*, they supposed, were the *Souls of dead Men* that had been more than ordinarily famous in their Generation. Thus *Ninus* made an Image to his Father *Belus* after he was dead, and caused him to be worshipped. *Hermes* confesseth that *Æsculapius* Grandfather to *Asclepius* (b), and *Mercury* his own Grandfather, were worshipped as Gods of *this Order*. Abundance of Instances I might produce to this Purpose; but to go on, these *Dæmons*, because to them was committed the Care of *terrestial* Affairs, (as *Celsus* argues against *Origen* (c),) and because of the Help and Advantage that Men might receive from them, they supposed it *Gratitude* and Duty to *worship* them, and this Worship they performed at their *Images*, *Sepulchres* and *Reliques*. To this Purpose *Plutarch* tells us of *Theseus* his Bones (*d*), and *Plato* of the Θῆκαι or Shrines of their *Dæmons*.

How evident is it that the *Papists* in their Doctrine and Practice about the Invocation of Saints and Angels, have writ after this Copy, and that they are the Men that have introduced this *Doctrine of Dæmons*, the Thing itself declares without further Evidence? Had the *Heathens* their *dead Heros* for Agents 'twixt the *supream Gods* and *Men*? so have the *Papists* their *dead Saints* to offer up their Prayers. Did the *Heathen* expect more *particular Aids* from some of these *Dæmons* in several Cases than from others? so do the *Papists*: Instead of *Diana* for Women in Labour, and *Æsculapius* for the diseased, they have their St. *Margaret* and St. *Mary* for travelling; *Sebastian* and *Roch* against the *Pestilence*; *Appollonia* against the Toothach; St. *Nicholas* against Tempests, &c. Did the Heathen *pray* to these *Dæmons* for their Aid? so do the Papists to their *Saints*, as their *Breviaries*, *Rosaries*, and *Ladies Psalters* testify. Had the Heathen their *Feasts*, their *Statas ferias* to their *Dæmons*? so have the Papists. Had they their *Februalia & Proserpinilia* with Torches and Lights? so have the Papists their *Candlemas* with Lights. Did the Heathen *erect Images* and Pillars, or keep the Ashes and Shrines of their *Dæmons*? so do the Papists: The one had

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(*a*) De *Civit. Dei* l. 8. c. 14, 18. (*b*) Vid. *Du Plessis* of the Trueness of Christian Religion, c. 22. (*c*) *Origen. Cont. Celf.* l. 8. p. 416. (*d*) *Plutarch* in vit. *Thesei* & *Demetrii*.

Proceſſions and *Adorations*, ſo have the other; and a great many more Things there are wherein Popery keeps a Correſpondence with Heathenism. To this Purpoſe you may read enough in *Monſieur de Croy, of the three Conformities*.

To make it yet more clear that the Corruptions in Religion by Popery came in by the Deſign of *ſuiting Chriſtian Religion to Paganiſm*; I ſhall in a Teſtimony or two ſhew you that they *profeſſedly avouched* the Deſign. *Gregory* the Great writes chidingly to *Serenus* Biſhop of *Marſeilles* (a) (who it ſeems was no forward Man in this Matter) to this Purpoſe, *Thou ſhouldſt have conſidered that thou didſt converſe chiefly with the* Gentiles, *to whom Pictures are inſtead of Reading, to the End that no Offence be given them under Colour of lawful Zeal wherewith thou art not cunningly endued.* And in another Epiſtle to *Mellitus* (b), he adviſeth, *That the Honours and Offerings which the Heathens gave to their* Dæmons, *ſhould be tranſferred to the Martyrs, and their Relicks*, and giveth this Reaſon for it, *it is impoſſible* (ſaith he) *to cut off all at once from ſtubborn Minds* (c). *Euſebius* alſo endeavours to perſwade to Chriſtianity by this Argument, that the *Chriſtians Cuſtom of honouring the Memories of the Martyrs, and ſolemnly aſſembling at their Sepulchres, did agree with the Cuſtom of the* Gentiles *of doing the like Honour to their* Dæmons (d), and having mentioned what *Heſiod* ſpeaks, concerning *Plato*'s Opinion, that their Champions became *Dæmons* after Death, Helpers and Protectors of Men; for which Cauſe they were *worſhipped* at their Sepulchres *as Gods*; he adds to this Purpoſe, that *if theſe Honours had been given to the Favourites of God, and Champions of true Religion, it had been well enough*: And for this ſhews the Example and Cuſtom of Chriſtians then to go to the Tombs of Martyrs, there to pray in Honour of their bleſſed Spirits. And altho' at firſt they might be *more modeſt* in honouring the Martyrs than now they are, according to that of *Auſtin*, *Theſe Obſervances at the Tombs of Martyrs* (ſaith he) *are only Ornaments of their Memories, not Sacrifices to them as to Gods* (e). Yet this ſoon fell into *greater Abuſe*, inſomuch that *Lud. Vives*, in his Notes on that Chapter, blames thoſe of his own Time for worſhipping Saints as Gods, and tells

(a) Lib. 9. Epiſt. 9. (b) Lib. 9. Epiſt. 71. (c) Nam duris mentibus ſimul omnia abſcindere impoſſibile, &c. (d) Vide *Perkin*'s Prepar. to Demonſt. of the Prob. 3. *Prepar. Evan.* l. 13. c. 7. (e) De civit. Dei. l. 8. c. 27. Ornamenta ſunt memoriarum non ſacrificia mortuorum.

tells us he cannot see the Difference betwixt the Opinion *concerning Saints* (as generally practised) and that of the Heathens concerning *their Gods* (a). I might add the positive Acknowledgment of *Beatus Rhenanus*, *Jacobus de Voragine*, concerning the burning of Candles to the Virgin *Mary*, which Custom they confest was *borrowed from the Heathens*, with a Respect to the Frowardness of Paganism, and a Design not to exasperate them, that they might gain them.

I might also shew, that the Mischief of this Design, of *accomodating Truth to a Compliance with different Parties*, hath not only shewn itself in introducing strange *Actions* and *Ceremonies*; but hath also discovered itself in leavening Mens *Judgments* in Reference to *Opinion*. *Calvin* conjectures, that those confident Assertions of the *Powers of Nature* (b), were first occasioned by an over *officious Willingness* to reconcile the *Doctrine* of the Scripture with the *Opinions* of Philosophy; and that Men, being unwilling to run the Hazard of the Scorn which they might meet with in contradicting the general received Principles of Philosophers, were willing to form the Doctrine of Truth relating to human Ability accordingly. Abundance of Instances of this Kind may be given. Whence came the Doctrine of Purgatory, but from hence? 'Tis but (c) *Plato*'s Philosophy christianized by the *Roman* Synagogue. He divided all Men into three Ranks; the *Virtuous*, who are placed by him in the *Elysian* Fields; the *desperate Ungodly*, these he adjudgeth to *everlasting Fire*; and a *third Sort*, betwixt the perfectly Virtuous and the desperately Wicked, he sendeth to *Acheron*, to be *purged* by Punishment. All this (d) *Eusebius* makes mention of at large. That the Papists derived their Purgatory from hence, is generally affirmed by Protestants, nay not only in these Cases, but in very many more, Corruptions have entred into Christianity, by an over eager Endeavour to make the *Doctrine* of the *Scriptures* to run even with the *Sayings* and Assertions of the *Schools* of Philosophers; a Thing complained of old by *Tertullian*, who plainly affirmed the *Philosophers* to be the Patriarchs of

(a) Non video in multis quid sit discrimen inter eorum opinionem de sanctis & id quod Gentiles putabant de diis suis. (b) *Instit.* l. 2. c. 2. § 4. Veteres nihil videntur hoc consilio vires humanas sic extulisse ne si impotentiam diserte effent confessi Philosophorum cachinnos excuterent... Scripturæ doctrinam cum Philosophiæ dogmatibus dimidiam ex parte conciliare studium illis fuit. (c) *Plato* l. 10. de Rep. Dial. (d) De Præpar. Evang. l. 11. cap. ult.

of the *Hereticks* (a). To which agrees that Obſervation of Dr *Owen*, That thoſe who either apologized for Chriſtians, or refuted the Objections of the Heathens againſt Chriſtianity, frequently cited the Opinions or Sentences of the Philoſophers, and *accommodated* them to their Purpoſe, that ſo they might beget in their Adverſaries more friendly Perſwaſions towards the Chriſtian Religion, by evidencing, that the Myſteries thereof were not abſurd, nor diſſonant from Reaſon, ſeeing they might be juſtified by the Sayings of their *own Philoſophers* (b). And *here was laid, in this Deſign and its Proſecution, (and ſurely it pleaſed its Undertakers not a little) the Foundation of that Evil which Religion hath ſince groaned under, that Men made bold with the tremendous Myſteries of Chriſtianity, to accommodate them unwarily to the Notions of the Gentiles.* And this the Apoſtle *Paul* foreſaw in that Caution he gave, *Col.* ii. 8. *Beware leſt any Man ſpoil you through Philoſophy, and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Chriſt.* Certainly the Snare is neither unuſual, nor weak, where the Caution is ſo ſerious. 'Tis a Thing naturally pleaſing, to be the Inventer of any new Thing, or to make new *Diſcoveries* in Religion, to raiſe new Hypotheſes, or to adventure in *unbeaten* Paths, for a *Reconcilement* of Religion to any Notion, or Practice, famous for its *Antiquity*, or Pretence to *Beauty* and *Decency*. Men hug themſelves when they can make ſeveral Things to hit right, and an exact ſuiting of Parallels is inſtead of Demonſtration. By this fooliſh Delight the Devil makes Men bold to make Eſſays; and what doth anſwer their Humour, paſſeth current for undoubted Truth.

5. He doth ſometime blind the Underſtanding, by working up the Affections to ſuch an *earneſt Oppoſition* to ſome Error, that in a *forward* Haſte they caſt the Mind upon a *contrary Extream*: So that through an haſty violent Avoidance of one Error, they are caſt upon a contrary, and (it may be) as dangerous as that they flee from. And this the Devil doth with great Eaſe, having the plauſible Pretence of *Zeal*, and *Care* to Truth, wherein the Affections being highly engaged, the Mind in a careleſs *Confidence* doth eaſily *overſhoot* the Truth, (which commonly lies in the Middle) and

(a) *Chemnitii* Exam. Concil. Trident *p.* 3. in hiſt. purgator. *c.* 1. (b) Hinc prima mali labes, dum cœleſtia myſteria & tremenda Chriſtianarum facta Gentilium notionibus & vanis ceremoniis attemperare voluerint. *Owen. Diſſert. de Verbo* § 16.

and thinks it doth well enough, if it gives the *greateſt Contradiction* to the Error now to be abominated. Men in this Caſe, having their Eyes only fixed upon what they *would avoid*, conſider not ſo much whither they are going, as *from what* they go. So that ſeeking (as Men in a Fright) to avoid the Pit that is *before* them, they run backward into another *behind* them.

This is ſuch a noted Stratagem of Satan, that all Men take Notice of it in the general, tho' all Men do not improve the Diſcovery for their own particular Caution. The *wiſeſt* of Men are often ſo befooled by their violent Reſiſtance of an *Untruth*, that they readily overſhoot themſelves and miſs the Mark. The *Fathers* in the Heat of Diſpute ſaid many Things ſo inconveniently, that thoſe who came after, do ſee and lament theſe *haſty Overſights*; and have no other Way to *ſalve* their Credit, but by giving *this Obſervation* in Excuſe for them. And it may be obſerved that ſome Errors which have riſen from this Root *at firſt*, have ſo ſtrongly fixed themſelves, that they have grown up to the great Annoyance of the Truth; while the contrary Errors that did occaſion them are forgotten, and their Memories are periſhed. I ſhall but inſtance in one inſtead of many, and that ſhall be *Arianiſm*; how ſadly prevalent that hath been in its Time, all Men know that know any Thing of Church-hiſtory; the Chriſtian World once groaned under it. But that which gave the firſt Occaſion to *Arius* to fix himſelf in that Error, was the Doctrine of *Alexander*, who diſcourſing of the *Unity* in the *Trinity* too nicely, ſeemed to juſtify the Error of *Sabellius*, who had taught (as alſo *Noetus* before) that there was but *one Perſon* in the Trinity, called by divers *Names*, of *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, according to different Occaſions; the Trinity (according to his Doctrine) being not of *Perſons*, but of *Names* and Functions. While *Arius* was diſſatisfied with this Account of the Trinity, he ran to a *contrary Extream*; and that he might give the higheſt Proof of a Trinity of *Perſons*, he affirmed that Jeſus Chriſt had a *Beginning*, and that there was a Time when he was not, &c. Thus *Socrates* ſpeaks of the Riſe of that Hereſy (*a*).

We might further follow the Footſteps of this Device, and trace it in moſt Opinions; where we might find the Humour

(*a*) *Socr.* Eccleſ. Hiſtor. *l.* i. *c.* 5.

of running to a contrary Extreme, hath ſtill either ſet up a contrary Error, or at leaſt leavened the Truth with *harſh* and *unjuſtifiable* Expreſſions and Explanations. The Diſputes betwixt *Faith* and *Works*, have been thus occaſioned and aggravated. Some ſpeak ſo of *Faith*, as if they *ſlighted Works*; others ſo urge a *Neceſſity of Works*, as if they intended to make *Faith uſeleſs*. Some talk of *Grace* to an utter *Contempt* of *Morality*; others on the contrary magnify *Morality* to the *annihilating* of *Grace*. Some in their Practice acquieſce in the *outward Performance* of Ordinances: If they pray or receive the Sacraments, (tho' never ſo formally) they are at Peace, ſuppoſing they have done all that is required; others obſerving the Miſtake, and knowing that God looks more to the Performance of the Soul and Spirit, than to the Act of the Body, upon a Pretence of worſhipping God in Spirit, throw off the Obſervation of his Ordinances altogether. Neither is there any Thing that doth more generally and apparently undo us in the preſent Diſſentions, (as many have complained) than Mens violent *Over-doing*, and running to contrary Extremes.

6. Satan makes Uſe of *Rewards*, or *Puniſhments*, on the one Hand to *bribe*, or on the other to *force* the Affections, and they being ſtrongly poſſeſſed, eaſily prevail with the Underſtanding to give Sentence accordingly. Men are ſoon perſwaded to take that for Truth which they ſee will be *advantagious* to them. Some Men indeed take up with a Profeſſion of Truth, which yet their Hearts approve not; but the Advantages they have by their Profeſſion, do ſilence their Diſſatisfactions; theſe are ſaid to uſe the Profeſſion of Truth *as a Cloak of Covetouſneſs*, 2 Theſ. ii. 5. But others go further, and are really brought to an *Approbation* of that Doctrine or Way that makes moſt for their *Profit*, their Minds being really corrupted by a ſelf-ſeeking Principle; they perſwade themſelves, (where there is any Conteſt about Doctrines) that that Doctrine is *true* which is *gainful*, and will accordingly diſpute for it. Hence that Expreſſion in 1 *Tim.* vi. 5. *ſuppoſing that Gain is Godlineſs*.

To this may be added, that the Affections are quickly ſenſible of the *Eaſe*, and *ſenſual Gratifications* of any Doctrine, and theſe are uſually thrown into the ſame Scale to make more Weight. Men have naturally a good Liking to that Doctrine that promiſeth fair for Eaſe, Liberty, Gain, and Honour; and this hath made it an uſual Piece

of

of Satan's Buſineſs in all Ages to gild an Error with outward Advantages, and to corrupt the Mind by ſecret Promiſes of Advancement.

On the other Side, he labours as much to prejudice Truth, by repreſenting it as *hazardous* and *troubleſome* to the Profeſſors of it. And this not only affrights ſome from an open Confeſſion of the Truth they believe; but alſo by the Help of the Affections doth perſwade ſome to believe that to be an Error, which unavoidably brings Perſecution with it: By this Engine are the Minds of Men turned about to think well or ill of a Doctrine preſented to them. This is ſo well known, that I ſhall forbear a further Proſecution of this Head, and go to the next Courſe that Satan takes to corrupt the Judgment by the Affections; which he doth,

7. By ſtirring up ſome *particular Paſſions*, which in Opinions do uſually more influence the *Underſtanding*. And here I ſhall only inſiſt upon theſe Two, *Pride* and *Anger*; with the peculiar Means that Satan hath to engage them in his Service.

That Pride and Anger are the two uſual *Firebrands* of Contention, and Fountains of Error, all Ages have acknowledged and bewailed. Theſe two *Companions in Evil* do ſo darken the Mind, that the miſerable Captive, in whom they domineer, is carried Blindfold he knows not whither, nor how. Pride uſually begins, and Anger follows with all its Forces to juſtify what Pride hath undertaken. Hence the Apoſtle in 1 *Tim.* vi. 4. rakes up all the concomitant Filth of Error, as *Envy, Strife, Railings, evil Surmiſings*, and *perverſe Diſputings of Men*, and lays them at the Door of *Pride*; *He is proud, knowing nothing.*

For the engaging of theſe two Thieves, that *rob* the Underſtanding of its Light, Satan hath many *Artifices* in Readineſs. Pride (which is forward enough of itſelf) is ſoon excited, by laying before it an Opportunity of a ſeeming *rare Diſcovery*, or of advancing the *Glory of Knowledge* above the common Pitch, of being *ſeen* and admired as more excellent than others, &c. (for upon ſuch unworthy Grounds have ſome dared to adventure upon ſtrange Notions) yet there is nothing that doth more firmly engage it, than Contention or *Diſpute*: For tho' the proper End of Diſputation be the *ſifting out* of Truth; yet ſuch is Mans Pride,

and Satan's Advantage by it, that it ſeldom attains its true End in *thoſe that are engaged*. Byſtanders, that keep their Minds calm, and unbyaſſed, may receive more Satisfaction than the Contenders themſelves; and there needs no other Evidence of this, than the common Experience which Men have of our frequent Contentions; where we have Confutations, Anſwers and Replies, and yet ſtill all Parties continue in their Opinions without Conviction. So that they that would unfeignedly ſeek Truth, (in my Mind) take not the beſt Courſe in their Purſuit, that preſently engage themſelves in a *publick Diſpute*; for the uſual Heats that are begot in a Contention alienate their Minds from a juſt *Impartiality*, and the Duſt they raiſe blinds their Eyes, that they diſcern not truly. Let us look into this Artifice of engaging Pride by Diſputation, and by it the Judgment. 1*ſt*, We find, that when an Humour of contending is raiſed, *certain* Truths are neglected, as to their Improvement and Practice; for ſo much of the Strength of the Soul is laid out upon *diſputable Queſtions*, that little is left for more *weighty Matters*. 2*dly*, In Diſputes Mens Credit is ſo concerned, that 'tis a moſt difficult Thing to preſerve a *faithful* Regard to Verity, eſpecially where they are managed with *Affronts* and *Contumelies*. They that by *calm Handling* might be induced to acknowledge a Miſtake, will ſcarce *come near* that Point of Ingenuity, when they muſt be called *Fool*, *Knave*, or *Aſs* for their Labour. Hence ordinarily (tho' they profeſs otherwiſe) Men ſeek rather Victory than Truth. 3*dly*, In Diſputes Pride and Paſſion are uſually heightned, and the *ſtronger* the Paſſions are, the *weaker* is the Judgment. Eager Altercations bring a Confuſion, both upon the Matter of which they diſpute, and upon the Underſtanding that ſhould judge. 4*thly*, In the Heat of Diſputation, when the Mind is inflamed, Men uſually behave themſelves like thoſe in a *Fray*, where they ſnatch and throw any Thing that comes to Hand, and never mind where it hits; they will affirm or deny any Thing that may ſeem any Way to bring them off. 5*thly*, Theſe Aſſertions being *once affirmed*, muſt be *maintained*, and ſo Errors and Contentions increaſe without End. Diſputes fix a Man in his Perſwaſion, and do as it were ty him to the Stake, ſo that right or wrong he will go through with it. 6*thly*, Some diſpute in Jeſt againſt their preſent Judgment, and yet at laſt diſpute themſelves into a *Belief* of

what

what they *wantonly* at first affirmed; as some tell Lies so long, that at length they believe them to be true (*a*). *Thly*, A sadder Mischief often follows a disputing Humour, which is an Hazard of the Loss of *all Truth*; Men dispute so long, till they suspect *all Things*, and after a long Trade of *Scepticism*, turn *Atheists*.

After the same Manner doth the Devil *engage Anger* in all Disputes and Controversies, for it keeps Company with Pride, wherever there is a Provocation (*b*). And besides this, Anger stirring up Injuries and Wrongs, hath often engaged Men (as it were *in Revenge*) to change their Opinion, and to take up another Way or Doctrine. Nay often that simple Mixture of Pride and Anger, which we call *Emulation*, hath privately tainted the Integrity of Mind, and prepared it for the next fair Opportunity of Error. This is noted of *Arius* by *Theodoret (c)*, that when *Alexander* was chosen Bishop of *Alexandria*, he envied him the Preferency, and from thence sought Occasions of Contention, which after a little while the Devil brought to his Hand, as we have heard.

So great is the Power of these two Passions over the Understanding, that we have Cause to wonder at their Success; seldom or never can it be shown, that any *Ringleader* in Error was not visibly *tainted* with Pride, or not apparently *sowred* with Discontents and Emulation.

8. To these Ways of blinding the Understanding by the Affections, I shall add but one more, which is this: Satan endeavours mainly to *adorn* an Error with *Truth's Clothing*; he takes its Ornaments and Jewels to dress up a false Doctrine, that it may look more lovely and dutiful; I mean, that he designs (where Errors are capable of such an Imitation) to put them into the *Way*, *Method*, *Garb* and *Manner*, which Truth doth naturally use. If Truth be adorned with *Zeal*, *Order*, *Strictness*, or have advantageous Ways of *managing* itself, Error must straightway imitate it in all these Things; and tho' he that looks near, may easily discern, that 'tis not the *natural Complexion* of Error, but an *artificial Varnish*, and such as doth no more become it, than a Court dress doth become a coarse, clownish Country-person (for you may at first Look usually discover the *Wolf* under *Sheeps*

(*a*) Contentionibus amittitur veritas, & multi eo adiguntur, ut postea nihil constitui posse certi sibi persuadeant, atque ita religionis omne studium abjiciant. (*b*) *Aeneas Strat. Satanæ*, lib. 1. p. 23. (*c*) *Theod.* Eccles. Hist. l. 1. c. 2.

Sheeps Clothing, and under the *Garb of the Apoſtles of Chriſt*, you may ſee *the Miniſters of Satan*) yet are the credulous uſually affected with theſe Appearances. If they find a profeſſed Strictneſs, a ſeeming Severity, an Imitation of the Ways of Truth, or of the Fruits thereof, they commonly ſeek no further, but judge that to be Truth which doth the Things that Truth doth, and if Error can handſomely ſtand in Competition with Truth, upon a pretence of being as effectual in *good Works*, and doing Things of themſelves *lovely*, and of *good Report*, it doth much gain upon the good Liking of thoſe, whoſe Conſideration leads them not much further than fair Appearances. I ſhall only exemplify this by the Art and Policy which *Julian* uſed to ſet up *Paganiſm*; and to ruine Chriſtianity (and thoſe who have obſerved the Ways which he took to gain his End, will readily acknowledge, he was as well skill'd in advancing Error, and ſuppreſſing Truth, as any whoſoever, and knew exactly to ſuit his Deſigns to Mens Inclinations) he obſerving, that Chriſtian Religion had ſome particular Things in its Practice and Way, which made its Face to ſhine, as that it had Perſons ſolemnly *ſet apart by Ordination* for teaching the Myſteries of the Goſpel, and for managing the publick Worſhip of God; that theſe Perſons were to be *grave* in their Carriage, and *exemplary* in a ſtrict holy Converſation; that the Conſtiturions of Religion appointed certain neceſſary and effectual Ways of *Diſcipline*, for Puniſhment and reſtoring of Offenders, and bringing them to Repentance; that it took Care of the comfortable Maintenance of thoſe that had given up themſelves to the Miniſtry of the Word and Prayer; that it alſo enjoined a Relief of the Poor and Strangers, *&c.* Taking Notice (I ſay) of theſe Excellencies in Chriſtianity, and how lovely they were in the Eyes of their Enemies, he appointed the *like Conſtitutions* for Paganiſm, and ordained that the *Idol Temples* ſhould be ſuited in Conveniency and *Comlineſs* to Chriſtian Churches; That there ſhould be *Seats* and *Desks* for the *chief Doctors* and Readers of *Gentiliſm*, who at ſet Times were to *exhort* the People, and *pray* with them; and that *Colleges* and *Monaſteries* ſhould be erected for them, and for the *Relief* of the Poor and Strangers. He commanded *Diſcipline* and *Penances* for the Chaſtiſement of Offenders; He required that their Prieſts ſhould ſeriouſly *give up* themſelves to the Worſhip

of

of God, as also their Families; That they should not frequent *Shews* and *Taverns*, nor practise any *infamous* Trade and Art. Thus *Sozomen* (*a*) reports him, and gives us a Copy of his Letter to *Arsacius* high Priest of *Galatia* to this Purpose; and all this he did, to bring *Gentilism* into Credit with the Vulgar, whom he had observed to be affected to Christianity, for its Order, Strictness and Government.

Yet is not this the only Instance that may be given in this Kind; for observe but any Error, that by *Schism* sets up for itself in a *distinct Party*, and you shall see, that tho' it departs from the *Truth* of the Church, and from its *Communion*; yet still (as the *Israelites* did with the *Egyptians*) it carries away with it these Jewels of the Church, and keeps to some considerable Part of the Church's Way (tho' *modified* according to its own Bent) that it might have a Lustre with it, to make it taking with others.

These *eight* Particulars are the most remarkable Ways of Satan, whereby the Affections are gained to a good Liking of Error, and by them the Judgment *secondarily* corrupted to call it Truth.

CHAP. V.

Satan's Attempts against the Peace of God's Children evidenced: (1.) By his Malice. (2.) From the Concernment of Peace to God's Children. What these Concerns are, explained. (3.) From the Advantages which he hath against them by disquieting their Minds. 1. Confusion of Mind. 2. Unfitness for Duty, and how. 3. Rejection of Duty. 4. A Stumbling block to others. 5. Preparations of the Mind to entertain venemous Impressions, and what they are. 6. Bodily Weakness. 7. Our Miseries Satan's Contentment.

WE have viewed the Ways of Satan, by which he tempts to *Sin*, by which he withdraws Men from *Duty* and Service, by which he corrupts the Mind through *Error*:

(*a*) *Sozom.* Eccl. Hist. l. 5, c. 15.

Error: It only now remains, that ſomething be ſpoken of his Attempts againſt the *Peace* and Comfort of the Children of God.

That 'tis alſo one of Satan's chief Deſigns to cheat us of our ſpiritual Peace, may be fully evinced by a Conſideration of *his Malice*, *the great Concern* of inward Comfort to us, and the *many Advantages* which he hath againſt us by the Diſquiet of our Minds.

Firſt, Whoſoever ſhall ſeriouſly conſider the Devil's *implacable Malice*, will eaſily believe, that he ſo *envies* our Happineſs, that he will induſtriouſly riſe up againſt all *our Comforts*. 'Tis his inward Fret and Indignation, that Man hath any Intereſt in that Happineſs from which he irrecoverably fell, and that the Spirit of God ſhould produce in the Hearts of his People any ſpiritual Joy or Satisfaction, in the Belief and Expectation of that Felicity; and therefore muſt it be expected, that his Malice (heightned by the Torment of his own Guilt, which (as ſome think) are thoſe *Chains of Darkneſs* in which he is reſerved at preſent, *to the Judgment of the great Day*) will not, cannot leave this Part of our Happineſs unattempted. He endeavours to ſupplant us of our Birth-right, of our Bleſſing, of our Salvation, and the comfortable Hopes thereof. From his common Imployment in this Matter, the Scripture hath given him *Names*, importing an Oppoſition to Chriſt and his Spirit, in the Ways they take for our Comfort and Satisfaction. Chriſt is our *Advocate* that pleads for us, Satan is Διάβολος, a *Calumniator*. The Spirit *interceeds* for us, Satan is Κατήγορος τῶν ἀδελφῶν, *the Accuſer of the Brethren, who accuſeth them before God Night and Day*, Rev. xii. 10. The Spirit is our *Comforter*, Satan is our Diſturber, a *Belzebub*, who is ever raking in our Wounds, as Flies upon Sores. The Apoſtle *Paul* had his Eye upon this, when he was adviſing the *Corinthians* to receive again the penitent inceſtuous Perſon, his Caution was moſt ſerious, 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. *leſt Satan get Advantage of us*, leſt he deceive and circumvent us (for his Expreſſion relates to Men, cunningly deceitful *in Trade*, that do (*a*) over-reach and defraud the unskilful); and the Reaſon of this Caution was, the known and commonly experienced Subtilty of Satan, *for we are not ignorant of his Devices*, implying, that he will, and frequently doth ly at Catch, to take all Advantages

(*a*) Πλεονεκτηθῶμεν.

Advantages againſt us. Some indeed reſtrain theſe Advantages (*a*) to *Verſe* 10. as if *Paul* only meant, that Satan was deſigning to fix the *Corinthians* upon an Opinion, that Backſliders into great Sins were *not to be received again*, or that he laid in Wait to raiſe a *Schiſm* in the Church upon the Account of this *Corinthian*. Others (*b*) reſtrain this Advantage which he waited for, to *Verſe* 7. where the Apoſtle expreſſeth his Fear, leſt the excommunicated Perſon ſhould *be ſwallowed up of too much Sorrow*; but the Caution being not expreſly bound up to any one of theſe, ſeems to point at them all, and to tell us that Satan drives on many Deſigns at once, and that in this Man's Caſe Satan would endeavour to put the *Corinthians* upon a *Phariſaical* Rigour, or to *rend* the Church by a Diviſion about him, and to *oppreſs the Penitent* by bereaving him of his due Comfort; ſo that it appears ſtill, that it is one of his Deſigns to hinder the Comfort, and moleſt the Hearts of God's Children.

Secondly, Of *ſuch Concern* is *inward* ſpiritual Peace to us, that 'tis but an eaſy Conjecture to conclude from thence, that ſo great an Adverſary will make it his Deſign to rob us of ſuch a Jewel: For,

1. Spiritual Comfort is the *ſweet Fruit* of Holineſs, by which God *adorns* and beautifies the Ways of religious Service, to render them amiable and pleaſant to the Undertakers, *Her Ways are Ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths are Peace*, Prov. iii. 17. and this is the preſent *Reſt and Refreſhment* of God's faithful Servants under all their *Toil*, that when they have *Tribulation from the World*, yet they have *Peace in him*, John xvi. 33. and that being *juſtified by Faith, they have Peace with God*, and ſometimes *Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*, 1 Pet. i. 8. and this they may the more confidently expect, becauſe *the Fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace*, &c. *Gal.* v. 22.

2. Spiritual Comfort is not only our Satisfaction, but our *inward Strength* and Activity, for all holy Services doth depend upon it. By this doth God ſtrengthen our Heart, and gird up our Loins *to run the Ways of his Commandments*; it doth alſo ſtrengthen the Soul to undergo *Afflictions*, to glory in Tribulations, to triumph in Perſecutions; the *outward Man* is alſo corrobotated by the inward Peace of the Mind; *A merry Heart doth good like a Medicine*.

(*a*) *Piſcator* in loc. (*b*) *Calvin* in loc.

dicine, but a broken Spirit drieth the Bones, Prov. xvii. 22. all which are intended by that Expreſſion, *Neh.* viii. 10. *The Joy of the Lord is your Strength*; 'tis Strength to the *Body*, to the *Mind*, and that both for *Service* and *Suffering*; the Reaſon whereof the Apoſtle doth hint to us, *Phil.* iv. 7. *The Peace of God which paſſeth all Underſtanding, ſhall keep your Hearts and Minds*; that is, Peace doth ſo guard us as with *a Garriſon*, (for ſo much the Word imports *) that our Affections (*our Hearts*) being *entertained* with *Divine Satisfactions*, are not eaſily *enticed* by baſer Proffers of *worldly Delights*, and our Reaſonings (*our Minds*) being kept *ſteady* upon ſo *noble an Object*, are not ſo eaſily *perverted* to a treacherous Recommendation of Vanities.

3. Joy and Peace are propounded to our careful Endeavours, for Attainment and Preſervation, as a neceſſary *Duty* of great Importance to us. Rejoicings are not only *recommended* as *ſeemly for the Upright*, but *injoined* as *Service*, and that in the *conſtant* Practice, *Rejoice evermore*; *in every Thing give Thanks*, 1 Theſſ. v. 16, 18. *Rejoice in the Lord alway*; *and again, I ſay, rejoice*, Phil. iv. 4. In the Old Teſtament God commanded the Obſervation of ſeveral Feaſts to the *Jews*, theſe tho' they had their ſeveral reſpective Grounds from God's Appointment, yet the general Deſign of all ſeems to have been this, *That they might rejoice before the Lord their God*, Lev. xxiii. 40. as if God did thereby tell them that it was the *comely Complexion* of Religion, and that which was very *acceptable* to himſelf, that his Children might always ſerve him in *Chearfulneſs of Heart*, ſeeing ſuch have *more Cauſe* to rejoice than all the World beſides. They are then much miſtaken, that think *mournful Eyes* and *ſad Hearts* be the greateſt *Ornaments* of Religion, or that none are ſerious in the Profeſſion of it, that have a *chearful* Countenance and a *rejoicing* Frame of Spirit. 'Tis true, there is a Joy that is *deviliſh*, and a Mirth which is *Madneſs*, to which Chriſt hath denounced *a Wo, Wo be to them that laugh now, for they ſhall mourn and weep*; but this is a Joy of another Nature, a *carnal* Delight in *Vanity and Sin*, by which Men *fatten* their Hearts to Ruin; and whatſoever is ſaid againſt this, can be no Prejudice to ſpiritual, holy Joy in *God*, his *Favour* and *Ways*.

4. Spiritual Comfort is alſo a *Badge* of our heavenly Father's Kindneſs. As *Joſeph* (the Son of his Father's Affections)

* Ψυχησαι.

Sections) had a special Testimony there of in his party coloured Coat; so have God's Favourites a peculiar Token of his good Will to them, when he gives *them the Garments of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness*; if spiritual Comfort be so advantagious to us, it will be no Wonder to see Satan so much rage against it; it would be a Satisfaction to him to tear these *Robes* off us, to impede so needful a *Duty*, to rob us of so much *Strength*, and to bereave us of the sweet *Fruits* of our Labours.

Thirdly, It further appears that Satan's design is against the Comforts of God's Children, by the many *Advantages* he hath against them, from the Trouble and Disquiet of their Hearts: I shall reckon up the Chief of them: As,

1. From the Trouble of the Spirit, he raiseth *Confusions and Distractions* of Mind: For, (1.) 'Tis as natural to Trouble, to raise up a Swarm of *muddy Thoughts*, as to *a troubled Sea to cast up Mire and Dirt*: And hence is that Comparison, *Isa.* lvii. 20. a thousand fearful Surmises, evil Cogitations, Resolves, and Counsels, immediately offer themselves. This Disorder of Thoughts Christ took notice of in his Disciples when they were in danger, *Why do Thoughts arise in your Hearts?* Luke xxiv. 38. And *David* considered it as Matter of great Anxiety, which called for speedy Help, *Psal.* xciv. 19. *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me, thy Comforts delight my Soul.* Sometimes one Fear is suggested, then presently another; now this doubt perplexeth, then another Question is begot by the former; they think to take this Course, then by and By they are off that, and resolve upon another, and as quickly change again to a Third, and so onward, one Thought succeeding another, as Vapours from a boiling Pot. (2.) Such Thoughts are *vexatious* and distracting, the very Thoughts themselves (being the poisonous *Steams* of their running Sores) are sadly afflictive, and not unfitly called *cogitationes onerosæ*, burdensome Thoughts. But as they wrap up a Man in Clouds and Darkness, as they puzzle him in his Resolves, *non-plus* him in his Undertakings, distract him in his Counsels, disturb and hinder him in his Endeavours, &c. so do they bring the Mind into a Labyrinth of Confusion. What Advantage the *Devil* hath against a Child of God when his Heart is thus divided and broken into Shivers, 'tis easy to imagine. And *David* seems to be very sensible of it, when he put up that Request, *Psal.* lxxxvi. 11. *Unite my Heart to fear thy Name.*

2. By

2. By Disquiet of Heart the *Devil unfits* Men *for Duty* or Service. Fitness for *Duty* lies in the *orderly Temper* of *Body* and *Mind*, making a Man *willing* to undertake, and *able* to finish his Work with *comfortable* Satisfaction; if either the Body or Mind be distempered, a Man is unfit for such an Undertaking, both must be in a suitable Frame, (like a *well-tun'd Instrument*) else there will be no Melody: Hence, when *David* prepared himself for Praises and Worship, he tells us, *Psal.* xlv. 1, 2. cviii 1, 2. his *Heart was ready* and *fixed*, and then *his Tongue* was *ready* also, so was his Hand with Psaltery and Harp, all these were *awakened* into a suitable Posture. That a Man is or hath been in a fit Order for Service, may be concluded from, (1.) His *Alacrity* to undertake a *Duty*. (2) His *Activity* in the Prosecution. (3.) His *Satisfaction* afterward, right *Grounds* and *Principles* in these Things being still *presupposed*. This being laid as a Foundation, we shall easily perceive how the Troubles of the Spirit do unfit us for *Duty*. For,

1. These do take away all *Alacrity* and Forwardness of the Mind, partly by *diverting* it from *Duty*. Sorrows when they prevail, do so fix the Mind upon the present Trouble, that it can think of nothing but its Burden, they *confine* the Thoughts to the *Pain* and Smart, and make a Man *forget* all other Things; as *David* in his Trouble *forget to eat his Bread*; and sick Persons willingly discourse only of their Diseases, partly by *indisposing* for Action *Joy* and *Hope* are *active* Principles, but *Sorrow* is *sullen* and sluggish. As the Mind (in Trouble) is wholly imployed in a *Contemplation* of its *Misery*, rather than in *finding out a Way* to avoid it, so if it be at Leisure at any Time to entertain Thoughts of using Means for Recovery, yet 'tis so tired out with its Burden, so disheartned by its own Fears, so discouraged with Opposition and Disappointment, that it hath no *List* to undertake any Thing; by this Means the *Devil* bringe the Soul into a spiritual *Catoche*, so *congealing* the Spirits, that it is made stiff and deprived of Motion.

2. Disquiets of Heart unfit us for Duty, by hindering our *Activity* in Prosecution of Duty. The *whole Heart*, Soul, and Strength should be *engaged* in all religious Services, but these Troubles are as Clogs and Weights to hinder Motion. Joy is the *Dilatation* of the Soul, and widens it for any Thing which it undertakes; but Grief *contracts* the

Heart,

Heart, and narrows all the Faculties: Hence doth *David* beg an *enlarged Heart*, as the Principle of Activity, *Pſal.* cxix. 32. *I will run the Way of thy Commandments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my Heart*: For what can elſe be expected, when the Mind is ſo diſtracted with Fear and Sorrow, but that it ſhould be uneven, tottering, weak, and confuſed? So that if it do ſet itſelf to any Thing, it acts troubleſomely, drives on heavily, and *doth very little* with a *great deal ado*; and yet were the Unfitneſs the leſs, if that *little* which it can do, were *well* done, but the Mind is ſo *interrupted* in its Endeavours, that ſometimes in Prayer the Man begins, and then is preſently at a Stand, and dare not proceed, his Words are *ſwallowed up, he is ſo troubled that he cannot ſpeak*, Pſal. lxxvii. 4. Sometimes the Mind is kept ſo employed, and fixed on Trouble that it cannot attend in hearing or praying, but preſently the Thoughts are called off, and become wandring.

3. Troubles hinder our Satisfaction in Duty, and by that Means unfit us to preſent Duties, and indiſpoſe us to future Services of that Kind. Our Satisfaction in Duty ariſeth, 1. Sometimes from *its own Luſtre* and Sweetneſs, the Conviction we have of its *Pleaſantneſs* and the ſpiritual Advantages to be had thereby; theſe render it alluring and attractive, and by ſuch Conſiderations are we invited to their Performance, as *Iſa.* ii. 3. *Come ye, let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord,——and he will teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths.* Hoſ. vi. 1. *Come, and let us return unto the Lord: For he hath torn, and he will heal us: He hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up*; but Trouble of Spirit draws a black Curtain over the Excellencies of Duty, and preſents us with frightful Thoughts about it, ſo that we judge of it according to our Fears, and make it frightful to ourſelves, as if it would be to no Purpoſe, rather a Miſchief than an Advantage. 2. Sometimes our Satisfaction ariſeth from ſome *ſpecial Token of Favour* which our indulgent Father lets fall upon us, while we are in his Work. As when he gives *us* more than ordinary Aſſiſtance, or puts Joy and Comfort into our Hearts. And this he often doth to make us come again, and to engage *afreſh* in the ſame, or other Services, at having *taſted and ſeen that the Lord is gracious*, and that there is a Bleſſedneſs in waiting for him. As in our Bodies he ſo orders it, that the *concocted Juices* become a *ſuc-*

a *ſucceſſive Ferment* to thoſe that ſucceed from our daily Meat and Drink: So from Duties performed, doth he beget and continue ſpiritual Appetite to new Undertakings. But O how ſadly is all this hindred by the Diſquiet of the Heart? The Graces of Faith and Love are uſually obſtructed, if not in their Exerciſe, yet in their delightful Fruits, and if God offer a Kindneſs, inward Sorrow hinders the Perception: As when *Moſes* told the *Iſraelites* of their Deliverance, *they hearkned not for hard Bondage.* If a Meſſage of Peace preſent itſelf in a Promiſe, or ſome Conſideration of God's merciful Diſpoſition, yet uſually this is not credited. *Job* confeſſeth ſo much of himſelf, *Job* xix. 16. *If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my Voice.* *David* alſo doth the like, *Pſal.* lxxvii. 2, 3. *My Soul refuſeth to be comforted: I remember God, and was troubled.* Matter of greateſt Comfort is often ſo far from giving Eaſe, that it augments the Trouble. However the Heart is ſo hurried with its Fears, and diſcompoſed with Grief, that it cannot hearken to nor conſider, nor believe any kind Offer made to it.

By all theſe Ways doth the Devil, through the Diſquiet of Mind, unfit the Lord's People for Duty; and what a ſad Advantage this is againſt us cannot eaſily be told. By this Means he may widen the Diſtance betwixt God and us, keep our Wounds open, make us a Reproach to Religion: And what not? But,

3. By theſe Diſquiets he puſheth us on to *reject all Duties*, for when he hath tired us out by wearilom Endeavours under ſo great Indiſpoſitions and Unfitneſs, he hath a fair Advantage to tempt us to lay all aſide. Our preſent Poſture doth furniſh him with Arguments, he forgeth his Javelings upon our Anvil, and they are commonly theſe *three:* 1. That *Duties* are *difficult.* And this is eaſily proved from our own Experience, while we are broken or bowed down with Sorrows: We make many *Attempts* for *Duty*, and are *oft beat* off with Loſs: Our greateſt Toil helps us but to very inconſiderable Performances, hence he infers, *'Tis Fooliſhneſs to attempt that which is above our Strength, better ſit ſtill than toil for nothing.* 2. That they are *unfruitful*, and this is our own *Complaint*, for *troubled Spirits* have commonly *great Expectations* from *Duties at firſt*, and they run to them (as the *impotent* and ſick

ſick People to the Pool of *Bethesda*) with *Thoughts* of *immediate* Eaſe as ſoon as they ſhall ſtep into them; but when they have tried, and waited a while, ſtretching themſelves upon *Duty*, (as *Eliſha*'s Servant laid the *Staff* upon the Face of the *Shunamite*'s Son) and yet there is *no Voice nor hearing*, no Anſwer from God, no Peace, then are they preſently diſſatisfied, reflecting on the Promiſes of God, and the Counſels of good Men, with this, *Where is all the Pleaſantneſs you ſpeak of? What Advantage is it that we have thus run, and laboured, when we have got nothing?* And then 'tis eaſy for the *Devil* to add, *And why do you wait on the Lord any longer?* 3. His laſt and moſt dangerous Argument is, that they are *ſinful*. Unfitneſs for *Duty* produceth many *Diſtractions*, much *Deadneſs*, wandring *Thoughts*, great *Interruptions*, and pitiful *Performances*. Hence the troubled Soul comes off from *Duty wounded* and *halting*, more diſtreſſed when he hath done, than when he began: Upon theſe Conſiderations, that all his Service was *Sin*, *a mocking of God*, *a taking his Name in vain*, nay a very *blaſphemous Affront* to a divine Majeſty. Upon this the *Devil* ſtarts the Queſtion to his Heart, *Whether it be not better to forbear all Duty, and to do nothing?* Thus doth Satan improve the Trouble of the Mind, and often with the deſigned Succeſs. For a dejected Spirit doth not only afford the *Materials* of theſe Weapons which the *Devil* frames againſt it, but is much prepared to receive them into its own Bowels. The Grounds of theſe *Arguments* it *grants*, and the *Inferences* are commonly *conſented* to, ſo that ordinarily *Duty* is neglected, either, 1. Through *Sottiſhneſs* of Heart; or, 2. Through *frightful* Fears; or, 3. Through *Deſperateneſs*; bringing a Man to the very Precipice of that *Atheiſtical* Determination, *I have cleanſed my Hands in vain.*

4. Satan makes Uſe of the Troubles of God's Children as a *Stumbling-block to others*. 'Tis no ſmall Advantage to him, that he hath hereby an Occaſion to render the Ways of God *unlovely* to thoſe that are beginning to look heaven-ward; he ſets before them the Sighs, Groans, Complaints, and reſtleſs Out-cries of the Wounded in Spirit, to ſcare them off from all Serioufneſs in Religion, and whiſpers this to them; *Will you chuſe a Life of Bitterneſs and Sorrow? Can you eat Aſhes for Bread, and mingle your Drink with Tears? Will you exchange the*

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Comforts and Contents of Life, for a melancholly Heart, and a dejected Countenance? How like you to go mourning all the Day, and at Night to be scared with Dreams, and terrified with Visions? Will you chuse a Life that is worse than Death, and a Condition which will make you a Terror to yourselves, and a Burden to others? Can you you be in Love with an Heart loaden with Grief, and perpetual Fears almost to Distraction, while you see others in the mean Time enjoy themselves in a contented Peace? Thus he follows young Beginners with his Suggestions, making them believe that they cannot be serious in Religion, but at last they will be brought to this, and that 'tis a very dangerous Thing to be religious over-much, and the high Way to dispair; So that if they must have a Religion, he readily directs them to use no more of it, than may consist with the Pleasures of Sin and the World, and to make an easy Business of it, not to let Sin lie over near their Heart, lest it disquiet them, nor over much to concern themselves with Study, Reading, Prayer, or hearing of threatning awakening Sermons, lest it make them *mad*, nor to affect the Sublimities of Communion with God, Exercises of Faith and divine Love, lest it *discompose* them, and dash their worldly Justities *out of Countenance*. A Counsel that is readily enough embraced by those that are almost persuaded to be Christians; and the more to confirm them in it, he sticks not sometimes to asperse the poor troubled Soul with *Dissimulation* (where that Accusation is proper, for the *Devil* cares not how inconsistent he be to himself, so that he may but gain his End) affirming all his Seriousness to be nothing but *subtile Hypocrisy*. So that whether they judge these Troubles to be real or feigned, his Conclusion is the same, and he persuades Men thereby to hold off from all religious Strictness, holy Diligence, and careful Watchfulness.

5. A further Use which the *Devil* makes of these Troubles of Spirit, is to prepare the Hearts of Men thereby to give Entertainment to his *venomous Impressions*. Distress of Heart usually opens the Door to Satan, and lays a Man naked without Armour or Defence as a fair Mark for all his poisoned Arrows, and 'tis a hundred to one but some of them do hit. I shall chuse out some of the most remarkable, and they are these:

1. After long *Acquaintance* with Grief he labours to fix them in it. In some Cases Custom doth *alleviate* higher Griefs,

Griefs, and Men take an *odd Kind of Delight in them*, 'tis some Pleasure to complain (*a*), and Men settle themselves in such a Course, their Finger is ever upon their Sore, and they go about telling their Sorrows to all they converse with, tho' to some this is a Necessity, (for real Sorrows if they be not *too great* for Vent, will constrain them to speak) yet in some that have been formerly acquainted with Grief, it degenerates at last into a *Formality* of complaining; and because they formerly had Cause so to do, they think they must always do so: But besides this, Satan doth endeavour to *chain* Men to their Mourning upon *two* higher Accounts (*b*), 1. By a *delusive Contentment* in Sorrow, as if our Tears *paid* some Part of *our Debt* to God, and made *Amends* for the Injuries done to him. 2. By an *obstinate Sullenness* and desperate Resolvedness, they *harden themselves in Sorrow*, and say as *Job* vii. 11. *I will not restrain my Mouth, I will speak in the Anguish of my Spirit, I will complain in the Bitterness of my Soul. Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou settest a Watch over me?*

2. Another Impression that Mens Hearts are apt to take, is *Unthankfulness*, for the Favours formerly bestowed upon them; their present Troubles blot out the Memory of old Kindnesses; they conclude they have nothing at all, because they have not Peace; tho' God heretofore hath sent down from on high, and taken them out of the great Waters, or out of the Mire and Clay where they were ready to sink; tho' he hath sent them many Tokens of Love, conferred on them many Blessings, yet all these are no more to them, so long as their Sorrows continue, than *Haman*'s Wealth and Honour was to him, so long as *Mordecai* the *Jew* sat at the King's Gate. Thus the *Devil* often prevails with God's Children, to deal with God as some unthankful Persons deal with their Benefactors; who, if they be not humoured in every Request, deny the Reality of their Love, and despise with great Ingratitude all that was done for them before.

3. By inward Griefs, the Hearts of the Afflicted are prepared to entertain the *worst Interpretation* that the *Devil* can put upon the *Providences* of God. The various *Instances* of Scripture, and the gracious *Promises* made to those *that walk in Darkness, and see no Light*, do abundantly forewarn Men from making *hard* Conclusions of God's

(*a*) Est quædam etiam dolendi voluptas. (*b*) Collins Cordial, *Part* 2. *p.* 156.

Dealings, and do tell us that God in Design, for our Trial, and for our Profit doth often *hide his Face for a Moment*, when yet his Purpose is to *bind us up with everlasting Compassions*. Now the *Devil* labours to improve the Sorrows of the Mind to give a quite contrary Construction: If they are afflicted, instead of saying, *Sorrow may endure for a Night, but Joy will come in the Morning*; or that *for a little while God hath hidden himself*, he puts them to say, *this Darkness shall never pass away*. If the Grief be little, he drives them on to a fearful Expectation of worse; as he did with *Hezekiah*, Isa. xxxviii. 13. *I reckoned till Morning, that as a Lyon, so will he break all my Bones, from Day even to Night wilt thou make an End of me*. If God purpose to teach us by inward Sorrows, our Pride of Heart, Carelessness, Neglect of Dependance upon him, the Bitterness of Sin, or the like: The Devil will make us believe (and we are too ready to subscribe to him) that God proclaims open War against us, and resolves never to own us more. So did *Job, chap.* xix. 6. *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and compassed me with his Net*: How often complained he, *Thou hast made me as thy Mark, thou hast broken me asunder, thou hast taken me by my Neck, and shaken me to Pieces*? So also *Heman*, Psal. lxxxviii. 14. *Why castest thou off my Soul? Why hidest thou thy Face from me?*

4. Upon this Occasion the Devil is ready to envenome the Soul with sinful Wishes and Execrations against itself. Eminent Saints have been tempted in their Trouble to say too much this Way, *Job* solemnly cursed his Day, *Job* iii. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the Night in which it was said, there is a Man-child conceived*, &c. So also *Jeremiah*, chap. xx. 14. *Cursed be the day wherein I was born, let not the day wherein my Mother bare me, be blessed; cursed be the Man who brought Tidings to my Father, saying, a Man-child is born unto thee; and let that Man be as the Cities which God overthrew, and repented not.* Strange Rashness! what had the Day deserved? Or wherein was the Messenger to be blamed? Violent Passions hurried him beyond all Bounds of Reason and Moderation. When Troubles within are violent, a small Push sets Men forward; and when once they begin, they are *carried headlong* beyond what they *first* intended.

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5. On this Advantage the Devil sometimes emboldens them to quarrel God himself directly. When *Job* and *Jeremiah* curſed their Day, it was a Contumely againſt God indirectly, but they durſt not make bold with God at ſo high a Rate as to quarrel him to his Face. Yet even this are Men brought to often, when their Sorrows are *long-laſting* and *deep*. The Devil ſuggeſts, *Can God be faithful, and never keep Promiſe for Help? Can he be merciful, when he turns away his Ears from the Cry of the Miſerable? Where is his Pity when he multiplies his Wounds without Cauſe?* Tho' at firſt theſe curſed Intimations do a little ſtartle Men, yet when by frequent inculcating they grow more familiar to the Heart, the Diſtreſſed break out *in their Rage*, with thoſe Exclamations, *Where is the Faithfulneſs of God? Where are his Promiſes? Hath he not forgotten to be gracious? Are not his Mercies clean gone?* And at laſt it may be Satan leads them a Step higher, that is,

6. To a *deſparing Deſperateneſs*. For when all Paſſages of Relief are ſtopt up, and the Burden becomes great, Men are apt to be drawn into *Rage and Fury*, when they think their Burden is *greater than they can bear*, and ſee no Hope of Eaſe, in a Kind of Revenge they expreſs their Anger againſt the Hand that wounded them. The Devil is officiouſly ready with his Advice of *curſe God and die*, and they being full of Anguiſh, are quickly made to comply with it.

7. When 'tis at this Height, the Devil hath but one Stage more, and that is the ſuggeſting of irreguler Means for Eaſe. Rage againſt God doth not quench the inward burnings; Blaſphemies againſt Heaven eaſeth not the Pain, the Sore runs ſtill and ceaſeth not, the Trouble continues, the Man cannot endure it longer, all Patience and Hope is gone, what ſhall he do in this Caſe? The Devil offers his Service, he will be the Phyſician, and commonly he preſcribes one of theſe two Things: 1. That 'tis beſt to endeavour to break thro' all this Trouble into a reſolved Prophaneneſs; not to ſtand in Awe of Laws, nor to believe that there is a God that governs in the Earth, but that this is only the bitter Fruit of *Melancholy*, and unneceſſary Seriouſneſs; and therefore 'tis beſt *to eat, drink, and be merry*. If a Man can thus eſcape out of his Trouble, the Devil needs no more; but oft he cannot, the Wounds of Conſcience will not be thus heal'd.

Then, 2. He hath another Remedy which will not fail, as he tells them, that is, to *deſtroy themſelves*, to end their Troubles with their Lives. How open are the Breaſts of troubled Creatures to all theſe Darts? And were it not that God *ſecretly* ſteps in, and *holds* the Afflicted *with his right Hand*, 'tis ſcarce imaginable but that wounded Conſciences ſhould by Satan's ſubtile Improvement of ſo fair an Advantage, be brought to all this Miſery.

8. Satan can afflict the *Body*, by the *Mind*: For theſe two are ſo cloſely bound together, that their good and bad Eſtate is ſhared betwixt them. If the Heart be merry, the Countenance is chearful, the Strength is renewed, the Bones do flouriſh like an Herb. If the Heart be troubled, the Health is impaired, the Strength is dried up, the Marrow of the Bones waſted, *&c.* Grief in the Heart is like a *Moth* in the Garment, it inſenſibly conſumeth the Body, and diſordereth it. This Advantage of weakning the Body falls into Satan's Hands by neceſſary Conſequence, as the Prophet's ripe Figs, that fell into the Mouth of the Eater. And ſurely he is well pleaſed with it, as he is an Enemy both to Body and Soul: But 'tis a greater Satisfaction to him, in that as he can make the Sorrows of the Mind produce the Weakneſs and Sickneſs of the Body: So can he make the Diſtemper of the Body (by a *reciprocal Requital*) to augment the Trouble of the Mind. How little can a ſickly Body do? It diſables a Man for all Services, he cannot oft pray, nor read, nor hear. Sickneſs takes away the Sweetneſs and Comfort of religious Exerciſes; this gives Occaſion for them to think the worſe of themſelves; they think the *Soul is weary* of the Ways of God, when the Body cannot hold out. All Failures which *Wearineſs* and Faintneſs produce, are aſcribed preſently to the *bad Diſpoſition* of the Mind, and this is like Oil caſt upon the Flame. Thus the Devil makes a double Gain out of ſpiritual Trouble.

9. Let it be alſo reckoned among the Advantages which Satan hath againſt Men from Trouble of Spirit, that 'tis a *Contentment* to him to ſee them in their Miſeries; 'tis a *Sport* to him to ſee them, (as *Job* ſpeaks) take their Fleſh in their Teeth, and cry out in the Bitterneſs of their Souls; their Groanings are his Muſick: When they wallow in Aſhes, drown themſelves in Tears, roar till their Throat is dry, ſpread out their Hands for Help, then he *gluts* his

Heart

Heart in looking upon their Woes. When they fall upon God with their unjuſt Surmiſes, evil Interpretations of Providence, queſtioning his Favour, denying his Grace, wiſhing they had never been born, then he *claps* his Hands and ſhouts *a Victory!* The pleaſanteſt Sight to him, is to ſee *God hiding* himſelf from his Child, and that Child *broken* with Fears, *torn* in Pieces with Griefs, made a *Brother to Dragons*, a *Companion* to *Owls*, under *reſtleſs Anxieties*, perpetual *Lamentations*, *feeble* and ſore broken, their Strength *dried* like a Potſheard, their *Throat* dry, their *Tongue* cleaving to their Jaws, their *Bowels boiling*, their *Bones* burnt with Heat, their *Skin black* upon them, their *Fleſh* conſumed, their *Bones* ſticking out, *cloathed* with *ſtrong* Pain upon their Bed. This is one of Satan's delightful Spectacles, and for theſe Ends doth he all he can, to bereave them of their Comfort, which we may the more certainly perſwade ourſelves to be true, when we conſider the Grounds forementioned, his *malicious Nature*, the *Advantages* of ſpiritual Peace, and the *Diſadvantages* of ſpiritual Trouble.

CHAP. VI.

Of the various Ways by which he hinders Peace. 1. *Way by Diſcompoſures of Spirit. Theſe Diſcompoſures explained, by ſhewing,* 1. *What Advantage he takes from our natural Temper; and what Tempers give him this Advantage:* 2. *By what Occaſions he works upon our natural Tempers.* 3. *With what Succeſs.* (1.) *Theſe Occaſions ſuited to natural Inclinations, raiſe great Diſturbance.* (2.) *They have a Tendency to ſpiritual Trouble. The Thing proved, and the Manner how, diſcovered.* (3.) *Theſe Diſturbances much in his Power. General and particular Conſiderations about that Power.*

HAVING evidenced that one of Satan's principal Deſigns is againſt the Peace and Comfort of God's Children; I ſhall next endeavour a Diſcovery of the *various Ways* by which he doth undermine them herein. All inward Troubles are not of the ſame *Kind* in themſelves, neither doth Satan always produce the ſame *Effects* out of all. Some being in their own Nature *diſquiets*, that do

not ſo *directly*, and immediately overthrow the Peace and Joy of believing, and the Comforts of Aſſurance of divine Favour, as others do. Yet ſeeing that by all, he hath no ſmall Advantage againſt us, as to *Sin* and *Trouble*, and that any of them at the *Long-run*, may lead us to *queſtion* our Intereſt in Grace, and the Love of God, and may accordingly afflict us, I ſhall ſpeak of them all; which that I may do the more diſtinctly, I ſhall rank theſe Troubles into ſeveral *Heads*, under *peculiar Names*, (it may not be altogether ſo proper, but that the Curious may find Matter of Exception to them) that by them and their Explanation, the Differences may the better appear. I diſtinguiſh therefore of a *fourfold* Trouble, that the Devil doth endeavour to work up upon the Hearts of Men. They are, 1. *Diſcompoſures*. 2. *Affrightments*. 3. *Dejections of Sadneſs*. 4. *Diſtreſſes* of Horrour. Of all which I ſhall ſpeak in their Order. And

1. Of *Diſcompoſures* of Soul. Theſe are *Moleſtations* and Diſturbances by which the Mind is put *out of Order* and made unquiet; the Calm (in which it ſhould enjoy itſelf, and by which it ſhould be compoſed to a regular and ſteady acting) being diſturbed by a *Storm of Commotion*, and in which the *Conſcience* or the Peace of it is not preſently concerned. This Diſtinction of the Trouble of *Soul* from the Trouble of *Conſcience* is not new, others (a) have obſerved it before, and do thus explain it, Trouble of Soul is *larger* than Trouble of Conſcience; every *troubled Conſcience* is a *troubled Soul*, but every troubled Soul is not a troubled Conſcience: For the Soul may be troubled from Cauſes *natural*, *civil*, and *ſpiritual*, according to *Variety* of Occaſions and Provocations, when yet a Man's *inward Peace* with God is firm; and in ſome Caſes (as in Infants and in Men diſtracted with Fevers, &c.) there may be Paſſions and Diſturbances of Soul, when the Conſcience is *not capable* of exerciſing its Office; nay the *Soul of Chriſt* was troubled (*John* xii. 27. *Now is my Soul troubled*) when it was not poſſible that *Sin* or *Deſpair* ſhould have the leaſt footing in him.

For the opening of theſe Diſcompoſures of Soul, I ſhall, 1. Shew upon what Advantage of *natural Temper* the Devil is encouraged to moleſt Men. 2. By what *Occaſions* he

(a) *Dickſon Therap. Sacr.* l. 1. c. 2. Differunt inter ſe caſus animæ ægræ & caſus conſcientiæ ægræ, &c.

he doth work upon our *natural Inclinations.* 3. And with what *Succeſs* of Diſturbance to the Soul.

1. As to our *natural Diſpoſitions*, Satan (as hath formerly been noted) takes his uſual *Indications* of working from thence; theſe guide him in his Enterpriſes; his Temptations being ſuited to Mens Tempers, proceed more ſmoothly and ſucceſsfully. Some are of ſo ſerene and calm a Diſpoſition, that he doth not much deſign their Diſcompoſure; but others there are, whoſe Paſſions are more ſtirring, (fit Matter for him to work upon:) And theſe are,

(1.) The *angry* Diſpoſition. How great an Advantage this gives to Satan to diſturb the Heart, may be eaſily conceiv'd, by conſidering the various Workings of it in ſeveral Men, according to their different Humours; 'tis a Paſſion that acts not alike in all, and for the Differences (ſo far as we need to be concerned,) I ſhall not trouble the Schools of Philoſophers, but content myſelf with what we have in *Eph.* iv. 31. where the Apoſtle expreſſeth it by *three* Words, (not that they differ eſſentially) declaring thereby the various Ways of Anger's working; the firſt is Πικρία, which we tranſlate *Bitterneſs* (a). This is a Diſpleaſure *ſmothered:* For ſome when they are angry cover it, and give it no vent, partly for that they are ſometimes aſhamed to mention the Ground as trivial or unjuſt, partly from Sullenneſs of Diſpoſition, and oft from a natural Reſervedneſs: While the Flame is thus kept down, it burns inwardly, and Men reſolve in their Minds many troubleſome vexatious Thoughts. The ſecond Word is Θυμὸς, *Wrath:* This is a fierce impetuous Anger. Some are ſoon moved, but ſo violent, that they are preſently tranſported into Rage and Frenzy, or are ſo peeviſhly waſpiſh that they cannot be ſpoken to. The third is Ὀργὴ, tranſlated here *Anger*, but ſignifies ſuch a Diſpleaſure as is deep, entertaining Thoughts of *Revenge* and Purſuit, ſettling itſelf at laſt into Hatred. Any of theſe is enough to bereave the Heart of its Reſt, and to alarm it with Diſturbances.

(2.) Others have an *envious* Nature, always maligning and repining at other Mens Felicity; an evil Eye, that cannot look on another's better Condition without Vexation. This turns a Man into a Devil, 'tis the Devil's proper Sin, and the Fury that doth unquiet him, and he the better knows of what Avail it would be to help on our Trouble.

(3.) Some

(a) *Βgins* in loc.

(3.) Some are of *proud* Tempers, always overvaluing themselves with the Scorn and Contempt of others. This Humour is troublesome to all about them, but all this Trouble doth at last redound to themselves; these think all others should observe them, and take Notice of their supposed Excellencies, which if Men do not, then it pines them, or stirs up their Choler to Indignation. *Solomon*, Prov. xxx. 21. mentioning those Things that are greatly disquieting in the Earth, instanceth in *a Servant when he reigneth, and the Hand-maid that is Heir to her Mistress*, intending thereby the proud imperious Insolency of those that are unexpectedly raised from a low Estate to Wealth or Honour: He that is of *a proud Heart stirreth up Strife*, Prov. xxviii. 25. and as he is troublesome to others, so doth he create Trouble to himself; for he not only molests himself by the working of his disdainful Thoughts, while he exercises his Scorn towards others, (*Prov.* xxi. 24. *The haughty Scorner deals in proud Wrath*) but this occasions the Affronts and Contempt of others again, which beget new Griefs to his restless Mind.

(4.) Some have a natural *Exorbitancy of Desire*, an evil Covering; they are passionately carried forth toward what they have not, and have no Contentment or Satisfaction in what they do enjoy. Such Humours are seldom at Ease, their Desires are *painfully* violent, and when they obtain what they longed for, they soon grow weary of it, and then another Object takes up their Wishes, so that these *Daughters of the Horse-leech are ever crying, Give, give*, Prov. xxx. 15.

(5.) Others have a *soft effeminate* Temper, a weakness of Soul that makes them unfit to bear any Burden, or endure any Hardness. These, if they meet with Pains or Troubles, (and who can challenge an Exemption from them?) they are presently impatient, vexing themselves by a *vain Reluctancy* to what they cannot avoid; not but that extraordinary Burdens will make the strongest Spirit to stoop, but these cry out for the smallest Matters, which a stout Mind would bear with some competent Chearfulness.

(6.) And there are other Dispositions that are *tender*, to an *Excess of Sympathy*, so that they immoderately affect and afflict themselves with other Mens Sorrows. Tho' this be a Temper more commendable than any of the former, yet Satan can take Advantage of this, as also of the forenamed Dispo-

sitions,

ſitions, to diſcompoſe us, eſpecially by ſuiting them with fit Occaſions, which readily work upon theſe Tempers: And this was

2. The *ſecond* Thing to be explained, which ſhall be performed by a brief Enumeration of them, the chief whereof are theſe:

1. *Contempt* or Diſeſtimation. When a Man's Perſon, Parts or Opinion are ſlighted, his Anger, Envy, Pride and Impatience are awakned, and theſe make him ſwell and reſtleſs within. Even good Men have been ſadly diſturbed this Way. *Job*, as holy a Man as he was, and who had enough of greater Matters to trouble his Mind, yet among other Griefs complains of this more than once, *Job* xii. 4. *I am as one mocked of his Neighbour; the juſt upright Man is laughed to ſcorn.* Job xix. 15. *They that dwell in mine Houſe, and my Maids count me for a Stranger.—I called my Servant, and he gave me no Anſwer;—Yea, young Children deſpiſed me, I roſe up and they ſpake againſt me.* Thus he bemoans himſelf, and (which is more) ſpeaks of it again with ſome *Smartneſs* of Indignation, *Job* xxx. 1. *Now they that are younger than I, have me in Deriſion, whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my Flock.* *David* alſo who had a ſtout Heart under Troubles, complains that he could not bear Reproaches, *Pſal.* lxix. *Reproach hath broken mine Heart, I am full of Heavineſs.* What theſe Reproaches were, and how he was ſtaggered with them, he tells us, ver. 10 *I chaſtned my Soul with Faſting, that was to my Reproach. I made Sackcloth my Garment, and I became a Proverb to them. They that ſit in the Gate, ſpeak againſt me; and I was the Song of the Drunkards.* With theſe he was ſo ſtounded, that if he had not catch'd hold on God by Prayer (as he ſpeaks, ver. 13.) he had fallen; *But as for me, my Prayer is unto thee, O Lord*, &c. and he afterward ſpeaks of his Support under Reproaches, as a Wonder of Divine Aſſiſtance, *Pſal.* cxix. 51, *The Proud have had me in Deriſion, yet have I not declined from thy Law.*

2. *Injury* is another Occaſion by which the Devil works upon our Tempers to diſquiet us. Wrongs of Injuſtice and Oppreſſion are hard to bear; this is a common Ground of Trouble, good Men cannot always acquit themſelves in this Caſe as they ought. *Jeremiah* when ſmitten by *Paſhur*, and put in the Stocks, *Jer.* xx. 2, 7. falls into a ſad Paſſion, *I am*

a Derision daily, every one mocketh me, I cried out, I cried Violence and Spoil, imitating the paſſionate Affrightments of thoſe that cry, Murder, Murder, &c. No Wonder, ſeeing *Solomon* gives it as an *Axiom* built upon manifold Experience, *Eccl.* vii. 7. *Oppreſſion* doth not only make a Man unquiet, but *mad* in his Unquietneſs; and not only thoſe that are fooliſh and haſty, but the moſt conſiderate and ſedate Perſons. *Oppreſſion makes a wiſe Man mad.*

3. Another Occaſion of Mens Diſcompoſure, is the *Proſperity of the Wicked*; their Abundance, their Advancements to Honours and Dignity, hath always been a Grudge to thoſe, whoſe Condition is below them, and yet ſuppoſe themſelves to have better Grounds to expect Preferment than they. This aſtoniſhed *Job* even to Trembling, *Job* xxi. 7. *When I remember, I am afraid, and Trembling taketh hold on my Fleſh*; and the Matter was but this, *Wherefore do the Wicked live, become old, yea, and mighty in Power?* &c. The Trouble that ſeizeth on Mens Hearts on this Occaſion, is called *Fretting*, a Vexation that wears out the Strength of the Soul, as two *hard* Bodies waſte by *mutual Attrition* or Rubbing; and it takes its Advantage from our Envy chiefly, tho' other Diſtempers come in to help it forward, *Pſal.* xxxvii. 1. *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of evil Doers, neither be thou envious againſt the Workers of Iniquity. David* confeſſeth, that he was apt to fall into this Trouble, *Pſal.* lxxiii. 3. *I was envious at the Fooliſh, when I ſaw the Proſperity of the Wicked.* Againſt this Diſquiet we have frequent Cautions, *Prov.* xxiv. 1, 19. and *Pſal.* xlix. 16. *Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the Glory of his Houſe is increaſed.* All which ſhew our Proneneſs to this Diſeaſe.

4. *Croſſes* and Afflictions give Satan an Opportunity to work upon our Paſſions. As Diſappointments of Expectations, Loſs of Friends, of Eſtate, Perſecutions and Sufferings for Conſcience Sake, &c. none of theſe in their own Nature *are joyous, but grievous*; and what Uſe they have been of to the Devil, to diſcompoſe the Minds of the Sufferers, is evidenced by common Experience. The Tears, ſad Countenances, and doleful Lamentations of Men, are true Witneſſes of the Diſquiet of their Hearts; every one being preſſed with the Senſe of his own Smart, is ready to cry out, *Is there any Sorrow like my Sorrow? I am poor and comfortleſs, my Lovers and my Friends have forſaken me, and there is none to help.* Some grow faint under their Burden, while their Eyes fail

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in looking for Redreſs, eſpecially when new unexpected Troubles overwhelm their Hopes, *When I looked for Good, then Evil came; and when I waited for Light, there came Darkneſs*, Job xxx. 26. *Why haſt thou ſmitten us, and there is no Healing for us? We looked for Peace, and there is no Good; and for the Time of Healing, and behold Trouble*, Jer. xiv. 19. and here they ſink, concluding there is no Hope. Others that bear up better in a bleſſed Expectation of ſpiritual Profit, having that of *David* in their Eye, *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou afflicteſt, and teacheſt in thy Law*; yet they cannot forbear their Complaints even to God, *Pſal.* xxv. 17. *The Troubles of mine Heart are enlarged, O bring thou me out of my Diſtreſſes, look upon mine Affliction and my Pain.* May thoſe that have had the higheſt Advantages of heavenly Support, whoſe Hearts have been kept in Peace, counting it all Joy that they have fallen into theſe Trials (and God doth more this Way, for thoſe that ſuffer for the Goſpel's Sake, than ordinarily for others) yet have not theſe been under a *Stoical Senſeleſſneſs* of their Trouble; tho' they were not *diſtreſſed, they were troubled on every Side*; tho' *not in Deſpair*, yet they were *perplexed*, 2 Cor. iv. 8. tho' their Afflictions were *light*, yet were they *Afflictions* ſtill.

5. To theſe may be added the *Pain* or Anguiſh of *Sickneſs*, and bodily Diſtemper. Tho' there are various Degrees of Pain, and that ſome Sickneſſes are leſs afflictive than others, yet none of them forbear to pierce the Mind, the whole Man is diſcompoſed. He that is exerciſed *with ſtrong Pains upon his Bed*, cries out in the Bitterneſs of his Soul; and he that by *inſenſible* Degrees languiſheth, grows ordinarily *peeviſh*, and his Mind bleeds by an inward Wound; ſo that he *ſpends his Days in Sighing*, and his Years in Mourning. And others there are, who being before acquainted with bodily Pains, grow very impatient in Sickneſs, and are able to bear nothing; and beſides the preſent Senſe of Pain, the Expectation of Death puts ſome into great Commotion; the Fears of it (for it is naturally dreadful) fills them with diſquiet Thoughts; and thoſe that approach to the Grave by ſlow Steps, under Conſumption or languiſhing Sickneſſes, they are habituated to Sadneſs, and can think of nothing *cheerfully* (except they have great Aſſurance of Salvation, and have well learned to die) becauſe the Coffin, Grave, and Winding-ſheet are ſtill preſented to them. Theſe, tho' they be very ſuitable Objects for Meditation,

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and (well improved) of great Advantage for Preparation to Death; yet doth Satan thereby (when it is for his Purpose) endeavour to keep Men under Grief, and to bereave them of their Peace.

6. Satan takes an Advantage of Trouble from the *Miseries* of others. Sympathy is a Christian Grace; and to bear one another's Burdens, to mourn with those that mourn, shews us to be *Fellow-feeling Members of the same Body*; for *if one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it.* Yet are some Men naturally of so tender a Constitution, that Satan overdrives them herein, every common Occasion will wound them: The usual Effects of God's ordinary Providence on the Poor, Lame, or Sick, are deeply laid to Heart by them; and instead of being not *unsensible* of other Mens Miseries, they are *not sensible* of any Thing else, neither do they enjoy their own Mercies. And here, as Satan can every Moment present them with Objects of Pity, ordinary or extraordinary; so upon a religious Pretence of merciful Consideration, they are made cruel to themselves, refusing their *own Peace*, because *other* Men are not at *Ease*.

3. The *third* Particular, promised to be explained for the Discovery of these Discomposures of Soul, was this; That by a *Concurrence* of these and such like *Occasions*, to such *Tempers*, the Hearts of Men are disturbed, and their inward Peace broken. This I shall evidence by these *three* Things: 1. That these *Occasions* meeting with such *Dispositions*, do naturally raise great *Disturbances* in their present Working. 2. That they have a Tendency to *further Trouble*. 3. That Satan doth *design*, and hath it ordinarily in his Power to *discompose* the Hearts of Men hereby.

1. That these Occasions meeting with such Dispositions, do naturally raise great Disturbances. This is evident from what hath been already said: For (1.) All these Dispositions carry as much *Fire* in their own Bosoms, as is sufficient to burn up the standing Corn of any Man's Peace. What is Anger, but an *inward Burning*, a restless Confusion of the Spirits, sometime a Phrensy, a Distraction, a troubled Sea full of Rage, a wild Beast let loose? Envy, that is a *fretful* Peevishness, a vexatious Repining, needing no other Tormentors but its own *Furies*, recoiling upon him that bred it, because it cannot wreck its Spite upon its Objects. An envious Person is a *Self-murderer* by the Verdict of *Eliphaz*,

Job

Job v. 2. *Wrath killeth the foolish Man, and Envy slayeth the foolish one.* This is not barely to be understood of its *provoking* the Judge of all the Earth to send down its deserved Destruction, but also (if not chiefly) of its own *corroding* Temper, which by long Continuance wastes the Strength, and consumes the Body. Pride is a *perpetual Vexation*, creating its Troubles from its own Fancy: Irregular Covetings, keep a Man still upon the Rack, they make a Man like the *Tantalus* of the Poets, they give a Man a *canimus appetitus*, a strong Appetite, with excessive Greediness, and restless Pursuit, and *constant Dissatisfactions*, he is ever *gaping* and never *enjoying*. Impatience is a wearisome Conflict with a Burden which it can neither *bear*, nor yet *shake off*; where all the Fruit of the vain Labour amounts to no better Account than this, that the Impatient makes his Burden the *greater*, the Bands that ty it on the *stronger*, and the Strength that should bear it the *weaker*. *Lastly*, An Excess of Pity, multiplies *Wounds without Cause*, it hinders a Man to be *happy*, so long as there are any that are *miserable*: He is always (in Reference to his Quiet) at the Mercy of other Men, the afflicted can torment him at a Distance; and by a Kind of *Magick*, make him feel the Torments that are inflicted upon his Image. Who can deny, but that Men that are ridden by such vexatious Dispositions, must lead an unquiet Life, and always be tossed with inward Tempests. Especially, (2.) When we consider, *how fit* the forementioned *Occasions* are, to draw out these *Humours* to their tumultuary Extravagancies: A lighted Match and Gunpowder, are not more exactly suited to raise a shaking Blast, than those Occasions and Tempers are to breed an inward Annoyance. Some of these Humours are so troublesome, that rather than they will want Work, they will fight with their *own Shadows*, and by a Perverseness of *prejudicated Fancy*, will create their own Troubles, and the best of them, which seem sometime to take Truce, and compose themselves to Rest, while Occassons are out of the Way: Yet they are *quickly awakened*, like sleeping Dogs that are roused with the least Noise; what Work then may we expect they will make when they are summoned to give their Appearance upon a solemn Occasion? But, (3.) If we should deal by Instances, and bring upon the Stage the Effects that have been brought forth by these concurring Causes, it will

appear

appear that they make Diſturbances in good Earneſt: Let us either view the *furious Fits*, that have been like ſudden Flaſhes, ſooneſt gone; or their more *laſting Impreſſions*, and we ſhall find it true. As to violents Fits, raiſed by ſuch Occaſions and Diſpoſitions, Examples are infinite. What Rages, Outrages, Madneſſes, and Extravagances have Men run into? Some upon Provocations, have furiouſly acted *ſavage Cruelties*, and for ſmall Matters have been carried to the moſt deſperate Revenges. Others have been brought to ſuch violent *Commotions* within themſelves, that the Frame of Nature hath been thereby *weakened*, and overthrown. As *Scilla*, who in a ſtrong Paſſion, vomited Choler till he died. Some in their Fury, have acted that which hath been Matter of *Sorrow* to them all their Days. But (omitting the Examples of Heathens and wicked Men) let us conſider the wonderful *Tranſports* of holy Men. *Moſes* a Man eminent, beyond Compariſon, in Meekneſs; was ſo aſtoniſhed with a ſudden Surprize of Trouble, at the Sight of the Golden Calf, that he threw down the Tables of the Law, and brake them. Some indeed obſerve from thence, a *Significancy* of *Iſrael*'s breaking the Law, and forfeiting God's Protection, as his peculiar People, but *this* is more to be aſcribed to the *Deſignment* of *Divine Providence*, that ſo ordered it, than to the *Intendment* of *Moſes*, who no doubt, did not this from a *ſedate* and calm *Deliberation*, as purpoſing by this Act to tell *Iſrael* ſo much; but was hurried by his Grief (as not conſidering well what he did) to break them. *Aſa* a good Man, when he was reproved by the Prophet, (inſtead of thankful Acceptance of the Reproof) grows angry, falls into a Rage, and throws the Prophet into Priſon. *Elias*, diſcompoſed with *Jezebel*'s Perſecution, deſires that God would *take away his Life*. *Jonah*, in his Anger, falls out with God, and *juſtifies* it when he hath done: Surely ſuch Fits as theſe proceeded from great inward Combuſtion. Would wiſe, ſober, holy Men have ſaid or done ſuch Things, if they had not been tranſported *beyond* themſelves? And though, in ſuch Caſes, the Fits are ſoon over, yet we obſerve that ſome are apt to fall into ſuch Fits *often*, and are ſo *eaſily* irritated, that (like the *epileptick* Perſon poſſeſſed by the *Devil*) upon every Occaſion, they are by him, *caſt into the Fire, or into the Water*, and by the *frequent Return* of their Diſtemper are *never* at reſt.

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As to others, whose Tempers are more apt to *retain* a troublesome Impression, 'tis very obvious that their Discomposures have as much in *Length* and *Breadth*, as the other had in *Height*. You may view *Haman* tormented under his secret Discontent, which his Pride and Envy formed in him, for the Want of *Mordecai*'s Obeysance: The King's Favour, a great Estate, high Honour, and what else a Man could wish to make him content, are all swallowed up in this Gulph, and become nothing to him. You see *Amnon* vexed and sick, for his Sister *Tamar*, waxing lean from Day to Day. You see *Ahab* (though a King, who had enough to satisfy his Mind) in the same Condition for *Naboth*'s Vineyard. If you say these were wicked Men, who rid their Lusts without a Bridle, and used the Spur: Look then upon better Men, and you will see too much. *Rachel* so grieves and mourns for Want of Children, that she professeth her Life inconsistent with her Disappointment, *Give me Children, else I die.* *Hanna* upon the same Occasion weeps and eats not, and prays in the Bitterness of her Soul, and the Abundance of her Complaint and Grief. *Jeremiah* (being pressed with Discouragements from the Contradiction of evil Men) calls himself *a Man of Strife and Contention to the whole Earth*, Jer. xv. 10. his Sorrows thence arising, had so imbittered his Life, that he puts *a Wo* upon his Birth, *Wo is me, my Mother, that thou hast born me a Man of Strife.* *Paul* had a noble Courage under manifold Afflictions, he could glory in the Cross, and rejoice in Persecutions: Nevertheless, the Greatness of his Work, the froward Perverseness and Unsteadiness of Professors, (which put him under Fears, Jealousies, and new Travel, 2 *Cor.* xi. 2. *Gal.* iv. 19.) the Miseries of Christians, and the Care he had for the Concerns of the Gospel, (which was a constant Load upon his Mind, his Heart (like old *Eli*'s) trembling still for the Ark of God) made him complain as one worn out by the Troubles of his Heart; 2 *Cor.* xi. 27. *In Weariness, and Painfulness, in Watchings often, in Hunger and Thirst, in Fastings often, in Cold and Nakedness. Besides those Things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the Care of all the Churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak?* &c. *Rom.* ix. 2. For the *Jews* he had great Heaviness and continual Sorrow in his Heart; and for the *Gentiles* he had perpetual Fears. Now though he had a great Share of divine Comforts intermixed, and a more

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than ordinary Aſſiſtance of the Spirit, to keep him from ſinful Diſcompoſure of Spirit (at leaſt to ſuch an Height, as it ordinarily prevails upon others) yet was he very ſenſible of his Burden, and doubtleſs the *Devil* laboured to improve theſe Occaſions to weary out his Strength. For by theſe, and ſuch like Things, he frequently vexeth the righteous Souls of the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel from Day to Day: So that their Hearts have no Reſt, and their Hands grow often feeble, and they cry out, O the Burden! O the Care! being ready to ſay as *Jeremiah*, Chap. xx. 7. *O Lord, thou haſt deceived me, and I was deceived? I am a Deriſion daily, every one mocketh me.* Thus, ſay they, Did we ever think to meet with ſuch Diſappointments, ſuch Griefs, from the Wilfulneſs, Pride, Weakneſs, Ignorance, Pettiſhneſs, Inconſtancy, Negligence, and Scandals of Friends? and ſuch Hatred, Contradictions, Scorns, and Injuries from Enemies? Were we free, what Calling would we not rather chuſe? What Place would we not rather go to, where we might ſpend the Remainder of our Days in ſome Reſt and Eaſe? Were it not better to work with our Hands for a Morſel of Bread, for ſo might our Sleep be ſweet to us at Night, and we ſhould not ſee theſe Sorrows? At this Rate are good Men ſometime diſturbed, and the Anguiſh of their Spirit makes their Life a Burden.

2. Yet is not this all the Diſturbance that the Devil works upon our Hearts by theſe Things, (though theſe are bad enough) but they have a Tendency *to further Trouble.* Diſcompoſures of Spirit, if they continue *long*, turn at laſt into *Troubles of Conſcience.* Though there is no Affinity Betwixt ſimple Diſcompoſure of Soul, and Troubles of Conſcience in their own Nature; the Objects of the former being Things *external*, no way relating to the Soul's Intereſt in God and Salvation, which are the Objects of the latter; yet the Effects produced by the Prevalency of theſe Diſturbances, are a fit Stock for the ingrafting of Doubts and Queſtionings about our ſpiritual Condition. As *Saul*'s Father firſt troubled himſelf for the Loſs of his Aſſes, and ſent his Son to ſeek them; but when he ſtaid long, he forgat his Trouble, and took up a new Grief for his Son, whom he feared he had loſt in Purſuit of the Aſſes. So is it ſometime with Men, who after they have long vexed themſelves for Injuries or Afflictions, *&c.* upon a ſerious Conſideration of the Working, and Power of theſe Paſſions, leave their

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former Purſuit, and begin to bethink themſelves in what a Condition their Souls are, that abound with ſo much Murmuring, Rage, Pride, or Impatience, and then the Scene is altered, and they begin to fear they have loſt their Souls, and are now perplexed about their ſpiritual Eſtate. To make this plain I will give ſome *Inſtances*, and then add ſome *Reaſons* which will evidence *that it is ſo*, and alſo *how* it comes to be ſo.

For Inſtances, tho' I might produce a ſufficient Number to this Purpoſe, from thoſe that have written of *Melancholly*, yet I ſhall only inſiſt upon two or three from Scripture.

Hezekiah when God ſmote him with Sickneſs, at firſt was diſcompoſed upon the Apprehenſion of Death, that he ſhould ſo ſoon be deprived of the *Reſidue of his Years, and behold Man no more with the Inhabitants of the World*, as he himſelf expreſſeth it, *Iſa.* xxxviii. 10. afterward his Trouble grew greater, *He chattered as a Crain or Swallow, and mourned as a Dove*, he was in *great Bitterneſs*, ver. 17. and ſadly *oppreſſed* therewith, *ver.* 14. That which thus diſtreſſed him was not ſimply the Fear of Death, we cannot imagine ſo pious a Perſon would ſo very much diſquiet himſelf upon that ſingle Account; but by the Expreſſions which he let fall in his Complainings, we may underſtand, that ſome ſuch Thoughts as theſe did ſhake him, that he apprehended God was *angry* with him, that the preſent Stroke ſignified *ſo much* to him, all Circumſtances conſidered, 2 *Kings* xx. 6. (for he was yet in his Strength, and *Jeruſalem* in great Diſtreſs, being at that Time beſieged by *Senacherib*'s Army (*a*), and for him to be doomed to Death by a *ſudden* Meſſage, at *ſuch* a Time, ſeemed to carry much in it) and that ſurely there was great *Provocation* on his Part; and it ſeems upon Search, he charged himſelf ſo deeply with his Sinfulneſs, that his Apprehenſions were no leſs, than that if God ſhould reſtore him, yet in the Senſe of his Vileneſs he ſhould never be able to look up; *I ſhall go ſoftly all my Years in the Bitterneſs of my Soul*, ver. 15. (which Expreſſion implies a Suppoſition of his Recovery, and a deep Senſe of Iniquity) and accordingly when he was recovered, he takes notice chiefly of God's Love to *his Soul*, and the *Pardon* of his Sin, (which evidently diſcover where the Trouble pinched him) *Thou haſt in Love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Corruption.*

(*a*) Vid. *Lightfoot* Harm. in loc.

ruption, for thou haſt caſt all my Sins behind thy Back, ver. 17.

Job's Troubles were very great, and his Caſe extraordinary: Satan had malicioufly ſtript him of all outward Comforts, this he bore with admirable Patience, *Job* i. 21. *Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked ſhall I return thither: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* The *Devil* ſeeing now himſelf defeated, obtains a new Commiſſion, wherein *Job* is wholly put into his Hand, (Life only excepted, *Chap.* ii. 9.) he ſets upon him again, and in his new Encounter labours to bring upon him ſpiritual Diſtreſſes, and accordingly improves his Loſſes and Sufferings to that End, as appears by his Endeavours and the Succeſs; for as he tempted him *by his Wife* to a deſperate *Diſregard* of God, that had ſo afflicted him, *Curſe God and die*, ſo he tempted him alſo by *his Friends*, to *queſtion* the State of his Soul, and his Integrity, and all from the Conſideration of his outward Miſeries. To that Purpoſe are all their Diſcourſes: *Eliphaz*, *Chap.* iv. 5, 6, 7. from his Sufferings and his Carriage under them, takes Occaſion to jeer his former Piety, (as being no other than feigned) *It is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt: Is not this thy Fear, thy Confidence, thy Hope, and the Uprightneſs of thy Ways?* That is, is all thy Religion come to this? And alſo concludes him wicked, *Who ever periſhed being innocent? And where were the Righteous cut off?* Bildad, *Chap.* viii. 6, 13. chargeth him with Hypocriſy upon the ſame Ground, and while he makes his Defence, *Zophar* plainly gives him the Lie, *Chap.* xi. 3. and at this Rate they go their Round; and all this while Satan (whoſe deſign it was to afflict his Conſcience with the Senſe of divine Wrath) *ſecretly* ſtrikes in with theſe Accuſations, inſomuch, that though *Job* ſtoutly defended his *Integrity*, yet he was wounded with inward *Diſtreſſes*, and concluded, that theſe Dealings of God againſt him were no leſs than God's ſevere Obſervance of his Iniquity; as is plain from his bemoaning himſelf in *Chap.* x. 2. *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me; ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* Ver. 16, 17. *Thou huntеſt me as a fierce Lion, thou renewеſt thy Witneſſes againſt me*, &c.

David was a Man that was often exerciſed with Sickneſs and Troubles from Enemies, and in all the Inſtances almoſt that we meet with in the *Pſalms*, of theſe his Afflictions,

we may obſerve the outward Occaſions of Trouble brought him under the Suſpicion of God's Wrath, and his Iniquity; ſo that he was ſeldom ſick, or perſecuted; but this called on the Diſquiet of Conſcience, and brought his Sin to Remembrance; as *Pſal.* vi. (which was made on the Occaſion of his Sickneſs, as appears from *ver.* 5.) wherein he expreſſeth the *Vexation* of his *Soul* under the Apprehenſion of God's *Anger*; all his other Griefs running into this Channel, (as little Brooks loſing themſelves in a great River) change their Name and Nature; he that was at firſt only concerned for his Sickneſs, is now wholly concerned with Sorrow and Smart under the Fear and Hazard of his Soul's Condition; the like we may ſee in *Pſal.* xxxviii. and many Places more.

Having made good the Aſſertion, That Diſcompoſures of Soul upon outward Occaſions, by long Continuance and Satan's Management, do often run up to ſpiritual Diſtreſs of Conſcience: I ſhall next for further Confirmation and Illuſtration ſhew how it comes to be ſo.

1. Diſcompoſures of Spirit do *obſtruct*, and at laſt *extinguiſh* the inward *Comforts* of the Soul: So that if we ſuppoſe the diſcompoſed Perſon at firſt (before he be thus diſordered) to have had a good Meaſure of ſpiritual Joy in God's Favour, and delight in his Ways; yet the Diſturbances, (1.) *Divert* his Thoughts from *feeding* upon theſe Comforts, or from the *Enjoyment* of himſelf in them. The Soul cannot naturally be highly intent upon two different Things at once, but whatſoever doth ſtrongly engage the Thoughts and Affections, that carries the whole Stream with it, be it good or bad, and other Things give way at preſent. When the Heart is *vehemently* moved on *outward* Conſiderations, it lays by the Thoughts of its Sweetneſs which it hath had in the Enjoyment of God; they are ſo contrary and inconſiſtent, that either our Comforts will chaſe out of our Thoughts our Diſcompoſures, or our Diſcompoſures will chaſe away our Comforts. I believe the Comforts of *Elias* (when he lay down under his Grief, and deſired to die) and of *Jeremiah* (when he cried out of Violence) run very low in thoſe Fits of Diſcontent, and their Spirits were far from an actual rejoicing in God; but this is not the worſt, we may not ſo eaſily imagine that upon the going away of the Fit, the wonted Comforts return to their former Courſe: For, (2.) The Mind being *diſtracted* with its Burden, is left *impotent* and

unable to return to its former Exercise; the Warmth which the Heart had, being smothered and suspended in its Exercise, is not so quickly revived, and the Thoughts which were busied with Disturbance (like the distempered Humours of the Body) are not reduced suddenly to that Evenness of Composure as may make them fit for their *old* Imployment. And, (3.) If God should *offer* the Influences of joyful Support, a discomposed Spirit is not in a Capacity to *receive* them, no more than it can receive those Counsels that by any careful Hand are interposed for its Relief and Settlement. Comforts are not heard in the midst of Noise and Clamour; the *Calmness* of the Soul's Faculties are presupposed as a necessary *Qualification* towards its *Reception* of a Message of Peace. *Phineas* his Wife being overcome of Grief for the Ark's Captivity and her Husband's Death, could not be affected with the joyful News of a Son. But, (4.) Sinful *Discomposures hinder* these gracious and comfortable *Offers*, if we could possibly (which we cannot ordinarily) receive them, yet we cannot expect that God will give them. The Spirit of Consolation loves to take up his Lodging in a *meek and quiet Spirit*, and nothing more grieves him than Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, and Malice, which made the Apostle, *Eph.* iv. 30, 31. subjoin his Direction of *putting these away* from us, with his Advice of *not grieving the Spirit by which we are sealed unto the Day of Redemption.* And then (5.) The *former Stock* of Comfort, which Persons distempered with *Discomposures* might be supposed to have, will soon be *wasted*, for our Comforts are not like the *Oil* in the Cruise, or *Meal* in the Barrel, which had (as it were) their *Spring* in themselves; we are comforted and supported by *daily Communication* of divine Aid, so that if the Spring-head be stopped, the Stream will quickly grow dry. 'Tis evident then, that inward Consolations in God will not *ripen* under these *Shadows*, nor *grow* under these continual *Droppings*, seeing a discomposed Spirit is not capable to *receive* more, nor able to *keep* what Comfort it had at first; we may easily see how it comes to pass, that these *Disturbances* may in Time bring on spiritual Troubles: For if our Comforts be once lost, Trouble of Conscience easily follows. Where there is nothing to fortify the Heart, the Poison of malicious Suggestions will unavoidably prevail.

2. Dis-

2. Diſcompoſures of Soul afford the Devil *fit Matter* to work upon. They furniſh him with ſtrong Objections againſt *Sincerity of Holineſs*, by which the Peace of Conſcience being ſtrongly aſſaulted, is at laſt overthrown. The uſual Weapons by which Satan fights againſt the Aſſurance of God's Children, are the *Guilt* of Sins committed, and the *Neglect* of Duty, and the diſturbed Soul affords enough of both theſe to make a Charge againſt itſelf: For,

1. Where there is much *Diſcompoſure* there is much *Sin*. If in the Multitude *of Words* there wants not Iniquity, then much more in the Multitude of *unruly Thoughts*. A diſturbed Spirit is like *troubled* Water, all the *Mud* that lay at the Bottom is raiſed up and *mixeth* itſelf with the Thoughts: If any Injury or Loſs do trouble the Mind, all the Thoughts are tinctured with Anger, Pride, Impatience, or whatſoever Root of Bitterneſs was in the Heart before; we view them not ſingly as the Iſſues of wiſe *Providence*, but ordinarily we conſider them as done by ſuch *Inſtruments*, and againſt ourſelves as malicious, ſpiteful, cauſeleſs, ungrateful Wrongs, and then we give too great a Liberty to ourſelves to rage, to meditate Revenge, to threaten, to reproach, and what not? And if our Diſpoſition have not ſo ſtrong a natural Inclination to theſe Diſtempers, yet the Thoughts by Diſcompoſure are quickly leavened (it is the Compariſon uſed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* v. 8. to expreſs the Power of Malice, (which is an uſual Attendant in this Service) to infect all the Imaginations) with a Sharpneſs, which makes them ſwell into Exorbitancy and Exceſs; hence proceed Revilings, Quarrellings, *&c.* When the Tongue is thus *fermented, it is a Fire, a World of Iniquity*, (producing more Sins than can be reckoned) *it defileth the whole Body*, (engaging all the Faculties in heady Purſuit,) *James* iii. 6.

2. Diſcompoſures obſtruct *Duties*. This is the Inconvenience which the Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* iii. 7.) tells us doth ariſe from Diſturbances among Relations; if the Wife or Husband do not carry well, ſo that Diſcontents or Differences ariſe, *their Prayers are hindred*. Duties then are obſtructed, (1.) In the *Act*. When the Heart is *out of Frame*, Prayer is *out of Seaſon*, and there is an Averſeneſs to it; partly becauſe all good Things are (in ſuch Confuſions) *burdenſome* to the *Humour* that then prevails, which eats out all Deſire and Delight to ſpiritual Things: And partly be-

cauſe they *dare not* come into *God's Preſence*; Conſcience of their own Guilt, and Awe of God hindring ſuch Approaches. (2.) They obſtruct the *right Manner* of Performance, ſtraitning the Heart, and contracting the Spirit, that if any Thing be attempted, 'tis poorly and weakly performed. (3.) And alſo the *Succeſs* of Duty is obſtructed by Diſcompoſure. God *will not accept* ſuch Services, and therefore Chriſt adviſeth to *leave the Gift before the Altar*, (tho' ready for offering) where the Spirit is overcharged with Offences, or angry Thoughts, and *firſt to go and be reconciled to our Brother*, and then to *come and offer thy Gift*, it being loſt Labour to do it before. From theſe Sins of Omiſſion and Commiſſion, Satan can (and often doth) frame a dreadful Charge againſt thoſe that are thus concern'd, endeavouring to prove by theſe Evidences, that they are yet (notwithſtanding Pretence of Converſion) in the Gall of Bitterneſs, and Bond of Iniquity, whereby the Peace of Conſcience is much ſhaken; and the more, becauſe alſo

(3.) Theſe Diſcompoſures of Soul give Satan a *fit Seaſon* for the Management of his Accuſation: Strong Accuſations do often effect nothing, when the Seaſon is unſuitable. Many a Time he hath as much to ſay againſt the Comforts of Men, when yet they ſhake all off (as *Paul* did the Viper off his Hand) and feel no Harm. But that which prepares the Conſcience to *receive* the Indictment, is a particular *Diſpoſition* which it is wrought into, by *ſuſpicious Credulity* and Fearfulneſs: Theſe make the Heart (as Wax to the Seal) ready to take any Impreſſion that Satan will ſtamp upon it: Now by long Diſturbances he works the Heart into this Mould very often, and upon a double Account he gains himſelf a fit Opportunity to charge Home his Exceptions. 1. In that he ſets upon the Conſcience with his Accuſations, after the Heart hath been *long moleſted* and confuſed with its other Troubles; for then the Heart is weakned and *unable* to make *Reſiſtance* as at other Times. An Aſſault with a freſh Party after a long Conflict, diſorders its Forces, and puts all to Flight. 2. In that long and great Diſcompoſures of Mind, bring on a Diſtemper of *Melancholy*; for 'tis notoriouſly known by common Experience, that thoſe *acid Humours* (producing this Diſtemper) which have their Riſe from the Blood, may be occaſioned by their violent Paſſions of Mind, the Animal Spirits becoming inordinate (by long Diſcompoſures of Sad-

nefs, Envy, Terror, and fretful Cares) and the Motion of the Blood being retarded, it by Degrees departs from its Temperament, and is infected with an Acidity, fo that Perfons no Way inclined naturally to Melancholy may yet become fo, by the Difquiets of their troubled Mind.

Both thefe Ways, but chiefly Melancholy, the Devil hath his Advantage for diſturbing the Conſcience. Melancholy (moſt naturally) inclines Men to be ſolicitous for their Souls Welfare; but withal diſpoſeth them ſo ſtrongly to ſuſpect the worſt, (for 'tis a credulous ſuſpicious Humour in Things hurtful) and afflicts ſo heavily with Sadneſs for what it doth reſpect, that when Satan lays before Men of that Humour their *Miſcarriages* under their Diſcontents, their Impatience, Unthankfulneſs, Anger, raſh Thoughts and Speeches againſt God or Men, *&c.* withal ſuggeſting that ſuch an Heart cannot be right with God, after ſerious Thoughts upon Satan's frequently *repeated* Charge, they cry out, *Guilty, guilty*, and then begins a new Trouble for their unregenerate Eſtate, and their ſuppoſed loſt Souls.

4. In this Caſe uſually Satan hath greater *Liberty to accuſe*, and by his Accuſations to moleſt the Conſcience, in that Men of diſcompoſed Spirits by the manifold Evils ariſing thence *provoke God to deſert* them, and to leave them in Satan's Hand to be brought into an *Hour* of Temptation. Satan's Commiſſion is occaſioned by our Provocations, and the Temptations ariſing from ſuch a Commiſſion, are uſually dreadful; they are *ſolemn* Temptations, and called ſo after a ſingular Manner; for of theſe I take thoſe Scriptures to be meant, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation*, Matth. xxvi. 41. *And lead us not into Temptation*, Matth. vi. 13. Such Temptations are not common Temptations, and are of unknown Force and Hazard to the Soul, which Way ſoever they are deſigned, either for Sin or Terror. For ſeveral Things do *concur* in a ſolemn Temptation: As, (1.) Satan doth in a ſpecial Manner *challenge* a Man to the Combate, or rather he *challenges* God to give him ſuch a Man to fight with him, as he did concerning *Job*. This Chriſt tells us of, *Luke* xxii. 31. *Simon, Satan hath deſired to have you*; the Word ſignifies a *challenging* or daring (*a*), and it ſeems the Devil is oft daring God to give us into his Hand, when we little know of it. (2.) There is alſo a ſpecial *Suitableneſs of Occaſion*, and Snare, to the Temper and State of

(*a*) Ἐξαιτεῖσθαι.

of Men. Thus he took *Peter* at an Advantage in the High-prieſt's Hall, and in the Caſe we now ſpeak of he takes Advantage of Mens Provocations and Melancholy. (3.) There is always a *violent Proſecution*, which our Saviour expreſſeth under the Compariſon of *Sifting*, which is a reſtleſs Agitation of the Corn, bringing that which was at the Bottom to the Top, and ſhuffling the Top to the Bottom, ſo that the Chaff or Dirt is always uppermoſt. (4.) And to all this there is *divine Permiſſion*, Satan let looſe and we left to our ordinary Strength; as is implied in that Expreſſion, *He hath deſired to have you, that he might ſift you.* Now then if the Devil have ſuch Ground to give God a Challenge concerning ſuch Men, and if God do (as he juſtly may) leave ſuch Men (whoſe Bitterneſs of Spirit hath been as *a Smoke in his Noſtrils all the Day*) in Satan's Hand, he will ſo ſhake them, that their Conſciences ſhall have no reſt. And this he can yet the more eaſily affect, becauſe

5. Diſcompoſures of Spirit have a particular *Tendency* to incline our Thoughts to *Severity* and Harſhneſs, ſo that thoſe who have had long and great Diſturbances upon any outward Occaſions, of Loſs, Affliction, or Diſappointment, *&c.* do naturally think (after a ſolemn Review of ſuch Troubles) harſhly *of God, and of themſelves*; they are ready to conclude that God is ſurely angry with them, in that he doth afflict them, or that they have unſanctified Hearts, in that their Thoughts are ſo fretful and unruly upon every inconſiderable petty Occaſion. 'Tis ſo ordinary for Men under the Weight of their Trouble, or under the Senſe of their Sin, to be ſadly apprehenſive of God's Wrath, and their Souls Hazard, that it were needleſs to offer Inſtances; let *David's* Caſe be inſtead of all. That his Troubles begot ſuch Imaginations frequently, may be ſeen throughout the Book of the *Pſalms*; we never read his Complaints againſt perſecuting Enemies, or for other Afflictions, but ſtill his Heart is afraid that God is calling Sin to Remembrance; in *Pſal.* xxxviii. he is under great Diſtreſs, and tells how low his Thoughts were; he was *troubled*, greatly *bowed down*, he *went mourning all the Day long*; he expreſſeth his Thoughts to have been, that *God had forſaken him*, ver. 21. and his Hopes (tho' they afterward revived) were almoſt gone; he cries out of his Sins, as having *gone over his Head*, and become *a Burden too heavy for him*, v. 4. and therefore ſets himſelf to confeſs them, *v.* 18. He trembles at God's Anger,

Anger, and feels the *Arrows* of God *sticking fast* in him, *ver.* 2. But what occasioned all this? The Psalm informs us, God had visited him with *Sickness*, *ver.* 7. besides that (for one Trouble seldom comes alone) his *Friends* were perfidious, *ver.* 11. his Enemies also were busy laying *Snares* for his Life, *ver.* 12. Now, his Thoughts were to this Purpose, That surely he had some way or other greatly provoked God by his Sins, and therefore he fears *Wrath* in every *Rebuke*, and *Displeasure* in every *Chastisement*, ver. 1. The like you may see in *Psal.* cii. where the Prophet, upon the Occasion of *Sickness*, ver. 3 and 23. and the *Reproach* of Enemies, *ver.* 8. is under great Trouble, and ready to fail, except speedy Relief prevent, *ver.* 2. the Reason whereof was this, That he concluded these Troubles were evident Tokens of God's Indignation and Wrath, *because of thine Indignation and thy Wrath*, ver. 10. From these five Particulars we may be satisfied, that it cannot be otherwise, and also how it comes to be so, that sometime Trouble of Conscience is brought on, by other discomposing Troubles of the Mind. For if these *take away* the Comforts which supported the Soul, and *afford* also Arguments to the Devil to prove a wicked Heart, and withal *a fit Season* to urge them to a deep Impression, God in the mean time standing at *a Distance*, and the Thoughts *naturally* inclined to conclude God's Wrath from these Troubles; how impossible is it that Satan should miss of disquieting the Conscience, by his strong vehement Suggestions of Wickedness and Desertion?

In our Enquiries after Satan's Success in working these Discomposures of Mind, we have discovered, 1. That the Disturbances thence arising are great. 2. That they have a Tendency to Trouble of Conscience. There is but one Particular more to be spoken of, relating to his Success in this Design, and that is,

3. These Disturbances are *much in Satan's Power. Ordinarily* he can do it at pleasure, except when God restrains him from applying fit Occasions, or when notwithstanding these Occasions) he extraordinarily suspends the Effect, which he frequently doth when Men are enraged under Suffering, upon the Account of *the Gospel* and *Conscience*; for then, tho' they be bound up *under Affliction and Iron*, yet the *Iron enters not into the Soul*; tho' they are *troubled*, they are not *distressed*. These *Extraordinaries* excepted, he

he can as eaſily *diſcompoſe* the Spirits of Men, as he can by Temptation *draw* them into other Sins, which may be evidenced by theſe Conſiderations:

1. We may obſerve, that thoſe whoſe *paſſionate* Tempers do *uſually* tranſport them into greater Vehemencies, are *never* out of Trouble. Their Fits frequently return, they are never out of the Fire; and this is, becauſe Satan is ſtill provided of Occaſions ſuitable to their Inclinations.

2. Tho' God out of his common Bounty to Mankind, hath allowed him a comfortable Being in the World, yet we find, that generally the Sons of Men, under their various Occupations and Studies, are wearied out with *Vexations of Spirit*. This *Solomon* in *Eccleſiaſtes* diſcovers at large in various Imployments of Men, not exempting the Purſuit of *Wiſdom* and Knowledge (Chap. i. 18. *In much Wiſdom is much Grief, and he that increaſeth Knowledge, increaſeth Sorrow*) nor Pleaſures, nor Riches; for by all theſe he ſhews, that a Man is obnoxious to Diſquiets; ſo that the general Account of Man's Life is but this, *Eccleſ.* ii. 23. *All his Days are Sorrows, and his Travel Grief, yea his Heart taketh not Reſt in the Night.* That it is ſo, is teſtified by common Experience paſt Denial; but how it comes to be ſo, is the Enquiry; 'tis either from *God*, or from *Satan*, working by Occaſions upon our Tempers. That 'tis not from God is evident; for tho' Sorrow be a Part of that *Curſe* which Man was juſtly doomed unto, yet hath he appointed Ways and Means, by which it might be ſo *mitigated*, that it might be tolerable without *Diſcompoſure* of Spirit; and therefore *Solomon*, deſigning in his *Eccleſiaſtes* to ſet forth the chief Good, ſhews, that Felicity conſiſts not in the common Abuſe of outward Things (becauſe that brings only Vexation) but in the *Fear of God* leading to future Happineſs; and in the mean time, in a *thankful, comfortable Uſe* of Things preſent, without Anxiety of Mind. Hence doth he fix his Concluſion (as the Reſult of his Experience) and often repeats it; *There is nothing better for a Man, than that he ſhould eat and drink, and that he ſhould make his Soul enjoy good in his Labour*, Eccleſ. ii. 24. and iii. 12, 13. and v. 18, 19. Not that *Solomon* plays the *Epicure*, giving Advice *to eat and drink, for to Morrow we die*; nor that he ſpeaks *deridingly* to thoſe that ſeek their Felicity in this Life, as if he ſhould ſay, *If ye do terminate your Deſires upon a terrene Felicity, there is nothing better than to*

eat

eat and drink, &c. but he gives a ſerious *poſitive* Advice, of enjoying the Things of this Life with *Cheerfulneſs*, which he affirms proceeds from the ſole Bounty of God, as his ſingular Gift; *It is the Gift of God*, Eccl: iii. 13. *'tis our Portion*, that is, our Allowance, *Eccl.* v: 19. (for theſe two Expreſſions [*our Portion*, and *God's Gift*] they are of the ſame Signification with *Solomon* here) and when a Man hath Power to enjoy this Allowance in Comfort, 'tis *God that anſwereth him in the Joy of his Heart*, ver. 20. 'Tis plain then, that God *ſows good Seed in his Field*; the ſpringing up therefore of theſe Tares of Vexation; which ſo generally afflict the Sons of Men, muſt be aſcribed to this, *the Enemy hath done it.*

3. 'Tis alſo a conſiderable Ground of Suſpicion, that Satan can do much in Diſcompoſures of Spirit, in that ſometimes thoſe whoſe Tempers are *moſt cool* and *calm*, and whoſe ſingular *Dependence* upon, and Communion with God, muſt needs more *ſtrengthen* them againſt theſe paſſionate Vexations, are notwithſtanding precipitated into violent Commotions. *Moſes* was naturally meek, above the common Diſpoſition of Men, and his very Buſineſs was Converſe with God, whoſe Preſence kept his Heart under a bleſſed Awe; yet upon the Peoples Murmuring, he was ſo tranſported with Sullenneſs and Unbelief at the Waters of *Meribah*, Numb. xx. 10, 12. that *it went ill with him*, which *David* thus expreſſeth, *Pſal.* cvi. 33. *They provoked his Spirit, ſo that he ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips.* Who can ſuppoſe leſs in this Matter, than that Satan having him at Advantage, hurried him to this Raſhneſs? ſpecially ſeeing ſuch Vehemencies were not *uſual* with *Moſes*, and that his natural Temper led him to the contrary. This hath ſome Affinity with the next Conſideration, which is,

4. That when Men moſt *foreſee* the Occaſions of their Trouble, and do moſt *fear* the Trouble that might thence ariſe, and moſt *firmly* deſign to keep their Hearts quiet, yet are they oft forced (againſt all Care and Reſolution) upon *extravagant* Heats. *David* reſolved, and ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to poſſeſs his Soul in Serenity and Patience, for what could be more than that ſolemn *Engagement*? *Pſal.* xxxix. 1. *I ſaid I will look to my Ways*; and what Endeavours could be more ſevere, than to keep himſelf *as with Bit and Bridle*? What Care could be more hopeful to ſucceed, than to be *dumb with Silence*?) yet for all this, he could not keep his Heart calm, nor reſtrain his Tongue, *ver.* 3. *My Heart was hot within him*

within me, while I was musing, the Fire burned, then spake I with my Tongue. Who suspects not the Hand of Satan in this?

5. 'Tis also remarkable, that when we have *least Reason* to give way to Discomposure, when we have *most Cause* to avoid all Provocations, yet then we have *most Occasions* set before us. When we would most *retire* from the Noise of the World for private Devotion, when we would most carefully *prepare* ourselves for a solemn Ordinance; if we be not very watchful, we shall be *diverted* by Business, *disturbed* with Noises, or some special *Occasion* of Vexation shall importune us to disquiet ourselves, when yet we shall observe, if we have not these *solemn* Affairs to wait upon, we shall have *fewer* of these Occasions of Vexation to attend us. This cannot be attributed to meer *Contingency* of Occasions, nor yet to our *Tempers* solely; for why they should be most *apt* to give us Trouble, when they are most *engaged* to Calmness, cannot well be accounted for; 'tis evidently then Satan, that maliciously directs these Occasions (for they have not a malicious Ingeniousness to prepare themselves, without some other chief Mover) at such Times as he knows would be most to our Prejudice.

These general Considerations amount to more than a Suspicion, that it is much in Satan's Power to give Disturbances to the Minds of Men; yet for the clearer Manifestation of the Matter, I shall shew, that he can do much to bring about *Occasions* of Discomposure, and also to *stir* up the Passions of Men upon these Occasions.

1. That *Occasions* are much in his Hand I shall easily demonstrate. For 1. There being *so many* Occasions of Vexation to a weak crazy Mind, we may well imagine, that one or other is still occurring; and while they thus offer themselves, Satan needs not be idle for want of an Opportunity. 2. But if common Occasions do not so exactly suit his Design, he can *prepare* Occasions; for such is his *Foresight* and Contrivance, that he can put some Men (without their Privity to his Intentions, or any evil Design of their own) upon such *Actions* as may (through the Strength of Prejudice, Misinterpretation, or evil Inclination) be an Offence to others; and in like Manner, can *invite* those to be *in the Way* of these Offences. I am ready to think, there was a Contrivance of Satan (if we well consider all Circumstances) to bring *David* and the Object of his Lust together; while *Bathsheba* was bathing, he might use his Art in pri-

vate

vate Motions to get *David* up to the Roof of his House. But more especially can the Devil prepare Occasions, that do depend upon the *Wickedness of his Slaves*; these are Servants under his Command, he can *say to one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes.* If Contempt, or Injury, Affronts or Scorns, &c. be necessary for his present Work against any, whom he undertakes to disturb, he can easily put his Vassals upon that Part of the Service; and if he have higher Employment for them, he ever finds them forward. And hence it was that when Satan designed to plunder *Job*, he could quickly perform it, because he had the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* ready at a Call.

3. If both these should fail him, he can easily awaken in us the *Memory* of old Occasions that have been heretofore a Trouble to us: These being raised out of their Graves, will renew old Disturbances, working afresh the same Disquiets, which the Things themselves gave us at first.

If Satan's Power were bounded here, and that he could do no more than set before Men Occasions of Vexation, yet we might justly, on that single Account, call him the *Troubler* of the Spirits of Men; considering, that naturally the Thoughts of Men are restless, and their Imaginations ever rowling. If Men sequester themselves from all Business, if they shut themselves up from Commerce with Men, turn *Eremites*, (as *Jerom* did) on Purpose to avoid Disquiet, yet their Thoughts would *hurry* them from Place to Place, sometimes to the *Court*, sometimes to the *Market*, sometimes to Shows and Pastimes, sometimes to Quarrellings, sometimes they view the Fields, Buildings and Countries, sometimes they fancy Dignities, Promotions and Honours, they are ever working upon one Object or other, real or supposed; and according to the Object such will the Affections be, high or low, joyful or sorrowful: So that if the utmost of what Satan could do, were no more than to provide Occasions, Discompositures would follow naturally. The evil Dispositions of Men would thereby be set a-working, tho' Satan stood by as an *idle Spectator.* The *Serpent* (in our Breasts, as *Solomon* tells us *Eccles.* x. 11.) would *bite without Enchantment*, that is, except it were charmed. But Satan can do no more than tempt objectively, when he hath provided the Fewel he can also bring Fire: For,

2. He can alſo ſet our Paſſions *on Work*, and inceníe them to greater Fury than otherwiſe they would arrive at. We ſee Perſons that are diſtempered with Paſſion, may be whetted up to an higher Pitch of Rage, by any officious *Flatterer*, that will *indulge* the Humour; and *aggravate* the Provocation. Much more then can Satan do it by whiſpering ſuch Things to our Minds as he knows will increaſe the Flame; and therefore it is, that where the Scripture doth caution us againſt *Anger*, (as the proper Product of our own Corruption, calling it *our Wrath*, Eph. iv. 26, 27.) There alſo it warns us againſt *the Devil*, as the *Incendiary*, that endeavours to heighten it. And where it tells us of the Diſorders of the Tongue, (which, though *a little Member*, *can* of itſelf do *great Miſchief*, James iii. 6.) there it alſo tells us, that the *Devil* brings it an *additional* Fire from *Hell*; *It is ſet on Fire of Hell*. And there are ſeveral Ways by which Satan can irritate the Paſſions. As,

1. By preſenting the Occaſions worſe than they are, or were ever intended, unjuſtly *aggravating* all Circumſtances. By this Means he makes the Object of the Paſſions the more diſpleaſing, and hateful; this muſt of Neceſſity provoke to an higher Degree.

2. He can in a natural Way move (as it were) the *Wheels*, and ſet the Paſſions agoing, if they were of themſelves more dull and ſluggiſh: For he hath a nearer Acceſs to our Paſſions than every one is aware of. I will make it evident thus; Our Paſſions, in their *Workings*, do depend upon the Fluctuations, Excurſions and Recurſions of the Blood, and animal Spirits, as *Naturaliſts* do determine (*a*): Now that Satan can make his Approaches to the Blood, Spirits and Humours, and can make Alterations upon them, cannot be denied by thoſe that conſider what the Scripture ſpeaks in *Job*'s Caſe, and in the Caſes of thoſe that were by Poſſeſſion of the Devil, made dumb, deaf, or epileptick: For if he could afflict *Job* with *grievous Boils*, Job ii. 7. 'tis plain he diſordered and vitiated his Blood and Humours, which made them apt to produce ſuch Boils or Ulcers; and if he could produce an *Epilepſy*, 'tis evident that he could infect the *Lympha* with ſuch a Sharpneſs, as by vellicating the Nerves, might cauſe a Convulſion: And theſe were much more than the diſorderly Motions of Blood, Spirits

(*a*) Vide Willis de anima Brut. *cap.* 8, & 9.

Spirits or Humours which raiſe the Paſſions of Men. If any object to this, That then (conſidering Satan's malicious Diligence) we muſt expect the Paſſions of Men would never be at Reſt. 'Tis *anſwered*, That this Power of Satan is not unlimited; but oft *God prohibites* him ſuch Approaches, (and without his Leave he can do nothing) and alſo *Grace* in God's Children, working Calmneſs, Submiſſion and Patience, doth balance Satan's contrary Endeavour. For as hurtful and vexatious Occaſions, being repreſented by the Senſe to the Imagination, are apt to move the Blood and Spirits; ſo on the contrary, the Ballaſt of Patience and other Graces, doth ſo *ſettle* the Mind, that the Blood and Spirits are kept ſteady in their uſual Courſe.

3. When the Paſſions are up, Satan can by his Suggeſtions make them more heady and violent. He can ſuggeſt to the Mind *Motives*, and Arguments to forward it, and can ſtir up our natural Corruption, with all its Powers, to ſtrike in with the Opportunity. Thus he not only kindles the Fire, but blows the Flame.

4. And he can further fix the Mind upon theſe Thoughts, and keep them ſtill upon the Hearts of Men. And then they eat in the deeper, and, like Poiſon, diffuſe their Malignity the further. We ſee that Men, who are at firſt but in an ordinary Fret, if they continue to meditate upon their Provocation, they increaſe their Vexation, and if they give themſelves to vent their Paſſions by their Tongues, though they begin in ſome Moderation, yet as Motion cauſeth Heat, ſo their own Words whet their Rage, according to *Eccleſ.* x. 13. *The Beginning of the Words of his Mouth is Fooliſhneſs, but the latter End of his Talk is miſchievous Madneſs.* The ſame Advantage hath Satan againſt Men by holding down their Thoughts to theſe Occaſions of Diſcompoſure.

If Occaſions be ſo much in Satan's Power, and he hath alſo ſo great an Hand over Mens Paſſions, 'tis too evident that he can do very much to diſcompoſe the Spirits of Men, that are naturally obnoxious to theſe Troubles, except God reſtrain him, and Grace oppoſe him. Thus have I ſpoken my Thoughts of the firſt Sort of Troubles, by which Satan doth undermine the Peace of Mens Hearts.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the second Way to hinder Peace. Affrightments, the general Nature and Burden of them, in several Particulars. What are the Ways by which he affrights: 1. Atheistical Injections. Observations of his proceeding in them. 2. Blasphemous Thoughts. 3. Affrightful Suggestions of Reprobation. Observations of his Proceedings in that Course. 4. Frightful Motions to sin. 5. Strong immediate Impressions of Fear. 6. Affrightful Scrupulosity of Conscience.

THE next Rank of Troubles, by which the *Devil* doth endeavour to molest us, I call *Affrightments*. It is usual for those that speak of Temptations, to distinguish them thus: Some are (say they) *Enticements*, some are *Affrightments* (*a*); but then they extend these Affrightments further than I intend, comprehending under them all those Temptations of Sadness and Terror, of which I am next to speak: But by *Affrightments*, I mean only *these Perplexities of Spirit into which Satan casts Men, by over acting their Fears, or astonishing their Minds, by injecting unusual and horrid Thoughts against their Consents.* Some there are that have thought those Temptations, of which the Apostle complains 2 *Cor.* xii. 7. (*there was given me a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet me*) were of this Kind, that is, horrid Injections frequently repeated, as Men deal their Blows in fighting. *Gerson* speaking of these, tells us they sometime come from the sole Suggestion of Satan, troubling the Fancy, and saying, *Deny God, curse God*; and then adds, *Such was the Thorn in the Flesh given to the Apostle* (*b*). But whether this was the Trouble of the Apostle, or some other Thing, (for several Things are conjectured, and nothing can be positively proved) we are sure (from the sad Experience of many) that such Troubles he doth often give; which I shall *first* explain in the *general*, and then give a *Particular* of these frightful Injections.

1. To explain the Nature and Burden of this Kind of Trouble, I shall present you with a few *Observations* about them. As,

1. These

(*a*) Irritamenta terriculamenta. (*b*) In calce *Tom.* 4. *p.* 973. Talis stimulus datus fuit apostolo.

1. Theſe aſtoniſhing Thoughts are purely *Injections*, ſuch as Satan caſts into the Mind, and not what the Mind of itſelf doth produce, as one expreſſeth it, they are more darting than reflecting. Not but that our natural Corruption could of itſelf beget blaſphemous or atheiſtical Thoughts, but when they have their Riſe from ourſelves ſolely, they do not ſo ſtartle us, having ſome Share (at leaſt) of our Conſent going along with them, they appear not ſo ſtrange. But in this Caſe in Hand, Satan is the *Agent*, and Men are the *Sufferers*, their Underſtandings and Souls being buſied all the while to repel them, with the utmoſt of their Reluctances. And to thoſe that do thus ſtrive againſt them, making Reſiſtance with all their Strength, with Tears and Prayers, they are only their *Afflictions*, but not their *Sins*. For the Thoughts are not polluted by the ſimple *Apprehenſion* of a ſinful Object, no more than the Eye is defiled by *beholding* loathſome and filthy Things: For then ſhould the Mind of *Chriſt* have been defiled, when Satan propounded himſelf blaſphemouſly, as the *Object* of his Worſhip, his Mind as truly apprehended the Meaning of that Saying, [*fall down and worſhip me*] as ours can do, when he caſts ſuch a Thing immediately into our Thoughts. Which is a Conſideration to be obſerved diligently, by thoſe that meet with ſuch ſad Exerciſe; if they do truly apprehend that they are but their Sufferings, and that God will not charge the Sin upon them, they will more eaſily bear and overcome the Trouble.

2. Theſe Injections are commonly *impetuous* and *ſudden*, frequently compared to Lightning: And this is uſually made a Note of Diſtinction, betwixt wicked blaſphemous Thoughts riſing from *our natural Corruption*, and *darted in* by Satan; the former being more *leaſurely*, *orderly*, and *moderate*, according to the uſual Courſe of the Procedure of *human* Thoughts, the latter uſually accompanied with an *haſty Violence*, *Subtility*, and *incoherently* ſhooting into our Underſtandings, as Lightning into an Houſe. So that all the Strength we have, can neither prevent them nor expel them, nor ſo much as mitigate the Violence of them.

3. They are alſo for the moſt Part *inceſſant*, and conſtant Troublers, where they once begin. Tho' Satan hath *Variety*, in Regard of the Matter of theſe amazing Injections, (for ſometimes he affrights one Man with blaſphemous Thoughts, another with atheiſtical Thoughts, a third with

grievous unuſual Temptations to ſin, as *Murder*, &c.) yet, uſually, he fixeth his Foot upon what he firſt undertakes. And as cunning Huntſmen, do not change their Game that they firſt rouſe, that they may ſooner ſpeed in catching the Prey; ſo what frightful Thought Satan begins the Trouble with, that he perſiſts in, and is withal ſo vehement in his Purſuit, that he gives little Intermiſſion. He makes theſe unwelcome Thoughts haunt them like Ghoſts, whitherſoever they go, whatſoever they do; he will give ſolemn Onſets it may be twenty or forty Times in a-day: And at this Rate he continues, it may be for ſome conſiderable Time, ſo that they are not quit of the Trouble for ſeveral *Months*, or it may be *Years*.

4. The Matter of theſe Affrightments are Things moſt contrary to the Impreſſions of Nature, or Grace; and therefore moſt odious and troubleſome. When he is upon this Deſign, Things that are moſt contrary to the Belief and Inclinations of Men are beſt for his Purpoſe. As Men that intend to affright others, chuſe the moſt *ugly Viſors*, the *ſtrangeſt Garbs* and *Poſtures*, and make the moſt uncouth *inhuman* Noiſes; and the more monſtrous they appear, the better they ſucceed in their Purpoſes. Yet Satan doth not always chuſe the *very worſt*, for then moſt of the Troubles of this Kind, would be about the ſame Thing, but he conſiders the Strength of our *Perſuaſions*, our *Eſtabliſhment* in Truths, the Probability or Improbability of an *After-game* with us; and accordingly ſometimes refuſeth to trouble us with Injections, contrary to what we are *moſt firmly* rooted in, chuſing rather that which (tho' contrary to our Thoughts and Reſolves) we have not been fixed in, without *a great deal of Labour*, and which (if there be Occaſion) might moſt fitly be charged upon us as our own, ſo that (whereas other Suggeſtions would be ſlighted, as apparent Malice and *Scarecrows*) theſe are moſt afflicting, (as being an Aſſault againſt ſuch a Fort which coſt us much to rear, and which we are moſt afraid to loſe) and moſt liable to his Accuſation after a long Continuance, as being the Iſſue of our own Unſettledneſs.

5. The firſt and moſt obvious Effects of theſe Injections, are the *utmoſt Abhorency of the Mind*, (which preſently ſtartles at the Appearance of ſuch odious Things) and the *trembling* of the Body, ſomtimes to an Agony and fainting. The Invaſion of *one ſingle* Injection hath put

put ſome into ſuch an heart-breaking Affrightment, that they have not recovered themſelves in a *whole Day's Time.* This *trembling* of the Body, and *Agony* of the Mind, are the uſual Conſquences of any Thing that is *ſurpriſing*, ſtrange and fearful; and therefore is trembling of the Body made, by Divines, a *Mark* to diſcover, that theſe hideous blaſphemous Thoughts are *caſt in* by Satan, and have not their Riſe from our own Hearts (*a*); for the *Horror of the Mind* is uſually ſo *great*, when it is ſpoken to in this *Language*, that it cannot *bear up* under its *Aſtoniſhment* and *Trouble.* Yea thoſe very Men that are otherwiſe *profane*, and can with Boldneſs commit great Iniquities, cannot but *ſhake*, and inwardly conceive an unſpeakable Hatred at theſe *monſtrous Suggeſtions.*

6. Theſe Affrightments are more common than Men are uſually aware of; they are by ſome thought to be *rare* and *extraordinary*: But this Miſtake ariſeth from the *Concealment* of theſe Kind of *Troubles*, thoſe that are thus afflicted, are often *aſhamed* to ſpeak to others what they find in their own Hearts: But if all would be ſo ingenuous as to declare openly what fearful Imaginations are obtruded upon them, it would appear that Satan very frequently endeavours to trouble Men this Way.

7. Theſe are very *grievous Burdens*, and hard to be born upon many Accounts. (1.) Who can well expreſs the inward *Torture* and *Moleſtation of the Mind*, when it is forced againſt its own *natural Bent* and *Inclination*, to harbour ſuch *Monſters* within itſelf? How would *Nature* reluct and abominate the drinking down of *noiſome puddled Water*, or the ſwallowing of *Toads* and *Serpents*? (and hence was it that *Perſecutors* in their deviliſh Contrivances invented ſuch Kind of Tortures) and what leſs doth the *Devil* do, when he forceth Blaſphemies upon their Thoughts, and commits *a Rape* by a malicious Violence upon their Imaginations? *David* under theſe Temptations, *Pſalm* lxxiii. 21. cries out, *Thus my Heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my Reins*: And it cannot be otherwiſe, for the Reaſon already mentioned. Nature abhors to be forced to what is moſt contrary to

(*a*) Horrore ſui ſic implent animum, ut tantum non pectus ipſum expectoratione videantur : : : ad quorum præſentiam natura vel depravatiſſima contremiſcat. *Arrowſmith Tract. Sacr.* l. 2. cap. 7. § 6.

itſelf, and ſo doth Grace. Now the Things by which Satan works theſe Affrightments, are contrary to Nature or Grace, or both together; and as they will ſtrive to the utmoſt of their Ability to caſt out what is ſo oppoſite to them, ſo muſt the Devil, to the utmoſt of his Ability, (if he would carry his Deſign) ſtrengthen himſelf in his Force, and from hence (as when Fire and Water are committed together) ariſeth a moſt *troubleſome Conflict*; and indeed if there were a *Compliance* of our *Conſent*, there would be *no Affrightment*; neither can this Kind of Temptation be managed, except there be the *utmoſt Diſſent of the Mind*. If any think there is no great *Ground* for theſe Temptations, becauſe ſome of the *Particulars*, by which he is ſaid to affright Men, are *natural* to us, as (for Inſtance) *atheiſtical* Thoughts (which are by ſome called the *Maſter vein* of our *original Corruption*, and by others ſaid to be in the Heart of every Man naturally) and then conſequently not ſo troubleſome as is imagined, *&c.* I anſwer, That when Divines call theſe, or blaſphemous Thoughts, *natural*, they do not mean that they are *natural Impreſſions engraven on us by Creation* (for they aſſert (*a*) the contrary) that 'tis a *natural* and *unextinguiſhable* Impreſſion upon every Man that *there is a God*, &c. and uſually give in this for Proof, that the greateſt *Atheiſts* in Fear and Extremity will manifeſt a *ſecret Belief* of a Deity, by calling out, *O God*, &c. or by ſome other *Poſture*, (as *Caligula* by hiding himſelf when it thundered) but they mean only, that our *natural Corruption may produce theſe Thoughts*, and that they are the natural Iſſues thereof; and therefore *Perkins* in Anſwer to a Queſtion of this Nature tells us (*b*), that theſe two Thoughts [*there is a God*] and [*there is no God*] may be, and are both in the ſame Heart. Now as this will give us the *Reaſon* why Satan doth make *Choice* of theſe Thoughts to trouble us withal, which may alſo riſe from ourſelves, (which I have hinted before, and ſhall preſently again touch upon) ſo it tells us ſtill, that whether theſe Thoughts ariſe from our own Corruption, or from Satan, our *natural Impreſſions* are ſtrong againſt them, and withal that they cannot be ſo affrightful but when

Satan

(*a*) Perkin's *Caſes of Conſcience*, l. 1. cap. 10 § 2. (*b*) *Treatiſe of Imaginations*, cap. 3.

Satan doth manage them, and when the contrary Impreſſions of Nature are awakened to give *ſtrong Reſiſtance*, and then that Struggling muſt be as the tearing of our Bowels, and ſtill the worſe in that we are inceſſantly purſued: Satan ſtill caſting back (with unwearied Labour) the ſame Thoughts as they are repulſed and rejected; as Soldiers that beſiege Cities uſe to caſt over the Walls their fir'd *Granado's*. 2. Theſe are alſo grievous, as they ſet the Mind upon the *Rack*, and ſtretch it under laborious and *doubtful Enquiries* after the Grounds or *Cauſes* of this Kind of Trouble, for the Heart aſtoniſhed with ſuch curſed Gueſts againſt his Will, preſently reflects upon God and itſelf, *What have I done? and wherefore am I thus diſquieted with Monſters? why doth the righteous Lord ſuffer Satan to break open my Heart, and fill me with ſuch fearful Thoughts?* But when Mens Enquiries are not ſo high, but detained in a Conſideration of the *Nature* of the Trouble and *Manner* of its working, without looking up to the Providence of God, then are their Troubles *increaſed*. 3. As theſe Injections neceſſitate Men in their own Defence, to *oppoſe*, and every Way to reſiſt, 'tis an Increaſe of the Burden: What Pleadings are they put to? What Defiances? What Endeavours to call off the Thoughts? and all to little Purpoſe; while the Trouble continues, they are forced to ly in their Armour, and to be conſtantly in their Ward. 4. And yet are they further troubleſome in the *After game* that Satan plays by theſe Thoughts. 'Tis not all of his Deſign to affright Men, but he uſually hath another Temptation to come in the *Rear* of this, and that is to turn theſe *Affrightments* into *Accuſations*, and by urging them *long* upon the Hearts of Men, to make them believe that they are their *own* Thoughts, the Iſſues of their own natural Corruption, and after Men are by continual Aſſaults weakned, their Senſes and Memory dulled, their Underſtanding confounded, *&c.* they eaſily conclude againſt themſelves; the Tempter imputes all the horrid Blaſphemy to them, boldly calls them guilty of all; and becauſe their Thoughts have dwelt long upon ſuch a *Subject*, and withal knowing that corrupt Nature of *itſelf* will lead Men to ſuch horrid Blaſphemies or Villanies (which makes it *probable* that it might be their own Fault, and for this *Reaſon* Satan makes Choice of ſuch Injections as may in the Acculation ſeem moſt *likely* to be true (*a*)) being

 ſtrongly

(*a*) Vide *Dickſon* Therap. Sacra *l.* 3. *c.* 26. § 7.

ſtrongly charged as guilty, they *yield*, and then begins another Trouble more fearful than the former: Oh! what ſad Thoughts have they then of themſelves? as the moſt vile blaſphemous Wretches! Sometimes they think, *That 'tis impoſſible that other Mens Hearts ſhould entertain ſuch intolerable Things within them as theirs; and that none was ever ſo bad as they*: Sometimes they think, *that if Men knew what vile Imaginations and monſtrous Things are in their Minds, they would in very Zeal to God and Religion ſtone them, or at leaſt exclude them from all Commerce with Men; ſometimes they think their Sin to be the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; ſometimes they think God is engaged in Point of Honour to ſhew upon them ſome remarkable Judgment, and they verily look for ſome fearful Stroke to confound them, and live under ſuch a frightful Expectation.* Theſe and many more to this Purpoſe are their Thoughts, ſo that theſe Temptations are every Way troubleſome both in their firſt and ſecond Effects.

Thus I have in the general expreſſed the *Nature* of theſe Affrightments; what the particular Injections are by which he ſtudies to affright Men, I ſhall next declare. They are principally *ſix*.

1ſt, *Atheiſtical Thoughts*. By injecting theſe into the Mind, he doth exceedingly affright Men, and frequently for that End doth he ſuggeſt, that there is no God, and that the Scriptures are but deluſive Contrivances, *&c.* Concerning theſe I ſhall note a few Things. As,

1. Tho' there be an obſervable Difference betwixt *atheiſtical Injections*, and *Temptations to Atheiſm*, not only in the *Deſign*, (Satan chiefly intending *Seduction* in the latter, and *Affrightment* by the former) but alſo in the *Manner* of Proceeding: (For when he deſigns *chiefly* to tempt to Atheiſm, he firſt prepares his Way by *debauching* the Conſcience with vicious or negligent living. According to *Pſal.* xiv. 1. that which makes Men *ſay in their Hearts there is no God*, is this, that *they are corrupt, and have done abominable Works*; and in this Method was famous *Junius* tempted to Atheiſm. But when he *chiefly* intends to affright, he ſets upon Men, that by a *watchful* and ſtrict Converſation cut off from him that Advantage) yet he doth *ſo manage* himſelf, that he can turn his Courſe *either Way*, as he finds Probability of Succeſs after Trial; for he preſſeth on upon Men moſt, where he finds them *moſt to yield*, ſo that thoſe

thoſe who were but at firſt affrighted, may at laſt be ſolemnly perſwaded and urged to believe the Suggeſtion to be true, if they give him any Encouragement for ſuch a Procedure.

2. *Contemplative Heads* and great Searchers are uſually moſt troubled in this Manner, partly becauſe they ſee *more Difficulties* than other Men, and are more *ſenſible* of humane Inability to reſolve them, and partly becauſe God (who will not ſuffer his Children to be tempted *above what they are able*) doth *not permit* Satan to moleſt the *weaker* Sort of Chriſtians with ſuch dangerous Aſſaults.

3. Perſons of eminent and ſingular *Holineſs* may be (and often are) troubled with atheiſtical Thoughts, and have ſad Conflicts about them, Satan labouring (where he cannot prevail for a poſitive Entertainment of Atheiſm) at leaſt ſo *diſquiet* their Minds by haunting them with his Injections, if not to *weaken* their Aſſent to theſe fundamental Truths, in which he ſometimes ſo prevails, that good Men have publickly profeſſed, that they have found it an harder Matter to believe that there is a God, than moſt do imagine.

4. Satan lies at the *Catch* in this Deſign, and uſually takes Men at the Advantage, *ſuddenly* ſetting upon them, either in the *Height* of their Meditations and Enquiries into fundamental Truths, (for when they ſoar aloft, and puzzle themſelves with a Difficulty, then is he at Hand to adviſe them to cut the Knot which they cannot unlooſe) or in the *Depth* of their Troubles, (for when Men cannot reconcile the daily Afflictions and Sufferings which they undergo, with the Love and Care of God toward his Children, then 'tis Satan's Seaſon to tell them that there is no ſupream Diſpoſer of Things;) in both theſe Caſes the Devil leaps upon them unawares (like a Robber out of a Thicket) who if he do not wound them by the Dart of atheiſtical Injection, at leaſt he is ſure to aſtoniſh them, and to confound them with Amazement. For,

5. Sometimes he purſues with wonderful *Violence*, and will *diſpute* with admirable Subtilty, urging the *Inequality* of Providence, the *ſeeming Contradictions* of Scripture, the *Unſuitableneſs* of Ordinances to an infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs, with many more Arguments of like Kind; and this with ſuch unexpected Acuteneſs, and ſeeming Demonſtration, that the moſt holy Hearts and wiſeſt Heads ſhall not readily know what to anſwer, but ſhall be forced to betake themſelves to their Knees, and to beg of God that he

would rebuke Satan, and uphold them that their Faith fail not: Nay, he doth not only dispute, but by urging, and (with unspeakable Earnestness) *threaping* the Conclusion upon Men, doth *almost force* them to a Perswasion, so that they are almost carried off their Feet whether they will or no. Which was the very Case of *David* (when the Devil pursued him with atheistical Thoughts on the Occasion of the Prosperity of wicked Men, and his daily Troubles) *Psal.* lxxiii. 2. *My Feet were almost gone, my Steps had well-nigh slipt.*

6. Yet for all this, he sometimes lays aside his sophistical Subtilty, and betakes himself to an *impudent Importunity*; for sometimes he insists only on *one* Argument, not changing that which he first took up, nor strengthning his Suggestion with Variety of Arguments, but by frequent Repetition of the same Reason, persists to urge his injected Atheism. This gives no Discovery of any deep Reach if he designed to perswade, (for 'tis scarce Rational to imagine, that serious Men, who by many Arguments are fully perswaded there is a God, should readily lose their Hold upon the Appearance of one Objection,) but it shews that he purposeth only to molest. And this appears more evidently, when he contents himself with weak and *trivial* Arguments, which the afflicted Party can answer fully, and yet cannot for all that quit themselves of the Trouble: For Instance, 'Tis not very many Years since a serious and pious Person came to me, and complained, that he could not be at Rest for atheistical Thoughts that perpetually haunted him, and upon a particular Enquiry into the Cause and Manner of his Trouble, he told me the first Rise of it was from his Observation, that I had interpreted some Scriptures otherwise than he had heard some others to have done; but withal, he added, that he knew the Reason of his Perplexity was but silly, and that which he could easily answer: This being no just Charge against the Scripture, (whose Sense and Truth might for all that be one, and uniform to itself) but only an Implication of humane Weakness appearing in the different Apprehensions of Expositors; yet notwithstanding, he affirmed he could not shake off the Trouble, and that his Thoughts were ever urged with the same Thing for a long Time together; nay, such is his Impudency in this Kind of Trouble, that those who know 'tis the best Way *not to dispute* Fundamentals with Satan, but with Abhorrency to reject him (after the Example of Christ)

with

with a *Get thee behind me Satan*, and accordingly do with their utmoſt Strength reject them, yet they find that he doth not readily deſiſt.

How ſad is this Trouble? How are pious Perſons affrighted, to ſee the Face of their Thoughts made abominably ugly and deformed by theſe violent and unavoidable Injections? 'Tis not only *wearisome* to thoſe that know it to be ſolely *Satan's Malice*, but it often proves to be an *aſtoniſhing Surpriſal*, like that of a Traveller, who while he paſſeth on his Way without Foreſight or Thought of Danger, is ſuddenly brought to the Top of a great Precipice, where when he looks down to the vaſt Deep below, his Head ſwims, his Heart pants, his Knees tremble, and the very Fear of the ſudden Danger ſo confounds him, that he is (through exceſſive Dread) ready to fall into that which he would avoid; ſo are theſe amazed at ſo great Hazards before them. Satan could not by all his Art prevail with them to abandon the holy Ways of God, in Exchange for the Pleaſures of Sin, and now they ſeem to be in Danger to loſe all at once, and yet 'tis more affrightful by far to thoſe that charge (through Satan's Cunning) all this Atheiſm *upon themſelves*.

2dly, Another affrightful Injection is that of *blaſphemous Thoughts*, as that God is not juſt, nor compaſſionate, that Scriptures and Ordinances are but low and ſorry Things, *&c.*

That Satan doth delight to force ſuch Thoughts upon Men is evident, 1. From his *Nature*. He is a *blaſphemous* Spirit, and withal ſo *malicious*, that whatſoever is in his curſed Mind he will be ready to vent upon all Occaſions. 2. From his *Practice*; for where he can obtain the Rule over Mens Imaginations (as in ſome diſtracted Perſons, and thoſe that are diſtempered with Fevers) he uſually makes them vomit forth Oaths, Curſings and Blaſphemies; and this he doth to ſome, that (while they have had the Uſe of their Reaſon) have not been obſerved to give their Tongue the Liberty of ſwearing, or curſed ſpeaking. 3. From his *profeſſed Deſign* in the Caſe of *Job*, concerning whom he boaſted to God himſelf, that he would make him curſe him to his Face, and accordingly tempted him by his Wife to curſe God and die. 4. From the ſad *Experience* of thoſe that have ſuffered under this ſad Affliction; for many have complained of blaſphemous Thoughts, and thoſe whom he cannot conquer, he will thus trouble.

Neither

Neither need we think it ſtrange, that the Devil can impreſs Blaſphemies upon the Imaginations of Men *againſt their Wills*, when we conſider that he could make *Saul* (in his Fits) to behave himſelf like an *inſpired Perſon*, and cauſe him to utter Things beyond and unſuitable to his Diſpoſition (after the Rate and Manner of thoſe Raptures which idolatrous Prieſts uſed to be tranſported withal:) This in 1 *Sam.* xviii. 10. is called *Saul's Prophesying*, when the *evil Spirit from the Lord vexed him*; and is the ſame with that which is ſpoken concerning *Baal's* Prieſts, 1 *Kings* xviii. 29. *They prophesied until the Time of the offering of the Evening-ſacrifice*; that is, they were exerciſed with Trances and rapturous Furies, in which they uttered ſtrange Sounds and Speeches (*a*). How eaſily then may Satan poſſeſs the Fancies of Men with Blaſphemies? ſo that the *Unwilling* may be troubled with them, and thoſe that are deprived of the Benefit of Reaſon, may (from the Power of the Impreſſion upon their Imagination) vent them with a Kind of Unwillingneſs.

Melancholy Perſons do very frequently meet with this Kind of Trouble, Satan having a great Power over their *Imagination*, and great *Advantages* from the Darkneſs of that Humour, to make the Fear ariſing from ſuch Thoughts the more *aſtoniſhing*, and to *delude* them into an Apprehenſion, that they are guilty of all that paſſeth through their Thoughts, and alſo to work this Perplexity to more *diſmal Effects*. In theſe Kind of Men he doth play the *Tyrant* with ſuch Injections, abuſing them to ſuch an Height, as if they were his Vaſſals and Slaves, whoſe Thoughts and Tongues were in his (and not their own) Keeping; and ſo ſtrongly doth he poſſeſs them with this Perplexity ſometimes, that all the Counſels, Reaſonings, or Advice of others, cannot in the leaſt ſatisfy or relieve them; yet notwithſtanding I have known ſeveral under this Affliction, who (when by *Phyſick* the State of their Bodies hath been altered) have found themſelves at Eaſe immediately, the Trouble gradually and inſenſibly ceaſing of itſelf.

Others there are that have great Vexation from theſe Thoughts, and theſe are commonly ſuch, as by ſome *long* and grievous Pain, Sickneſs or other Croſſes, have their Spirits *fretted* and imbittered; then is Satan ready to ſuggeſt, that God is cruel, or regardleſs of his People; and theſe

(*a*) Bacchatur Vates, *Virg.*

these Thoughts are the more dreadful, because fretting and murmuring Spirits have a natural Tendency to think harshly of God; so that Satan in this Case doth with the more *Boldness* obtrude these Suggestions upon them, finding so great a Forwardness toward such Imaginations; and also with greater *Severity* he doth *reflect* upon them, as being in some Likelihood compliant and consenting.

When other Persons (not so concerned as these two Sorts of Men above mentioned) are assaulted with blasphemous Thoughts, the Fits are *less permanent*, and (because they easily *discover* the Design and Author of them) not highly affrightful, tho' still troublesome.

The Burden of these Injections are much like the former, very sadly afflicting. For who can easily bear the *Noise* of Satan, while he shouts continually into their Ears odious Calumnies, and blasphemous Indignities against God? *David* could not hear wicked Men blaspheme God, but it was *as a Sword in his Bones*, exceeding painful. The Impressions of *Nature* (that teach us to revere and honour God) the Power of *Education* (that confirms these Impressions) the *Perswasion* of Faith (that assures us of the Reality and infinite Excellency of a Godhead) and the Force of Love (that makes us more sensibly apprehensive of any Injury, or Dishonour done to him whom we love above all); *all these* do suffer by these violent Incursions of Satan, and the Sufferer finds himself to be pained and tortured in these *noble Parts*. How grievous must it be to a Child of God, to have his Ear *chained* to these intolerable ungrateful Reproaches? Especially when we consider, that the Devil will in this Case utter the *most dreadful* Blasphemies he can devise, which will still add to the Affliction (for even those Men that through Habit, can well bear ordinary petty Oaths, will yet startle at outragious prodigious Swearing) and therefore whatever *Covert* and consequential Blasphemies may be to some Men, these *impudent* hideous Abuses of the holy and just God, must needs sadly trouble those that are forced to hear them; and the more *constant*, the greater Trouble. Who would not be weary of their Lives, that must be forced to undergo this Vexation still without Intermission? And yet the Devil can advance the Trouble a little higher, by the *Apparatus* or artificial Dread which he puts upon the Tempration in the *Manner* of the Injection. As the *Roaring* of the Lion increaseth

creaſeth Terror in the Beaſts of the Field, who without that would tremble at his Preſence; and as the *Thundering* and Lightning at the giving of the Law, increaſed the Fear of *Iſrael*, ſo when Satan is upon this Deſign, he *ſhakes* as it were the Houſe, and makes a Noiſe, that the Fright may be increaſed.

3*dly*, *Suſpicious Fears* of being excluded out of God's eternal *Decree of Election*, is another of his Affrightments. This is, when Satan boldly takes upon him to *determine* God's ſecret Counſel concerning any Man, peremptorily aſſerting, that *he is none of God's Elect*. In which Caſe he often doth only inject the *Suſpicion confidently*, without *Offer* of Proof; or if he uſe Arguments, they never amount to a Proof of his Aſſertion (neither is it poſſible they ſhould, for theſe are among *God's Secrets*, and out of Satan's Reach) tho' poſſibly they may prove the Perſon to be *not converted* at preſent; ſo that this Kind of Trouble differs exceedingly from thoſe Diſquiets of Temptation, which frequently Men ſuffer about their *State* of Regeneration. And indeed the *Queſtion* ſhould not be *confounded*, it being of great Concern to Men, when their Peace is aſſaulted, to be able to obſerve the Difference betwixt theſe two Aſſertions, *Thou art not elected*, and *Thou art not yet regenerated*. Seeing the latter being granted, there yet remains a Hope of the *Probability* or *Poſſibility* of that Man's Converſion afterwards: (the Suſpicions of Non-converſion are more common, and not ſo dangerous) Nay, in unregenerate Perſons, the Fears of their being yet in that Condition (being joined with Diligence and Care to avoid the Danger) are neceſſary and advantageous; but the former being granted, *all Hopes* are together with that Conceſſion *laid off*, which muſt needs make the Affrightment intolerable. In this we may obſerve,

1. That Satan for the better Management of this Deſign, doth not only inject theſe Suſpicions in the moſt *dreadful Language* (as *Thou art a loſt and damned Wretch, hopeleſly miſerable to all Eternity; God hath not elected thee to Life, but prepared for thee* (*as a Veſſel of Wrath*) *the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone for ever*, &c.) But alſo he doth aſſert them with the higheſt *Peremptorineſs* imaginable, as if he had *Authority* from God to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation a-

gainſt

gainſt a Man: This muſt needs amaze the Afflicted unſpeakably.

2. In this he alſo *obſerves his Advantages*: For there are ſome Men ſo ſadly ſuited to this Deſign, that Satan comes better to ſpeed upon them, than others. Uſually he fixeth his Eyes, (1.) Upon *young Perſons* at their *firſt* ſerious Attendances upon, and Conſiderations of Scripture-truths. Their Hearts are then *tender*, (Youth hath a natural Tenderheartedneſs; we find them coupled together in *Rehoboam*'s Character, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 7. *When Rehoboam was young, and tender hearted*) and they are apt to receive ſtrong Impreſſions. When thoſe who were formerly mindleſs of their ſpiritual Concern, begin to be ſerious, they can no ſooner fall upon a Conſideration of thoſe weighty *Doctrines*: That there are *Sheep* and *Goats*, ſome *ſaved*, and ſome *damned*; that the Bleſſed are *few*, in Compariſon of the *Many* that take the broad Way to Deſtruction, and that theſe were from Eternity *ordained unto* Life, and *theſe only*, &c. No ſooner (I ſay) begin they to ponder theſe Things, but Satan is ready with this Suſpicion, *And what doſt thou know, but thou art one of theſe excluded Wretches? If but few are ſaved, a Thouſand to one thou art none of them? For why ſhould God look upon thee more than another?* Theſe are his firſt Eſſays with young Men, beginning to be ſerious, in which afterward he proceeds with greater Boldneſs, as he ſeeth Occaſion. (2.) He alſo doth this to Perſons that are *ſome way quickned* to a devotional Fear of God, and Care of their Souls, but withal are *ignorant*, and not able *diſtinctly* to apprehend, and *orderly* to range the *Doctrines* of the Scriptures into a due *Conſiſtency* with one another. Their *careful Fears* make them enquire into what God hath ſaid concerning the everlaſting State of Men; and before they can be able to *digeſt* the Principles of Religion, Satan ſets ſome Truths *edge ways* againſt them, which put them into great Affrightment, while (through their Ignorance) other Truths (appointed and declared for the Satisfaction of the Minds of thoſe that hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs) cannot come in to their Relief. How ſtartling muſt the Truths of God's Election be, when they ſtand forth *alone*, and are not accompanied with the *Invitations* of the Goſpel, that promiſe *Pardon* and *Acceptance* to all that will come in and ſubmit to Chriſt? Satan uſually holds ſuch Kind of Men, to the Conſideration of thoſe Truths,

Truths, that have the moſt *diſmal Aſpect*, and while they are ſtopt there, they can draw forth no other Concluſions than theſe, *That they are in Hazard, and for ought they know, utterly loſt.* (3.) Satan hath alſo this Plot againſt thoſe that by ſome *grievous* Iniquity, or *long Continuance* in Sin, have highly provoked the Lord. Here he uſeth Arguments from the Heinouſneſs of their Iniquity; thou art a *Reprobate*, becauſe thou haſt committed theſe *great Evils*. theſe are *Marks* of Damnation, &c. Which Arguments, though they be of *no Value*, and no way proving that for which they are brought, yet Satan *injecting Suſpicions*, and their own Conſciences in the mean Time juſtly accuſing, they ſo ſink under their Fears, that they ſuffer Satan to make *what Concluſion* he will, and then they *ſubſcribe* to it. (4.) Above all, *melancholly* Perſons give the *Devil* the *greateſt* Advantage to raiſe Affrightments. That *Diſtemper* naturally fills Men with ſad Thoughts, and is credulous of the worſt Evil that can be objected againſt him that hath it. Of itſelf, it can create the blackeſt Conceits, and ſaddeſt Surmiſes, and then believes its own Fancy (*a*). When Satan ſtrikes in with this Humour, they are the more confirmed in their Suſpicions, and the Fright is the greater, becauſe they are as *incredulous* of what is Good (if it be told them) as they are apt to believe what is Evil, and to believe it, becauſe *they fear* it (*b*); though no other Reaſon were offered: But much more when Satan in a *prophetick* Manner foretels their Miſery, and aſſures them they muſt never be happy.

5. The Suſpicions which the *Devil* hath by theſe Advantages *raiſed up*, he doth endeavour to *increaſe*, and to root them *deeply* in the Minds of them, upon whom he hath thus begun: And indeed, by frequent *inculcating* the ſame Thing with his continued *Peremptorineſs* of aſſerting the Certainty of their Non-election, he at laſt brings up very many to a *full Perſuaſion* that it is ſo; and beſides other Arts that he may have, or exerciſe in this Particular, he commonly practiſeth upon Men, by *perverting* the true *Intendment* and Uſe of the *Doctrine* of Election. That there is ſuch a Thing as *Election*, and that of a *determinate* Number, are Truths undeniable; and the End of their Diſcovery in the Goſpel, is the *Comfort* and *Confirmation* of the Converted. Here they may ſee God's *unchangeable Love*

(*a*) Finguntque creduntque. (*b*) Dum timet, credit.

Love to them, how much they *ſtand engaged* for the Freeneſs of Grace, and that *the Foundation of God is ſure*, &c. For to this Purpoſe doth our Saviour improve theſe Doctrines, *John* xvii. 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16. But nothing of this is ſpoken to *diſcourage* any Man from his *Endeavours*, neither can any Man *prove that he, or any other, is excluded out of the Decree of Election*, (except in the Caſe of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt;) neither is it poſſible for the *Devil* to *prove* any ſuch Thing againſt any Man; neither *ought any to ſuppoſe himſelf not elect*: But on the contrary, if he is *willing to forſake Sin*, and *deſirous to be reconciled to God*, he ought to apprehend a *Probability* that he is elected, becauſe the Proffer of Chriſt is made *to all that will receive him*. And therefore ſhould Men *ſtop* their Ears againſt ſuch Suggeſtions, and not diſpute that with Satan, but rather *hearken* to the Commands, Exhortations, and Promiſes of Scripture, it being moſt certain that theſe *ſecret Things belong to God*, Deut. xxix. 29. and are no Man's *Rule* to walk by, ſeeing *revealed Things only belong to us*. All this the *Devil* perverts, for he endeavours to make Election the *immediate Object* of our Faith, and *our Rule* to walk by; as if it were neceſſary that every Man *knew God's eternal Purpoſe* concerning him, before *he begin* his Endeavours. And as he argues ſome Men into a *perverſe Careleſsneſs* upon the Ground of Election, making them to conclude, that *if they are ordained to Life, they ſhall be ſaved, though they live wickedly; if they be not, they ſhall be damned, though they endeavour never ſo much to the contrary.* So he alſo argues ſome, from this *Doctrine*, into terrible *Fears of Damnation*, becauſe they cannot be aſſured *aforehand, that their Names are written in Heaven.* And theſe dreadful Suſpicions he doth labour to ſtrengthen, by ſome Mens *unwary* handling of the *Doctrine* of Non-election; when ſome Preachers unskilfully urge the *dangerous Signs* of Reprobation, or ſpeak *ſeverely* of God's Decrees, without due *Caution* and *Promiſe* of Mercy to all penitent Sinners. Or when ſome, unskilful in the Methods of comforting the Diſtreſſed in Conſcience, becauſe they are not able to ſhew the Afflicted their Condition, or to ſpeak *a Word in Seaſon* to quiet their Minds, and to *direct* them what Courſe to take, do uſually refer them to God's Decree, and tell them, If God have *decreed* them to Salvation, they *ſhall be ſaved.* Satan doth induſtriouſly hold them

them there, by this Means he leads them from the Promiſes and their Duty, and keeps them *muſing* and *poring* upong Election, till they are *bewildered*, and cannot find the Way out. Thus have ſeveral continued under their Affrightments for many Years.

4. We may obſerve, That when Satan hath brought them into this Snare, he doth *tyrannically domineer* over them. He doth *deride* them under their Trouble, and *mock* at them when *their Fear comes* upon them. And becauſe now the very Thought, or Hearing of *Election*, is as a Dagger to the Heart, and a *dreadful Sound in their Ears*, he delights to *repeat* it to them; for the very naming of the Word, becomes as dreadful, as the Sentence of *Condemnation* to a Malefactor, being always accompanied with this Reflection; *Oh how miſerable am I, that have no Part nor Portion in it!* Beſides, he doth buſy their Minds with *imaginary Repreſentations* of Hell, and ſets before them as in a *Scheme*, the Day of Judgment, the Terrors of the Damned, the Sentence againſt the Goats on the Left-hand, the intolerable Pains of everlaſting Burnings, and (that which is the Miſery of all theſe Miſeries) the *Eternity* of all. Thus he forceth their Meditations, but ſtill with Application to themſelves; neither doth he ſuffer them to reſt in the Night, but they are terrified with ſad *Dreams*, and the *Viſions of the Night* do diſquiet them.

5. How *grievous* this Affrightment is, I ſhould next obſerve, but that is partly expreſſed in the aforegoing Particulars, and may yet more fully appear by a Conſideration of theſe three Things. (1.) That a Man hath nothing *dearer* to him than his Soul: Alas, that cannot be counter-balanced by the gaining of the whole World, and to have *no Hope* or Expectancy of its Salvation, muſt needs be terribly affrightful. (2.) Theſe Suſpicions of Non-election prevailing, all *Promiſes* and *Comforts* are urged in vain, and they commonly return them back again to thoſe that offered them, with this Reply: *They are true, and uſeful to thoſe unto whom they appertain, but they belong not unto me.* Nay, all Means are rejected as uſeleſs. If ſuch be adviſed to pray, or read, they will in their Fit of Affrightment *refuſe* all; upon this Reaſon, that *they are not elected.* And then to what Purpoſe (ſay they) is Prayer, or any Endeavours? *For who can alter his Decree?* And indeed, if their Affrightments *continued* at an Height without Intermiſſion,

miſſion, they would never do any Thing; but this is their Help, that ſome ſecret *under-ground Hopes* which they eſpy not, do revive at leaſt ſometimes, and put them upon Endeavours, which (through God's Bleſſing) become Means of better Information. (3.) Though Satan's Injections of Non-election be altogether unproveable, and withal ſo terrifying, that it might be ſuppoſed Men ſhould not be forward in their Belief of ſo great an Unhappineſs: Yet can he prevail ſo far, that the Perſons above named (eſpecially the Melancholly) are made to believe him; and this chiefly by poſſeſſing their Imaginations, with his *frequent confident* Affirmations. We ſee it is a common Practice to teach Birds muſical Notes and Sounds, which is only by conſtant Repetition, till a ſtrong Impreſſion is made upon their Fancy: And thus may one Man impoſe upon the Imagination of another with his Songs, or Sayings; For what we hear often, we cannot forbear to repete in our Thoughts, being ſtrongly fixed upon our Fancy. No wonder then, if Satan by often repeating, *Thou art not elected, thou art damned*, &c. do form ſo ſtrong an Impreſſion upon the Imagination, that poor amazed Creatures learn *to ſay after him*; and then take the *Ecchoes* of their *Fancy*, to be the *Voice of Conſcience condemning them*. Now then, if the *Unhappineſs* (ſuſpected) be the *greateſt* beyond all Compariſon, if theſe Suſpicions entertained cut off all *Succours* of Comfort that may ariſe from the Promiſes of God, and the Endeavours of Man, if Satan can prevail with Men to entertain them with any *Perſuaſion* (as we ſee he can) how dreadfully will theſe Perſuaſions recoil upon a Man? And thus will his Thoughts run, *I am perſuaded I am not elected; and if not elected, then Comforts and Prayers are all in vain; and if theſe be in vain, there is no Poſſibility of Salvation, nor the leaſt Hope of a who knows, or a Peradventure; and if that, Oh unſpeakably miſerable*? Under theſe aſtoniſhing Thoughts doth Satan exerciſe their Hearts by Suſpicions of Non-election. But,

4*thly*, Sometimes he takes another Courſe to affright Men, and that is by injecting *Motions* of ſome *abominable Sin*, or Evil into their Minds, to the Commiſſion whereof he ſeems ſtrongly to ſolicite; yet not with *full* Intention, or *Expectation* of Prevalency; but with a Purpoſe to *moleſt* and diſquiet. And for that End, he commonly chuſeth ſuch Sins as are *moſt vile* in their own Nature, and *moſt oppoſite* to the Diſpoſitions of Men: Thus he injects Thoughts

of Uncleanneſs to a chaſt Perſon; Thoughts of Injuſtice and Wrong to a juſt Man; Thoughts of Revenge and Cruelty to a weak Man; Thoughts of Rejoicing in the Loſs and Miſery of others to the merciful Man. Or elſe he injects Motions to ſuch Sins, wherein formerly Men have been *overtaken*, but have been made *bitter* by deep Repentance; the very Thoughts whereof are now become moſt *loathſome*. And ſometimes he purſues Men with Thoughts of *Self-Murder*, even while there is *nothing* of Diſcontent or Trouble in their Minds, to ſecond ſuch a Temptation. By this manner of proceeding, he creates great Affrightments to the Hearts of Men. For,

1. Theſe are ſtrange *Surpriſals*; and Perſons under this Kind of Trouble, cannot but be amazed to find ſuch Thoughts within them, which are moſt *contrary* to their Diſpoſitions, or their moſt *ſerious Reſolves*. The chaſt Perſon tempted to Uncleanneſs, or the juſt Man to Revenge; the humble Perſon urged to the ſame Sin that coſt him ſo dear, &c. They *wonder* at their own Hearts, and while they *miſtake* theſe Temptations, by judging them to be the *Iſſues* of their own *Inclination*, with Aſtoniſhment they cry out, *Oh I had thought that I had mortified theſe Luſts, but what a ſtrange Heart have I? I ſee Sin is as ſtrong in me as ever? And I have Cauſe to fear my ſelf*, &c.

2. And this is yet a greater Trouble, becauſe uſually Satan takes them at *ſome Advantage* of an offered Occaſion, or Opportunity, then he gives them a ſudden Puſh, and with Importunity urgeth them *to take the Time*; this often affrights them into Trembling, and their Fears do ſo *weaken* their Purpoſes, that their Hazards are the greater, in that they are aſtoniſhed into an *Inactivity*. So that in this Caſe, the *Men* of *Might* do not readily find their Hands.

3. Neither are theſe *Motions ſudden* and *tranſient* Glances, which periſh as ſoon as they are born, (though it be a very frequent Thing with Satan to caſt in *Motions* into the Heart for Trial Sake, without further Proſecution) but he (in this Caſe) purſues with frequent *Repetitions*, following hard after them, to the Increaſe of the Affrightment. So that for a long Time together *Men* may be afflicted with theſe *Meſſengers* of Satan to buffet them; and tho' they may pray earneſtly againſt them, that they may be removed, yet they find the *Motions* continue upon them. Which muſt needs be an *bateful Annoyance* to an upright Heart,

Heart, that doth *know* it to be only Satan's Design to affright, much more muſt it afflict thoſe that do *not perceive* the Contriver and End of ſuch *Motions*; but judge them to be the natural Workings of their own evil Heart.

4. Satan can alſo affright Men by *immediate Impreſſions of Fear* upon their Minds. He can do much with the Imagination, eſpecially when Perſons are diſtempered with *Melancholly*; for ſuch are naturally fearful, and any Impreſſions upon them have the deepeſt, moſt piercing Operation. They are always framing to themſelves diſmal Things, and abound with black and dark Conceits; furmiſing ſtill the worſt, and always incredulous of what is good. Hence it is that ſometimes *Men* are ſeized upon by Fearfulneſs and Trembling, when yet they cannot give any *tolerable Account* of a Cauſe, or Reaſon, why it ſhould be ſo with them. And others are exceſſively aſtoniſhed with the Shadows of their own Thoughts, upon the meaneſt Pretences imaginable.

That this is the Work of Satan, doth appear by unqueſtionable Evidence. This was that *evil Spirit* which God ſent between *Abimelech* and the Men of *Sechem*, Judg. ix. 23. God permitted Satan (for the Puniſhment of them both) to raiſe Fears and Jealouſies in the Heart of *Abimelech*, againſt the Men of *Sechem*, and in the Hearts of the Men of *Sechem* againſt *Abimelech*. They were mutually afraid of one another, and theſe Fears *wrought ſo far*, that they were (for the Prevention of a ſuppoſed Danger) engaged in *treacherous Conſpiracies*, to the real Ruin of them both. The *evil Spirit that vexed Saul*, 1 Sam. xvi. 14. was nothing elſe but ſudden and vehement *Fits of Terror*, and inward Fear which the Devil raiſed by the working up of his *Melancholly*: For we may obſerve theſe Fits were allayed by *Muſick*; and alſo we might ſee by his Diſpoſition *out of his Fits*, and by his Carriage *in them*, that *inward Fears* were his *Tormentors*: For 1 *Sam.* xviii. 9. 'tis noted, that *Saul eyed David*; that is, his jealous Fears began to work concerning *David*; of whom 'tis ſaid expreſly, *ver.* 12. *That he was afraid because the Lord was with him*; and when the evil Spirit came upon him, his Heart was exerciſed with theſe Fears; and accordingly he behaved himſelf when he caſt the Javelin at *David* with a Purpoſe to ſlay him. Upon any Occaſion of Trouble eſpecially, the Devil was at hand to heighten his Affrightment, inſomuch that when the ſuppoſed *Samuel* told him of his Death, 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 20. he *was afraid to ſuch*

an Height, that he *fell straightway all along on the Earth, and there was no Strength in him.* Neither muſt we ſuppoſe that Satan in this Kind of Working, is confined only to wicked Men: For there is nothing in this Manner of Affrightment, which is inconſiſtent with the Condition of a Child of God, eſpecially when God gives him up to Trial, or Correction. Nay, many of God's Servants ſuffer under Satan's Hand in this very Manner Let us conſider the Troubles of *Job*, and we ſhall find that though Satan endeavoured to deſtroy his Peace by Diſcompoſure of Spirit, by queſtioning his Integrity, by frightful Injections of blaſphemous Thoughts, yet all theſe he vanquiſhed with an undaunted Courage, the Blaſphemy he rejected with Abhorrency, his Integrity he reſolved he would not deny ſo long as he lived, his Loſſes he digeſted eaſily with a ſober compoſed Mind, bleſſed God that gives and takes at Pleaſure, and yet he complains of his Fears, and his frequent Surpriſals thereby, inſomuch that his Friends take notice that moſt of his Trouble aroſe from thence; *Job* xxii. 10. *A ſudden Fear troubleth thee*, and he himſelf confeſſeth as much, *Job* ix. 34. *Let not his Fear terrify me,—but it is not ſo with me.* So that it appears that *Job*'s inward Diſtreſs, was moſtly from ſtrong Impreſſions of affrighting Fears.

Theſe Fears impreſſed upon the Mind, muſt needs be an unexpreſſible Trouble, there is nothing that doth more looſen the Sinews and Joints of the Soul, to the weakening and utter enfeebling of it in all its Endeavours, than Fears; it ſcatters the Strength in a Moment. And beſides the preſent Burden, which will bow down the Backs of the ſtrongeſt, theſe Fears have a ſpecial Kind of *envious Magnanimity* in them: For, 1. They come by Fits, and have Times of more fierce and *cruel Aſſaults*, yet in their Intervals they leave the Heart in a *trembling fainting* Poſture, (for the Devil gives not over the preſent Fit, till he hath *rent* them ſore, and left them (as he did the Man's Son in *Mark* ix. 26.) *as one dead*:) So that 'tis no more to be reckoned Compaſſion, and Gentleneſs in Satan toward the Afflicted that their Fits are not *conſtant*, than it can be accounted Tenderneſs or Kindneſs in a Tyrant, who, when he hath racked or tormented a Man as much as Strength will bear without killing out of Hand, gives over for a Time, that the Party might be reſerved for *new Torments*. 2. Theſe Fits uſually return at *ſuch* Times as the Party afflicted ſeems to promiſe himſelf

ſome

ſome *little Eaſe*, being deſigned to give the greater Diſappointment, in intercepting his expected Comforts. *Sleep* and *Meat* are the two great Refreſhments of the Diſtreſſed, theſe Times Satan watcheth for his new Onſets. *Job* found it ſo in both Caſes, his Meal times were Times of Trouble; *Job* iii. 24. *My Sighing cometh* (that is the Fits of Sighing return) *before I eat, and my Roarings are poured out like the Waters*; and his ſleeping Times were no better, *Job* vii. 13. *When I ſay my Bed ſhall comfort me, my Couch ſhall eaſe my Complaint: Then thou ſcareſt me with Dreams, and terrifieſt me through Viſions, ſo that my Soul chuſeth ſtrangling and Death, rather than Life.*—3. Theſe Fears do make them feel the Weight, not only of *real* preſent Evils, but of all others which the *Imagination* can repreſent to them. So that the Sight or hearing of any ſad Thing afflicts them with Surmiſes, that this will be their Caſe. Hence are they full of miſgiving Thoughts; ſometimes they fear that they ſhall at laſt fall off from God, into ſome ſcandalous Sin, to the Diſhonour of God and Religion, as that they ſhall be Apoſtates, and turn openly profane; ſometimes they fear they ſhall meet with ſome ſignal devouring Judgment, by which they ſhall one Day periſh; as *David* ſaid in the like Caſe, *I ſhall one Day periſh by the Hand of Saul*: Thus are they crucified betwixt their preſent Burden, and future Expectations of Evil.

6thly, The laſt (and indeed the meaneſt) Engine for the working of Affrighrment, is *Scrupuloſity of Conſcience.* Satan vexeth the Conſcience and diſtracteth the Mind, by raiſing up *needleſs, groundleſs* Fears concerning a Man's Practice. Where the *Ignorance* of Men, or their *timerous* Diſpoſitions do encourage Satan to this Enterprize, there he multiplies Scruples upon them, ſo that tho' they aſſent to the doing of any Thing as good or lawful, yet are they conſtantly affrighted from it by a ſuſpicious Fear that it may be otherwiſe.

This Kind of Trouble takes in almoſt all Kind of Actions, it extends to the Way of a Man's *Calling*, the Way of his Management of it, the Rates he takes, and the Prices he gives for his Commodities; our very *natural* Actions of ſleeping, eating, drinking, Company, Recreation, are not unconcerned. In all which the Devil affrights the timerous Conſcience that (it may be) he hath offended: If he buys or ſells, he is diſquieted with [*a may-be*] that he hath ſold too dear, or bought too cheap; if he eats or ſleeps, he fears he hath

been exceſſive, a Sluggard or a Glutton: Thus are ſome Men moleſted in every Thing they do.

Neither is this Kind of Affrightment to be deſpiſed: For tho' often 'tis a groundleſs Fear, and ſo appears to be to diſcerning Chriſtians; yet thoſe that are under this Moleſtation think it bad enough: Tho' it be not as a *Rack* that afflicts with violent Pains, yet 'tis as thoſe Kinds of *Puniſhments* which at firſt are nothing, but by Continuance do tire Men out with *little Eaſe*, and ſo at laſt become intolerable. Beſides this is a *multiplying* Trouble; for one Scruple begets another, and by *Continuance* of ſcrupling, the Conſcience grows *ſo weak* and unſteady, that *every* Thing is ſcrupled, and the Man brought to a continual Affrightment of doing wrong in every Action. Neither can all Men make Uſe of the *Remedy* that is preſcribed for the Cure of this Diſtemper, which is, That when ſuch Scruples cannot be removed by *Reaſon*, then either Men ſhould forbear the *thinking* upon ſuch Things from whence Scruples are apt to ariſe, or they ſhould *break* them down by Violence, and go over the Belly of their Scruple to the Performance of their Action. I deny not but that ſomething may be done and endeavoured this Way; but any may ſee that 'tis not eaſy for every one to do either of theſe: So that this is alſo a troubleſome Evil, from which 'tis not eaſy to be diſcharged.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Satan's third Way to hinder Peace by ſpiritual Sadneſs. Wherein, (1.) *Of the Degrees of ſpiritual Sadneſs.* (2.) *Of the Frequency of this Trouble, evidenced ſeveral Ways. Of the Difference 'twixt God and Satan in wounding the Conſcience.* (3.) *Of the ſolemn Occaſions of this Trouble.* (4.) *The Engines by which Satan works ſpiritual Sadneſs.* 1ſt. *His Sophiſtry. His Topicks enumerated and explained.* 1. *Scriptures perverted.* 2. *Falſe Notions.* 3. *Miſrepreſentations of God.* 4. *Sins; how he aggravates them.* 5. *Leſſening their Graces: How he doth that.* 2dly, *His ſecond Engine, Fear; how he forwards his Deſign that Way.*

BESIDES the Troubles already mentioned under the Heads of *Diſcompoſures* of Spirit, and *Affrightments*, there is a third Kind of Trouble which Satan gives to the Children of God, and this may, for Diſtinction Sake, be called

called *ſpiritual Sadneſs.* Theſe ſpiritual Sadneſſes *are Troubles raiſed in the Mind, relating to the Conſcience, and ſpiritual State or Condition of Men.* They differ exceedingly from the two former Sorts of Trouble: For, (1.) Theſe Troubles wholly concern the Conſcience in Point of *Regeneration*, and Mens *Suitableneſs* thereunto; whereas ſimple Diſcompoſures of Spirit, *firſtly* relate to *outward* Things. (2.) In theſe the Conſcience is *immediately* concerned, but in other Troubles, the Conſcience is either wholly *untouched*, or wounded only *ſecondarily*, by Continuance and Progreſs of the Diſcompoſure of the Spirit. (3.) In theſe Troubles, Conſcience is the great *Inſtrument* by which the Devil works, whereas in the Trouble of Affrightments the Devil acted *alone*, the Heart being in the mean Time *uncompliant* and reſiſting. For the opening of this Trouble, I ſhall explain,

The ſeveral *Degrees* thereof. 'Tis a Trouble of Conſcience unduly aggravated by Satan, wherein he confines himſelf to the *Operations* of Conſcience. But then, as he ſuggeſts the Troubles of Men by the *Voice* of Conſcience, ſo he doth all he can to make it *irregular* in its Actings, and *exceſſive* in that Irregularity. So that in this Caſe, the Conſcience is *evil*, and imploys itſelf in that Miſtake, to enquire into Mens Regeneracy or Holineſs, always being either a *Neuter*, or an *Adverſary*, and the Devil helps this forward all he can.

The Apoſtle in *Heb.* x. 22. makes mention of an *evil Conſcience*, and that chiefly as it doth occaſion Fear, hindering our comfortable Acceſs to God. This the Conſcience doth when it doth not execute its Office aright, either in *not excuſing* when it ought, or in *accuſing* when it ſhould not; and theſe falſe Accuſations cauſe different Sorts of Troubles, according to the Variety of the Matter for which it doth condemn. Hence is it that there are *three Degrees* of Trouble of Conſcience, below the Trouble of Diſpair:

1. The loweſt Degree is when a regenerate Perſon doth not *poſitively* determine the Caſe of his Soul, whether he be regenerate or not, but is only kept in *Suſpence* betwixt Hope that he is, and Fear that he is not, the Conſcience in the mean Time forbearing to witneſs for him, tho' it have juſt Cauſe to excuſe him: This we may call a *doubting* or queſtioning Conſcience; and tho' it comes far ſhort of theſe Diſtreſſes in which ſome Men are plunged upon the Account of their Souls, yet is it a Trouble, for their Peace is hereby hindred, and their Deſires of Satisfaction fruſtrated, which

in Matters of ſo great Concern (as are theſe of everlaſting Life, and everlaſting Miſery) muſt be very diſquieting. When the Affections are earneſt, their Satisfaction cannot be delayed without Trouble; for *Hope deferred makes the Heart ſick*, Prov. xiii. 12. not only doth it faint under its Doubts, but is by that Means ſo *weak* in its Purpoſes that 'tis eaſily drawn to admit of greater Inconveniencies, which may lay the Foundation of more perplexing Diſturbances.

That the Conſcience may be in ſuch a Diſtemper, that it will not witneſs *for a Man*, when yet it cannot witneſs *againſt him*, is the Obſervation of thoſe that have treated of the Nature of Conſcience(a): Sometimes it will not make *Application* of God's Promiſes, tho' it will believe, that he that forſakes Sin is regenerate, that he that truly repents ſhall be pardoned, yet it will not *affirm* for a Man, that he forſakes Sin or repents, tho' he really do ſo; or if it cannot deny that, yet it will ſometimes refuſe to make that Concluſion which one would think would follow of itſelf, by natural Conſequence, and ſo refuſeth to judge the Perſon regenerate or pardoned, tho' it cannot deny but that he forſakes Sin and repents. The *Greatneſs* of the Bleſſing, the *Remainders* of Unbelief, the deep *Senſe* of Unworthineſs, with other Conſiderations, do keep off the Heart from making (as I may ſay) *ſo bold* with the Promiſes; but all this while the Devil is doing his utmoſt to aggravate theſe Conſiderations, affrighting the Conſcience from that juſt Abſolution which it ought to give.

2. Another Degree of Trouble ariſing from an evil Conſcience, is when the *Condition* of a regenerate Perſon is determined by Conſcience (but falſly) to be *very bad*. I muſt here (as ſome others have done (*b*)) for want of better Terms diſtinguiſh betwixt the *State* of Regeneracy, and a Man's *Condition* in that State, tho' the Words [*State and Condition*] are uſed promiſcuouſly the one for another. A Man may be in a *regenerate State*, and yet his Condition in *that State* may be very bad and blame-worthy, as not walking worthy of ſo holy a Calling; as a Perſon may be a Man, and yet unhealthy or languiſhing. Thus many of the *Aſian* Churches were *true* Churches, and yet in a *bad* Condition; ſome *Luke-warm*; ſome *had a Name to live, and were* comparatively *dead*, becauſe *their Works* were not full or *perfect before God*; and others had *left their firſt* Love. To this Purpoſe is that of the

(a) Ames. Cas Conſ. *l.* 1. *c.* 9. (*b*) *Dickſon* Therap. ſacra *l.* 3. *c.* 1.

the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. *Know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates**? Where the Word *Reprobate* is not to be taken in the ſtrict ſevere Senſe for one *not elected*, but for one whoſe Converſation is not *ſo ſound* and approved as it ſhould be: For this relates not to their *being in Chriſt*, but to their *Aſſurance* of being in that State, which the Apoſtle affirms they might know, except the Fault lay in their negligent careleſs Converſation.

This Kind of Trouble then is of this Nature: The Conſcience doth not accuſe a Man to be *unregenerate*, yet it condemns him for a Carriage unſuitable to the Goſpel and this ſometimes when his Actions are not abſolutely evil, but partly good, partly bad: When the Conſcience condemns the Actions as altogether ſinful, becauſe of ſome Mixture of Infirmities, in which Caſe we ſhould imitate the Apoſtle in *Rom.* vii. who when by Reaſon of the Remainders of Sin in him, he *could not* do the Good *he would*, that is, in *ſuch a Manner* and Degree as he deſired, nor avoid the Evil which he would, ſo clearly and fully as he wiſhed, ſome Imperfections in his beſt Endeavours ſtill cleaving to him: Yet his Conſcience took a right Courſe, he was humbled for his Imperfections, but withal acquits himſelf in Point of Integrity, his Conſcience teſtified, *ver.* 16. that he *conſented to the Law as good*, and *ver.* 22. that he *delighted in the Law of God after the inward Man.* But in this Caſe of ſpiritual Trouble, the Conſcience takes all in the worſt Senſe, it only fixeth upon the Imperfections, and makes them to ſerve for Proofs againſt the Sincerity. Thus if a Man in praying be troubled with wandering Thoughts, then a diſtempered Conſcience condemns that Prayer as a ſinful Prophanation of the Name of God: If the great Concern of *God's Glory* run along in ſuch a Way, as is alſo advantagious to the *Perſon* in outward Things, then will ſuch a Conſcience condemn the Man for *Self ſeeking*, tho' his main Deſign were truly the Honour of God. In all Actions where there is Infirmity appearing with the moſt ſerious Endeavours, or where *God's Glory* and *Man's Good* are twiſted together, the diſordered Conſcience will be apt to take Part with Satan, accuſing and condemning the Action. Yea very often when the Actions are *very good*, no Way juſtly reprovable, the Conſcience ſhall condemn: If he have had Peace,

* ἐι μήτι ἀδόκιμοί ἐστε.

Peace, he ſhall be judged for Security; if he have Faith in God's Promiſes, it will call it Preſumption; if he have a Zeal for God, it will be miſinterpreted for carnal Rigour; if he have Joy, it ſhall be misjudged to be natural Chearfulneſs, or Deluſion; in a Word, all his *Graces* ſhall be eſteemed no better than *moral Virtues*. At this Rate are the Children of God put to great Trouble, *loſing* (as I may ſay) *the Things they have wrought*, ſadly bemoaning their Hardneſs of Heart, or want of Faith and Love, when in their Carriage and Complainings, they give very *high Proofs* of all. In this alſo Satan is buſy to nouriſh the Conſcience in its Jealouſies, and doth ſuggeſt many Objections to confirm it in its Diſtemper. The Conſcience is not always of a peeviſh or perverſe Humour; for ſometimes it will ſmite a Man for a Miſcarriage, (as it did to *David* when he cut off the Lap of *Saul*'s Garment) and yet not break his Peace; which is a ſufficient Evidence that it is put (in this Caſe) far out of Order; which Advantage Satan works upon to diſquiet the Heart, to make Men unthankful for the Mercies they have received, and to incapacitate them for more. This, for Diſtinction Sake, we may call the Trouble of *a grieved or dejected Conſcience*, according to that of *Pſal.* xlii. 5, 11. *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul? And why art thou diſquieted within me?* Tho' ſuch Men are under God's Favour, yet they miſdeem it, and think God is angry with them, their Heart pants, their Soul thirſts, their Tears are their Meat, they are ready to ſay unto God, *My Rock, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And tho' they have ſome Hopes for the future, that God *will command his loving Kindneſs*, and that they *ſhall yet praiſe him*; yet their preſent Apprehenſion of their ſpiritual Wants and Weakneſſes, and of the Diſpleaſure of God, which they ſuppoſe they are under, makes them *go mourning all the Day*.

3. The third Degree of Trouble of Conſcience is when the Conſcience peremptorily denies the *State of Regeneration*. Hereby a Man that is really regenerate, is concluded to be yet *in the Gall of Bitterneſs and Bond of Iniquity*; his former Hopes are taxed for Self-deluſion, and his preſent State to be a State of Nature. This Trouble is far greater than the two former; becauſe the Party is judged to be in greater Hazard, and by many Degrees more remote from Hope. 'Tis the frequent and ſad Thought of ſuch, That if Death ſhould in that Eſtate cut off their Days, Oh! then

they

they were for ever miserable. The Fears and Disquiets of the Heart on this Account are very grievous, but yet they admit of Degrees, according to the Ignorance of the Party, the *Distemper* of the Conscience, the *Strength* of the Objections, or Severity of the Prosecution, in regard the Conscience is now sadly out of Order. We may call this Degree of Grief (for Distinction) *a wounded Spirit*; which how hard it is to be born *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* xviii. 14. by comparing it with all other Kind of Troubles, which the *Spirit of a Man* can make some Shift to *bear*, making this heavier than all, and above ordinary Strength.

Some make Enquiry what may be the Difference betwixt a wounded Spirit in the *Regenerate* and the *Reprobate*? To which it may be answered, 1. That in the Parties Apprehension there is no Difference at all; both of them may be compassed about with the *Sorrows of Death*, and suppose themselves to be in the *Belly of Hell*. 2. Neither is there any difference in the *Degree* of the Trouble, a Child of God may be handled with as much seeming Severity, as he whom God intends for a future *Topher*. 3. Neither is there any such remarkable Difference in the working of the Spirits of the one and other, that they themselves at present, or others that are By-standers can easily observe. Yet a formal Difference there is, for Grace being in the Heart of the one, will in some *Breathing* or *Pulse* discover its Life. And tho' sometimes it acts so low, or confusedly, that God only can distinguish; yet often those that are experienced Observers will discover some real Breathings after God, and true loathing of Sin, and other Traces of Faith and Love, that are not so discernible to the Parties themselves. 4. But in God's *Design* the Difference is very great; the Wicked lie under his Lash as Malefactors, but the Regenerate are as Patients under Cure, or Children under Discipline. 5. And accordingly the Issue doth determine, that God's Intention in wounding their Spirits were not alike to both; the one at last coming out of the Furnace as *Gold*, the other still remaining as *reprobate Silver*, or being consumed as Dross. Thus have ye seen the Nature and Degree of spiritual Sadness.

2*dly*, For the further Explanation whereof I shall next shew you that this is an usual Trouble to the Children of God.

Which, 1. I might evidence from several Instances of those that have suffered much under it; as *David*, whose Com-

plaints

plaints in this Case are very frequent; and *Heman*, who left a Memorial of his Griefs in *Psal.* lxxxviii. *Jonah* also in the Belly of the Whale, had a sharp Fit of it, when he concluded that he was *cast out of God's Sight*, and his *Soul fainted* within him, *Jonah* ii 4, 7. Neither did *Hezekiah* altogether escape it, for tho' his Disquiet began upon another Ground, it run him into spiritual Trouble at last. But besides these, innumerable Instances occur. One shall scarce converse with any Society of Christians, but he shall meet with some who, with sad Complainrs, shall bemoan the Burden of their Hearts, and the Troubles of their Conscience.

2. The Provisions which God hath made in his Word for such, is an Evidence that such Distempers are frequent. He that in a City shall observe the Shops of the Apothecaries, and there take Notice of the great Variety of Medicines, Pots and Glasses full of Mixtures, Confection and Cordials, may from thence rationally conclude, that 'tis a frequent Thing for Men to be sick, tho' he should not converse with any sick Person for his Information. Thus may we be satisfied from the Declarations, Directions, and Consolations of Scripture, that 'tis a common Case for the Children of God to stand in Need of spiritual Physicians, and spiritual Remedies to help them, when they are wounded and fainting. *Solomon*'s Exclamation, *a wounded Spirit, who can bear it?* shews that the Spirit is sometimes wounded The Prophet's Direction, *He that walks in Darkness, and sees no Light, let him trust in the Lord*, clearly implies that some there are that walk in Darkness. God's creating the *Fruit of the Lips, Peace, Peace*; his Promises of restoring *Comforts to Mourners*; his Commands to others to comfort them, do all inform us, that 'tis a common Thing for his Children to be under such Sadnesses of Spirit, that all this is necessary for their Relief.

3. The Reasons of this Trouble do also assure us of the Frequency of it: For of them we may say (as Christ speaks of the Poor) *we have them always with us*; so that the Grounds of spiritual Sadness considered, 'tis no Wonder to find many Men complaining under this Distemper. The Reasons are,

1. The *Malice* of Satan, who hath no greater Revenge against a Child of God, when translated from the Power of Darkness to the Kingdom of Christ, than to hinder him of the Peace and Comfort of that Condition.

2. The

2. The many *Advantages* which Satan hath againſt us. For the effecting of this, we cannot imagine, that one ſo malicious as he is, will ſuffer his Malice to ſleep, when ſo many fair Opportunities of putting it in Practice do offer themſelves. For 1. The *Queſtions* to be determined for ſettling the Peace of the Soul, are very *intricate*, and often of greater Difficulty than *doctrinal Controverſies*. How hard is it to conclude, what is the *minimum quod ſic*, the loweſt Degrees of true Grace? Or the *maximum quod ſic*, the higheſt Degree of Sin, conſiſtent with true Grace? To diſtinguiſh betwixt a Child of God at the *loweſt*, and an Hypocrite or temporary Believer at the *higheſt*, is difficult. In *mixt* Actions, to be able to ſhew how the Soul doth manage its Reſpect *to God*, when the Man hath alſo a Reſpect to *himſelf*, eſpecially when it is under any *Confuſion*, is not eaſy. And in theſe Actions, where the Difference from others of like Kind, lies only in the *Grounds* and *Motives* of the Undertaking, or where the *prevailing Degree* muſt diſtinguiſh the Act, in reference to *different* Objects that are *ſubordinate* to one another (as our loving God above the World or ourſelves, our fearing God above Men, *&c.*) 'tis not every one that can give a ſatisfactory Determination. 2. As the Intricacies of the Doubts to be reſolved give the Devil an Advantage to puzzle us, ſo is the Advantage heightned exceedingly, by the great *Injudiciouſneſs* and Unskilfulneſs of the greateſt Part of Chriſtians. Theſe Queſtions are in their *Notion* difficult, more difficult in their *Application* to particular Perſons (where the ableſt Chriſtian may eaſily be nonpluſt) but moſt difficult to the *weak* Chriſtians: Theſe Satan can baffle with every poor Objection, and impoſe what he will upon them. 3. Eſpecially having the Advantage of the working *Guilt* of Conſcience, which he can readily ſtir up, to preſent to a Man's *Remembrance* all his Failings and Miſcarriages, of what Nature ſoever. And when Guilt rageth in an unskilful Heart, it muſt needs create great Diſquiet. 4. But moſt of all, when our *natural Fears are awaked*; as when a Man hath been under any great Conviction, tho' he be cured of his Trouble, yet it uſually leaves a Weakneſs in the Part (as Bruiſes and Maims do in any Member of the Body) which at the Change of Weather, or other accidental Hurt, will renew their old Trouble; and then, when freſh Guilt begins to preſs hard upon the Conſcience,

not

not only do the broken Bones ake, by the *reviving* of former Fears, but the Impreſſions of his old Suſpicions, bad Conceit of himſelf, and Jealouſies of the Deceitfulneſs of his Heart, which had then fixed themſelves by a deep Rooting, do now make him *moſt fearful* of entertaining any *good Thought* of himſelf; ſo that if any Conſideration tending to his Support be offered, he dare not come near it, ſuſpecting his greateſt Danger to ly *on that Hand*. Theſe Advantages conſidered, we ſhould not think it ſtrange that any Child of God is driven to ſpiritual Sadneſs (as ſome do) but may rather wonder, that this is not the common Condition of all Chriſtians.

3. Another Reaſon that muſt be aſſigned for theſe Troubles, is *Divine Diſpenſation*; ſuch are his Children, ſome ſo careleſs, others proud, others ſtubborn, many preſumptuous, that God is forced to correct them by this Piece of *Diſcipline*, and to cure them by caſting them into a Fever. Others of his Children he thus exerciſeth for *other Ends*, ſometimes to take Occaſion therefrom, of making larger *Diſcoveries* of his Love; ſometimes thereby *preventing* them from falling under ſome grievous Miſcarriage, or for the *Trial* and Exerciſes of their Graces. We may obſerve accordingly, that there are *three* Sorts of Men that uſually have Exerciſes of this Kind.

1. Thoſe who at their Converſion are either *ignorant, melancholy*, or were *groſly ſcandalous*, are uſually brought through with great Fear and Sadneſs. And this is ſo obſervable, that (by the Miſtake of Men) it is made a general Rule, that none are converted, but they are under great and frightful Apprehenſions of Wrath and diſmal Terrors. This indeed is true of ſome, but theſe ordinarily are the ſcandalous, melancholy, and ignorant Sort (tho ſometimes God may deal ſo with others; for who can limit him?) yet are there many, whoſe Education hath been good, and their Inſtruction aforehand great, whoſe Converſion is ſo *gradual* and inſenſible, that they are Strangers to theſe Troubles of Conſcience; and profeſs, that if theſe *Heights* of Fear be neceſſary to Converſion, they muſt be at a *Loſs*, neither can they give an Account of the Time of their Converſion, as others may.

2. Thoſe whoſe Converſion was eaſy, when after their Converſion they *miſcarry* by any *great* Iniquity, they meet with as great a Meaſure of Terror and Fear (and ſome

think far greater,) as those whose new Birth was more difficult. *David*'s greatest Troubles of Soul came upon him after he began to appear more publick in the World; for then he met with many *Temptations*, and great *Occasions* for God's exercising his Discipline over him. I believe, when he kept his Father's Sheep, his Songs had *more* of Praises, and *less* of Complainings than afterward. It is the Opinion of some, that God's dealing in this Kind of Dispensation, even when Miscarriage is not the Cause, is more sharp usually to those whose Conversion hath been most easy.

3. There is another Sort of Men, to whom God vouchsafes but *seldom* and *short* Fits of spiritual Joy, as *breathing Times*, betwixt sharp Fits of Soul-trouble, for necessary Refreshment and Recovery of Strength; but the *constant Course* which God holds with them, is to *exercise* them under Fears, while he hides his Face from them, and suffers Satan to vex them, by urging his Objections against their Holiness and Integrity. *Heman* was one of this Rank, and the *great* Instance which God hath given in his Word, for the Support of others that may be in the same Case; for he testifies, *Psal.* lxxxviii. that he suffer'd the *Terrors* of God almost to *Distraction*, and this from *his Youth up*. 'Tis not fit for us too narrowly to question, why God doth thus to his Children, seeing his *Judgments are unsearchable*, and his *Ways past finding out*; but we may be sure, that God sees this Dealing to be most fit for those that are exercised therewith; it may be to keep Pride from them, or to prevent them from falling into some greater Inconvenience or Sin: Unto which he takes Notice of a more than ordinary *Proneness* in their Disposition, or for the Benefit of others, who may thereby take Notice, what *an evil and bitter Thing it is* to sin against God, and what a malicious Adversary they have to deal with. Whoso shall consider these Reasons of spiritual Sadness, must needs confess, that (seeing the *Advantages* which Men give to a malicious Devil to vex their Consciences, are so many and great, and the *Weakness* of God's Children so hazardous, for the Prevention whereof, a wise careful Father will necessarily be engaged to exercise his Discipline) it cannot be expected, but that spiritual Troubles should be very frequent among the Servants of God.

Quest.] Here it is requisite that I give Satisfaction to this *Query*: Seeing that *God* doth sometime *wound* the Consciences

Conſciences of his Children, and that *Satan* alſo *wounds* them, what are the *Differences* betwixt God and Satan in inflicting theſe Wounds?

Anſw.] For the right underſtanding of this Queſtion, I ſhall propound *two* Things:

1. That it is a Truth, that *God* doth ſometimes *wound* the Conſciences of his Children; and this, 1. *Before* Converſion: But in *order* to it, as preparatory to that Change, Men are then in their Sins, walking in the Vanity of their Minds: To *tranſlate* them from this Eſtate, he awakens the Conſcience, ſhews them their Iniquities, and the Danger of them; that at preſent they are *in their Blood, Children of Wrath as well as others*, and that without Chriſt they are miſerable; the Effect of this muſt needs be *ſerious* Conſideration, deep Thoughts of Heart with ſome *Trouble*; only as to the *Meaſure* and Degree there is great *Difference*; God doth not in the particular Application of theſe Things to the Conſcience, tie up himſelf exactly to the ſame *Manner* and *Meaſure* of Proceeding, tho' he keep ſtill to his *general Method*. Hence is it, that ſome (in regard of God's gentle *leaſurely* Dealing, and the frequent *Interpoſure* of Encouragements) are (if compared with the Caſe of others) ſaid to be *allured*, and *drawn with Cords of Love*: But others have a remarkable Meaſure of Trouble, ſharp Fits of Fear and Anguiſh; and thoſe moſt commonly are ſuch, whoſe Converſion is more *quick*, and the Change viſible from one *Extreme* to *another* (as *Paul*, when converted in the Midſt of his perſecuting Rage) or thoſe whoſe *Ignorance* or *Melancholy* makes their Hopes and Comforts inacceſſible for the preſent. Theſe Troubles God *owns* to be the Work of his Spirit; the ſame Spirit which is a *Spirit of Adoption* to the Converted, is a *Spirit of Bondage* to theſe, *Rom.* viii. 16. And accordingly we find, it was ſo to the Converts in *Acts* ii. who being *pricked in their Hearts* by *Peter*'s Sermon, *cried out, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* The like did the *Jaylor*. And the Promiſe which God makes of calling the *Jews*, Zech. xii. 10. doth expreſs God's Purpoſe of dealing with them in this very Method; *They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and ſhall mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only Son, and ſhall be in Bitterneſs for him,—in that Day ſhall be a great Mourning.*

2. God alſo ſometimes wounds the Conſcience of his Children

dren *after Converſion*; and this he doth, to convince and humble them for ſome Miſcarriage which they become guilty of: As when they grow *ſecure* (*a*), carnally confident of the Continuance of their Peace, when they are careleſly *negligent* of Duty, and the Exerciſes of their Graces; when they fall into *groſs* and ſcandalous Sins, or wilfully *deſert* the Ways of Truth; and in many more Caſes of like Kind. When his Children make themſelves thus obnoxious to Divine Diſpleaſure, then God hides his Face from them, takes away his Spirit, ſignifies his Anger to their Conſciences, threatens them with the Danger of that Condition; from whence follows Grief and Fear in the Hearts of his People. In this Manner God expreſſed his Diſpleaſure to *David*, as his Complaints in *Pſal.* li. do teſtify: *Make me to hear Joy and Gladneſs, that the Bones which thou haſt broken may rejoice; hide thy Face from my Sins.— Caſt me not away from thy Preſence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Reſtore unto mé the Joy of thy Salvation*, &c.

2. Notwithſtanding all this, there is a *great Difference* betwixt God and Satan in this Matter, which mainly appears in *two* Things. 1. God doth *limit* himſelf in all the Trouble which he gives his Children, to his great *End* of doing them Good, and healing them, and conſequently *ſtints* himſelf in the *Meaſure* and *Manner* of his Work to ſuch a *Proportion*, as his Wiſdom ſees will exactly ſuit with his End; ſo that his Anger is not like the *Brawlings* of malicious Perſons, that know *no Bounds*; He will not *always chide*, his Debates are *in Meaſure*; and this, *leſt the Spirit ſhould fail before him*, Iſa. lvii. 16. So that when he wounds the Conſcience before Converſion, 'tis but to bring them to Chriſt, and to prevent their taking ſuch Courſes, as might through Deluſion make them take up their Stand ſhort of him. So much of Mourning and Fear as is requiſite for the true effecting of this, he appoints for them, and no more. When he wounds after Converſion, 'tis but to let them feel, that it is an evil and bitter Thing to ſin againſt him, that their godly *Sorrow* may work *Repentance* ſuitable to the Offence; and that they may be ſufficiently cautioned for the Time to come, to *ſin no more, leſt a worſe Thing befal them*. He that afflicts not willingly, will put no more Grief upon them, than is neceſſary to bring them to this.

(*a*) Vid. Goodwin's *Child of Light.*

But Satan when he is admitted (and God doth often permit him, in Subservience to his Design) to wound the Conscience, he proceeds according to the *boundless Fury* of his Malice, and plainly manifests, that his Desire is to *destroy*, and to tread them down, that they may never rise again. This tho' he cannot effect (for God will not suffer him to proceed further, than the bringing about his holy and gracious Purpose) yet it hinders not, but that still his envious Thoughts boil up in his Breast, and he acts according to his *own Inclination*. For 'tis with Satan, as 'tis with wicked Men; if God imploy them for the Chastisement of his Children, they consider not *who* sets them on Work, nor what *Measures* probably God would have them observe; but they propose to themselves *more Work* than ever God cut out for them. As *Assyria*, when imployed against *Jerusalem*, Isa. x. 7. had Designs more large and cruel than was in God's Commission. God had stinted him in his holy Purpose; yet the *Assyrian meant not so, neither did his Heart think so, but it was in his Heart to destroy and cut off Nations not a few.* So that when God is *a little displeased* (as he speaks, *Zach.* i. 15.) they do all that lies in them to help forward the Affliction. Thus doth the Devil endeavour to make all Things worse to God's Children, than ever God intended. Here is one Difference betwixt God and Satan, in the wounding of Consciences. But 2. They are yet further differenced, in that all that God doth in this Work is still *according to Truth*: For if he signify to the Unconverted, that they are in a State of Nature, liable to the Damnation of Hell, unless they accept of Christ for Salvation upon his Terms; this is no more than what is true, God doth not *misrepresent* their Case to them at *that* Time. Again, if he express his Displeasure to any of his converted Children, that have grieved his Spirit by their Follies, by setting before them the Threatnings of his Word, or the Examples of his Wrath; he doth but *truly tell them*, that he is angry with them; and that *de jure*, according to the *Rigour* of the Law, and the *Demerit* of their Offence, he might justly cast them off; but he doth not *positively* say, that *de eventu* it shall infallibly be so with them. But Satan in both these Cases goes a great Way *further*. He plainly affirms to those that are in the Way to Conversion, that God *will not* pardon their Iniquities, that there is *no*

Hope

Hope for them; that Christ *will not* accept them; that he *never intended* the Benefit of his Sufferings for them. And when the Converted do provoke God, he sticks not to say, the Breach *cannot* be healed, and that they *are not* yet converted; all which are most *false* Assertions. And tho' God can *make Use* of Satan's Malice, when he abuseth his Children with his *Falshoods*, to their great Fear, to carry on his own Ends by it, and to give a *greater* Impression to what he *truly* witnesseth against them; yet is not God the *proper Author* of Satan's Lying, for he doth *it of his own* wicked Inclination. The *Effect* of these desperate false Conclusions (which is the putting his Children into a Fear, in order to his End) may be ascribed to God; but the *Falshood* of these Conclusions are *formally* Satan's Work, and not God's; for he makes Use of so much of Satan's *Wrath*, as may be to his *Praise* and the *Remainder of* his *Wrath* he doth *restrain*.

I have discovered the *Nature* and Degrees of these Spiritual Troubles, and that 'tis a common Thing for the Children of God to fall under them. For the further opening of them, I shall next discover,

3*dly*, The usual *solemn Occasions* that do as it were invite Satan to give his Onset against God's Children, and they are principally these *Six*.

1. The *Time of Conversion*: He delights to set on them when they are in the Straits of a new Birth; for then the Conscience is *awaken'd*, the Danger of Sin *truly* represented, *Fear* and *Sorrow* (in some Degree) necessary and unavoidable; at this Time he can easily *overdrive* them. Where the Convictions are *deep* and *sharp*, ready to weigh them down, a *few Grains* more cast into the Scale, will make the Trouble (as *Job* speaks) *heavier than the Sand*; and where they are more easy or gentle, yet the Soul being *unsettled*, the Thoughts in Commotion, they are disposed to receive a *strong* Impression, and to be turned (*as Wax to the Seal*) into a Mould of *Hopelessness* and Desperation. That this is one of Satan's special Occasions, we need no other Evidence for Satisfaction, than the common Experience of Converts; many of them do *hardly escape* the Danger, and after their difficult Conquest of the Troubles of their Heart (which at that Time are extraordinarily enlarged) *do witness*, that they are assaulted with desperate Fears,

that their Sins were *unpardonable*, and ſad Concluſions againſt any *Expectation* of Favour from the Lord their God. Theſe Thoughts, we are ſure, the Spirit of God *will not* bear Witneſs unto becauſe *falſe*, and therefore we muſt leave them at Satan's Door.

2. Another Occaſion which Satan makes Uſe of, is the Time of *ſolemn Repentance* for ſome *great Sin* committed *after* Converſion. Sometimes God's Children fall, to the breaking of their Bones. What great Iniquities they may commit through the Force of Temptation, I need not mention. The Adultery and Murder of *David*, the Inceſt of the *Corinthian*, *Peter*'s Denial of Chriſt, with other ſad Inſtances in the Records of the Scriptures, do ſpeak enough of that. Theſe Sins (conſidering their Hainouſneſs, the Scandal of Religion, the Diſhonour of God, the grieving of his Spirit, the Condition of the Party offending againſt Love, Knowledge, and the various Helps which God affords them to the contrary, with other aggravating Circumſtances) being very diſpleaſing to God, their Conſciences at leaſt (either *compelled* to Examination *by God immediately*, or *mediately* by ſome great *Affliction*; or *voluntarily* awakening to a ſerious Conſideration of what hath been done, by the working of its *own Light*, aſſiſted thereunto by quickning Grace, 1 *Cor.* xi 31, 32.) call them to a ſtrict Account; thence follow *Fear*, *Shame*, *Self indignation*; *bitter Weeping*, *deep Humiliation*; then comes Satan, he rakes their Wounds, and by his Aggravations makes them ſmart the more; he pours in *Corroſives* inſtead of Oil, and all to make them believe, that *their Spot is not the Spot of God's Children*; that their Backſlidings cannot be healed. An Occaſion it is, as ſuitable to his Malice as he could wiſh; for ordinarily God doth *ſeverely* teſtify his Anger to them, and doth not *eaſily* admit them again to the *Senſe* of his Favour. At which Time the Adverſary is very buſy to work up their Hearts to an *Exceſs* of Fear and Sorrow. This was the Courſe which he took with the inceſtuous *Corinthian*, taking Advantage of his great Tranſgreſſions, *to overwhelm him with too much Sorrow*, 2 Cor. ii. 7, 11.

3. Satan watcheth the *Diſcompoſures* of the Spirits of God's Children under ſome grievous *Croſs* or *Affliction*. This Occaſion alſo falls fit for his Deſign of wounding the Conſcience; when the Hand of the Lord is *lifted up* againſt them,

them, and their Thoughts *disordered* by the Stroke, suggesting at that Time God's *Anger* to them and their *Sins*; he can easily frame an Argument from these Grounds, That they are not reconciled to God, and that they are dealt with'al as Enemies. *David* seldom met with outward Trouble, but he at the same Time had a Conflict with Satan about his spiritual Condition, or State, as his frequent Deprecations of divine Wrath, at such Times do testify; *Lord, rebuke me not in thy Wrath*, &c. There is indeed but a Step betwixt Discomposure of Spirit, and spiritual Troubles; as hath been proved before.

4. When Satan hath *prepared* the Hearts of God's Children by *atheistical*, or *blasphemous* Thoughts, he takes that Occasion to *deny* their Grace and Interest in Christ. And the Argument *at that Time* seems unanswerable. Can Christ lodge in an Heart so full of horrid Blasphemies against him? Is it possible it should be washed and sanctified, when it produceth such filthy cursed Thoughts? All the Troubles of Affrightment (of which before) are improveable to this Purpose.

5. Another spiritual Occasion for spiritual Trouble, is *Melancholy*; few Persons distempered therewith, do escape Satan's Hands, at one Time or other, he casts his Net over them, and seeks to stab them with his Weapon. *Melancholy* indeed affords so *many* Advantages to him, and those so *answerable* to his Design, that it is no Wonder if he make much of it. For, (1.) Melancholy affects both *Head* and *Heart* (a), it affords both *Fear* and *Sadness*, and *deformed, misshapen, dolirous* Imaginations to work upon; than which, nothing can be more for his Purpose. For where the Heart *trembles*, and the Head is *darkned*, there every Object is misrepresented; the *Ideas* of the Brain are *monstrous* Appearances, reflected from *opake* and *dark* Spirits, so that Satan hath no more to do, but to suggest the new Matter of Fear. For that Question, *Whether the Man be converted*, &c. being once started, to a Mind already distempered with Fear, must of itself (it being a Business of so high a Nature) without Satan's further Pursuit, sum up the utmost Powers of Sadness and Misrepresentation, to raise a Storm. (2.) Besides, the *Impressions* of Melancholy are always *strong*, it is strong in its *Fears*, (or else Men would never be tempted to *destroy* themselves;) it is strong in its *Mistakes*, (or else they could

(a) Willis de anima Brut. cap. 9. de melancholia.

never perſwade themſelves of the Truth of *fooliſh*, *abſurd*, and *impoſſible* Fancies;) as that of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who by a deluſive Apprehenſion, believing himſelf to be a *Beaſt*, forſook the Company of Men, and betook to the Fields to eat Graſs with Oxen. The Imaginations of the Melancholick are *never idle*, and yet *ſtraitned*, or confined to a few Things; and then the Brain being weakned as to a true and *regular* Apprehenſion, it frames nothing but *Bugbears*, and yet with the higheſt Confidence of Certainty. (3.) Theſe Impreſſions are uſually *laſting*, not vaniſhing as an *early Dew*, but they continue for Months and Years. (4.) And yet they have only *ſo much* Underſtanding left them, as ſerves to nouriſh their Fears. If their Underſtanding had been *quite* gone, their Fears would vaniſh with them: As the Flame is extinguiſhed for want of Air (*a*): But they have only *Knowledge* to let them *ſee* their Miſery, and *Senſe* to make them *apprehenſive* of their Pain. And therefore will they *pray* with Floods of *Tears*, unexpreſſible *Groanings*, deepeſt *Sighing*, and *trembling* Joints, to be *delivered* from their Fears. (5.) They are alſo apt after Eaſe of their Troubles, to have *frequent Returns*: What Diſpoſition (all theſe Things being conſidered) can be more exactly ſhaped to ſerve Satan's Turn? If he would have Men to believe *the worſt* of themſelves, he hath ſuch Imaginations to work upon, as are already miſhapen into a *Deformity* of evil Surmiſing. Would he *terrify* by Fears, or *diſtreſs* by Sadneſs? He hath that already; and 'tis but *altering the Object* (which oftentimes needs not, for naturally the ſerious Melancholick imploys all his Griefs upon his ſuppoſed miſerable Eſtate of Soul) and then he hath ſpiritual Diſtreſs. Would he continue them *long* under their Sorrows, or take them upon all Occaſions *at his Pleaſure*, or act them to a *greater Height* than ordinary? Still the melancholick Temper ſuits him. This is ſufficient for Caution, that we take ſpecial Care of our Bodies for the preventing or abating of that Humour, by all lawful Means, if we would not have the Devil to abuſe us at his Will.

6. *Sickneſs*, or *Death-bed*, is another ſolemn Occaſion, which the Devil ſeldom miſſeth with his Will. Death is a ſerious Thing, it repreſents the Soul and Eternity *to the Life*. While they are at a Diſtance, Men look ſlightly upon theſe, but when they approach near to them, Men uſually have

(*a*) Fal. Plateri prox. med. *cap.* 3. de mentis alienatione.

have such a Sight of them, as they never had before. We may truly call Sickness and Death-bed an *Hour of Temptation*, which Satan will make Use of with the more mischievous Industry, because he hath but a *short Time* for it. That's the last Conflict, and if he miss that, we are beyond his Reach for ever. So that in this Case Satan encourageth himself to the Battle, with *a now, or never.* And hence we find, that it is usual for the dying Servants of God, to undergo most *sharp* Encounters; then to tell them (when the Soul is about to loose from the Body) that they are yet in their Blood, without God, and Hope, is enough to affright them into the *extreamest Agonies*; for they see *no Time* before them answerable to so great a *Work*, if it be yet to do. And withal, they are under vast *Discouragements* from the Weariness and Pains of Sickness, their Understandings and Faculties being also dull, and stupified; so that if at this last Plunge, God should not extraordinarily appear to rebuke Satan, and to pluck them out of these *great Waters* (as he often doth, by the fuller Interposition of the Light of his Face, and the larger Testimony of his Spirit) after their long and comfortable Profession of their Faith, and holy Walking, their Light would be *put out in Darkness*, and they would *ly down in Sorrow.* Yet this I must note, That as desirous as Satan is to improve this Occasion, he is often remarkably *disappointed*, and that wherein he (it may be) and we would least expect, I mean in regard of those, who through a timerous Disposition, or *Melancholy*, or upon other Accounts, are (as I may so say) *all their Lifetime subject to Bondage*; those Men who are usually exercised with *frequent Fits* of spiritual Trouble, when they come to Sickness, Death-bed, and some other *singular Occasions* of Trouble, tho' we might suspect their Fears would then be working, if ever; yet God out of gracious Indulgence to them, (considering their *Mould and Fashion*, or because he would prevent their *extream* Fainting, *&c.*) doth meet them with *larger* Testimonies of his Favour, *higher* Joys, more confident Satisfactions in his Love, than ever they received at any Time *before*; and this to their Wonder, their high Admiration, making the Times which they were wont to *fear most*, to be Times of greatest *Consolation.* This Observation I have grounded, not upon *one* or *two* Instances, but could produce a Cloud of Witnesses for it. Enough it is to check our *forward* Fears of a *future* evil Day,

and to heal us of a ſighing Diſtemper, while we afflict ourſelves with ſuch Thoughts as theſe: *If I have ſo many Fears in Health, how ſhall I be able to go through the Valley of the Shadow of Death?*

4thly, I have one Thing more to add, for the Diſcovery of theſe ſpiritual Troubles, and that is to ſhew you the *Engines* by which Satan works them, and they are theſe Two, *Sophiſtry* and *Fears*.

1ſt, As to his *Sophiſtry*, by which he argues the Children of God into a wrong Apprehenſion of themſelves, it is very great. He hath a wonderful Dexterity in framing Arguments againſt their Peace, he hath Variety of ſhrewd Objections and ſubtile Anſwers, to the uſual Replies, by which they ſeek to beat him off. There is not a *Fallacy* by which a cunning *Sophiſter* would ſeek to entangle his Adverſary in Diſputation, but Satan would make Uſe of it; as I might particularly ſhew you, if it were proper for a common Auditory. Tho' he hath ſo much Impudence, as not to bluſh at the moſt *ſilly contemptible* Reaſon that can be offered; notwithſtanding he hath alſo ſo much Wit as to urge (tho' never *true*, yet) always *probable* Arguments. How much he can *prevail* upon the Beliefs of Men, in Caſes relating to their *Souls*, may be conjectured by the Succeſs he hath upon the *Underſtandings* of Men, when he argues them into *Error*, and makes them *believe a Lie*. We uſually ſay (and that truly) that Satan cannot, in any Caſe, *force* us properly to conſent; yet conſidering the Advantages which he takes, and the Ways he hath to *prepare* the Hearts of Men for his Impreſſions, and then his very great *Subtilty* in diſputing, we may ſay, that he can ſo order the Matter, that he will *ſeldom miſs* of his Aim. It would be an endleſs Work to gather up all the Arguments that Satan hath made Uſe of, to prove the Condition, or State of God's Children to be bad: But that I may not altogether diſappoint your Expectations in that Thing, I ſhall preſent to your View Satan's *uſual Topicks*, the *common Places*, or Heads unto which all his Arguments may be reduced. And they are,

1. *Scripture abuſed* and perverted. His Way is not only to *ſuggeſt* that they are unregenerate, or under an evil Frame of Heart, but to *offer Proof* that theſe Accuſations are true. And becauſe he hath to do with them that profeſs a Belief of Scriptures, as the Oracles of God, he will fetch his Proofs from

from thence, telling them that he will evidence what he saith *from Scripture.* Thus sometimes he assaults the weaker unskilful Sort of *Christians, Thou art not a Child of God: For they that are so, are enlightned, translated from Darkness, they are the Children of the Light; but thou art a poor, ignorant, dark, blind Creature, and therefore no Child of God.* Sometimes he labours to conclude the like from the Infirmities of God's *Children,* abusing to this Purpose that of 1 *John* iii. 9: *He that is born of God doth not commit Sin;* and *he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* Thus he urgeth it, *Can any Thing be more plainly and fully asserted? Is not this Scripture? Canst thou deny this?* Then he pursues, *But thou sinnest often, that is thine own Complaint against thyself, thy Conscience also bearing Witness to the Truth of this Accusation; therefore thou canst be no Child of God.* Sometimes he plays upon Words that are used in divers Senses, (a fit Engine for the *Devil* to work by) for what is true in one Sense, will be false in another; and his arguing is from that which is true, to that which is false. I remember one that was long racked with that of *Rev.* xxi. 8. *The fearful and unbelieving,* &c. *shall have their Part in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone.* From whence the Party thus argued: The Proposition is true, because 'tis Scripture, and I cannot deny the Assumption: *Fearful I am, because I am doubtful of Salvation; and unbelieving I am, for I cannot believe that I am regenerate, or in a State of Grace, and therefore I cannot avoid the Conclusion.* To the same Purpose he disputes against some, from 1 *John* iv. 18. *There is no Fear in Love, but perfect Love casteth out Fear;* but *thou art full of Fears, therefore thou lovest not God.* Sometimes he makes Use of those Scriptures, that make the prevailing *Degree* of our Love and Respects to God above the World, and the Things of this Life, to be the Characters of true Grace, as that of *John*: *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him:* And that of Christ, *If a Man love any Thing more than me, he is not worthy of me: He that forsakes not all for me, cannot be my Disciple,* &c. Then he urgeth upon them their Love of the World, and Unwillingness to part with their Estates; and so brings the Conclusion upon them. Instances might be infinite, but by these you may judge of the rest. Let us now cast our Eye upon his Subtilty in managing his Arguments against Men.

1. He

1. He grounds his Arguments on Scripture, becauſe that hath Authority with it, and the very troubled *Conſcience* hath a Reverence to it. 2. He always ſuits his Scriptures, which he thus cites, to that wherein the *Conſcience* is moſt tender: If there be any Thing that affords Matter of Suſpicion, or Fear, he will be ſure to chuſe ſuch an Arrow out of the Quiver of Scriptures, as will directly *hit the Mark*. 3. Tho' in the Citation of Scripture, he always urgeth a Senſe which the Holy Ghoſt *never* intended: Yet there will be always ſomething in thoſe Scriptures which he makes Uſe of, which in Words, at leaſt, ſeem to favour his Concluſion, as appears in the Inſtances now given. For when he would conclude a Man not to be a Child of God becauſe of his Ignorance, ſomething of his Argument is true; it may be the Man is ſenſible that his Knowledge is but *little*, compared with the Meaſures which ſome others have; or that he is at a Loſs, or confuſed in many doctrinal Points of Religion; or hath but *little Experience* in many practical Caſes, *&c.* This, as it is true, ſo is it his Trouble; and whilſt he is poring upon his Defect, Satan claps an Arreſt upon him, of a far greater Debt than God chargeth upon him, and from Scriptures that ſpeak of a total Ignorance of the Fundamentals of Religion, (as that there is a God, that *Chriſt Jeſus* is God and Man, the Redeemer of Mankind by a Satisfaction to divine Juſtice, *&c.*) or of a wilful Ignorance of the Worth of the Proffer of the Goſpel, or its Reality (which is diſcovered in the Refuſal of the Terms thereof) he concludes him to be in a State of *Darkneſs*: Whereas the Ignorance which the Man complains of, is not the Ignorance which thoſe Scriptures intend. So in the next Inſtance, the Sins which a Child of God complains of, are thoſe of *daily Incurſion*, which he labours and ſtrives againſt; but that *committing Sin* mentioned in the Text, hath Reſpect to the *Gnoſticks*, who taught a Liberty in ſinning, and fancied a Righteouſneſs conſiſtent with the avowed Practice of Iniquity: Hence doth *John*, 1 John iii. 7. *directly* face their Opinion, in theſe Terms, *Little Children, let no Man deceive you; he that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous.* And *he that is born of God neither doth*, nor can avouch a Liberty of *ſinning*, it being contrary to the Principles of the new Nature. So that the Miſcarriages of Infirmity which the Child of God laments in himſelf, are not the ſame with that of the Text, upon which Satan grounds the Acculation.

The

The like may be ſaid of the third Inſtance, from *Revel.* xxi. 18. The Threatning there is againſt ſuch a Fear to loſe the Comforts of the World, that they dare not believe the Goſpel to be true, and accept it accordingly; which is nothing to thoſe Fears and Doubtings that may be in a Child of God, in Reference to his Happineſs. Thus in all the reſt, the Fallacy lies in *miſapplying* the Scripture (to ſuit them to that wherein the Conſcience is tender) under a Senſe which was never intended by them; yet in another Senſe, the Thing charged upon the Conſcience is true. 4. Yet is Satan ſo ſubtile, that when he diſputes by ſuch fallacious Arguments, he chiefly endeavours to draw off the *Defendant's Eye* and Conſideration, from that Part of the Argument wherein its *Weakneſs* lies, (which in this Caſe is always in the Abuſe of the Scripture to a wrong Senſe) this he doth, partly from the Advantage which he hath from the Reverence that they carry to Scripture, they believe it to be true, and are not willing to *ſuſpect the Senſe*; and many are ſo weak, that if they ſhould, Satan is ſo cunning, that he can eaſily baffle them in any Diſtinction that they can make. And partly from the Senſe they have of that whereof they are accuſed, they feel themſelves ſo ſore in that Place, (and for that very End doth Satan direct his Scripture to hit it) that they readily *take it for granted*, that the Hinge of the Controverſy turns upon it, and that the whole Diſpute reſts upon it. Now Satan having theſe fair Advantages, by a further Improvement of them, hides the Weakneſs of his Argument. For, 1. He takes that Senſe of the Scripture (in which he miſapplies it) *for granted*, and that with great *Confidence*, making as if there were no doubt there. 2. He *turns* always that Part of the Argument to them, which they can leaſt anſwer, preſſing them eagerly with the *Matter of Charge*, (which they are as ready to *confeſs*, as he is to *accuſe* them of) and *aggravating* it very buſily. And becauſe the Unskilful have no other *Direction* for the finding the Knot of the *Controverſy*, than *Satan's Buſle*, (tho' he, like the *Lapwing*, makes the greateſt Noiſe when he is furtheſt from his Neſt, on Purpoſe to draw them into a greater Miſtake) they *look no further*; and then not being able to anſwer, they are ſoon caſt, and ſtriking in with the Concluſion againſt themſelves,

ſelves, they multiply their Sorrows, and cry out of themſelves as miſerable.

2. Another Piece of his Sophiſtry is the improving certain *falſe Notions*, (which *Chriſtians* of the weaker Sort have received) as Proofs of their Unregeneracy, or bad Condition. As there are vulgar Errors concerning natural Things, ſo there are popular Errors concerning ſpiritual Things. Theſe Miſtakes, in a great Part, have their Original from the Fancies, or Miſapprehenſions of unskiful Men. Some indeed have (it may be) been preached and taught as Truths, others have riſen (without a Teacher) from mere Ignorance, being the Concluſions and Surmiſes which weak Heads have framed to themſelves, from the Sayings, or Practices of Men, which have not been either ſo *cleared* from the Danger of Miſtake, or not ſo *diſtinctly* apprehended as was neceſſary. Theſe falſe Inferences once ſet on Foot, are *traditionally* handed down to others, and in Time they gain (among the ſimple) the Opinion of undoubted Truths. Now where ever Satan finds any of theſe that are fit for his Purpoſe, (for to be ſure whatever Miſtake we entertain, he will at one Time or other caſt it in our Way) he will make it the Foundation of an Argument againſt him that hath received it, and that with very great Advantage: For a Falſhood in the *Premiſes* will uſually produce a Falſhood in the *Concluſion*. And theſe Falſhoods being taken for granted, the *Devil* is not put to the Trouble to prove them; if then he can but exactly fit them to ſomething in the Party which he cannot deny, he forthwith carries the Cauſe, and condemns him by his *own Confeſſions*, as out of his *own Mouth*.

'Tis ſcarce poſſible to number the falſe Notions which are already entertained among *Chriſtians*, relating to *Grace* and *Converſion*, much leſs thoſe that may afterward ariſe. But I ſhall mention ſome that *Satan* frequently makes Uſe of, as Grounds of Objection.

1. 'Tis a common Apprehenſion among the weaker Sort, that *Converſion* is always accompanied with great Fear and Terror. This is true in ſome, (as hath been ſaid) and tho' none of the Preachers of the Goſpel have aſſerted the Univerſality of theſe *greater* Meaſures of Trouble, yet the People taking Notice, that many ſpeak of their deep Humiliations in *Converſion*; and that *ſeveral Authors* have ſet forth the Greatneſs of *Diſtreſs* that *ſome* have

have been caſt into on that Occaſion, (though without any Intention of fixing this into a *general Rule*) have from thence ſuppoſed, that all the Converted are brought to their Comforts *through the Flames of Hell.* Upon this Miſtake, the *Devil* diſquiets thoſe that have not felt theſe *extream Agonies* of Sorrow in themſelves; and tells them that it is a *ſure Sign* that they are not yet converted. Though 'tis eaſy for a Man that ſees the Falſhood of the Notion, to anſwer the Argument, yet he that *believes it to be true*, cannot tell what to ſay, becauſe he finds he never was under ſuch Troubles, and now he begins to be troubled, becauſe he was not troubled *before*, or (as he ſuppoſeth) not troubled *enough*.

2. Another falſe Notion is, That a Convert can give an Account of the *Time* and *Manner* of his Converſion. This is true in *ſome*, as in *Paul* and ſome others, whoſe Change hath been ſudden and remarkable, though in *many* this is far otherwiſe; who can better give Account that they *are* converted, than by what *Steps*, *Degrees*, and *Methods*, they were brought to it. But if any of theſe receive the Notion, they will preſently find that Satan will turn the Edge of it againſt them, and will tell them that they are *not converted*, becauſe they cannot nominate the Time when, nor the Manner how ſuch a Change was wrought.

3. Some take it for granted, that Converſion is accompanied with a *remarkable Meaſure of Gifts* for Prayer and Exhortation; and then the Devil objects it to them, That they are not converted, becauſe they cannot *pray* as others, or *ſpeak* of the Things of God ſo readily, fluently, and affectionately, as ſome others can. Thus the poor weak Chriſtian is baffled for want of *Abilities* to expreſs himſelf to God and Men.

4. Falſe Notions about the *Nature of Faith*, are a ſad Stumbling-block to ſome. Many ſuppoſe that ſaving Faith is a *certain Belief that our Sins are pardoned, and that we ſhall be ſaved*; making Faith and Aſſurance all one. This Miſtake is the deeper rooted in the Minds of Men, becauſe ſome have directly taught ſo; and thoſe Men of Eſtimation, whoſe Words are entertained with great Reverence by well-meaning Chriſtians. For whom, notwithſtanding, this may be pleaded in Excuſe, that they have rather deſcribed Faith *in its Height*, than in its *loweſt Meaſures*. However it be, thoſe that have no other Under-

ſtanding

ſtanding of the Nature of Faith, can never anſwer Satan's Argument, if he takes them at any Time at the *Advantage of Fear, or Doubting*: For then he will diſpute thus, *Faith is a Belief that Sins are pardoned, but thou doſt not believe this; therefore thou haſt no Faith.* Oh, what Numbers of poor doubting Chriſtians have been diſtreſſed with this Argument!

5. Some take it for a Truth, that *Growth* of Grace is always *viſible*, and the Progreſs remarkable. And then becauſe they can make no ſuch Diſcovery of themſelves, the *Devil* concludes their Grace to be counterfeit and hypocritical.

6. Of like Nature are ſome *miſtaken Signs* of true Grace, as that true Grace fears God *only for his Goodneſs*. And then if there be any Apprehenſion of divine Diſpleaſure impreſſed upon the Heart; though upon the neceſſary Occaſion of Miſcarriage, they, through the *Devil*'s Inſtigation, conclude, that they are *under a Spirit of Bondage*, and their ſuppoſed Grace not *true*, or not *genuine* at leaſt; according to that *Diſpoſition* which the *New Teſtament* will furniſh a Man withal: 'Tis alſo another miſtaken Sign of Grace, That it doth direct a Man to love God *ſingly* for himſelf, without the *leaſt Regard* to his *own Salvation*; for that, they think, is but Self love. Now when a Child of God doth not ſee his Love to God ſo *diſtinct*, but that his *own Salvation* is twiſted with it, Satan gets Advantage of him, and forceth him to caſt away his Love as adulterate and *ſelfiſh*. Like to this Miſtake (but of an higher Strain) is that of ſome, That where Grace is true, 'tis ſo carried forth to honour God, that the *Man*-that hath it, can deſire *God may be honoured, though he ſhould be damned.* God doth not put us to ſuch Queſtions as theſe, but upon Suppoſition that this is true; the Grace of moſt Men will be ſhaken by the Objection that Satan will make from thence: He can and will preſently put the miſtaken to it, *Canſt thou ſay thou art willing to go to Hell, that God may be glorified? If not, where is thy Grace?* From ſuch Miſtakes as theſe, he diſputes againſt the Holineſs of the Children of God; and 'tis impoſſible but that he ſhould carry the Cauſe, againſt thoſe who grant theſe Things to be true. Satan can undeniably ſhew them, that their Hearts will not anſwer ſuch a Deſcription of a Convert, or gracious Heart, as theſe falſe Notions will make. So long then as they hold theſe Notions,

tions, they have no Relief againſt Satan's Concluſions; no Comfort can be adminiſtred, till they be convinced that they have embraced Miſtakes for Truths. And how difficult that will be in this Caſe (where the Confidence of the Notion is great, and the Suſpicion ſtrong, that the Defect is only in the Heart) hath been determined by frequent Experience already.

3. The *third* Piece of Satan's Sophiſtry, from whence he raiſeth falſe Concluſions, is his *Miſrepreſentation of God.* In this he directly croſſeth the Deſign of the Scriptures, where God in his Nature and Dealings is ſo ſet forth, that the weakeſt, the moſt afflicted and toſſed, may receive Encouragement of Acceptance, and of his fatherly Care over them in their ſaddeſt Trials. Yet withal, leſt Men ſhould turn his Grace into Wantonneſs, and embolden themſelves in Sin becauſe of his Clemency, the Scriptures ſometimes give us lively Deſcriptions of his Anger againſt thoſe that wickedly preſume upon his Goodneſs, and continue ſo to do. *Both* theſe Deſcriptions of God ſhould be taken *together*, as affording the only true Repreſentation of him. He is ſo gentle to the humbled ſenſible Sinner, that *He will not break their bruiſed Reed, nor quench* their *ſmoaking Flax.* And ſo careful of Health, that (for their Recovery) he will not *leave* them *altogether unpuniſhed*; nor ſuffer them to ruine themſelves by a Surfeit upon worldly Comforts; yet *with the froward*, he *will ſhew himſelf froward*, Pſal. xviii. 26. And, *As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their crooked Ways, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the Workers of Iniquity*, Pſal. cxxv. 5. He will *put out the Candle of the Wicked*, for he ſets them *in ſlippery Places: So that they are caſt down into Deſtruction, and brought into Deſolation as in a Moment; they are conſumed with Terrors.* Now Satan will ſometimes argue againſt the Children of God, and endeavour to break their Hopes, by turning *that Part* of the Deſcription of God againſt them; which is *intended* for the diſmounting of the Confidence of the Wicked, and the bringing down of high Looks. By this Means he wreſts the Deſcription of God to a contrary End, and miſrepreſents God to a trembling afflicted Soul. This he doth,

1. By miſrepreſenting *his Nature*: Here he reads a ſolemn Lecture of the *Holineſs* and *Juſtice* of God, but always with Reflection upon the *Vileneſs* and Unworthineſs of the Perſon

Perſon againſt whom he intends his Dart. And thus he argues: *Lift up thine Eyes to the Heavens, behold the Brightneſs of God's Glory: Conſider his unſpotted Holineſs, his infinite Juſtice. The Heavens are not clean in his Sight, how much more abominable and filthy then art thou! His Eyes are pure, he cannot wink at, nor approve of the leaſt Sin: How canſt thou then imagine (except thou be intolerably impudent) that he hath taken ſuch an unclean Wretch into his Favour? He is a jealous God, and will by no Means acquit the guilty? Canſt thou then with any Shew of Reaſon, conclude thy ſelf to be his Child? He beholds the Wicked afar off; he ſhuts out their Prayer; he laughs at their Calamity; he mocks when their Fear comes; and therefore, thou haſt no Cauſe to think that he will hear thy Cry, though thou ſhouldeſt make many Prayers. It cannot be ſuppoſed that he will incline his Ear. 'Tis his expreſs Determination, that if any Man regard Iniquity in his Heart, the Lord will not hear his Prayer.* This, and a great deal more will he ſay. And while Satan ſpeaks but at this Rate we may call him modeſt, becauſe his Allegations are in themſelves true, if they were applied rightly. Sometimes he will go further, and plainly *belie* God, ſpeaking incredible Falſhoods of him: But becauſe theſe properly appertain to an higher Sort of Troubles, of which I am next to ſpeak, I ſhall not hear mention them. However, if he ſtops here, he ſaith enough againſt any Servant of God, that carries an *high Senſe* of his Unworthineſs. For being thus brought to the View of theſe *aſtoniſhing* Attributes, he is daſhed out of Countenance, and can think no other, but that 'tis very unlikely, that *ſo unworthy* a Sinner ſhould have any Intereſt in *ſo holy* a God. Thus the Devil affrights him off, turning the *wrong Side* of the Deſcription of God to him; and in the mean Time *hiding* that Part of it that ſpeaks God's wonderful Condeſcenſions, infinite Compaſſions, unſpeakable Readineſs to accept the humble broken-hearted, weary, heavy-laden Sinner, that is proſtrate at his Foot-ſtool for Pardon. All which are on Purpoſe declared in the Deſcription of God's Nature, to obviate this Temptation, and to encourage the weak.

2. He miſrepreſents God in his *Providence*. If God chaſtiſe his Children by any Affliction, Satan perverſely wreſts it to a bad Conſtruction, eſpecially if the Affliction be *ſharp*,

or seem to be *above* their Strength, or *frequent*, and most of all if it seem to *cross* their Hopes and Prayers; for then he argues, *These are not the Chastisements of Sons: God indeed will visit their Transgressions with Rods, but his dealing with thee is plainly of another Nature; for he breaketh thee with his Tempests. And whereas he corrects his Sons that serve him in Measure, thou art bowed down with thy Trouble to Distress and Despair: But he will lay no more upon his Sons than they are able to bear, he will not always chide his Servants; but thou art afflicted every Morning. And besides, if thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the Habitation of thy Righteousness prosperous: For to his Sons he saith, Call upon me in the Day of Trouble, I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me,* Psal. l. 15. Hence comes the Complaint of many, that they are not regenerated, because they think God deals not with them as with others. *Oh! say they, we know God chastiseth every Son whom he receiveth: But our Case is every Way different from theirs, our Troubles are Plagues, not Rods; our Cry is not heard, our Prayers disregarded, our Strength faileth us, our Hearts fret against the Lord, so that not only the Nature and Quality of our Affections, but the Frame of our Heart under them, in not enduring the Burden (which is, the great Character of the Chastisement of Sons,* Heb. xii. 7.) *plainly evinceth that we are under God's Hatred, and are not his Children.* This Objection, though it might seem easy to be answered by those that are not at present concerned, yet it will prove a difficult Business to those that are under the Smart of Afflictions. How much a holy and wise Man may be gravell'd by it, you may see in *Psal.* lxxiii. where the Prophet is put to a grievous Plunge upon this very Objection, *ver.* 14. *All the Day long have I been plagued, and chastised every Morning.*

And yet in all this Satan doth but play the Sophister, working upon the Advantages, which the *Nature* of the Affliction, and the *Temper* of Mens Hearts do afford him. For, (1.) Afflictions are a great *Depth*, one of the *Secrets* of God, so that 'tis hard to know what God intends by them. (2.) The *End* of the Lord is not discovered *at first*, but at some Distance, when the Fruits thereof begin to appear. (3.) The Mind of the Afflicted cannot always proceed *regularly* in making a Judgment of God's

or seem to be *above* their Strength, or *frequent*, and most of all if it seem to *cross* their Hopes and Prayers; for then he argues, *These are not the Chastisements of Sons: God indeed will visit their Transgressions with Rods, but his dealing with thee is plainly of another Nature; for he breaketh thee with his Tempests. And whereas he corrects his Sons that serve him in Measure, thou art bowed down with thy Trouble to Distress and Despair: But he will lay no more upon his Sons than they are able to bear, he will not always chide his Servants; but thou art afflicted every Morning. And besides, if thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the Habitation of thy Righteousness prosperous: For to his Sons he saith, Call upon me in the Day of Trouble, I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me,* Psal. l. 15. Hence comes the Complaint of many, that they are not regenerated, because they think God deals not with them as with others. *Oh! say they, we know God chastiseth every Son whom he receiveth: But our Case is every Way different from theirs, our Troubles are Plagues, not Rods; our Cry is not heard, our Prayers disregarded, our Strength faileth us, our Hearts fret against the Lord, so that not only the Nature and Quality of our Affections, but the Frame of our Heart under them, in not enduring the Burden (which is, the great Character of the Chastisement of Sons,* Heb. xii. 7.) *plainly evinceth that we are under God's Hatred, and are not his Children.* This Objection, though it might seem easy to be answered by those that are not at present concerned, yet it will prove a difficult Business to those that are under the Smart of Afflictions. How much a holy and wise Man may be gravell'd by it, you may see in *Psal.* lxxiii. where the Prophet is put to a grievous Plunge upon this very Objection, *ver.* 14. *All the Day long have I been plagued, and chastised every Morning.*

And yet in all this Satan doth but play the Sophister, working upon the Advantages, which the *Nature* of the Affliction, and the *Temper* of Mens Hearts do afford him. For, (1.) Afflictions are a great *Depth*, one of the *Secrets* of God, so that 'tis hard to know what God intends by them. (2.) The *End* of the Lord is not discovered *at first*, but at some Distance, when the Fruits thereof begin to appear. (3.) The Mind of the Afflicted cannot always proceed *regularly* in making a Judgment of God's

Design upon them: Especially at first when 'tis *stounded* by the Assault, and all Things in *Confusion*, Faith is to seek, Patience awanting, and Love staggering; after it hath recollected itself, and attained any *Calmness*, to fit it for *a Review* of the Ways of God, and of the Heart, it is better enabled to fix some Grounds of Hope. *Lam.* iii. 19, 20, 21. *This I recal to my Mind, therefore have I Hope.* (4.) Afflictions have *a light* and *a dark* Side, and their Appearances are according to our *Posture* in which we view them: As some Pictures, which if we look upon them one Way, they appear to be Angels, if another Way, they seem Devils.

5. Some Men in Affliction do *only busy* themselves in looking upon the dark Side of Affliction. Their Disposition (either through *natural Timerousness*, or *strong Impressions* of Temptation) is only to *meditate Terrors*, and to surmise Evils. These Men out of the Cross, can draw nothing but the *Wormwood* and the *Gall*, while others, that have another Prospect of them, observe *Mixtures* of Mercy and Gentleness, and do *melt* into Submission and Thankfulness. These (considered together) are a great Advantage to Satan in disputing against the Peace of God's afflicted Children, and it often falls out, that as he doth *misrepresent* God's Design, so do they (urged by Temptation) upon that Account *misjudge* themselves.

3. He also misrepresents God in the *Works of his Spirit*; if God withdraw his Countenance, or by his Spirit signifies his Displeasure to the Consciences of any, if he permit Satan to molest them with spiritual Temptations, presently Satan takes Occasion to put his false and malignant Interpretaion upon all: He tells them that *God's hiding* his Face is his *casting them off*, that the *Threatnings* signified to their Conscience, are plain *Declarations* that their present State is Wrath and Darkness. That Satan's *Molestations* by Temptations, shew them to be yet under *his Power*; that the *Removal* of their former Peace, Joy, and sensible Delight which they had in the Ways of God, is beyond Contradiction, an Evidence that God hath *no Delight* in them, nor they in him; that their Faith was but that of *Temporaries*, their Joy but that of *Hypocrites*, which is only for a Moment. How often have I heard Christians complaining thus? *We cannot be in a State of Grace, our Consciences lay under the Sense of God's Displeasure, they give Testimony against us, and we know that Testimony is true, for we*

feel

feel it. 'Tis true, Time was when we thought we had a Delight in hearing, praying, meditating, but now all is a Burden to us, we can reliſh nothing, we can profit nothing, we can remember nothing: Time was when we thought we had Aſſurance, and our Hearts rejoiced in us; ſometimes we have thought our Hearts had as much of Peace and Comfort as they could hold, now all is vaniſhed, and we are under ſad Fears: If God had had a Favour to us, would he have dealt thus with us? Thus are they cheared into a Belief that they never had any Grace; they take all for granted that is urged againſt them: They cannot conſider God's *Deſign* in hiding his Face, nor yet can they ſee how *Grace acts* in them under theſe Complainings; how they expreſs their *Love* to God in their *Deſires* and Pantings after him, in their *bewailing* of his Abſence, in *abhorring* and condemning themſelves, *&c.* but their preſent Feeling, (and an Argument from Senſe is very ſtrong) bears down all before it.

Thus doth Satan frame his Arguments from Miſrepreſentations of God, which (tho' a right View of God would eaſily anſwer them, yet) how difficult it is for a Perſon in an Hour of Temptation to diſpel, by a right Apprehenſion of the Ways of the holy God, doth abundantly appear from *Pſal.* lxxvii. where the Caſe of *Aſaph* (or whoever elſe he was) doth inform us, (1.) That 'tis uſual for Satan, for the diſquieting of the Hearts of God's Children, to offer a *falſe Proſpect* of God. (2.) That this *overwhelms* their Hearts with Grief, *ver.* 3. (3.) That the more they perſiſt in the Proſecution of this Method, under the *Miſts of Prejudice*, they ſee the leſs, being apt to miſconſtrue every Thing in God to their Diſadvantage, *ver.* 3. *I remembred God, and was troubled.* (4.) The Reaſon of all that Trouble lies in this, that they can *only conclude* Wrath and Deſertion from God's Carriage toward them. (5.) That till they look upon God in *another Method*, and take up better Thoughts of him and his Providences, even while they carry the Appearance of Severity, they can expect no Eaſe to their Complainings. For before the Prophet quitted himſelf of his Trouble, he was forced to acknowledge *his Miſtake* (ver. 10.) in the Miſconſtruction he made of his Dealings, and to betake himſelf to a Reſolve of entertaining better Thoughts of God, *ver.* 7. His Interrogation, *Will the Lord caſt off for ever, &c.?* ſhews indeed what he did once think, being miſled by Satan, but withal that he would never do ſo again. *Will the Lord caſt*

off for ever? is not here the Voice of a despairing Man, but of one that through better Information hath *rectified* his Judgment, and now is resolved strongly to hold *the contrary* to what he thought before, as if he should say, *'Tis not possible that it should be so, he will not cast off for ever, and I will never entertain such perverse Thoughts of God any more.* (6.) But before they can come to this, it will cost them some Pains and serious Thoughts; 'tis not easy to break these Fetters, to answer this Argument; but they that will do so, must *appeal* from their present Sense, to a Consideration of *the Issues* of these Dealings upon *other Persons*, or upon themselves at *other Times*: For the Prophet, *ver.* 5, *considered the Days of old, and the Years of ancient Times*; and *ver.* 6 he also made use of his own Experience, calling *to Remembrance*, that after such Dealings as these, God by his Return of Favour gave him *Songs in the Night*.

4. Another common Head from whence this great Disputant doth fetch his Arguments against the good Condition and State of God's Servants, is their *Sin and Miscarriages*. Here I shall observe two or three Things in the general concerning this, before I shew how he draws his false Conclusions from thence. As,

1. That with a Kind of *feigned Ingenuity*, he will grant a Difference betwixt *Sin and Sin*, betwixt Sins reigning, and not reigning; Sins mortified, and not mortified; betwixt the Sins of the Converted, and the Unconverted: And upon this Supposition he usually proceeds. He doth not always (except in case of *great Sins*) argue Want of Regeneration from *one Sin* for that Argument; *This is a Sin, therefore thou art not a Convert*, would be easily answered, by one that knows the Saints have their Imperfections, but he thus deals with Men: *These Sins whereof thou art guilty, are reigning Sins*, such as are inconsistent with a converted Estate, and therefore thou art yet unregenerated.

2. He produceth usually for the backing of his Argument, such Scriptures as do *truly* represent the State of Men *unsanctified*; but then his Labour is to make the Parties to appear *suitable* to the Description of the Unregenerate. And to that Purpose he *aggravates* all their Failings to them: He makes severe Enquiries after all their Sins, and if he can charge them with any *notorious* Crime, he lays Load upon that, still concluding that a regenerate Person doth not sin at such a Rate as they do.

3. This

2. This is always a very *difficult* Case; 'tis not easy to answer the Objections that he will urge from hence: For, (1.) If there be the real Guilt of any *grievous* or remarkable Scandal which he objects, the accused Party (tho' never so knowing, or (formerly) never so holy) will be hardly put to it to determine any Thing in favour of his Estate. 1. The *Fact* cannot be denied. 2. The Scripture nominates *particularly* such Offences, as render a Man unfit for the Kingdom of God. 3. Whether in such Cases, Grace be not *wholly* lost, is a *Question* in which all are not agreed. 4. However it will be very doubtful whether such had *ever* any Grace. The Scripture hath given them *no Note* of Difference, to distinguish betwixt a regenerate and unregenerate Person, *in the Acts* of Murder, Adultery, Fornication, &c. It doth not say the Regenerate commits an Act of gross Iniquity *in this Manner*, the Unregenerate *in that*, and that there is a *visible* Distinction betwixt the one and the other, relating to these *very Acts*. And whatever may be supposed to be the *inward* Workings of Grace in the Soul, while 'tis reduced to so *narrow* a Compass, as a Spark of Fire raked up in Ashes, yet the *Weight* of present Guilt upon the Soul (when 'tis charged home) will always *poise* it toward the *worst* Apprehensions that can be made concerning its State. *Former* Acts of Holiness will be disowned under the Notion of Hypocrisy; or if yet owned to be true, they will be apt to think that true Grace may be *utterly lost*. *Present* Acts of Grace they can see none, so that only the *After-acts* of Repentance can discover that there is yet a Being and Life of Grace in them, and *till then* they can never answer Satan's Argument from great Sins. But, (2.) In the *usual Infirmities* of God's Children the Case is not *so easy*. For the Scriptures give Instances of some, whose Conversations could not be taxed with any notorious Evils; who tho' they were *not far from the Kingdom of God*, yet were not *of the Kingdom of God*: A Freedom then from *great Sins*, is not pleadable, as an *undoubted Mark* of Grace. And if others that are *not converted*, may have no greater Infirmities than some *that are*, the *Difference* betwixt the one and the other must depend upon the *secret* Powers of Grace, giving Check to these Infirmities, and striving to mortify them: And this will be an *intricate* Question. The Apostle, *Rom.* vii. 15. notes indeed *three* Differences betwixt the Regenerate and Unregenerate, in this Case of Sins of Infirmity,

cy. 1. *Hatred* of the Sin *before* the Commission of it; *What I hate, that do I.* 2. *Reluctancy in the Act: What I would, that do I not.* 3. *Disallowance after the Act: That which I do, I allow not.* Yet seeing natural Light will afford some *Appearances* of Disallowance, and Reluctancy, it will still admit of further Debate, Whether the *Principles*, *Motives*, *Degrees* and *Success* of these Strivings, be such as may discover the Being and Power of real Grace.

While Satan doth insist upon Arguments from the Sins of Believers, for the Proof of an unconverted Estate, he only aims to make good this Point, That *their* Sins are *reigning* Sins, and consequently that they cannot be in so good a Condition as they are willing to think. And to make their Sins to carry that Appearance, his constant Course is to *aggravate* them all he can: This is his Design, and the Means by which he would effect it. His great Art in this Case, is to heighten the Sins of the Regenerate; this he doth many Ways, As,

1. From the *Nature* of the Sin committed, and the *Manner* of its Commission: And this he chiefly labours, because his Arguments from hence are more probable, especially considering what he fixeth upon usually, is that which may most favour his Conclusion. As (1.) If any have fallen into a *great Sin*, which a Child of God doth but *rarely* commit, then he argues against him thus: *They that are in Christ, do mortify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, they cast away the Works of Darkness: And these Works of the Flesh are manifest*, Gal. v. 19. *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations*, &c. *because of these Things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience. Be not therefore Partakers with them, have no Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness*, Eph. v. 6, 11. *But thou hast not put these away, nor mortified them, as thy present Sin doth testify, therefore thou art no Child of God.* (2.) If any do more than once or twice *relapse* into the same Sin, (suppose it be not so highly scandalous as the former) then he pleads from thence, that they are *Backsliders in Heart*, that they have *broken their Covenant* with God, that they are *in Bondage* to Sin. Here he urgeth, it may be, that of 2 *Pet.* ii. 19, 20. *Of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in Bondage*;—*The Dog is returned to his Vomit.* (3.) Or if any have by any

Offence,

Offence, more remarkably gone *against their Knowledge*, or *violated* their Conscience, then he tells them, that *they sin wilfully, that they reject the Counsel of the Lord, that they are the Servants of Sin; for his Servants ye are to whom ye obey.* Rom. vi. 16. *And that where there is Grace, tho' they may fall, yet it is still against their Wills*, &c. (4.) If he have not so clear Ground to manage any of the former Charges against them, then he argues from the *Frequency* of their *various* Miscarriages. Here he sets their Sins *in Order* before them, *rakes* them altogether, that he may oppress them by a *Multitude*, when he cannot prevail by an Accusation from one or two Acts: And his Pleading here is, *Thou art nothing but Sin, thy Thoughts are evil continually; thy Words are vain and unprofitable, thy Actions foolish and wicked, and this in all thy Employments, in all Relations, at all Times. What Duty is there that is not neglected or defiled? What Sin that is not some Way or other committed?* &c. *Can such an Heart as thine be the Temple of the Holy Ghost? For the Temple of the Lord is holy, and his People are washed and cleansed*, &c.

These are all of them strong Objections, and frequently made Use of by Satan, as the Complaints of the Servants of God do testify, who are made thus to except against themselves; *If our Sins were but the usual Failings of the Converted, we might comfort ourselves, but they are great, they are Backslidings, they are against Conscience, they are many; What can we judge, but that we have hitherto deceived ourselves, and that the Work of Conversion is yet to do?* The Objections that are from *great* Sins, or from *Recidivation*, or wilful *Violation* of Conscience, do usually prevail for *some Time*, against the best that are chargeable with them; they cannot determine that they *are converted* (tho' they might be so) so long as they cannot deny the *Matter of Fact* upon which the Accusation is grounded; till their *true Repentance* give them some Light of better Information, they are in the Dark and cannot answer the Argument. *Jonah* being imprisoned in the Whale's Belly, for his stubborn Rebellion, at first concluded himself a Cast away: *Jonah* ii. 4. *Then I said I am cast out of thy Sight*: Neither could he think better of himself, till upon his *Repentance*, he recovered his Faith and Hope of Pardon, *Yet will I look again toward thy holy Temple.* Yea those Objections that are raised from the *Multitude* and *Frequency* of lesser Failings, tho' they may be answered by a Child of God, while his Heart is not *overshadowed*

with the Mists and Clouds of Temptation, yet when he is confused with violent Commotions within, his Heart will fail him, and till he can bring himself to some *Composure* of Spirit, he hath not the *Boldness* to assert his Integrity. *David* was gravelled with this Objection, *Psal.* xl. 12. *Innumerable Evils have compassed me about, mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the Hairs on my Head, therefore my Heart faileth me.*

2. He aggravates the Sinfulness of our Condition, from the *Frequency* and *Violence* of *his own* Temptations. 'Tis an usual Thing for him to give young Converts *incessant Onsets* of Temptation to Sin: Most commonly he works upon their *natural Constitution*, he blows the Coals that are not yet quite extinguished, and that have greater Forwardness from their own Inclination to kindle again; as Lust and Passion. The *first Motions* of the one, (tho' it go no further, than those *Offers* and Risings up in the Heart, and is there *damped* and kept down by the opposing Principle of Grace) and the *occasional Out-breakings* of the other, (which he provokes by a diligent Preparation of *Occasion* from without, and violent *Incitations* from within) furnish him with sufficient Matter for his intended Accusations; and sometimes (being as it were wholly negligent of the Advantages which our Tempers give him, or not being able to find any such Forwardness to these Evils in our Constitution, as may more eminently serve his Ends) he satisfies himself to molest us with earnest Motions to *any Sins* indifferently; and all this to make us believe, that Sin is not crucified in us. Which some are more apt to believe, because they observe their Temptations to these Sins, to importune them more, and with *greater Vehemency* than they were wont to do before: And this doth yet the more astonish them, because they had high *Expectations* that after their Conversion, Satan would *fall before them*, and their Temptations *abate*; that their Natures should be altered, and their natural Inclinations to these Sins *wholly cease*: But now finding the contrary, they are ready to cry out, (especially when Satan violently buffets them with this Objection) *We are yet in our Sins, and under the Dominion thereof; neither can it be that we are converted, because we find Sin more active and stirring than formerly; 'tis not then surely mortified in us, but lively and strong.* Tho' in this Case it be very plain that *Temptations* are only strong, and *Sin* weak, and that Grace

Grace is *faithfully* acting its Part against the Flesh, arguing, not that Grace is so very *weak*, but that Satan is more *busy* than ordinary; the Sins are not *more* than formerly, but the Light that discovers them more is *greater*, and the *Conscience* that resents the Temptation is more tender. Yet all this doth not at first give Ease to the Fears that are now raised up in the Mind; they find Sin working in them, their Expectations of attaining a greater *Conquest* on a Sudden, and with greater Ease, are disappointed, (and the Desire of having much, makes a Man think himself poor) and withal they commonly labour under so much Ignorance, or perverse *Credulity*, that they conclude they consent to every Thing which they are tempted to, insomuch that 'tis long before these *Clouds* do vanish, and the Afflicted brought to a right Understanding of themselves.

3. From some remarkable Appearances of God, doth Satan aggravate our sinful *Condition*. If God shew any notable Act of Power, he makes the Beams of that Act reflect upon our Unworthiness with a dazling Light. When *Peter* saw the Power of *Christ*, in sending a great Multitude of Fishes into his Net, (having laboured all Night before and caught nothing) it gave so deep an Impression to the Conviction of his Vileness, that he was ready to put *Christ* from him, as being altogether unfit for his blessed Society, *Depart* (saith he) *from me; for I am a sinful Man*. If God discover the glorious Splendor of his *Holiness*, 'tis enough to make the holiest Saints (such as *Job* and *Isaiah*) to cry out they are *undone*, being *Men of unclean Lips*, and to *abhor themselves in Dust and Ashes*, Job xlii. 6. Isa. vi. 5. The like may be said of any Discovery of the rest of the glorious Attributes of God. Of all which Satan makes this Advantage, that the Parties tempted should have so deep a Consideration of their Unworthiness, as might induce them to believe, (as if it were by a Voice from Heaven) that God prohibites them any Approaches to him, and that they have nothing to do to take God's Name within their Mouths. And tho' these remarkable Discoveries of God (either by his Acts of Power and Providence, or by immediate Impressions upon the Soul, in the Height of Contemplation) have ordinarily great Effects upon the Hearts of his Children, but not of long Continuance: Yet where they strike in with other Arguments by which they were already staggered as to their Interest in God, they mightily

mightily ſtrengthen them, and are taken for no leſs than God's own Determination of the Queſtion againſt them.

But this is not all the Uſe that Satan makes of them; for from hence he ſometimes hath the Opportunity to raiſe *new Accuſations* againſt them, and to tax them with *particular Crimes*, which in a particular *Manner* ſeem to prove them unregenerate. For what would ſeem to be a clearer *Character* of a Man *dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins*, than a *hard Heart*, that can neither be ſenſible of Judgments nor Mercies? This he ſometimes chargeth upon the Children of God, from the great *Diſproportion* that they find in themſelves, betwixt the *little Senſe* that they ſeem to have (and that which is *diſproportionable*, they reckon to be *nothing*) and the *vaſt Greatneſs* of God's Mercy or Holineſs. I have obſerved ſome to complain of utter *Unthankfulneſs*, and *Inſenſibleneſs* of Heart, (from thence concluding confidently againſt themſelves) becauſe, when God hath remarkably appeared for them, in Deliverances from Dangers, or in unexpected Kindneſſes, they could not render a Thankfulneſs that carried any Proportion to the Mercy. While they were in the higheſt *Admiration* of the Kindneſs, ſaying, *What ſhall I render to the Lord?* they were quite out of the *Sight* of their own Senſe and Feeling, and thought they returned *nothing* at all, becauſe they returned nothing *equivalent* to what they had received. Others I have known, who, from the Confuſion and Amazement of their Spirits, when they have been overwhelmed with Troubles, have poſitively determined themſelves to be *ſenſeleſs*, ſtupid, paſt feeling, hardned to Deſtruction: When in both Caſes any might have ſeen the *working* of their Hearts to be an apparent *Contradiction* to what Satan charged them withal: For they were not *unapprehenſive* either of Mercies or Judgments; but on the contrary, had only a *greater Senſe* of them than they were able to manage.

4. To make full Meaſure, Satan doth ſometimes aggravate the Miſcarriages of thoſe whom he intends to accuſe, by *comparing* their Lives and Actions with the *holy Lives* of ſome eminent Servants of God, eſpecially ſuch as they have *only* heard of, and not known perſonally. For ſo they have only their *Virtues* repreſented, without their *Failings*. Here Satan takes a Liberty of declaiming againſt them: And though he could never ſpare a Saint a good Word out of Reſpect; yet, that others might be put

out

out of Heart and Hope, he will commend the Holineſs, Strictneſs, Care, Conſtancy of dead Saints to the Skies. And then he queries, "*Art thou ſuch an one? Canſt thou ſay thou art any Thing like them, for a heavenly Heart, a holy Life, a Contempt of the World, a Zeal for God, for good Works, for patient Suffering?* &c. (all this while not a Word of their Weakneſſes.) *Theſe* (ſaith he) *were the Servants of the Moſt High: Their Examples thou ſhouldeſt follow, if thou expecteſt their Crown. Had they any more Holineſs than they needed? And if thou haſt not ſo much, thou art nothing.* What can Humility, Modeſty, and Senſe of Guilt, ſpeak in ſuch a Caſe? They go away mourning, their Fears increaſe upon them; and what God hath ſet before them (in the Examples of his Servants) for the Increaſe of their Diligence, they take to be as a *Witneſs* againſt them, to prove them unconverted.

5. The laſt Part of Satan's Sophiſtry is to leſſen their *Graces*, that ſo he may altogether deny them. In this he proceeds upon ſuch Scriptures as do aſſert the Fruits of the Spirit; and urgeth for his Foundation, that none are the Children of God but ſuch as *are led by the Spirit*; and that *he that hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, is none of his.* The Neceſſity of Faith, Love, Patience, Humility, with the Fruits of theſe and other Graces, he *preſſeth*; but ſtill, in order to a Demonſtration, (as he pretends) that ſuch are *not to be found* in thoſe, whoſe gracious State he calls into Queſtion, and conſequently that they are not the Children of God.

The Rule by which he manageth himſelf in this Diſpute, is this; *The more Graces are heightned in the Notions, that muſt give an Account of their Nature and Beings; the more difficult it will be to find out their Reality in the Practice of them.* His Deſign then hath theſe *two* Parts. 1. He *heightens* Grace in the *Notion*, or Abſtract, all he can. 2. He *leſſens* it in the Concrete, or *Practice*, as much as *is* poſſible, that it may appear a very Nullity, a Shadow and not a Subſtance. I ſhall ſpeak a little of both.

1. As to the *firſt Part* of his Deſign, he hath many Ways by which he *aggravates* Grace in the Notion. We may be ſure if it ly in his Way, he will not ſtick to give *falſe Definitions* of Grace; and to tell Men that it is what indeed it is not. He is a Liar, and in any Caſe what-

whatsoever he will lie for his Advantage, if he have Hope his Lie may pass for current; but he cannot always use a palpable Cheat in this Matter, where the Nature of any Grace is positively determined in Scripture, except it be with the *Ignorant*, or where the Nature of Grace is made a Business of Controversy among Men. I will not make Conjectures what Satan may possibly say, in belying the Nature of Grace, to make it seem to be quite another Thing than it is; but shall rather shew you the more usual plausible Ways of Deceit which herein he exerciseth; and they are these that follow.

1. As the same Graces have different Degrees in several Persons, and these different Degrees have Operations suitable; some Acts being stronger, some weaker, some more perfected and ripened, others more imperfect, and immature: So when Satan comes to describe Grace, he sets it forth in its *highest Excellencies*, and most glorious Attainments. You shall never observe him to speak of Graces at their *lowest Pitch*, (except where he is carrying on a Design for *Presumption*, and then he tells Men that any *Wishing*, or *Woulding* is Grace; and every formal [*Lord forgive me*] is true Repentance) but on the contrary he offers the highest Reach of it, that any Saint on Earth ever arriv'd at, as *essentially* necessary to constitute its *Being*; and tells them if they have not *that*, they have *nothing*. Let us see it in the Particulars. 1. Grace sometimes hath its *Extraordinaries*; (as I may call them) we have both Precept and Example of that Nature in Scripture, which are propounded not as the *common Standard* by which the Being and Reality of Grace is to be measured, but as *Patterns* for Imitation, to provoke us to Emulation; and to quicken us in pressing forward. Of this Nature I reckon to be the Example of *Moses*, desiring to be blotted *out of God's Book* (whatever he meant by it) in his Love to the People; and the like of the Apostle *Paul*, wishing himself to be *accursed from Christ for his Brethrens Sake*. Of this Nature also we have many Precepts; as *rejoice evermore*, of *waiting* and *longing* for the Appearance of Christ, of *rejoicing* when we fall *into divers Temptations*; and many more to this Purpose. All which are Heights of Grace that do rarely appear among the Servants of God, at any Time. 2. Grace hath sometimes its *special Assistances*; this is when the Occasion is *extraordinary*, but

the

the Grace befitting that Occasion is promised *in ordinary*, and ordinarily received. When God calls any to such Occasions, tho' compared with that *Measure of Grace*, which usually is acted by the Children of God upon ordinary Occasions, it is a special Assistance of the Spirit. Of this Nature is that *Boldness* which the Servants of Christ receive, to *confess* Christ before Men in Times of Persecution, and to *die* for the Truth with Constancy, Courage, and Joy.

3. There are also singular *Eminencies* of Grace, which some diligent, careful, and *choice* Servants of God attain unto, far above what the *ordinary Sort* arrive at. *Enoch* had his Conversation so much in Heaven, that he was said to *walk with God*. *David*'s Soul was often full of *Delights* in God. Some in the Height of Assurance rejoice in God with *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*. *Moses* was eminent in *Meekness*, *Job* in *Patience*, the Apostle *Paul* in *Zeal* for promoting the Gospel, &c. Now Satan when he comes to question the Graces of Men, he presents them with these Measures; and if they fall short (as ordinarily they do) he concludes them altogether graceless.

2. Satan also can do much to heighten the *ordinary Work* and usual Fruits of *every* Grace. His Art herein lies in two Things. 1. He gives us a Description of Grace as it is *in itself*, abstracted from the Weakness, Dulness, Distractions and Infirmities that are concomitant with it, as it comes forth to Practice. He brings to our View Grace in its *Glory*, and without the *Spots*, by which our Weakness and Satan's Temptation do much *disfigure* it. 2. He presents us with Grace in its *whole Body*, compleated with all its Members, Faith, Love, Hope, Patience, Meekness, Gentleness, &c. From both these he sets before those whom he intends to discourage a complete *Copy* of an *exact* holy Christian, as if every true Christian were to be found in the *constant* Practice of *all these Graces at all Times*, on all *Occasions*, and that without Weakness or Infirmity; whereas indeed a true Christian may be found sometimes *evidently* practising *one* Grace, and weak, or at present *defective in another*. And sometimes the best of his Graces is so *interrupted* with Temptation, so *clogged* with Infirmity, that its Workings are scarce *discernible*.

3. He hath a Policy in heightening those *Attainments* and Workings of Soul, in Things relating to God and Religion, which are to be found in *temporary Believers*, which,

which, becauſe they ſometimes appear in the Unconverted, as well as in the Converted (tho' all unconverted Men have them not) are therefore called *common* Graces. This he doth, that he may from thence take Occaſion to *diſprove* the *real* Graces of the Servants of God, of whom *better Things, and Things that accompany Salvation* (that is ſpecial ſaving Graces) are to be expected, *Heb.* vi. 9. His Way herein is, 1. To ſhew the utmoſt *Bravery* of theſe common Graces, how much Men may have, how far they may go, and yet at laſt come to nothing. For *Gifts*, they may have powerful *Eloquence*, *Prophecy*, underſtanding of *Myſteries*, Faith of *Miracles*. For *good Works*, they may give their *Eſtates to relieve the Poor*. In *moral Virtues* they may be excellent, their *Illumination* may be great, they may *taſte the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come*, Heb. vi. 4. Their Converſation may be *without Offence*, and their Conſcience *honeſt*, as *Paul's* was before his Converſion. 2. With theſe *Heights* of common Grace he compares the *loweſt Degree* of ſpecial Grace. And becauſe the *Principles*, *Motives*, and *Ends*, which conſtitute the Difference betwixt theſe two, are (as it were) *under Ground*, more remote from Senſe and Obſervation, and oftentimes darkned by Temptation, he takes the Boldneſs to deny the Truth of Grace, upon the Account of the ſmall inconſiderable *Appearance* that it makes, confidently affirming, that ſpecial Grace muſt of Neceſſity make a far greater *outward Shew* than theſe common Graces. In what Manner, and to what End Satan doth *heighten Grace* in the *Abſtract*, we have ſeen, it remains that we diſcover,

2. How he doth *leſſen* Grace in the *Concrete*; this is the Center of his Deſign. He would not extol Grace ſo much, but that he hopes thereby to *condemn the Generation of the Juſt*, and to make it appear, that there are *few* or *none* that are truly gracious. When he comes to apply all this to the Condition of any Child of God, he deals treacherouſly, and his Cunning conſiſts of three Parts.

1. He compares the *preſent State* of any one with whom he deals, to the *higheſt* Attainments and Excellencies of Grace, allowing nothing to be Grace, but what will anſwer theſe Deſcriptions he had already given. Here the Tempter doth apparently make Uſe of a *falſe Ballance*, and a *Bag of deceitful Weights*. For thus he puts them to it. *Thou ſayſt thou haſt Grace, but thou doſt altogether deceive thy*

ſelf;

ſelf, for indeed thou haſt none at all. Compare thy ſelf with others that were in Scripture noted as undoubtedly gracious, and thou wilt ſee that in the Ballance thou art lighter than Vanity. Abraham *had Faith, but believed above Hope.* Moſes *and* Paul *had Love, but they manifeſted it, by preferring their Brethrens Happineſs before their own.* David *was a Saint, but he had a Heart raviſhed with God. The Martyrs ſpoken of in* Heb. xi. *they could do Wonders; they were above Fears of Men, above the Love of the World; they loved not their Lives to the Death: How joyfully took they the ſpoiling of their Goods? How courageouſly did they ſuffer the ſharpeſt Torments? Beſides* (ſaith he) *all the Children of God are deſcribed as ſanctified throughout, abounding with all Fruits of Righteouſneſs; their Faith is Working; their Love ſtill laborious, their Hope produceth conſtant Patience. What art thou to theſe? That in thee which thou calleſt Faith, or Love, or Patience,* &c. *'tis not fit to be named with theſe. Thy Fears may tell thee, that thou haſt no Faith, and ſo may thy Works; thy Murmurings under God's Hand is Evidence ſufficient, that thou haſt no Patience. The little that thou doſt for God, or eſpecially wouldſt do, if it were not for thy own Advantage, may convince thee that thou haſt no Love to him; thy Wearineſs of Services and Duties, thy confeſſed Unprofitableneſs under all, do proclaim thou haſt no Delight in God, nor in his Ways.* He further adds, for the Confirmation of all this, *Conſider how far Temporaries may go, that ſhall never go to Heaven. Thou art far ſhort of them; thy Gifts, thy Works, thy Virtues, thy Illumination, thy Converſation, thy Conſcientiouſneſs are nothing like theirs: How is it poſſible then that ſuch an one as thou (a pitiful contemptible Creature) ſhouldſt have any Thing of true Grace in thee?* Thus he makes the Application of all the Diſcovery of Grace which he preſented to them; tho' he needs not urge *all* theſe Things to every one, any one of theſe Particulars frequently ſerves the Turn. When a trembling Heart compares itſelf with theſe Inſtances, it turns its Back, yields the Argument, and is aſhamed of its former Hopes, as thoſe are of their former Confidence who flee from Battle. Hence then do we hear of theſe various Complaints; one ſaith, *Alas! I have no Grace, becauſe I live not as other Saints have done, in all Exactneſs.* Another ſaith, *I have no Faith, becauſe I*

cannot

cannot believe above Reason, and contrary to Sense, as Abraham *did*. A third cries out, *He hath no Love to God, because he cannot find his Soul ravished with Desire after him*. Another thinks, *He hath a hard Heart, because he cannot weep for Sin*. Another concludes against himself, because *he finds not a present cheerful Resolve* (while he is not under any Question for Religion) *to suffer Torments for Christ*. Some fear themselves, *because Temporaries in some Particulars have much outgone them*. You see how Complaints may upon this Score be multiplied without End; and yet all this is but Fallacy. Satan tells them what Grace is at the *highest*, but not a Word of what it is at *lowest*; and so *unskilful* is a tossed, weak Christian, that he in examining his Condition, looks after the *highest Degrees* of Grace (as affording clearer Evidence) and not after the *Sincerity* of it, which is the safest Way for Trial, where Graces are weak. In a word, this Kind of Arguing is no better than that of Children, who cannot conclude themselves to be *Men*, because their present Stature is *little*, and they are not as tall as the Adult.

2. Another Part of his Cunning in lessening the real Graces of God's Children, is to take them at an Advantage, when their Graces are *weakest*, and themselves most *out of Order*. He that will choose to measure a Man's Stature while he is upon his Knees, seems not to design to give a faithful Account of his Height. No more doth Satan, who, when he will make Comparisons, always takes the Servants of God at the worst. And indeed many Advantages do the Children of God give him, insomuch that it is no Wonder that he doth so oft baffle them, but rather a Wonder, that they at any Time return to their Comforts. 1. Sometimes he takes them to Task while they are yet *young and tender*; when they are but newly converted, before their Graces are grown up, or have had Time to put forth any considerable Fruit. 2. Or when their Graces are *tired out*, by long or grievous Assaults of Temptation; for then they are not what they are at other Times. 3. When their Hearts are *discomposed* or *muddied* with Fear; for then their Sight is bad, and they can so little judge of Things that differ, that Satan can impose almost any Thing upon them. 4. Sometimes he comes upon them, when some Grace *acts* his Part but *poorly* (as not having its *perfect Work*) and is scarce able to get through, sticking as it were

were in the Birth. 5. Or when the *Progress* of Grace is small and *imperceptible*. 6. Or while in the *Absence* of the Sun (which produceth Flowers and Fragrancy, and is the Time of the *singing of Birds*, Cant. ii. 11, 12.) it is forced to cast off its *Summer-fruits* of Joy and sensible Delights, and only produceth *Winter-fruits* of lamenting after God, longing and panting after him, justifying of God in his Dealings, and condemning itself; all this while *sowing in Tears*, for a more pleasing Crop. 7. Or while *Expectations* are more than *Enjoyments*, the Man it may be promised himself large Incomes of greater Measures of Comforts, Ease or Strength, under some particular Ordinances or Helps which he hath lately attained to; and not finding Things presently to answer what he hoped for, is now suspicious of his Case, and thinks he hath attained nothing, because he hath not what he would. 8. Sometimes Satan shews them his Face in this Glass, when 'tis *foulest*, through the Spots of some Miscarriage. 9. Or he takes Advantage of some *natural Defects*, as Want of *Tears*, which might be more usual in former Times, but are now dried up; or from the *Ebbings* and Uncertainty of his Affections, which are never sure Rules of Trials. 10. Or in such Acts that are of a *mixed* Nature in the Principles and Motives, where it may seem to be *uncertain* to which the *Act* must be ascribed, as to the *true* Parent. The Heart of a gracious Person being challenged upon any of these Points, and under so great a Disadvantage, being called out to give a Proof of himself, especially in the View of Grace set forth in all its Excellency and Glory, shall have little to plead, but will rather own the Accusation; and the rather, because

3. It is another Part of Satan's Cunning, to urge them (whilst they are thus at a Stand) with a *Possibility*, nay a *Probability* of their *mistaking* themselves, by passing too favourable an Opinion formerly of their Actions. To confirm them in this Apprehension, 1. He lays before them the Consideration of the *Deceitfulness* of the Heart, *Jer.* xvii. 6. which (being so above all Things, and desperately wicked beyond ordinary Discovery) makes a fair Way for the Entertainment of a Suspicion of *Self-delusion* in all the former Hopes which a Man hath had of himself. Satan will plainly speak it, *Thou hast had some Thoughts and Workings of Mind towards God, but seeing they carry*

so great a Disproportion to Rule and Example, and come so far short of common Graces, 'tis more than probable, that such poor, weak, confused Appearances are nothing. How knowest thou, that thine Adherence to, and Practice of the Command and Services of God are any more, than from the Power of Education, the Prevalency of Custom, or the Impressions of moral Swasion? How dost thou know, that thy Desires after God, and thy Delight in him, are any more than the Products of natural Principles, influenced by an historical Faith of Scripture-doctrine? 'Tis oftentimes enough for Satan to hint this: A suspicious Heart (as it were greedy of its own Misery) catcheth at all Things that make against it, and hence complains, that it hath no Grace, because it sees not any visible Fruits, or makes not a sufficient Appearance at all Times, when opposed or resisted; or because it wants sensible Progress, or gives not the Summer-fruits of Praises, Rejoicings, and Delights in God; or because it seems not to meet with remarkable Improvements in Ordinances; or because it cannot produce Tears, and raise the Affections; and because the Party doth not know, but his Heart might deceive him in all that he hath done. Which the Devil yet further endeavoureth to confirm, 2. By a Consideration of the *seeming* Holiness and Graces of such, as believed themselves to be the Children of God, and were generally by others reputed so to be, who yet after a glorious Profession turned Apostates. This being so great and undeniable an Instance of the Heart's Deceitfulness, makes the poor tempted Party conclude, that he is certainly no true Convert.

Thus have we seen Satan's Sophistry in the Management of these five grand Topicks, from whence he draws his false Conclusions against the Children of God, pretending to prove that they are *not converted*; or at least, if they be in a State of Grace, that they in that State are in a very bad *unsuitable* Condition to it. (For if his Arguments fall short of the *first*, they seldom miss the *latter* Mark.) This was his first Engine, now follows,

2*dly*, The other Engine by which he fixeth these Conclusions, which tho' it be not *argumentative*, yet it serves to *sharpen* all his Fallacies against the Comforts of God's Children; this is *Fear*, which together with his Objections he sends into the Mind. That Satan can raise a Storm and Commotion in the Heart by Fear, hath been proved before, I shall now only

only in a few Things *shew*, how he doth *forward* his Design, by astonishing the Heart with his frightful Thunderings,

1*st*, His Objections being accompanied with *Affrightments*, they pass for *strong* undeniable Arguments, and their Fallacy is not so easily detected. Fear, as well as Anger, *darkens* Reason, and disables the Understanding to make a true faithful *Search* into Things, or to give a right *Judgment*: As Darkness deceives the Senses, and makes every Bush affrightful to the Passenger; or as muddied Waters hinder the Sight; so do Fears in the Heart disable a Man to discover the silliest Cheat that Satan can put upon it.

2*dly*, They are also very *credulous*. When Fear is up, any Suggestion takes Place. As suspicious *Incredulity* is an Effect of *Joy* (the Disciples at first hearing that Christ was risen, *for Joy believed it not*) so suspicious *Credulity* is the Effect of *Fear*; and we shall observe several Things in the Servants of God, that shew a strange Inclination, as it were a *natural Aptitude*, to believe the Evil of their spiritual Estate which Satan suggests to them. As 1. There is a great Forwardness and *Precipitancy* in the Heart to close with evil Thoughts raised up in us. When Jealousies of God's Love are injected, there is a violent *Hastiness* forthwith (all calm Deliberation being laid aside) to entertain a Belief of it. This is more than once noted in the *Psalms*. In this Case *David* acknowledgeth this hasty Humour, *I said in my Haste*, Psal. xxxi. 22. and Psal. cxvi. 11. This hasty Forwardness to determine Things that are against us, without due Examination; *Asaph* calls a great Weakness, *This is my Infirmity*, Psal. lxxvii. 10. 2. There is observable in those that are under spiritual Troubles, a great Kind of *Delight* (if I may so call it) to hear *Threatnings* rather than Promises, and such Discourses as set forth the Misery of a natural State, rather than such as speak of the Happiness of the Converted, because these Things, in their Apprehension, are more suitable to their Condition, and more needful for them, in order to a *greater* Measure of Humiliation, which they suppose to be necessary; however, thus they add Feuel to the Flame. 3. They have an Aptitude to *hide themselves* from Comfort, and with a wonderful Nimbleness of Wit and Reasoning, to evade and answer any Argument brought for their Comfort, as if they had been Volunteers in Satan's Service, to fight against themselves. 4. They have also so great a *Blasting* upon their

Understanding, that Satan's *tempting* them to doubt of their good Estate, is to them a sufficient *Reason* to doubt of it; and that is Ground enough for them to *deny* it, because Satan *questions* it.

3. These Fears make all Satan's Suggestions strike the *deeper*; they point all his Arrows, and make them pierce (as it were) *the Joints and Marrow*; they poison and envenom them, to the great *Increase* of the Torment, and *Hindrance* of the Cure; they *bind* the Objections upon them, and *confirm* them in a certain Belief that they are all true. We have now viewed Satan's Engines and Batteries against the Servants of the Lord, for the Destruction of their Joy and Peace by spiritual Troubles; but these are but the *Beginnings* of Sorrows, if compared with those Distresses of Soul which he sometimes brings upon them, of which next.

CHAP. IX.

Of his fourth Way to hinder Peace, by spiritual Distresses. 1. The Nature of these Distresses, the Ingredients and Degrees of them, Whether all Distresses of Soul arise from Melancholy? 2. Satan's Method in working them, the Occasions he makes Use of, the Arguments he urgeth, the strengthening of them by Fears. 3. Their Weight and Burden explained in several Particulars. Some concluding Cautions.

THE last Sort of Troubles by which Satan overthrows the Peace of the Soul, are *spiritual Distresses*; these are more *grievous* Agonies of Soul, under *deepest* Apprehensions of Divine *Wrath*, and *dreadful* Fears of everlasting *Damnation*; differing in *Nature* and *Degree* from the former Sorts of Troubles, tho' in these Satan observes much what the same general Method which he used in spiritual Troubles last mentioned; for which Cause, and also that these are not so common as the other, I shall speak of them with greater Brevity. Herein I shall shew, 1. Their *Nature*. 2. Satan's *Method* in working them. 3. Their *Weight* and Burden.

1st, The Nature of spiritual Distresses will be best discovered, by a Consideration of those *Ingredients* of which they are made up, and of the different *Degrees* thereof.

1. As

1. As to the Ingredients, there are ſeveral Things that do concur for the begetting of theſe violent Diſtreſſes. As, (1.) There is uſually a *Complication* of ſeveral *Kinds* of Troubles. Sometimes there are *outward* Troubles, and *inward* Diſcompoſures of Spirit ariſing from thence; ſometimes *Affrightments* of blaſphemous Thoughts long continued, and uſually *ſpiritual* Troubles (in which their State or Condition have been called to Queſtion) have gone before. *Heman* (who is as famous an Inſtance in this Caſe, as any we meet withal in Scripture) in *Pſal.* lxxxviii. ſeems not obſcurely to tell us ſo much; his *Soul* was *full of Troubles*, Ver. 3. And in *Ver.* 7. he complains that God had afflicted him *with all his Waves*: And that theſe were not all of the ſame Kind (tho' all concurred to the ſame End) he himſelf explains, *Ver.* 8, 18. where he bemoans himſelf for the Unkindneſs of his Friends: *Thou haſt put away mine Acquaintance; Lover and Friend thou haſt put far from me.* (2.) Theſe Troubles drive at a *further End* than any of the former; for their Deſign was only againſt the *preſent Quietneſs* and Peace of God's Children, but theſe deſign the *Ruin* of their Hopes for the *future*; they are troubled, not for that they are not *converted*, but for that they expect *never to be converted.* This is a Trouble of an high Nature, making them believe that they are *eternally reprobated*, cut off from God for ever, and under an *Impoſſibility* of Salvation. (3.) Theſe Troubles have the *Conſent* and Belief of the Party. In ſome other Troubles Satan diſquieted the Lord's Servants, by *impoſing* upon them his own curſed Suggeſtions, violently bearing in upon them Temptations to Sin and Blaſphemy, or Objections againſt their State of Regeneration, while in the mean Time *they oppoſed* and refuſed to give Conſent; but in theſe Satan prevails with them, to believe that their Caſe is really ſuch as their Fears repreſent it to be. (4.) They are Troubles of a far higher *Degree* than the former, the deepeſt Sorrows, the ſharpeſt Fears, the greateſt Agonies. *Heman*, Pſal lxxxviii. 15, 16. calls them *Terrors* even to *Diſtraction*: *While I ſuffer thy Terrors, I am diſtracted; thy fierce Wrath goeth over me, thy Terrors have cut me off.* (5.) There is alſo God's *deſerting* of them in a greater Meaſure than ordinary, by withdrawing his Aids and Comforts. And (as Mr. *Perkins* notes (*a*)) *If the withdrawing of Grace be joined with the ſeeling of*

(*a*) Treat. *of Deſertions.*

God's Anger, thence ariseth the bitterest Conflict, that the Soul of a poor Creature undergoes.

2. As to the different *Degrees* of spiritual Distresses, we must observe: That according to the Concurrence of *all*, or *fewer* of those Ingredients (for they do not always meet together, tho' most frequently they do) and according to the *higher*, or *lower* Degrees in which these are urged upon the Conscience, or *apprehended* and believed by the troubled Party; these Agonies are more or less, and accordingly we may distinguish them variously. As,

1. Some are desperate Terrors, of *cursed Reprobates* under Desperation. These Terrors in them, are, in the greatest Extremity, the very Pit of Misery, of the same Nature with those of the Damned in Hell, *where the Worm that never dies*, is nothing else but the dreadful Vexation and Torment of an accusing Conscience (*a*). They are commonly accompanied with *blaspheming* of God, and an utter *Rejection* of all Means for Remedy; and tho' they sometimes turn to a Kind of *secure Desperation*, (by which (when they see it will be no better) they *harden* themselves in their Misery, and seek to *divert* their Thoughts) as *Cain* did, betaking himself to the building of Cities. And *Esau*, when he had sold his Birth-right, despised it, and gave himself up to the Pursuit of a worldly Interest; yet sometimes these Terrors end in *Self-murder*, as in *Judas*, who being smitten with Dread of Conscience, went and hanged himself. We have many sad Instances of these desperate Terrors. *Cain* is the first we read of, and tho' the Account the Scriptures give of him be but short, yet 'tis sufficient to let us see what his Condition was, *Gen.* iv. 11. to 16. *First*, He was *cursed from the Earth.* Of this Part of his Curse, there were two Branches; (1.) That his Labour and Toil in Tillage should be *great*, and *greatly* unsuccessful; for thus God himself explains it, *Ver.* 12. *When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength.* The Earth was cursed with Barrenness before to *Adam*, but now to *Cain* it hath a *double* Curse. (2.) That he should be a Man of uncertain Abode in any Place; *A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth*: Not being able to stay long in a Place, by reason of the Terrors of his Conscience. His own Interpretation of it, *Ver.* 14. shews, that herein lay a great Part of his Misery;

(*a*) Ames *Cases of Conscience* lib. 1. cap.

fery; *Thou haſt driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth.* By which it appears, that he was to be as one that was chaſed out of all Society; and as one that thought himſelf ſafe in no Place. *Secondly*, He was *hid from the Face of God*; that is, he was doomed to carry the inward Feeling of God's Wrath, without any Expectation of Mercy. *Thirdly*, His Mind being terrified under the Apprehenſion of that Wrath, he cries out, That his *Sin was greater* than it could be *pardoned*; or that *his Puniſhment* (a) was *greater than he could bear.* (For the Word in the Original, ſignifies both Sin and Puniſhment.) Take it which Way you will, it expreſſeth a deep Horror of Heart. If in the former Senſe, then it ſignifies a Conviction of the Greatneſs of his Sin to *Deſperation*; if in the latter Senſe, then 'tis no leſs than a blaſphemous *Reflection* upon God, as unjuſtly cruel. *Fourthly*, This Horror was ſo great, that he was afraid of all he met with, ſuſpecting every Thing to be armed with divine Vengeance againſt him; *every one that findeth me, ſhall ſlay me.* Or if that Speech was a Deſire, that any one that found him might kill him, (as ſome interpret (*b*)) it ſhews that he preferred Death before that Life of Miſery. It ſeems then, that God ſmote him with ſuch Terror and Conſternation of Mind, and with ſuch affrightful Trembling of Body, for his bloody Fact, that he was weary of himſelf, and afraid of all Men, and could not ſtay long in a Place. By theſe Tokens (or ſome other Way) God ſets his *Mark* upon him, as upon a curſed Miſcreant, to be noted and abhorred of all. Such another Inſtance was *Lamech*, of whom the ſame Chapter ſpeaks: 1. The Sting of Conſcience was ſo great, that he is *forced to confeſs* his Fault: (The Interpretations of thoſe, that take it interrogatively; *Have I ſlain?* Or, *If I have, what is that to you?* &c. are upon many Accounts improper; much more are thoſe ſo, that take it negatively.) Which, whether it were the Abomination of *Poligamy*, (as ſome think) by which Example he had deſtroyed more than *Cain* did; or if it were *Murder* in a proper Senſe (as the Words and Context plainly carry it) 'tis not very material to our Purpoſe; however God ſmote him with Horror, that he might be a Witneſs againſt himſelf. 2. He accuſeth himſelf for a more grievous Sinner, and more deſperate Wretch by far than *Cain*: *If* Cain (Ver. 24.) *ſhall be avenged Seven-fold, truly*

(*a*) GNAVAN, (*b*) *Lightfoot* Harm. in loc.

Lamech *Seventy and seven-fold.* Which is as much as to say, that there was as much Difference 'twixt his Sin and *Cain's*, as betwixt Seven and Seventy-seven. 3. It seems also by his Discourse to his Wives, that he was grievously perplexed with *inward Fears*; suspecting (it may be) his very Wives (as well as others) might have private Combinations against him, for the Prevention whereof, he tells them by *Cain's* Example of God's avenging him. These two early Examples of Desperation the Beginning of the World affords, and there have been many more since, as *Esau* and *Judas*. Of late Years we have the memorable Instance of *Francis Spira*, one of the cleareſt and most remarkable Examples of spiritual Horror, that the latter Ages of the World were ever acquainted with; yet I shall not dare to be confident of his Reprobation, as of *Cain's* and *Judas's*, because the Scripture hath determined their Case, but we have no such certain Authority to determine his.

2. There are also Distresses from *Melancholy*, which may be further differenced according to the Intenseness, or Remisness of the Distemper upon which they depend. For sometimes the *Imagination* is so exceedingly depraved, the *Fears* of Heart so great, and the *Sorrows* so deep, that the melancholy Person crying out of himself, that he is damned, under the Curse of God, &c. appears to be wholly *beside himself*, and his Anguish to be nothing else, but a *delirous irrational Disturbance*. There are too many sad Instances of this: Some I have known, that for many Years together, have laboured under such Apprehensions of Hell and Damnation, that they have at last proceeded to curse and blaspheme God in a most dreadful Manner; so that they have been a Terror to all their Friends and Acquaintance. And tho' sometimes they would fall into Fits of *obstinate Silence*, yet being urged to speak, they would amaze all that were about them, with the confident Averment of their Damnation; with horrible Outcries of their supposed Misery and Torments, and with terrible Rage against Heaven. Some in this Distemper, will fancy themselves to be in *Hell already*, and will discourse as if they saw the Devils about them, and felt their Torture. Such as these give plain Discovery by their *rebale Carriage* under their Trouble, and some *concomitant false Imaginations* about other Things,

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(as when they fancy themselves to be in Prison, or sentenced to Death, and that Torments, or Fire are provided for them by the Magistrate, &c.) that 'tis only Melancholly (perverting their Understanding) that is the Cause of all their Sorrow. Others there are, who are not altogether irrational, because in most other Things their Understanding is right; yet being driven into Melancholly upon the Occasion of Crosses, or other outward Afflictions, they at last fix all their Thoughts upon their Souls, and now their Fancy becoming irregular in Part, the whole of the Irregularity appears only in that, wherein they chiefly concern themselves. Hence they misjudge themselves, and condemn themselves to everlasting Destruction; sometimes without any apparent Cause, and sometimes they accuse themselves of such Things as they never did; they fear and cry out they are damned, but they cannot give a particular Reason why they should entertain these Fears, neither can they shew any Cause why they should refuse the Comforts of the Promises that are offered, but they say they know, or are persuaded it is so, upon no better Account than this, *It is so, because it is so.* Or if they give Reasons of their Imagination, they are commonly either feigned, or frivolous, and yet in all other Matters they are rational, and speak or act like Men in their right Minds. Of both these Kinds of Desperation I shall speak nothing further; 'tis enough to have noted that such there are, because the Cure of the former is *impossible*, and the Cure of the latter doth wholly depend upon *Physick.*

Quest. Some may possibly question, Whether all extraordinary Agonies of Soul, upon the Apprehension of *eternal Damnation*, be not the Fruits of Melancholly? And if not, then what may the Difference be betwixt those that proceed from Melancholly, and those that are properly the Terrors of Conscience?

Ans. As to the first Part of the Question, I *answer*; 1. That all spiritual Distresses are not to be ascribed to Melancholly: For, 1. There are some melancholly Persons, who are never more free from spiritual Troubles (tho' frequently accustomed to them at other Times) than when (upon the Occasion of some special Trouble, or Sickness, threatning Death) there is *greatest Cause* to fear such Onsets upon the *Increase* of Melancholly; some such I have known. 2. Sometimes these Distresses come *suddenly*, their Consci-

Conſcience ſmitting them in the very Act of Sin; and theſe Perſons ſometimes ſuch as are not of a *melancholick Conſtitution*. *Spira* was ſuddenly thunder-ſtruck with Terrors of Conſcience, upon his Recantation of ſome Truths which he held; and ſo were ſome of the *Martyrs*. Sometimes Terrors that have continued long, and have been very *fierce*, are removed in a *Moment*. Now 'tis not rational to ſay, that Melancholly only occaſioned all ſuch Troubles, where in Bodies that are not naturally of that Complexion; (and ſome ſuch have been ſurpriſed with Terrors of Conſcience) if we will take a Liberty to ſuppoſe an *accidental Melancholly*, we muſt of Neceſſity allow ſome Time; and (uſually) ſome *precedaneous Occaſion*, to mould them in ſuch a Diſtemper. Neither do the Fears of Melancholly ceaſe on a Sudden, but abate gradually, according to the gradual Abatement of the Humour. To ſay that *Cain*'s, or *Judas*'s Deſpair were the Invaſions of ſtrong Melancholly, is not only beyond all Proof, but alſo Probability. Neither is it likely that *David* (whoſe ruddy Countenance, and Inclination to Muſick, are Tokens of a ſanguine Complexion) was always melancholick under his frequent Complaints of ſpiritual Trouble.

4. They that read the Story of *Spira*, and obſerve his *rational ſerious* Replies to the Diſcourſes that were offered him for his Comfort, and his Carriage all along, will have no Cauſe to conclude his Trouble to be only melancholly; neither did the ſober judicious By-ſtanders aſcribe his Diſtreſs to any ſuch Cauſe.

5. The Agony of *Chriſt* upon the *Croſs*, under the Senſe of divine Wrath for our Sins, (tho' it were *without Deſperation*) is an undeniable Proof, that there may be *deep Senſe* of God's *Diſpleaſure* upon the Soul of Man; which cannot be aſcribed to Melancholly.

2*dly*, I anſwer, That it is not to be denied, but that God may make Uſe of that Humour as his *Inſtrument*, for the Increaſe and Continuance of Terrors upon the Conſciences of thoſe, whom he thinks fit to puniſh (for any Provocation) with ſpiritual Deſertion. As he made Uſe of that Diſtemper to puniſh *Saul* and *Nebuchadnezzar*. I ſpeak not here of thoſe Diſtreſſes, which are nothing elſe but Melancholly, (ſuch as thoſe before mentioned, of which Phyſicians (*a*) have given us frequent Hiſtories) tho' in this Caſe,

(*a*) Vide Fel. Plateri obſerv. lib. 1. in mentis alienatione.

Caſe, the ſecret Ways of God's Providences are to be adored with humble Silence; but of theſe Terrors of Conſcience, which have a Mixture of Melancholly to help them forward, yet ſo, as that the Judgment and Reaſon are not thereby perverted. *Spira*, when his Caſe was haſtily concluded, by an injudicious Friend, to be a ſtrong Melancholly, made this Reply: *Well, be it ſo, ſeeing you will needs have it ſo; for thus alſo is God's Wrath manifeſted againſt me.*—Which ſhews, 1. That he believed God doth ſometime manifeſt his Wrath againſt Man by Melancholly. And, 2. That he denied this to be *his Condition*: For he ſtill concluded, that God ſent the Terrors of his Wrath immediately upon his Conſcience, as the Sentence of his juſt Condemnation for denying *Chriſt*. Now when God doth make Uſe of Melancholly, as his Inſtrument in Satan's Hand, to make the Soul of Man more apprehenſive of his Sin and God's Wrath, (tho' he doth not always make Uſe of this Means, as hath been ſaid) while he ſtill preſerves the Underſtanding from falſe *Imaginations*. The Diſtreſs is ſtill rational, and we have no Cauſe to make any great Difference betwixt theſe Troubles that have ſuch a Mixture of Melancholly, and ſuch as have not. Neither muſt we ſay, that then 'tis in the Power of the Phyſician to remove, or mitigate ſuch ſpiritual Diſtreſſes. For if God ſee it fit to make Uſe of Melancholly for ſuch a Purpoſe, he can ſuſpend the Power of Phyſick, ſo that it ſhall not do its Work till God hath performed all his Purpoſe. And the *Unſucceſsfulneſs* of Remedies in this Diſtemper, (while it ſeems to be wonderfully ſtubborn, in reſiſting all that can be done for Cure) is more to be aſcribed (in ſome Caſes) to *God's Deſign*, than every Phyſician doth imagine.

As to the latter Part of the Queſtion; How the Terrors of Melancholly, and thoſe of Conſcience are to be *diſtinguiſhed*? I ſhall only ſay this, That (as I ſaid) we are not much concerned to make any Diſtinction, where the diſtreſſed Party acts rationally. 'Tis true, ſomething may be obſerved from theſe Mixtures of Melancholly; and thence may ſome Indications be taken by the Friends of the Diſtreſſed, which may be of Uſe to the afflicted Party. Phyſick in this Caſe is not to be neglected, becauſe (tho' God may permit that Diſtemper in order to the Terror of the Conſcience) we are not of God's Counſel, to know *how high* he would have it to go, nor how long to continue;

continue; but 'tis our Duty (with Submiſſion to him) to uſe all Means for Help. However, ſeeing the Phyſician is the only proper Judge of the bodily Diſtemper, it were improper to ſpeak of the Signs of Melancholly in theſe *mixt Caſes*, to thoſe that cannot make Uſe of them. And as for the Diſtreſſes of Melancholly that are irrational, they are of themſelves ſo notorious, that I need not give any Account of them. There is uſually a *Conſtitution* inclining that Way, and often the Parents, or Friends of the Party, have been handled in the ſame Manner before; or if their natural Temper do not lead them that Way, there is uſually ſome Croſs, Trouble, Diſappointment, or the like outward Affliction that hath firſt preſſed them heavily, and by Degrees hath wrought them into Melancholly, and then afterward they come to concern themſelves for their Souls. (As that Woman in *Plater*'s Obſervations (*a*), who being long grieved with Jealouſy upon Grounds too juſt, at laſt fell into grievous Deſpair, crying out, *That God would not pardon her; that ſhe was damned; that ſhe felt Hell already, and the Torments of it*, &c.) Or there are ſome *concomitant Deliriums*, Imaginations apparently abſurd, or falſe, &c. all which give plain Diſcoveries of irrational Diſtreſſes. And if there remained any Doubt concerning them, the Conſideration of *all Circumſtances* together, by ſuch as are ſober and judicious, would eaſily afford a Satisfaction.

3. Having now confined the Diſcourſe to the *ſpiritual Diſtreſſes* of God's Children, that are not ſo oppreſſed with Melancholly, as to be miſled with falſe Imaginations; I muſt next, concerning theſe Diſtreſſes, offer another obſervable *Diſtinction*, which is this: That they are either made up of *all the five* fore-mentioned Ingredients, or only of *ſome of them*, and ſo may be called *total*, or *partial*; tho' in each of theſe there may be great Differences of Degrees. 1. Sometimes then the Children of God may be brought into *total* Diſtreſſes of Conſcience, even with *Deſperation*, and (that which is more hideous) with *Blaſphemy*. If Mr. *Perkins* his Obſervation hold true, who tells us (*b*), *That they may be ſo over-charged with Sorrow, as to cry out they are damned, and to blaſpheme God.* And we have no Reaſon to contradict it, when we obſerve how,

(*a*) Lib. 1. de mentis alienatione. (*b*) *Treat. of Deſertion.*

how far *David* went in his Haſte, more than once. And whatever may be the *private* Differences betwixt theſe and the Reprobates, in their Agonies (as Differences there are; both in *God's Deſign*, and *their Hearts*, though not viſible) yet if we compare the Fears, Troubles, and Speeches of the one and the other together, there appears *little* or no Difference which By-ſtanders can certainly fix upon. If it ſeems harſh to any, that ſo horrid a Thing as *Deſpair* ſhould be charged upon the *Elect of God*, in the *worſt* of their Diſtreſſes, it will readily be anſwered; 1. That if we *ſuppoſe not* this, we muſt ſuppoſe that which *is worſe*. If we like not to ſay, that God's *Children* may fall *into Deſpair*; we muſt conclude (very uncharitably) that they *that fall* into Deſpair, are not God's Children. 2. 'Tis eaſy to imagine a Difference betwixt *partial* and *total* Deſpair, betwixt *imaginary* and *real*. The Children of God, under ſtrong Perturbation of Spirit, may imagine themſelves to do what they do not, and ſo may bear *falſe Witneſs* againſt themſelves; profeſſing that all their Hope of Salvation is loſt, when yet the *Root* of their Hope may ſtill remain in their Hearts *undiſcovered*. The *Habit* may be there, when all viſible *Acts* of it are at *preſent* ſuſpended, or ſo diſguiſed in a Croud of confuſed Expreſſions, that they cannot be known. Or, if they have *real Diſtruſt* of their Salvation, yet every *Fit* of real Diffidence, is not *utter Deſperateneſs*; neither will it denominate a Man, to be *totally deſperate* (*a*), any more than every *Error*, even about *Fundamentals*, will denominate a Man an *Heretick*. For as it muſt be a *pertinacious* Error in *Fundamentals* that makes an Heretick, ſo it muſt be a *pertinacious Diffidence* that makes a Man truly deſperate. 3. But ſometimes the Children of God have only *partial* Diſtreſſes. That is, they may have a great Meaſure of *ſome* of the Ingredients, without Mixture of the reſt. Particularly, they may have a great Meaſure of the *Senſe of Divine Wrath* and Deſertion, *without Deſperation*. The Poſſibility of this is evident, beyond Exception, in the Example of our bleſſed Saviour, when he cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*? None can aſcribe *Deſperation* to him, without Blaſphemy; and if they ſhould, the very Words, *My God, my God*, (expreſſing his full and certain *Hope*), do expreſly contradict them. Such an Inſtance, of ſpiritual

(*a*) Ames's *Caſes of Conſ.* lib. 4. cap. 9.

ſpiritual Diſtreſs *without Deſperation*, I take *Heman* to be. How high his Troubles were, is abundantly teſtified in *Pſal.* lxxxviii. and yet that his Hope was *not loſt*, appears not only by his *Prayer* for Relief in the general; (for Hope is not utterly deſtroyed, where the appointed Means for Help are carefully uſed) but by the particular *Avouchment* of his Hope in God, in the firſt Verſes of that Pſalm, *O Lord God of my Salvation, I have cried Day and Night before thee.*

4. The laſt Difference of ſpiritual Diſtreſſes which I ſhall obſerve, is this; That ſome are more *tranſient. Fits* and *Flaſhes* of Terror, under a *preſent Temptation*, which endure not long; others are more *fixed* and permanent. The *leſs* durable Diſtreſſes may be *violent* and ſharp, while they hold. Temptations of Diffidence may ſtrongly poſſeſs a Child of God, and at firſt may *not be repelled*; and then before their Faith can recover itſelf, they vent their preſent ſad Apprehenſions of their Eſtate, as *Jonah* did, *Jon.* ii. 4. *I ſaid I am caſt out of thy Sight.* Many ſuch Fits *David* had, and in them, complained at this Rate, *Why haſt thou forſaken me? Why caſteſt thou off my Soul?* Pſal. xxxi. 22. *I ſaid in my Haſte, I am cut off from before thine Eyes.* Pſal. cxvi. 11. *I ſaid in my Haſte, all Men are Liars.* Which was a great Height of Diſtruſt, and too boldly reflecting upon God's Faithfulneſs, conſidering the *ſpecial* Promiſes that God had made to him. Such ſharp Fits were thoſe of *Bainham*, and *Bilney*, Martyrs, whoſe Conſciences were ſo ſorely wounded for recanting the Truth which they profeſſed, that they ſeemed to feel a very *Hell* within them.

The more *fixed* Diſtreſſes, as they are of *longer* Continuance, ſo they are often accompanied with the very *worſt Symptoms*: For when in theſe Agonies, *no Sun nor Star of Comfort appears to them for many Days, all hope that they ſhall be ſaved ſeems to be taken away*; and being *tired out* with Complaints and Importunities, without any Anſwer, they at laſt reject the uſe of Means. Some have lain many Years (as the *paralytick* Man at the Pool of *Bethesda*) without Cure. Some from their Youth up, as *Heman* complains. Some carry their Diſtreſſes to their *Death-bed*, and it may be, are not eaſed till their Souls are ready to depart out of their Bodies, and then they often end *ſuddenly* and *comfortably*. Some, I could tell you of, who, on their Death-bed, after grievous Terrors, and many Out-cries,

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concerning their Miseries of *Blackness and Darkness forever*, lay long silent; and then on a Sudden brake out into Raptures of Joy, and adoring Admiration, of the Goodness of God, using that Speech of the Apostle, *Rom.* xi. 33. *O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* Others go out of the World in *Darkness*, without any Appearance of Comfort: Such an Instance was Mr. *Chambers*, (as the Story of his Death testifies) mentioned by Mr. *Perkins*, in his Treatise of *Desertions*, of whom this Account is given; that in great Agonies he cried out, *he was damned*, and so died. The Case of such is surely very sad to themselves, and appears no less to others; yet we must take heed of judging rashly concerning such. Nay, if their former Course of Life hath been *uniformly good*, (for who will reject a fine Web of Cloth (as one speaks) for a little coarse List at the End,) especially if there be any obscure Appearance of Hope. (As that Expression of Mr. *Chambers*, [*O that I had but one Drop of Faith!*] is by Mr. *Perkins* supposed to be;) we ought to judge the best of them. We have seen the Nature of spiritual Distresses, in the Ingredients and Differences thereof. We are now to consider,

2*dly*, Satan's Method in procuring them: Which consists, (1.) In the *Occasions* which he lays hold on for that End. (2.) In the *Arguments* which he useth. (3.) In the working up of their *Fears*, by which he confirms Men in them.

1. As to the Occasions:- He follows much the *same Course* which hath been described before in spiritual Troubles; so that I need not say much, only I shall note *two* Things. (1.) That it makes much for Satan's Purpose, if the Party against whom he designs, have fallen into some *grievous Sins*. Sins of *common* Magnitude, do not lay a Foundation suitable to the Superstructre which he intends; he cannot plausibly argue *Reprobation*, or *Damnation* from every *ordinary* Sin; but if he finds them guilty of something extraordinary, then he falls to Work with his Accusations. The most usual Sins which he takes Advantage from, are (as Mr. *Perkins* observes) those against the *Third*, *Sixth*, and *Seventh* Command; sometimes those against the *Ninth*: Murder, Adultery, Perjury, and the wilful Denial of Truth, against Conscience, are the Crimes upon which he grounds his Charge, but most usually the last. Upon this

the diſtreſſed *Spira*, and ſome of the *Martyrs*. As for the other, the more *private* they are, Satan hath oft the *more* Advantage againſt them, becauſe God's ſecret and juſt Judgment, will by this Means *bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs*; and force their Conſciences to accuſe them, of that which no Man could lay to their Charge, that he might manifeſt himſelf to be *the Searcher of the Hearts, and Trier of the Reins*. Thus have many been forced to diſcloſe private Murders, ſecret Adulteries, and to vomit up (though with much Pain and Torture) that which they have by Perjury, or Guile, extorted from others. (2.) Where Satan hath not theſe particular Advantages, he doth endeavour to prepare Men for Diſtreſſes, by *other* Troubles *long continued*. All Men that are brought to deſpair of their Happineſs, muſt not be ſuppoſed to be *greater Sinners* than others; ſome are diſtreſſed with Fears of eternal Damnation, that are in a good Meaſure able to make *Job*'s Proteſtation in theſe Caſes: That their *Heart hath not been deceived by a Woman*: That they *have not laid Wait at their Neighbour's Door*, Job xxxi. 9, &c. That they *have not lift up their Hand againſt the Fatherleſs, when they ſaw their Help in the Gate; that their Land doth not cry againſt them, nor the Furrows thereof complain; that when they ſaw the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in Brightneſs, their Heart hath not been ſecretly enticed, nor their Mouth kiſſed their Hand; that they rejoiced not in the Deſtruction of him that hated them, nor lift up themſelves when Evil found him*; &c. Notwithſtanding all which their Fears are upon, and prevail againſt them. But then before Satan can bring them to conſent to ſuch diſmal Concluſions againſt themſelves, they muſt be *extraordinarily fitted* to take the Impreſſion; either *tired* out under *great* Afflictions, or *long* exerciſed with *Fears* about their ſpiritual Eſtates, without Intermixture of Comfort, or Eaſe, or their Faculties *broken* and weakned by Melancholly. Any of theſe give him an Advantage *equivalent* to that of *great Sins*. For though he cannot ſay to theſe, your Sins are ſo enormous, that they are (conſidered themſelves together with their Circumſtances) *ſad Signs* of Reprobation; yet he will plead that *God's Carriage* towards them, doth plainly diſcover that he hath wholly caſt them off, and left them to themſelves, without Hope of Mercy.

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2. As for the *Arguments* which he uſeth, they are much-what from the ſame *Topicks* which he maketh choice of in bringing on ſpiritual Troubles. Only as he aims at the Proof of a great deal more againſt God's Children, than that they are not converted; ſo accordingly he ſcrues up his *Mediums* for Proof to an higher Pin. His Arguments are,

1. From *Scriptures wreſted*, or miſapplied. His Choice of Scriptures for this Purpoſe, is of ſuch Places as either ſeem to ſpeak moſt ſadly the dangerous and fearful Eſtate of Men, according to the *firſt View* and literal Repreſentation of them, through the Unskilfulneſs of thoſe that are to be concerned; or of ſuch Places as do *really* ſignify the miſerable Unhappineſs of ſome Perſons, who through their own Fault, have been cut off from all Hope, and the Poſſibility of the like to ſome others for the future. So that in framing Arguments from Scripture, the Devil uſeth *a twofold* Cunning. (1.) There are ſome Scriptures which have the Word *Damnation* in them, applied to ſome *particular Acts* and Miſcarriages of Men; when yet their *Intendment* is not ſuch as the Word ſeems to ſound, or as he would make them to believe. Now, when he catcheth a Child of God in ſuch Acts as are there ſpecified, (if he finds that his Ignorance, or Timerouſneſs is ſuch, as may render the Temptation feaſible) he preſently applies Damnation to them by the Authority of thoſe Texts. For Inſtance, that Text of *Rom.* xiv. 23. hath been frequently abuſed to that End; *He that doubteth is damned, if he eat.*—The Word *damned* there, ſtrikes deep with a weak troubled Chriſtian, that is not skilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs. For whether Satan apply it to *Sacramental Eating* (as ſometimes he doth to the ignorant, though contrary to the Purpoſe of the Text,) or to *Doubting* in the general, he makes this Concluſion out of it: *Thou doubteſt, or thou haſt eaten the Sacrament doubtingly, therefore there is no Hope for thee; thou art damned.* Whereas all this while, the Devil doth but play the Sophiſter in the Abuſe of the *Signification* of Words. For that Scripture evidently relates to the *Difference* that then was in the Church, about eating thoſe Meats that were unclean by *Moſes*'s Law: In which Caſe the Apoſtle doth poſitively declare, that the Difference betwixt clean and unclean Meats, is taken away; ſo that a Chriſtian might, with all Freedom imaginable,

eat thoſe Meats that were formerly unclean, with this *Proviſo*, that he were *fully perſwaded in his own Mind*. The Neceſſity of which Satisfaction, he proves from this, That otherwiſe he ſhould offend his own Conſcience, which in that Caſe muſt needs *condemn* him (and that's the Damnation that is there ſpoken of;) as is more evident by comparing this Verſe with the next foregoing; *Happy is he-that condemneth not himſelf.* But he that doubteth, doth *condemn* himſelf, becauſe *he eats not of Faith*; that is, from *full Perſwaſion* of the Lawfulneſs of the Thing. This Scripture then hath nothing at all in it, to the Purpoſe for which Satan brings it; it doth not ſpeak of any *final Sentence* of Condemnation paſſed upon a Man for ſuch an Act; all, and the utmoſt that it ſaith, is only this, That it is *a Sin* to go againſt the Perſwaſion of Conſcience, and conſequently it puts no Man further off Salvation, than any *other* Sin may do; for which, upon Repentance, the Sinner may be pardoned.

Another Text which Satan hath frequently abuſed, to the very great Prejudice of many, is that of 1 *Cor.* xi. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himſelf.* With this Scripture he inſults over the humble fearful Chriſtian, who is ſenſible of his Unworthineſs of ſo great a Privilege. Sometimes he keeps him off long from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, upon this very Score, That ſuch an unworthy Wretch ought not to make ſuch near and familiar Approaches to Chriſt. And if at laſt he is perſuaded to partake of this Ordinance, then (taking the Advantage of the Party's Conſciouſneſs of his great Vileneſs, and the very low Thoughts which he entertains of himſelf) he endeavours to perſwade him, that now he hath *deſtroyed himſelf for ever*, and run upon his own irrecoverable Damnation. Thus he pleads it; *Can any Thing be more plain, than that thou haſt eaten and drunken unworthily? Thy own Conſcience tells thee ſo: And can any Thing be more poſitively aſſerted than this, that he that doth ſo, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himſelf? What then canſt thou think of thy ſelf, but that thou art a damned Wretch?* Neither do I ſpeak barely, what may be ſuppoſed Satan *would ſay* in this Matter, but what may be proved by many Inſtances he *hath ſaid* and urged upon the Conſciences of the weak, who have from hence concluded (to the great Diſtreſs of their Souls) that by

by unworthy receiving of the Sacrament, they have sealed up their own Condemnation; and all this by abusing and *perverting* the Sense of this Text. For the unworthy receiving, doth relate to the Miscarriages which he *had taxed* before, and it implies a *careless, profane Eating*; such as might plainly express the small, or unworthy Esteem that they had in their Hearts for that Ordinance. And the *Damnation* there threatned, is not *final* and irrecoverable Damnation, but *temporal Judgment*; as the Apostle himself doth explain it, in the next Verses: *For this Cause many are sickly.—And if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.*—That is (as he further explains it) we should not be thus chastned, or afflicted; and the Word translated *Damnation* (*a*), doth signify Judgment. At the furthest, if we should take it for the Condemnation of Hell, all that is threatned would be no more than this; That such have *deserved*, and God in Justice might inflict the Condemnation of Hell for such an Offence: Which is not only true of *this Sin*, but of *all others*, which still do admit of the *Exception* of Repentance. All this while this is nothing to the poor humbled Sinner, that judgeth himself unworthy in his most serious Examination, and greatest Diligence. Satan here plays upon the Unexactness of the Translation, and the Ignorance of the Party in *Criticisms*; for 'tis not every one that can readily answer such *captious* Arguments. (2.) But he hath another Piece of Cunning, which is this. He doth by a singular Kind of Art, *threap* upon Men some Scripture that really speaks of eternal Condemnation, without any sufficient Evidence in *Matter of Fact* for the due Application of them, only because they *cannot prove* the contrary. His proceeding herein is to this Purpose: *First*, (After he hath prepared his Way, by forming their Minds to a fearful Suspicion of their Estate) he sets before them such Scriptures as these; *God hardned the Heart of Pharaoh*: He hath prepared *Vessels of Wrath, fitted for Destruction.* Christ prayed not *for the World*:-And that concerning the *Jews*, *He hath blinded their Eyes, and hardned their Hearts. Secondly*, He confidently *affirms* that they are such. *Thirdly*, He puts *them* to prove the contrary, and herein he sends them to the Search of God's *eternal Decrees*; in which

(*a*) Κρίμα.

Art, Satan (like an *ignis fatuus*) leads them out of the Way. And though he cannot possibly *determine* what he affirms, he shifts off the *positive Proof* from himself, and leaves it upon them to make out, that they *are not thus determined of* by God's unchangeable Purpose. And because the tempted (under so great a Cloud) have no such *Persuasion* of their present Graces, as may enable them to make *sure their Election*, by the Fruits of their *Vocation*, they are beaten off from their Hold, and are brought to believe that the Argument is unanswerable: Because they cannot say *they are converted*, they conclude they *must be damned*; overlooking the true Answer that they might make, by keeping close to the *Possibility*, or *Probability* that they *may be* converted, and so escape the Damnation of Hell. This *general Hope* being of such high Concern to the Distressed, (for 'tis the first Thing that must relieve them, till better Evidence come in) it is Satan's great Policy to cheat them of it, which he often doth by this Method now declared.

2. Satan doth mainly endeavour to *misrepresent* God to troubled Souls, and from thence he draweth our Arguments against them. In the former Case of *spiritual Troubles*, he misrepresents God, in that he represents only some Attributes of his, not only *distinct* from, but in *Opposition* to others, by which he labours to conceal the sweet and beautiful *Harmony* that is among them; and also to make one Attribute, an Argument against the comfortable supporting Considerations, which another would afford. He insists upon God's Justice without Respect of Mercy, upon his Holiness, without any Regard of his gracious Condescensions to the Infirmities of the Weak. But when it is his Business to bring any under spiritual *Distresses*, he then misrepresents God at an *higher Rate*, and sticks not to asperse him with abominable *Falsehoods*. There are two Lies which he commonly urgeth at this Time.

1. He represents God as a *cruel Tyrant*, of a rigorous unmerciful Disposition, that delights himself in the Ruin and Misery of Men. To this Purpose he rakes together the *harshest* Passages of the Scripture, that speak of God's just *Severity* against the *wilful* obstinate Sinners, that stubbornly contemn his Offers of Grace. God indeed hath cleared himself of this Aspersion, by solemn *Oath*, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. *As*

I live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and live. Yet the Tempted will sooner believe Satan's *Suggestion* than God's *Oath*; partly because the Sense of their *Vileness* doth secretly sway them to think, there is *Reason* that he should be so; partly because their *Fears* incline them to suspect the *worst*; and partly the uneasy Tossings of their Mind long continued, reviveth the natural *Forwardness* of the Spirit against God. Which, how apt it is (when fretted with Vexation) to entertain harsh Thoughts of God, may be seen in the Answer of the slothful Servant to his Lord, who returned his Talent back again unimproved, with a *Reflection*: Importing that his Master was such as none could please; so severe, that he was discouraged from making any Attempt of serving him acceptably, *Matth.* xxv. 24. He said, *Lord, I know thee that thou art an hard Man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed.*

2. He belies God further, by representing him as *designing* the Ruin and Misery of the tempted Person in particular. He would make him believe that God had a *particular Spleen* (as it were) against him above other Men; and that in all his Dealings with, or concerning him, he is but as a *Bear lying in wait, and as a Lion in secret Places*, ready to take any Advantage to cut him off. And accordingly he gives no other Interpretation of all the Ways of God, but such as make them look like Tokens of *final* Rejection of those that are concerned in them. If there be upon them outward *Afflictions*, he tells them, these are but the *Forerunners* of Hell: If they ly under inward *Sense of Wrath*, he calls that the *First-fruits* of everlasting Vengeance: If any particular *Threatning* be impressed upon their Consciences by the Spirit of God, in order to their Humiliation and Repentance; he represents it as God's *final Sentence*, and absolute Determination against them. If for Caution, God see it fit to set before them the *Examples* of his Wrath, (as it is very frequent for him to do, lest we *should fall after the same Example of Unbelief*, 1 Pet. ii. 6. 1 *Cor.* x. 6.) Satan perverts this to that which God never intended, for he boldly asserts, That these Examples *prognosticate* their Misery; and that God signifies by them, a Prediction of certain unavoidable Unhappiness.

This muſt be obſerved here, That theſe Miſrepreſentations of God, are none of Satan's *primary* Arguments; he uſeth them only as *freſh Reſerves* to ſecond others. For where he finds any Wing of his *Batalions* ready to be beaten, he comes up with theſe Supplies to relieve them. For indeed, theſe Conſiderations of God's Severity in the general, or of his ſpecial Reſolve againſt any in particular, are not of Force ſufficient to attack a Soul, that is within the *Trenches* of preſent Peace; they are not of themſelves proper *Mediums* to produce ſuch a Concluſion. Tho' we ſuppoſe God ſevere, (except we ſhould imagine him to be an *Hater* of Mankind *univerſally*) we cannot thence infer the final Ruin of this, or that *individual* Perſon. And beſides, (that theſe are *unjuſtifiable* Falſhoods) they cannot make the final Damnation of any one ſo much as *probable*, till the Heart be firſt *weakned* in its Hopes, by Fears, or Doubtings, raiſed up in it upon other Grounds. Then indeed Men are ſtaggered, either by the deep Senſe of their Unworthineſs, or ſome ſad continuing Calamity, and the ſeeming Neglect of their Prayers. If Satan then tell them of God's Severity, or that (all his Providences conſidered) he hath ſet them up as a *Mark for the Arrows of his Indignation*, they are ready to believe his Report, it being ſo ſuitable to their preſent Senſe and Feeling.

3. Satan alſo fetcheth Arguments from the *Sins* of God's Children, but his great Art in this is by unjuſt Aggravations to make them look like thoſe Offences, which, by *Special Exception* in Scripture, are excluded from Pardon. The Apoſtle, 1 *John* v. 16. tells us of a *Sin that is unto Death*; that is, a Sin, which if a Man commits, he cannot eſcape eternal Death, and therefore he would not have ſuch a Sinner prayed for. (That the Popiſh Diſtinction of *venial* and *mortal* Sins is not here intended, ſome of the Papiſts themſelves do confeſs (*a*).) What he means by that Sin he doth not tell us, it being a Thing known ſufficiently from other Scriptures. The Note of *Unpardonableneſs*, is indeed affixed to Sins under *ſeveral Denominations*; the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, Chriſt pronounceth *unpardonable*, Matth. xii. 31. *Total Apoſtacy* from the Truth of the Goſpel, hath no leſs ſaid of it by the Apoſtle, when he calls it *a drawing back to Perdition*, Heb. x. 39. Whether theſe be all one, or whether there is any other *Spe-*

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(*a*) Lorinus in loc. Barth. Pegus in loc.

cies of Sin irremiſſible, beſides that againſt the Holy Ghoſt, 'ris not to our Purpoſe to make Enquiry. Whatever they are in themſelves, Satan in this Matter, makes Uſe of the Texts that ſpeak of them diſtinctly; as we ſhall preſently ſee. But beſides theſe, the Scriptures ſpeak of ſome, that were *given up to vile Affections, and to a reprobate Mind*, Rom. i. 26, 28. And of others that were given up *to hardneſs of Heart*, Matth. xiii. 14. *Acts* xxviii. 26. Now, whoſoever they are of whom theſe Things may be juſtly affirmed, they are certainly miſerable, hopeleſs Wretches. Here then is Satan's Cunning, if he can make any Child of God believe that he hath done any *ſuch Act*, or Acts of Sin, as may bring him within the *Compaſs* of theſe Scriptures, then he inſults over them, and tells them over and over again, that they are cut off for ever.

To this Purpoſe he aggravates all their Sins. And, 1. If he find them guilty of any *great Iniquity*, he fixeth upon that, and labours all he can to make it look moſt *deſperately*, that ſo he may call it the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*; and in this he hath a mighty Advantage, that moſt Men are in the *Dark* about that Sin: All Men being not yet agreed whether it be a *diſtinct Species* of Sin, or an *higher Degree* of Wilfulneſs relating to any particular Sin. Upon this Score, Satan can lay the Charge of this Sin, upon thoſe that *apoſtatize* from the Truth, and through Weakneſs have *recanted* it. (Thus he dealt with *Spira*, with *Bilney*, with *Bainham*, and ſeveral others.) There is ſo near a Reſemblance in theſe Sins of denying Truths, to what is ſaid of the unpardonable Sin, that theſe Men tho' they were *Scholars*, and Men of *good Abilities*, yet they were not able to anſwer the Argument that the Devil urged againſt them, but it prevailed to diſtreſs them. Upon others alſo, hath Satan the Advantage to fix this Accuſation: For let the *Species* of the Sin be what it will, if they have any Thing of that Notion, that the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is a *preſumptuous Act* of Sin, under Temptation, they will call any *notorious Crime*, the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe of the more remarkable aggravating *Circumſtances* that have accompanied ſuch a Fact. 2. He aggravates the Sins of God's Children from the Wilfulneſs of their ſinning. 'Tis a Thing often too true, that a Child of God may be carried by a *violent Impetus*, or ſtrong Inclination of Affe-

ction, to ſome particular Iniquity, where the *Forwardneſs* of Deſires that Way, by a ſudden Haſte, do *ſtifle* thoſe Reluctancies of Mind, which may be expected from one endowed with the Spirit of God; whoſe Power upon them, doth ordinarily ſway them, *to luſt againſt the Fleſh*. But it is more ordinary to find a Temptation to prevail, notwithſtanding that an enlightned Mind doth make *ſome Reſiſtance*; which (becauſe 'tis too feeble) is eaſily born down by the ſtrong *Importunities* of Satan, working upon the Inclinations of the Fleſh. *Both* theſe Caſes are improved againſt them, over whom Satan hath got any Advantage of doubting of their Eſtate. If they have reſiſted but *ineffectually*, or *not reſiſted* at all, he chargeth them with the *higheſt* Wilfulneſs, and will ſo aggravate the Matter that they ſhall be put in fear, not only that there can be *no Grace* (where Sin hath ſo much Power as either to *controul* ſo much Light and Endeavours, or hath ſo *ſubjected* the Heart to its Dominion, that it can command without a Contradiction) but that they can have *no Hope*; that they that ſin with ſo high an Hand, ſhould ever enter into God's Reſt. And to this Purpoſe he commonly ſets before them, that Text of *Heb.* x. 26. *If we ſin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins.* Or that of *Heb.* vi. 4. *It is impoſſible for thoſe who were once enlightned — if they fall away, to renew them again to Repentance.* Both which Places ſpeak indeed, at leaſt, ſuch a *Difficulty*, as in common Uſe of Speech, is called an *Impoſſibility*, if not an utter *abſolute* Impoſſibility of Repentance and Pardon. But then the *ſinning wilfully*, or *falling away*, there mentioned, is only that of *total Apoſtacy*; when Men that have embraced the Goſpel, and by it have met with ſuch Impreſſions of Power and Delight upon their Hearts, which we uſually call *common Grace*, do notwithſtanding, reject that Goſpel as *falſe* and fabulous, and ſo riſe up againſt it with Scorn and utmoſt Contempt; as *Julian* the Apoſtate did. If now the true Intendment of thoſe Scriptures were conſidered, by thoſe that are diſtreſſed with them, they might preſently ſee, that they were put into Fear, where *no ſuch Cauſe* of Fear was. But all Men have not this Knowledge, nor do they ſo duly attend to the Matter of the Apoſtle's Diſcourſe, as to be able

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to put a right Interpretation upon it; upon ſuch Satan impoſeth his deceitful Gloſs, and tells them, *Wilful Sinners cannot be reſtored to Repentance, but you have ſinned wilfully; when Sin was before you, you ruſhed into it without any Conſideration, as the Horſe into the Battle: Or when God ſtood in your Way with Commands, and Advice to the contrary; when your Conſciences warned you not to do ſo great Wickedneſs, yet you would do it. You were as thoſe that break the Yoke and burſt the Bonds.* Upon this Suppoſition, that theſe Texts ſpeak of *wilful* Sinning in the general, how little can be ſaid againſt Satan's Argument? How many have I known that have been tortured with theſe Texts, judging their Eſtate fearful, becauſe of their Wilfulneſs in ſinning? Who upon the breaking of the *Snare* of Satan's *Miſrepreſentation*, have eſcaped *as a Bird unto the Hill.* 3. When either of the two former Ways will not ſerve the Turn (that is, when he meets with ſuch againſt whom he hath nothing of notorious Wickedneſs to object, or ſuch as have a better diſcerning of Scripture than ſo to be impoſed upon) he labours to make a Charge againſt them from the Number of their Miſcarriages. Here he takes up all the Filth he can, and lays it upon one Heap at their Door. 'Tis indeed an eaſy Thing for Satan to ſet the Sins of a Child of God *in Order* before him, and to bring to Mind *innumerable* Evils, eſpecially to one that is already awakned with a true Diſcovery of the Corruption of Nature, and the Vileneſs of Sin. In which Caſe, the more a Man conſiders, the more he will diſcover; and Sins thus ſet in *Battle Array* (tho' they be not more than ordinary hainous, yet being many) have a very *diſmal Appearance.* Satan's Deſign in this is to bring Men under the Affrightments, which ſeem moſt proper to be raiſed from a perverſe Aſpect of the *third* Rank of Scriptures, which a little before I pointed at; for the Word of God, ſpeaking of the final Eſtate of Men, doth not only diſcover the hopeleſs Condition of ſome, as to eternal Life, from ſome particular *Acts* of Sin, but alſo the ſad Eſtate of others, from the *Manner*, *Degrees*, and *Frequency* of ſinning. The Heathens, becauſe they improved not the Knowledge of God which they had from the Works of Creation, neither making thoſe *Inferences* in Matters relating to his Worſhip, which thoſe Diſcoveries did direct them unto; nor behaving themſelves in full Compliance to

thoſe Rules of *virtuous Converſation*, which they might have drawn from theſe Principles, and unto which in Point of Gratitude they were obliged, *Rom.* i. 21. *They glorified him not as God, neither were thankful*; therefore God *gave them up to a reprobate Mind.* And generally concerning all others, the Scripture teacheth us, that a Return to a profane fleſhly Life, after ſome Reformation, hath a greater Hazard in it than ordinary, as appears by the Parable in *Mat.* xii. 45. *Seven more wicked Spirits re-enter*, where *one* that was caſt out is received again, and the *laſt State of that Man is worſe than the firſt.* So alſo 2 *Pet.* ii. 20. To this Purpoſe is that of *Solomon*, concerning the Danger of Continuance in Sin, after many Reproofs, *Prov.* xxix. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his Neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without Remedy.* Theſe and many ſuch like Scriptures Satan hath in Readineſs, which he plies Home upon the Conſciences of thoſe that are troubled with the Senſe of Sin, telling them, *That their Hearts and Ways being continually evil, notwithſtanding all the Courſes that God hath taken to reclaim them; that they having ſo long neglected ſo great Salvation; or that after having ſeemed to entertain it, became more ſinful than before.* (Which they will eaſily believe, becauſe they are now more ſenſible of Sin, and more obſervant of their Miſcarriages than formerly,) *There can be no Queſtion, but they are given up to vile Affections; and like the Ground that bears nothing but Briers and Thorns, they are rejected, and nigh unto curſing, whoſe End is to be burned.* The Wound that is made with this Weapon is not ſo eaſily healed, as ſome others already mentioned, becauſe (tho' Satan do *unduly* wreſt theſe Paſſages to ſuch Failures in the Children of God, as have *little or no Affinity* with them; for they only ſpeak of falling into *open Prophaneneſs with Contumacy*, yet) they that have deep Convictions, accompanied with great Fears, do uſually think that there are *none worſe* than they are. And tho' they will grant, that ſome others have *more flagitious Lives*, yet they think they have *Hearts* ſo deſperately wicked, that they muſt needs be under as great Hazards, as thoſe whoſe Lives ſeem to be worſe.

4. There is but one Argument more, that carries any Probability of Proof for everlaſting Condemnation, and

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that is from an *hard and impenitent Heart*. How Satan will manage himself, to make a Child of God believe, that he hath such an Heart, is our last Observation relating to his *Sophistry*, and it is this: He unjustly aggravates the *Discomposures* of the Spirits of those that are troubled for Sin, and from thence draws his Arguments of irrecoverable Damnation, pleading that their Hearts are seared, hardned, incapable of Repentance, and consequently of Heaven. That *final Impenitency* will conclude Damnation, is certain; and that some have been given up to such a *judicial* Hardness long before Death, that they could not repent, may not only be evidenced from the Threatning of God to that Purpose, *Mat.* xiii. *Make the Heart of this People fat*, &c. but also from the sad Instances of *Pharaoh* (of whom 'tis said, that God hardned his Heart) and the *Jews* who were blinded, *Rom.* xi. 8. *God hath given them the Spirit of Slumber, Eyes that they should not see, and Ears that they should not hear.* But still the Art lieth in this, how to make a Child of God believe that 'tis so with him; for this Purpose he must take him at some Advantage, he cannot terrify him with this Argument at *all Times*. While he is *acting* Repentance with an *undisturbed* settled Frame of Heart, 'tis not possible to make him believe he doth not, or cannot repent; for this were to force him contrary to Sense and Experience; but he must take him at some Season, which may with some Probability admit of his Plea, and nothing is more proper for that Design than a *troubled Heart*; so that he hath in this Case *two* Things to do.

1. He disquiets the Soul into as great an *Height* of Confusion as he can. That 2. When he hath *melted* it into Heaviness, and torn it into Pieces, he may work upon its *Distractions*.

There are many Things that fall out in the Case of great Anxiety of Mind, that are capable of Improvement for the Accomplishment of this Design. As, 1. Distracting Troubles bring the Heart under the *Stupidity* of Amazement. Their Thoughts are so broken and disjointed, that they cannot unite them to a composed, settled Resolution in any Thing; they can scarce *join* them together, to make out so much as might *spell* out their *distinct* Desires or Endeavours; they scarce know what they are *doing*, or what they *would* do. 2. They also *poison* the Thoughts with harsh

harsh Apprehensions against God. Great Distresses make the Thoughts sometimes recoil against the Holy Lord with unseemly Questionings of his Goodness and Compassion; and this puts Men into a bad *sullen* Humour of Untowardness, from whence (through Satan's Improvement) arise the greatest *Plunges* of Despair. 3. Most usually in this Case the greatest *Endeavours* are fruitless and dissatisfactory. Satan (tho' he be no Friend to Duty) doth *unseasonably* urge them to repent and pray; but 'tis because they cannot do either with any *Satisfaction*, and then their Failures are Matter of Argument against them. For if they resolve to put themselves upon a more severe Course of Repentance, and accordingly begin to think of their Sins, to number them, or to aggravate them, they are usually affrighted from the Undertaking, by the hainous Appearance of them; they cannot, they dare not think of them, the remotest Glimpse of them is terrible to an affrighted Conscience; the *raising* of them up again in the *Memory* (like the rising of a Ghost from the Grave) is far more astonishing than the *first Prospect* of them after Commission. So true is that of *Luther*, *If a Man could see Sin perfectly, it would be a perfect Hell.* If they set themselves to beg their Pardon by earnest Prayer, they are so *distracted* and confused in Prayer, that their Prayers please them not; they come off from the Duty *more* wounded than when they began. Or if in any Measure they overcome these Difficulties, so that they do pray and confess their Iniquities, then they urge and *force* a Sorrow or Compunction upon themselves, but still to a greater *Dissatisfaction*: For it may be (and this usually happens in greater Distresses) they cannot *weep* nor force a Tear, or if they do, still they judge their Sorrow is not *deep enough*, nor any way suitable to the Greatness of their Sin. 4. To all these Satan sometimes makes a further Addition of Trouble, by injecting *blasphemous* Thoughts: Here he sets the Stock, with an Intention to graff upon it afterward. When all these Things are thus in Readiness, then comes he to set Fire to the *Train*, and thus he endeavours to blow up the *Mine*: *Is not thy Heart hardned to everlasting Destruction? How canst thou deny this? Art thou not grown stupid and senseless of all the Hazards that are before thee?* (Here he insists upon the Amazement and Confusion of their Spirit; and 'tis very natural for those

that

that are drunk with the Terrors of the Almighty, to think themſelves ſtupid, becauſe of the *Diſtraction* of their Thoughts. I have known ſeveral that have pleaded that very Argument to that Purpoſe.) Satan goes on, *What greater Evidence can there be of an hardned Heart, than Impenitency? Thou canſt not mourn enough. Thou haſt not a Tear for thy Sins, tho' thou couldſt weep enough formerly, upon every petty Occaſion; nay, thou canſt not ſo much as pray for Pardon: Is not this not only a Heart that doth not, but that cannot repent? Beſides* (ſaith he) *thou knoweſt the ſecret Thoughts that thy Heart is privy to, do they not boil up in thy Breaſt againſt God? Art thou not ready to tax him for dealing thus with thee? What is this Untowardneſs, but deſperate Obdurateneſs?* And if with all theſe there be blaſphemous Injections, then he tells him it is a clear Caſe that he is judicially hardned; in that *he acts the Part of the damned in Hell already.* By all, or ſome of theſe Deceits, the Devil doth often prevail ſo far with Men, that they conclude their Heart to be ſo obſtinate, ſo ſtupid, that 'tis impoſſible that it ſhould be ever mollified, or brought into a penitential Frame, and conſequently that there is no Hope of their Salvation.

3. There is but one Thing more, (beſides the Occaſions which he takes, and the Arguments which he makes Uſe of) relating to Satan's Method for the Procurement of ſpiritual Diſtreſſes, and that is his Endeavour to ſtrengthen theſe Arguments, by the Increaſe of *Fears* in their Hearts.

What Satan can do in raiſing up miſgiving, tormenting Fears, hath been ſaid, and how ſerviceable this is to his Deſign, I ſhall ſhew in a few Particulars, having only firſt noted this in the general, That as his Deſign in theſe Diſtreſſes, is raiſed to expreſs his utmoſt Height of Malice againſt Men, in puſhing them forward to the greateſt Miſchief, by excluding them totally from the loweſt Degree of the Hope of Happineſs, and by perſuading them of the inevitable *Certainty* of their eternal Miſery: So he doth endeavour by the ſtrongeſt Impreſſions of Fear, to terrify them to the utmoſt Degree of affrightful Amazement, and conſequently the Effects of that Fear are moſt powerful. For,

1. By this Means the Spirits of Men are formed and moulded into a Frame moſt ſuitable for the Belief and Entertainment of the moſt diſmal Impreſſions, that Satan can put upon them. For ſtrong Fears (like Fire) do aſſimulate every

every Thing to their own Nature, making them naturally incline to receive the blackeſt, the moſt diſadvantagious Interpretations of all Things againſt themſelves; ſo that they have no Capacity to put any other Senſe upon what lies in their Way, but the very worſt; hence are they poſſeſſed with no other Thoughts, but that they are remedileſs Wretches, deſperate Miſcreants, utterly forſaken of God. They are brought into ſuch a woful Partiality againſt their own Peace, that they cannot judge aright of any Accuſation, Plea, or Argument that Satan brings, for a Proof of their Unhappineſs; but being filled with ſtrong Prejudices of Hell, they think every *Sophiſm* a ſtrong Argument, every Suppoſition a Truth, and every *Accuſation concluſive* of no leſs than their eternal Damnation. Inſomuch that their Fears do more to diſcomfit them, than all Satan's Forces. *A dreadful Sound being in their Ears*, their Strength fails them at the Appearance of any Oppoſition. As when Fear comes upon an Army, they throw away their Weapons, and by an eaſy Victory give their Backs ſometimes to an inconſiderable Enemy.

2. Men thus poſſeſſed with Fear, do not only receive into their own Bowels every Weapon which Satan directs on Purpoſe, to the wounding and ſlaying of their Hopes; but by a ſtrange Kind of Belief, they imagine every Thing to be the *Sword of an Enemy*. All they hear, or meet with, turns into Poiſon to them, for they think every Thing is againſt them; *Promiſes* as well as *Threatnings*; *Mercies* as well as *Judgments*; and that by all theſe (one as well as another,) God (as with a *flaming Sword*, turning every Way) doth hinder their Acceſs to the *Tree of Life*. *Bilney* the Martyr (as *Latimer* in his Sermons reports of him) after his Denial of the Truth, was under ſuch Horrors of Conſcience, that his Friends were forced to ſtay with him Night and Day. No Comforts would ſerve: If any comfortable Place of Scripture was offered to him, it was as *if a Man ſhould cut him through with a Sword*. Nothing did him good; he thought that *all Scriptures made againſt him, and ſounded to his Condemnation*. Neither is it ſo rare a Thing for Fears to form the Imagination into ſuch miſhapen Apprehenſions, as that we ſhould think ſuch Inſtances to be only ſingular and unuſual; but 'tis a common Effect of Terror, which few or none eſcape that are under ſpiritual Diſtreſſes. The Black-

neſs

meſs of their Thoughts make the whole Scripture ſeem black to them: The unfit *Medium* through which they look, doth diſcolour every Object. So that the *Book of Life* (as Mrs. *Katharine Bretterge*, in the like Caſe, expreſſed herſelf concerning the *Bible*) ſeems to be nothing elſe but a *Book of Death to them* (*a*).

3. From hence it follows, that no *Counſel*, or Advice, can take Place with them. Exceſſive Fears do remove their Souls ſo far from Peace, that they will not believe there is any Hope for them, tho' it be *told them*. The moſt compaſſionate ſerious Admonitions of Friends, the ſtrongeſt Arguments againſt Deſpair, the cleareſt Diſcoveries of the Hopes that are before them, *&c.* effect but little; while they are ſpoken (it may be) they ſeem to relieve them a little, but the Comfort abides not with them, 'tis ſoon gone: Tho' they *cannot anſwer* the Arguments brought for them, yet they cannot *believe* them; as if their Souls were now deprived of all Power to believe any Thing for their Good. Suitable to that Expreſſion of *Spira*, in Anſwer to his Friends that laboured to comfort him, *I would believe Comfort but cannot, I can believe nothing But what is contrary to my Comfort.* Nay, when they are told, that many others have been under the like dreadful Apprehenſions of everlaſting Miſery, who have at laſt been comforted, (and by manifold Experience, we find, that it is *the greateſt Eaſe to diſtreſſed Souls, to hear (eſpecially to ſpeak with) ſome that have been in the like Caſe*; for this will oft adminiſter ſome Hope, that they alſo may *at laſt* be comforted, when the moſt comfortable *Promiſes* of the *Scripture* are a Terror to them.) Yet this doth not effect the leaſt Eaſe for them ſometimes, becauſe ſome are ſo wholly poſſeſſed with *unalterable* Prejudice againſt themſelves; that they think none are, or ever were like them. They compare themſelve to *Judas* and *Cain*, and think their Iniquity to be aggravated by many Circumſtances, far beyond the Pitch of them. Thus *Spira* judged of himſelf; *I tell you* (ſaith he) *my Caſe is mine own, 'tis ſingular, none like it.*

4. Tho' Fears make the Soul unactive to any Thing of Comfort, becauſe they wholly deſtroy its Inclination, and alter its Byaſs to Hope; yet on the contrary, they make it

(*a*) Vide *her Story in* Clark's *Lives*,

it very nimble, and active to purſue the Concluſions of Miſery, which they have helped to frame. For the Spring of all the Faculties of the Soul are bent that Way. Hence it is, that thoſe who are poſſeſſed with theſe Agonies, will eagerly plead againſt themſelves, and with an admirable *Subtility*, will frame Arguments againſt their Peace, coin Diſtinctions, and make ſtrange Evaſions to eſcape the Force of any Conſolation that may be offered to them; their Underſtandings are, as it were, *whetted* by their Fears to an unimaginable *Quickneſs*. Who would not wonder to hear the Replies that ſome will give to the Arguings of their Friends, that labour to comfort them? What ſtrange Anſwers *Spira* gave to thoſe that pleaded with him? How eaſily he ſeemed to turn off the Example of *Peter* denying Chriſt, and thoſe Scriptures that ſpeak of *God's Love* to Mankind, *&c.* may be ſeen at large in his Narrative.

5. Fears, by a ſtrange Kind of *Witchcraft*, do not only make them believe that they *ſhall be* unhappy, but alſo will at laſt perſuade them, that they feel and ſee their Miſery already. How aſtoniſhingly doth *Spira* ſpeak to this Purpoſe? *I find be daily more and more bardens me, I feel it.* Anſwerable to this (I remember) was the Caſe of one who was long impriſoned in deep Diſtreſſes: He told me, that he verily believed that Scripture of *Iſaiah* lxvi. 24. was fulfilled upon him, *From one Sabbath to another, ſhall all Fleſh come to worſhip before me, and they ſhall go forth and look upon the Carcaſes of the Men that have tranſgreſſed againſt me: For their Worm ſhall not die, neither ſhall their Fire be quenched, and they ſhall be an abhoring to all Fleſh.* To his own feeling he had the Torments of Conſcience, and the Senſe of divine Wrath was as a burning Fire within him; and to his Apprehenſion, every Look from others was a gazing upon him as *a Monſter* of Miſery, *abhorred of all Fleſh.*

The Nature of ſpiritual Diſtreſſes, and Satan's Method in working them, being explained, the laſt Thing promiſed is now to be opened. This is,

3*dly*, The Burden and Weight of theſe Diſtreſſes, which how grievous, how intolerable it is, may be ſufficiently ſeen in what hath been already ſaid, and may be further evidenced in the Particulars following.

1. Thoſe

1. Thoſe that are wounded with theſe *fiery Darts*, do at firſt uſually *conceal* their Wound, and ſmother their Grief, being aſhamed to declare it; partly, becauſe ſome *great Tranſgreſſion* (it may be) hath kindled all this Fire in their Boſoms, and this they are unwilling to declare to others. Partly, becauſe they ſuſpect, (though no one remarkable Sin hath occaſioned theſe Troubles) that the Diſcovery of their Caſe, will expoſe them to the *Wonder* and *Cenſures* of all that ſhall hear of them. By this Means the Fire burns with greater Vehemency: Their Sore runs continually, and having none to ſpeak a Word in Seaſon for the leaſt Relief, it becomes more painful and dangerous. As bodily Diſtempers concealed by a *fooliſh Modeſty* from the Phyſician, increaſe the Trouble and Hazard of the Patient. Here have they many Strugglings within themſelves, many Attempts to overcome their Fears, but all in vain; they *ſit alone and keep Silence*, they flee the Company and Society of Men; they labour after ſolitary Places, where they may weep with Freedom, (if their Tears be not yet dried up) or at leaſt where they may pour out their *Complaints* againſt themſelves; they *meditate* nothing but their Miſery; they can fix their Thoughts upon nothing elſe; they *chatter as a Crane, or Swallow, they mourn as a Dove*; they are as a *Pelican in the Wilderneſs; as an Owl in the Deſart*, but ſtill without Eaſe. They are but as thoſe that are *ſhared in Dens, and Priſon-houſes*; who the longer they lie there, have the *leſs Patience* to bear the preſent Unhappineſs, and the *leſs Hope* to be delivered from it.

2. When they are *tired* out with private Conflicts, and have no Reſt or Intermiſſion of Trouble; then at laſt they are forced *to ſpeak*; and having once begun to open their Troubles, they care not who knows it. If there be any heinous Sin at the Bottom, their Conſciences are forced to *confeſs* it: Wickedneſs (that was once ſweet in his Mouth) is *turned in his Bowels, it is the Gall of Aſps within him*, Job xx. 14, 15. Thus doth God make Men to vomit up what they had ſwallowed down. Terrors chaſe away all Shame, they can now freely ſpeak againſt their Sin, with the higheſt Aggravations. And if their Conſciences have not an heinous Crime to accuſe them of in *particular*, yet in the general they will judge and condemn themſelves, as the *moſt ſtubborn*, ſinful, or

hardned Wretches, juſtly branded with indelible Characters of the Wrath of God. However the Diſtreſs becomes greater, if they *truly* accuſe themſelves of any particular Sin, that Vomit is not without a Violence offered to Nature, which otherwiſe would cover its Shame. It cannot be done without Sickneſs, Straining and Torture; and when it it done, they take it for granted, that every one paſſeth the ſame Judgment upon them, which they do upon themſelves; and the *frequent* ſpeaking doth *confirm* their Minds in their fearful Expectations. For what Men do *accuſtom* themſelves to aſſert, that they do more confidently believe. If they only complain of themſelves in the general, with any Intentions of Procurement of Pity, (as is uſual for the diſtreſſed to do.) yet while they cry out to others, *Is this nothing to you, all you that paſs by? Is there any Sorrow like to my Sorrow?* &c. Still they think their *Stroak is heavier than their groaning*, and their Cry to others, doth ſtrongly fix this Apprehenſion in themſelves, that none can be more miſerable than they. Thus are they brought to *Job*'s Condition, *Job* xvi. 6. *Though I ſpeak, my Grief is not aſſwaged; and though I forbear, what am I eaſed?*

3. All this while they are under an *expreſſible Senſe* of divine Wrath. *Heman* ſpeaks his Apprehenſions of it, under the Similitude of the moſt hideous, and diſmal, comfortleſs *Impriſonment*, Pſalm lxxxviii. 6. *Thou haſt laid me in the loweſt Pit, in Darkneſs, in the Deeps.* *David* in *Pſalm* cxvi. 3. compares it to the *Sorrows of Death*, and (the higheſt that human Thoughts can reach) the *Pains of Hell*: *The Sorrows of Death compaſs'd me, and the Pains of Hell gat hold upon me; I found Trouble and Sorrow.* Well might they thus judge, all Things conſidered, for Sin (that then lies heavy upon them) is a great Weight, a *Burden* (ſaith *David*) *greater than I can bear*; eſpecially when 'tis preſſed on by an heavy Hand, *thy Hand preſſeth me ſore.* Sin makes the greateſt Wound, conſidering the Conſcience, which is wounded by it, is the *tendereſt* Part, and of exquiſite Senſe. (Hence the Grief of it is compared to the Pain of a running fretting Ulcer, that diſtempers the whole Body: (*My Wounds ſtink and are corrupted; my Sore ran in the Night and ceaſed not*) Or to the Pain of broken and ſhattered Bones, *Pſalm* xxxviii. 3. *There*

is

is no Soundness in my Flesh, because of thine Anger, neither is there any Rest in my Bones, because of my Sin.) The Instrument also that makes the Wound is sharp, and cuts deep, (*'tis sharper than a two edged Sword*) but when the Weapon is poisoned, (and Satan hath a Way to do to that) then it burns, making painful malignant Inflammations. The Wrath of God expressed to the Conscience, brings the greatest Terror, *Who knows the Power of thine Anger?* Psal. xc. 11. It is impossible for the most trembling Conscience, or most jealous Fears, to go to the utmost Bounds of it, neither can we apprehend any Torture greater; the Rack, Tortures, Fire, Gibbets, &c. are all nothing to it. Hence is it that those who were afraid of suffering for Truth, when by this Means they were brought under these Distresses, could then be willing to suffer any Torment on the Body; yea, and heartily wish to suffer much more, so that these Tortures might be ended. Thus it was with *Bainham* Martyr (*a*), who in the publick Congregation bewailed his Abjuration of the Truth, and prayed all his Hearers, *rather to die by and by, than to do as he had done.* But that of *Spira* seems almost beyond Belief; thus speaks he to *Vergerius*, *If I could conceive but the least Spark of Hope of a better Estate hereafter, I would not refuse to endure the most heavy Weight of the Wrath of that great God, yea, for twenty thousand Years, so that I might at length attain to the End of that Misery.*——What dreadful Agonies were these, that put him to these Wishes? But 'tis less Wonder, if you observe what Apprehensions he had of his present Trouble, he judged it worse than Hell itself; (and if you would have a lively Exposition of *David*'s Expression, *The Pains of Hell*, &c. you may fetch it from this Instance) *My present Estate* (saith he), *I now account worse, than if my Soul (separated from my Body) were with Judas and the rest of the Damned; and therefore I desire rather to be there, than thus to live in the Body.* So that if you imagine a Man crusht under the greatest Weight, wounded in the most tender Parts, and those Wounds provoked by the sharpest *Corrosives*, his Bones all disjointed and broken, pined also with Hunger and Thirst, and in this Case put under the highest *Tortures*; yet you have but a

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(*a*) Acts and Monuments, c. 8. *p.* 938.

very Shadow of divine Wrath: Add to all theſe (according to *Spira*'s Wiſh) *twenty thouſand Years of Hell* itſelf, yet all is nothing to that which a diſtreſſed Mind ſuppoſeth, while the Word *Eternity* preſents the Soul with the *total Sum* of utmoſt Miſery all at once. Oh unexpreſſible Burden of a diſtreſſed Mind! Who can underſtand it truly, but he that feels it? How terribly is the Mind of Man ſhaken with Terrors, as the *Wilderneſs by a mighty Wind!* which not only produceth violent Motions, but alſo hideous Noiſe, Murmur, and Howling.

4. This Burden upon the Mind forceth the Tongue to vent its Sorrow in the ſaddeſt Accent of moſt doleful *Outcries*, their whole Language is Lamentation; but when the Pangs of their Agonies come upon them, (for their Diſtreſſes have their Fits) then they ſpeak in the Bitterneſs of their Souls. *Oh!* (ſaid *Bainham*) *I would not for all the World's Good, feel ſuch an Hell in my Conſcience again.* One (formerly mentioned) in theſe Diſtreſſes, cries out (*a*), *Wo, wo, wo! a woful, a wretched, a forſaken Woman!* It would ſurely have made a Man's Hair to ſtand upright for Dread, to have heard *Spira* roaring out that terrible Sentence, *How dreadful is it to fall into the Hands of the living God?* Or to have heard His Reply to him that told of his being at *Venice*, *O curſed Day!* (ſaith he) *O curſed Day! O that I had never gone thither, would God I had then died!* &c. The like Outcries had *David* often, *Pſalm* xxii. 1. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? Why art thou ſo far from helping me, and from the Words of my roaring?* And *Heman*, Pſal. lxxxviii. 14. *Lord, why caſteſt thou off my Soul, why hideſt thou thy Face from me?* 'Tis true, *David*'s and *Heman*'s Words have a better Complexion than thoſe others laſt mentioned, but their Diſquiet of Heart ſeems (at ſometimes) to have urged their Expreſſions with impetuous Violence; as thoſe Paſſages ſeem to ſay, *Pſal.* xxxviii. 8. *I have roared by reaſon of the Diſquietneſs of my Heart*, Pſal. xxxii. 3. *My Bones waxed old, through my Roaring all the Day long.* Job iii. 24. *My Roarings are poured out like Water.* If their Lamentations were turned into *Roarings*, and thoſe Roarings were like the breaking in of a *Flood*, and that Flood of ſo long Continuance, that it *dried* up the Marrow of

(*a*) Mrs. K. B.

of the Bones, we may ſafely imagine, that they were not ſo much at Leiſure to *order* their Words, but that their Tongues might ſpeak in that *Dialect* which is proper to Aſtoniſhment, and Diſtreſs.

5. Tho' the Mind be the principal Seat of theſe Troubles, yet the *Body* cannot be exempted from a *Copartnerſhip* in theſe Sorrows. Notwithſtanding this is ſo far from abating the Trouble, that it increaſeth it by a *Circulation*. The Pains of the Body, contracted by the Trouble of the Mind, are communicated again to the Fountain from whence they came, and *reciprocally* augment the Diſquiet of the Mind. The Body is weakned, their *Strength poured out like Water*; they are *withered like Graſs*; pined as *a Skin*, become as a *Bottle in the Smoke*: Thus *David* frequently complains, *Pſal.* xxii. 14. he deſcribes himſelf as reduced to a *Skeliton*: *I am poured out like Water, and all my Bones are out of Joint*: *My Heart is like Wax, it is melted in the Midſt of my Bowels; my Strength is dried up like a Potſherd, my Tongue cleaveth to my Jaws, and thou haſt brought me to the Duſt of Death.* Neither is this his peculiar Caſe, but the common Effect of ſpiritual Diſtreſſes, *Pſal.* xxxix 11. *When thou with Rebukes doſt correct Man for Iniquity, thou makeſt his Beauty to conſume away like a Moth.*

6. Being thus diſtreſſed for their Souls, they caſt off *all Care* of their Bodies, Eſtates, Families, and all their outward Concerns whatſoever. And no Wonder, for being perſwaded that they have made *Shipwrack* of their Souls, they judge the reſt are not *worth the ſaving*.

7. Giving all for loſt, they uſually caſt about for ſome *Eaſe* to their Minds, by ſeeking after the *lower* Degrees of Miſery, hearing, or ſuppoſing that all are not tormented alike, they endeavour to perſwade themſelves of a *cooler Hell*. This, if they could reach it, were but poor Comfort, and little to their Satisfaction; but as poor as it is, it is uſually denied to them, for while they judge themſelves to be the *greateſt Sinners*, they cannot but adjudge themſelves to the *greateſt Torments*: And theſe Endeavours being fruſtrated, they return back to themſelves, (as now hopeleſs of the leaſt Eaſe) worſe than before. Now they fix themſelves upon the *deep* Contemplations of their Miſery: *Oh* (think they) *how great had our Happineſs been, if we had been made Toads, Serpents, Worms, or any Thing*

but Men! For then should we never have known this Unhappiness; and this begets a thousand vain Wishes. Oh that we had never been born! Or that Death could annihilate us! Or that as soon as we had been born, we had died! (As *Job* speaks, *Job* iii. 11, 12. *Why died I not from the Womb? Why did I not give up the Ghost, when I came out of the Belly?*) *For then had we not contracted so much Guilt. Or that the Mountains and Hills could fall upon us, and cover us from the Face of our Judge.*

8. When all their Hopes are thus dashed, and (like a Shipwracked man on a Plank) they are still knocked down with new Waves, all their Endeavours being still frustrated, they seem to themselves to be able to hold out no longer; then they give over all further *Enquiries*, and the *Use of Means*, they refuse to pray, read, hear. They perceive (as *Spira* said) *that they pray to their own Condemnation*; and that all is to no Purpose. They are *weary of their Groanings*, Psal. vi. 6. *Their Eyes fail with looking up*; their *Knees are feeble*, their Hands hang down. And as *Heman*, Psal. lxxxviii. 4, 5. *They count themselves with those that go down to the Pit, free among the Dead, like the Slain that ly in the Grave*, whom God *remembreth no more.* Thus they ly down under their Burden, and while they find it so hard to be born, 'tis usual for them to come to the utmost Point of *Desperateness*. (Satan suggesting and forwarding them.) Sometimes they open their Mouths with Complaints against God, and blaspheme. And (as the last Part of the Tragedy) being weary of themselves, they seek to put an End to their present *Misery*, by putting an End to their *Lives*.

I have presented you with Satan's Stratagems, against the *Peace* of God's Children: The Remedies against these and other Subtilties of our grand Enemy, I shall not offer you; because many others have done that already, to whose Writings I must refer you. Some *principal* Directions I have pointed at in the Way; and in the general have done this for the Help of the Tempted, that I have endeavoured to shew them the *Methods* of the Tempter, which is no *small Help to preserve* Men from being thus imposed upon, and to recover out of his Snare those that are. 'Tis a great Preservative from Sickness, and no mean Advantage to the Cure, to have a Discovery of the Disease, and the Causes of it. I shall conclude these Discoveries with a Caution or Two.

(1.) Let

(1.) Let none think worſe of the *ſerious Practice* of holy Strictneſs in Religion, becauſe theſe ſpiritual Diſtreſſes do ſometimes befal thoſe that are conſcientiouſly careful in the Ways of God, while the profane and negligent Profeſſors are Strangers to ſuch Trials. 'Theſe Troubles are indeed very ſad; but a ſenſeleſs careleſs State is *far worſe*: Theſe Troubles often *end very comfortably*, whereas the other end (except God make them ſenſible, by Conviction of their Sin and Danger) in that *real Miſery*, the Fears whereof occaſion theſe Sorrows to God's Children. And the Danger of ſpiritual *Troubles* is not ſo great as is that of an *hardned* Heart, (nay, God frequently makes Uſe of them to prevent eternal Ruin) *for one* that goes *roaring* to the Pit, there are *Thouſands* that go *laughing* to Hell.

(2.) Let none *ſlight*, or ſcoff at theſe tremendous Judgments. 'Tis too common with Men, either to aſcribe ſpiritual Troubles to *Melancholy*, as if none were ever thus concerned, but ſuch, as by too much Serioufneſs in Religion, are *become mad*, (a fair Pretence for Careleſneſs) or to a whining *Diſſimulation*: To the former I have ſaid ſomething before, and as for the latter, I ſhall only reply in the Words of *Spira*, to one that objected Hypocriſy to him: *I am a Caſt-away, a Veſſel of Wrath, yet dare you call it Diſſembling and Frenzy, and can mock at the formidable Example of the heavy Wrath, of God, that ſhould teach you Fear and Terror? But 'tis natural to the Fleſh to ſpeak (either out of Malice or Ignorance) perverſly of the Work of God.*

(3.) *Let none be afraid of this* Goliah, let no Man's Heart faint becauſe of him. A Fear of *Caution* and Diligence to avoid his Snares, is a neceſſary Duty, (*Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary the Devil*, &c.) but a *diſcouraging* diſtruſtful Fear, is a diſhonourable *Reflection* upon God's Power and Promiſes to help us, and upon the Captain of our Salvation, who goeth our before us: Let us hold on in the Practice of Holineſs, and not be afraid. The God of Peace ſhall tread down Satan under our Feet ſhortly. *Amen.*

DÆMONOLOGIA SACRA:

OR, A

TREATISE of *Satan's Temptations.*

PART III. Containing an Account of the Combate betwixt CHRIST and Satan, in *Matth.* iv. Wherein the deep Subtilty of *Satan*, in managing thoſe Temptations, is laid open, as the grand Inſtance of the Sum of his Policy in all his Aſſaults upon Men; Leading to a Conſideration of many Temptations in particular, and of ſpecial Directions for Reſiſtance.

MATTH. iv. 1. *Then was Jeſus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted of the Devil.*

CHAP. I.

The firſt Circumſtance of the Combat. The Time when it happened. The two ſolemn Seaſons of Temptation. The Reaſons thereof.

I SHALL here conſider the great Temptation which it pleaſed our Lord *Chriſt* to ſubmit unto, as a moſt famous *Inſtance* for Confirmation and Illuſtration of the Doctrine of Temptations already handled.

The *firſt* Verſe ſets down ſeveral remarkable Circumſtances of this Combat; all of them Matter of Weight and Worth. As,

Firſt, The

First, The *Time* when this fell out; not as a looſe and *accidental Emergency*, but as *particularly* made *Choice* of both by God and Satan, being moſt fit, and proper for the *Deſign* which each of them were carrying on. This is expreſly noted in *Matth.* iv. 1. *Then was Jeſus led up*: But more fully in *Mark* i. 12. *Immediately the Spirit driveth him into the Wilderneſs*; Manifeſtly directing us to expect ſomething worthy of our Obſervation in that Circumſtance: Neither can we miſs of it, when the Things unto which this directs us, are ſo fully related immediately before. For we find in both theſe Evangeliſts, (which ſpeak ſo exactly of the Time of theſe Temptations) that *Chriſt* was baptized of *John*; this was in order to the fulfilling the *Righteouſneſs* of his *Office*. As the *Prieſts* under the Law when they came to be *thirty Years old* (*a*), entred upon their Function, by Waſhings (or Baptizings) and *Anointings*, Levit. viii. 6, 12. So *Chriſt* (that he might anſwer his Type) beginning to be about *thirty Years of Age*, Luke iii. 23. was ſolemnly inaugurated into the great Office of the *Mediatorſhip* by *Baptiſm*, and the *extraordinary* deſcending of the *Holy Ghoſt*; by which *he was anointed with the Oil of Gladneſs above his Fellows*. To this ſolemn Inſtalment the Father adds an honourable Teſtimony concerning him; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*. Immediately after this was he carried to the Place of Combate. Hence we may infer,

Obſ. 1.] *That our entring upon a ſpecial Service for God, or receiving a ſpecial Favour from God; are two ſolemn Seaſons which Satan makes uſe of for Temptation.* Often theſe two Seaſons *meet* together in the ſame *Perſon*, at the ſame *Time*. *Paul* after his Rapture into the third Heaven, which (as ſome conceive) was alſo upon his Entrance upon the Miniſtry, was buffeted by the Meſſenger of Satan, 2 *Cor.* xii. 2, 7.

Sometime theſe two Seaſons are *ſevered*; yet ſtill it may be obſerved, that the Devil watcheth them. When any Servant of God is to engage in any particular Imployment, he will be upon him. He aſſaulted *Moſes* by Perſecution, when he was firſt called to deliver *Iſrael*. As ſoon as *David* was anointed, immediately doth he enrage the Minds of *Saul* and his Courtiers againſt him. It was ſo ordinary with *Luther*, that he at laſt came to this, that before any *eminent Service*, he conſtantly expected either a *Fit* of *Sickneſs*, or the

(*a*) Numb. 4. 3. *Vid. Lightfoot's* Temple Service and Harmony.

the Buffetings of Satan. He is no leſs ſedulous in giving his Aſſaults when any Child of God hath been under peculiar Favours, or Enjoyments: The *Church* after an high Entertainment with *Chriſt*, is preſently overcome by a careleſs ſleepy Indiſpoſition, *Cant.* v. 1, 2.

Though this may ſeem ſtrange, yet the Harſhneſs of ſuch a Providence on *God's Part*, and the Boldneſs of the Attempt on *Satan's Part*, may be much taken off by the Conſideration of the Reaſons hereof.

First, On *Satan's Part*: It is no great Wonder to ſee ſuch an Undertaking, when we conſider his Fury, and Malice. The more we receive from God, and the more we are to do for him, the more doth he *malign* us. So much the more as God is good, by ſo much is his Eye evil.

Secondly, There are (in ſuch Caſes as theſe) ſeveral *Advantages*, which (through our Weakneſs and Imperfection) we are too apt to give him; and for theſe he lieth at the Catch.

As *firſt*, *Security*. We are apt to grow proud, careleſs, and confident after, or upon ſuch Employments and Favours; even as Men are apt to ſleep or ſurfeit upon a full Meal, or to forget themſelves, when they are advanced to Honour. *Job*'s great Peace and Plenty made him (as he confeſſeth) ſo confident, that he concludeth he ſhould *die in his Neſt*, Job xxix. 18. *David* enjoying the Favour of God in a more than ordinary Meaſure, (though he was more acquainted with Viciſſitudes and Changes than moſt of Men) grows ſecure in this Apprehenſion, that he *ſhould never be moved*, Pſal. xxx. 6. But he acknowledgeth his Miſtake, and leaves it upon Record as an Experience neceſſary for others to take Warning by, that when he became warm under the Beams of God's Countenance; then he was apt to fall into Security. And (this it ſeems was uſual with him in all ſuch Caſes) when he was moſt ſecure, he was neareſt ſome Trouble or Diſquiet: *Thou didſt hide thy Face*, (and then to be ſure the Devil will ſhew his) *and I was troubled*. Enjoyments beget Confidence; Confidence brings forth Careleſsneſs; Careleſsneſs makes God withdraw, and gives Opportunity to Satan to work unſeen. And thus as Armies after Victory growing ſecure, are oft ſurprized; ſo we are oft after our ſpiritual Advancements thrown down.

Secondly, *Diſcouragement*, and Tergiverſation is another Thing the Devil watcheth for. By his Aſſaults he repreſents the Duty difficult, tedious, dangerous, or impoſſible, on Purpoſe to diſcourage us, and to make us fall back. No ſooner

doth

doth *Paul* engage in the Goſpel, than the Devil is upon him, ſuggeſting ſuch Hazards as he knew were moſt prevalent with our frail Natures; if he had not been aware of him, and refuſed to hearken to what Fleſh and Blood would have ſaid in the Caſe, *Gal.* i. 16. When God honoured *Moſes* with the high Imployment of delivering *Iſrael*; the Hazard and Danger of the Work was ſo ſtrongly fixed upon his Thoughts, that he makes many Excuſes; one while pleading his *Inability* and Inſufficiency; *Who am I, that I ſhould go to Pharaoh?* Exod. iii. 11. Another while he urgeth *Iſrael's Unbelief*, and a ſeeming Impoſſibility to ſatisfy them of his Commiſſion, *Exod.* iv. 1. after that he deviſeth another Shift, *I am not eloquent*, in the 10th *Verſe*. And when all theſe Subterfuges were removed, (Satan had ſo affrighted him with the Trouble and Difficulty of this Undertaking,) that he attempts to *break* away from his Duty; *ver.* 13. *Send by the Hand of him whom thou wilt ſend*; That is, ſpare me and ſend another: And till the Anger and Diſpleaſure of God was manifeſted againſt him, he ſubmitted not. In *Jonah* the Temptation went higher. He (upon the Apprehenſions mentioned) *ran away* from his Service, and puts God to convince him by an extraordinary Puniſhment. And when Satan prevails not ſo far, as *wholly* to deter Men by ſuch Onſets; yet at leaſt he doth *diſhearten* and diſcourage them: So that the Work loſeth much of that Glory, Excellency, and Exactneſs, which a ready and chearful Undertaking would put upon it.

Thirdly, The *Fall* or Miſcarriage of the Saints at ſuch Times is of more than ordinary *Diſadvantage*; not only to *others*, (for if they can be prevailed with to lay aſide their Work, or to neglect the Improvement of their Favours others are deprived of the Benefit and Help that might be expected from them) but alſo to *themſelves*. A prevailing Temptation doth more than ordinarily prejudice them at ſuch Times. The Greatneſs of the Diſappointment under ſpecial Service, the unworthy Neglect, and Unanſwerableneſs to ſpecial Favours are *extraordinary Provocations*, and produce more than ordinary *Chaſtiſements*; as we ſee in *Jonah*'s Affliction, and the *Spouſe*'s Deſertion.

Secondly, As we have ſeen the Reaſon of *Satan's Keenneſs* in taking thoſe Opportunities; ſo may we conſider the Reaſons of *God's Permiſſion*, which are theſe.

1*ſt*, Temp-

1*ſt*, Temptations at ſuch Seaſons are permitted for more eminent *Trial* of the Upright. On this Account was *Job* tempted.

2*dly*, For an *Increaſe* of Diligence, Humility, and Watchfulneſs. If theſe Privileges and Mercies will not diſcourage Satan, what will? And if Satan ſo openly malign ſuch Enjoyments, we may be *awaken'd* to hold them *faſter*, and ſet a *double Guard* upon them.

3*dly*, For a plentiful *Furniture* of *Experience*. Temptation is the Shop of Experience. *Luther* was ſo great a Gainer by this, that he became able ſo to ſpeak to the *Conſciences* and *Conditions* of his Hearers, that the *Thoughts* of their Hearts were *manifeſted* by his ſpeaking, as if he had had an *Intelligencer* in their own *Boſoms*. Hence did he commend *Prayer*, *Meditation* and *Temptation*, as neceſſary Requiſites for the Accompliſhment of a Miniſter.

Applic.] This may adminiſter Matter of Counſel to us in *both Caſes* aforementioned, if we be put upon eminent *Imployments*, or receive eminent *Favours*.

(1.) We muſt not be ſo ſecure, as to think Satan will be aſleep that while, or that we are beyond Danger. While we are *receiving* Kindneſſes, he is *deviſing* Plots and laying Snares. With Privileges and Mercies expect Exerciſes and Hazards.

(2.) In particular we may receive ſomething of Advice from this Conſideration, in reference to *both* Caſes. 1. If God is about to *imploy* us in any Services, (1.) We have little Need to be *confident* of our Abilities or Performance, when we know that Temptations *wait* for us. (2.) We muſt not only be ſenſible of our Weakneſs, that we be not confident; but we muſt be *apprehenſive* of the *Strength* and Power of God to carry us through, that we be not *diſcouraged*. (3.) We muſt ſee our *Oppoſition*, that we may be *watchful*; and yet muſt we refuſe to give it the leaſt Place of Conſideration in our *Debates* of Duty, leſt it *ſway* us againſt Duty, or *diſhearten* us in it. 2. If God be pleaſed to honour us with peculiar *Favours*. Then (1.) Tho' we muſt improve them to the full, yet muſt we not feed on them *without Fear*. (2.) We muſt not ſtay in the Enjoyment, or play with the Token; but look to the *Tendency* of ſuch Favours, and improve them to Duty, as to their proper End.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The second Circumstance, Christ's being led by the Spirit. What Hand the Spirit of God hath in Temptations. And of running into Temptation when not led into it.

THE second *Circumstance* acquaints, *how Christ* was carried to the Combat. In solemn Combats and Duels, the Persons undertaking the Fight were usually carried to the Place with great *Solemnity* and *Ceremony*: *Christ* in this spiritual Battle is described as having the *Conduct* of the Spirit, *He was led up of the Spirit*, &c. What this Spirit was, is (tho' by a needless and over officious Diligence) questioned by some; but we need not stay much upon it, if we consider the Phrase of the *Evangelists*, who mention *Spirit* without any *Note* of Distinction (which of Necessity must have been added, if it had intended either his *proper* Spirit as Man, or the *wicked* Spirit Satan) directing thereby to understand it of him to whom the Word *Spirit* is more peculiarly attributed, (*viz.*) the *Holy Ghost*. Or if we observe the close *Connexion* in *Luke*, betwixt that Expression of Christ's *being full of the Holy Ghost*, and his being *led by the Spirit*, it will be out of Controversy, that the *Holy Spirit* is here intended. Hence was it that *Beze* translates it more fully; *Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, was led* eodem Spiritu, *of the same Spirit*; and the *Syriack* in *Matthew* doubts not to express it by the *Holy Spirit*: And what else can be imagined? When in this Text the *Spirit* that *led* him up, and the *Devil* that *tempted*, are mentioned in so direct an Opposition: *He was led of the Spirit into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil*. The Manner of his being carried thither, is expressed by such Words, as signify (tho' not an external *Rapture*, like that of *Philip*) a strong inward *Motion* and *Impulse* (*a*) upon him. The Spirit *driveth* him, saith *Mark*. The Spirit *led* (*b*) him, saith *Luke*, using the same Word, by which the Scripture elsewhere expresseth the Power of the Spirit upon the Children of God, who are said to be *led* by him.

Obs. 2.] Hence note, *That the Spirit of God hath a Hand in Temptations.* Christ was led by the Sprit to be tempted,

(*a*) ἐκβάλλει. (*b*) ἤγετο.

tempted. This muſt not be underſtood, as if God did *properly* tempt any to Sin, either by *inticing* their Hearts to Evil, or by *moving* and ſuggeſting wicked Things to their Minds, or by *infuſing* evil *Inclinations*, or by any *proper Compliance* with Satan, to undermine and delude us by any Treachery or Deceit; none of theſe can be imagined, without apparent Derogation to the Holineſs of God, *who tempteth no Man, neither can he be tempted with Evil*: But what we are to underſtand by the *Holy Spirit*'s concerning himſelf in Temptations, is included in theſe Particulars.

1*ſt*, God gives *Commiſſion* to Satan, without which his Hand would be ſealed up under an Impoſſibility of reaching it out againſt any.

2*dly*, *Opportunities* and Occaſions do depend upon his *Providence*, without which nothing comes to paſs. Neither we nor any Thing elſe do or can move without him.

3*dly*, The Spirit *overſees* the Temptation, as to *Meaſure* and *Continuance*; the Length and Breadth of it is ordered by him.

4*thly*, The *Iſſue* and Conſequences of every Temptation are at his Appointment; the Ways of its working for our Exerciſe, Humiliation or Conviction, or for any other Good and Advantage whatſoever, they all belong to his Determination.

So that it is not improper to aſſert, that *God* and *Satan* do *concur* in the ſame Temptation, tho' the *Ways* of proceeding with the *Aims* and *Intentions* of both, be *directly different* and contrary. Hence it is, that the Temptations of *David*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1. and 1 *Chron.* xxi. 1. are upon *ſeveral Regards* attributed both to God and Satan.

Appl. 1.] This Note is of Uſe, to remove thoſe harſh *Interpretations* which poor tempted Chriſtians meet withal, commonly from ſuch as have not touched their Burdens with the leaſt of their Fingers. Men are apt in theſe Caſes to judge,

1*ſt*, The *Ways of Religion*, as being Ways (at leaſt in the more ſerious and rigid Practice of them) of intolerable *Hazard* and Perplexity; and only upon an Obſervation, *That thoſe who moſt addict themſelves to a true and ſtrict Obſervance of Duty and Command, uſually complain of Temptations, and expreſs ſometimes their Fears and Diſtreſs of Heart about them.* This is your Reading, your Praying and Hearing. Such Preaching (ſay they) leads

Men

Men to Deſpair and perpetual Diſquiet: And upon the Whole, they conclude it dangerous to be religious, above the *common Rate* of thoſe that proſecute it in a ſlow and careleſs *Indifferency*.

2dly, The like Severity of Cenſure do they uſe in reference to the ſpiritual *State* of the Tempted, as if they were *Veſſels of his Hatred*, and ſuch as were by him given up to the Power of this *wild Boar* of the *Forreſt* to devour and tear. All Kind of Diſtreſſes are obnoxious to the worſt of Misjudgings from malevolent Minds. The Sufferings of *Chriſt* produced this cenſorious Scoff, *Let God deliver him, if he will have him.* *David*'s Troubles eaſily induced his Adverſaries to conclude, that *God had forſaken him, and that there was none to deliver him*, Pſal. lxxi. 11. But in Troubles of this Nature (where eſpecially there are frightful Complainings againſt themſelves) Men are more eaſily drawn out to be peremptory in their uncharitable Determinations concerning them, becauſe the Trouble itſelf is ſomewhat *rare*, and apt to beget *hideous Impreſſions*; and withal, the *Vent* which the afflicted Parties give, by their bemoaning of their Eſtate, in hope to eaſe themſelves thereby, is but taken as a *Teſtimony* againſt themſelves, and the undoubted *Ecchoes* of their real Feelings.

3dly, Their *Sins* are upon this Ground misjudged and heightned. *Unuſual Troubles* with common Apprehenſion argue *unuſual Sins*. The Viper upon *Paul*'s Hand, *Acts* xxviii. 4. made the *Barbarians* confident, he was a Man of more than ordinary Guilt and Wickedneſs. *David*'s Sickneſs was enough to give his Enemies Occaſion to ſurmiſe, that it was the Puniſhment of ſome great Tranſgreſſion. *An evil Diſeaſe* (ſay they) *cleaveth to him*, Pſal. xli. 8. Thoſe that were overwhelmed by the Fall of the Tower of *Siloam*, Luke xiii. 4. and thoſe whoſe Blood *Pilate* mixed with their Sacrifices, were judged *greateſt Sinners*. But in *inward* Temptations, this misjudging Confidence is every Way more heightned; and thoſe that are *moſt moleſted*, are ſuppoſed to have given *more Way* to Satan.

4thly, Temptations are alſo misjudged to be *worſe* than they are. They are indeed Things to be trembled at, but they are not properly of an aſtoniſhing, amazing, or deſpairing Conſideration, as Men are apt to think that view the Workings of them at a Diſtance.

Againſt

Againſt all thoſe unrighteous Surmiſes, the poor afflicted Servants of Chriſt may have Relief from this Truth in Hand, That the *Holy Spirit* of God hath a *Hand* in Temptations: And therefore it is impoſſible, that every where they ſhould be of ſuch a *Signification*. Were they in themſelves no Way *ſerviceable* to God's Glory in the gracious Exerciſe of his Children, the Spirit of *Wiſdom* and *Holineſs* would not at all have a *Hand* in them. If under Satan's Aſſaults you meet with thoſe that by ſuch a Harſhneſs of Cenſure, would *aggravate* your Troubles, and ſo *grieve* thoſe whom God hath ſadned; you may boldly appeal from them to him that judgeth righteouſly. And indeed if Men would but conſider in the ſaddeſt Caſe of this Nature, either (1.) The *End* of the Lord in permitting Temptations which (if ſeen) would give an high Juſtification of his Dealing; and force Men to applaud and magnify his Wiſdom, rather than to cenſure it. Or, (2.) If they could but ſee the *ſecret Ways* of God's *Support*. How he acts his Part, in *holding* them by the Hand, in *counterworking* of Satan, and *confounding* him under the Exerciſe of his higheſt Malice; and alſo in the Ways of his *Preſervation* and *Deliverance*. Or, (3.) If the *Harmleſneſs* of Temptations when their *Sting* is taken out were but weighed, Men would change their Minds as readily, as the *Barbarians* did, when they ſaw the Viper not effect that Miſchief they ſuppoſed upon *Paul*; and would ſee Cauſe to ſtand amazed at the Contrivances of *ſo much* Power and Wiſdom, as can turn theſe to quite *other Ends and Uſes*, than what they of *themſelves* ſeem to threaten.

Appl. 2.] This Conſideration will further expreſs its Uſefulneſs, in *comforting* us under Temptations. It might have been *Paul*'s great Diſcouragement, that in his Anſwer before *Nero* no Man ſtood with him, 2 *Tim.* iv. 16. But this was his Support, that *God was with him*. The like Encouragement we have under all Aſſaults of Satan, that we are not *left* to ourſelves, but the *Spirit of God* is with us; and that he concerns himſelf on a *Deſign* to *over-ſee*, and *over-rule* his Work, and to put a *Check* upon him when there is need. So that he cannot tempt *as* he will, nor *when* he will, nor in *what* he would, nor as *long* as he would; but that in all Caſes, we may rely upon the great Maſter-contriver, for Relief, Help, Mitigation, or Deliverance, as there is Need.

Uſ. 3.]

Obſ. 3.] In that the *Evangeliſts* do not ſay that Chriſt caſt himſelf upon a Temptation, neither did go to undertake it, till he was *led* to it, we note, *That whatever may be the Advantage of a Temptation by the Spirit's ordering of it; or what Security from Danger we may promiſe to ourſelves upon that Account, yet muſt we not run upon Temptations; tho' we muſt ſubmit when we are fairly led into them.* The Reaſons of this Truth are theſe:

Firſt, There is ſo much of the *Nature* of *Evil* in Temptations that they are to be avoided if poſſible. Good they may *accidentally* be, (that is beyond their proper Nature and Tendency) by the *over-ruling* Hand of God; but being in their own *natural Conſtitution* evil, 'tis inconſiſtent with *humane* Nature to *deſire* them *as ſuch.*

Secondly, To *run* upon them would be a dangerous *tempting* of God, (that is) making a bold and preſumptuous Trial (without Call) whether he will put forth his Power to reſcue us or not. *Now he that runs upon a Temptation hath no Promiſe to be delivered out of it.* And beſides, runs upon ſo deſperate a *Provocation*, that in all Probability he ſhall *miſcarry* in it, as a juſt Puniſhment of his *Raſhneſs.*

Queſt. But Enquiry may be made, When do Men run (uncalled and) unwarrantably upon Temptation? I anſwer, many Ways. As

Anſw. 1.] 1*ſt*, When Men engage themſelves in Sin and *apparent* Wickedneſs in the Works of the Fleſh. For it can never be imagined that the holy God ſhould ever by his Spirit call any to ſuch Things as his Soul abhors.

2*dly*, When Men run upon the *viſible* and *apparent Occaſions and Cauſes* of Sin. This is like a Man's going to the Peſt-houſe, thus do they, that tho' they deſign not to be Actors in Evil, yet will give their *Company* and Countenance to Perſons *actually engaged* in Evil.

3*dly*, When Men *unneceſſarily* (without the Conduct either of Command, or urging an unavoidable Providence) do put themſelves (tho' not upon *viſible* and *certain* Opportunities, yet) upon *dangerous* and *hazardous* Occaſions and Snares. *Peter* had no Errand in the High-prieſt's Hall; his Curioſity led him thither; he might eaſily have foreſeen a probable Snare; but confidently putting himſelf forward, where his *Danger* was *more* than his *Buſineſs*, he ran upon the Temptation, and accordingly fell. The like did *Dinah*, when ſhe made a *needleſs* Vagary to ſee the Daughters

of the Land; *Gen.* xxxiv. 1. where she met with her Sin and Shame. Neither do they otherwise, who dare adventure themselves *in Families* (whilst yet they are free and may otherwise dispose of themselves) where they *see* Snares and Temptations will be *laid* before them. The Case indeed is otherwise to those that are under the *necessary* Engagement of *Relation*, *natural* or voluntary, (if it be antecedent to the Hazard) to live in such Places or Callings, *Psal.* xci. 11. they have a greater Promise of Preservation than others can lay Claim to, *Prov.* x. 29.

4thly, Those run upon Temptation, that adventure *apparently* beyond their *Strength*, and put themselves upon Actions good or harmless, disproportionably to their Abilities. The Apostle gives the Instance in *Marriage-abstinence*, 1 Cor. vii. 5. which he cautions may not be undertaken at a *careless Adventure*, for Fear of a Temptation: And by this may we judge other Things of like Nature.

5thly, They are also guilty, that design an *Adventure* unto the *utmost Bounds* of lawful *Liberty*. Those that have a Mind to try Conclusions, how near they may make their Approaches to Sin, and yet keep off from the Defilement; such as would divide a *Hair* betwixt Good and Evil, have at best but a *Hair's Breadth* betwixt them and Sin; but how easily are they brought over that. Like a Man that walks upon the utmost *Verge* of a River's Brink, oft-times meets with *hollow Ground*, and a dangerous *Slip* before he is aware.

6thly, Those also may be reckoned in the Number of such as rush upon their Danger, who go abroad without their *Weapons*, and forget in the Midst of *daily* Dangers, the *Means* of Preservation. *Thomas* by his Neglect slid into a greater Unbelief than the rest of the *Apostles*. *David*'s unwatchful Heart was easily smitten by the Intelligence which his Eyes brought him. They that would plead their Innocency against Temptation, had Need to carry their Arms and Preservatives still with them.

Appl.] This Truth is a sufficient Caution against the rash *Adventurousness* of those who forwardly engage themselves in Matters of Temptation. As the former Observation told us, Temptations are not to be *feared*; so this also tells, they are not to be *slighted*. The Carriage of the *Philistines* when the *Ark* came among them, is Matter of *Imitation* to us. We may *tremble* justly when we hear of their Approach; but our Hazard should be the *Whet-stone* of our Courage;

and

and our Danger ſhould bring us to Reſolves of a more *ſtout* Reſiſtance; that we may *quit ourſelves like Men.*

The Apoſtle, *Gal.* vi. 1. ſeems to imply (when he tells thoſe that were more ſevere and careleſs of others, that *they may alſo be tempted*) that the beſt of Men do little know what a *Change* a Temptation may make upon them; a *ſmall* Temptation may be too *ſtrong* for them, and may carry them to what they never thought of; nay, may break down the *ſtrongeſt* of their Reſolves, and ſnap their Purpoſes as a Thread in a Flame. It did ſo with *Peter*, who was quickly *overcome* by that which he had with ſo much Confidence *undervalued.*

CHAP. III.

The third Circumſtance, the Place of the Combat. The Advantage given to Temptations by Solitude.

THE third Circumſtance (next to be conſidered) is the *Place* of this Combat, *the Wilderneſs.* To enquire what or where this Wilderneſs was, is not only impertinent and uſeleſs, (as to any Thing we can obſerve from it in Reference to Temptation) but alſo a Matter of mere uncertain Conjecture; only they that would underſtand it of a Place more thinly peopled, are expreſly contradicted by *Mark* i. 13. where 'tis ſaid, *he was with the wild Beaſts*; noting thereby a *deſolate* and dangerous Solitude, far remote from humane Society and Comfort.

'Tis much more our Concern to ſeek after the Reaſons of his Choice of that Place, or rather among theſe many that are given to ſatisfy ourſelves with, what may have the greateſt Appearance of Truth. They that think Chriſt hereby deſigned to ſhew the uncertain *Changes* and Viciſſitudes of outward Things in this Life; or to point at the future *low Eſtate* of his Church in the World, that it ſhould ſojourn in a Wilderneſs; or to direct thoſe that have dedicated themſelves to God, to *withdraw* from the Blandiſhments and Allurements of the Earth; with a great many more Hints of Inſtruction, and Document of that Kind (*a*): They I ſay, that offer no other, ſeem not to attend to the *true Deſign* of the Choice of this Place; which notwithſtanding

(*a*) *Spanhem* dub. Evan. in loc.

is evidently discovered to have been done in *order* to the *Temptation*. *He was led into the Wilderness to be tempted.* The Place then was subservient to the Conflict, as the proper *Theater* on which so great a Contest was to be acted; and if we shall but mind what special Consideration was to be had of such a Place (an howling desolate Wilderness) which may with Ease pitch upon these following Reasons.

First, It pleased God to have an Eye to the *Glory* of Christ's Conquest, when in a *single* Combat he should so remarkably foil the Devil without any the least Advantage on his Part; there being none that might be the least Support or Encouragement to him.

Secondly, The Condition of the Place, gave *Rise* to the first Temptation. For in that he *hungred* in a *barren Wilderness*, it gave *Occasion* to Satan to tempt him more strongly to *turn Stones into Bread.*

Thirdly, In the Choice of such a Place, God seems to offer Satan a special *Advantage* in tempting; which was the *Solitude* and Danger of his present Condition.

To omit the two former Considerations (as not altogether so useful, further than what I shall be engaged to speak to afterwards) this last affords this Observation:

Obs. 4.] *That Solitude affords a great Advantage to Satan in the Matter of Temptation.* This Advantage ariseth from Solitude two Ways:

1*st*, As it doth deprive us of *Help*. So great and many are the blessed Helps arising from the Society and Communion of such as fear the Lord, (as Counsel, Comfort, Encouragement from their Graces, Experiences, and Prayers, &c.) that the Woe pronounced to him *that is alone*, Eccles. iv. 10. is not groundless. Christians in an holy Combination can do more *Work*; and so have a good *Reward* for their Labour. They can mutually *help* one another when they *fall*; they can mutually *heat* and *warm* one another; they can also *strengthen* one anothers Hands to prevail against an Adversary. He then that is alone, being deprived of these Advantages, lieth more open to the Stroke of Temptation.

2*dly*, Solitude increaseth *Melancholy*, fills the Soul with *dismal* Apprehensions; and withal doth so spoil and alter the *Temper* of it, that it is not only ready to take any disadvantagious *Impression*, but it doth also dispose it to *leaven* and sowre those very Considerations that should *support*;

and

and to put a bad Construction on Things that never were intended for its Hurt.

Applic. This may warn us, to take Heed of giving Satan so great an Advantage against us, as an *unnecessary* Solitude may do. I know there are *Times* and *Occasions* that do justly require it, to seek a solitary Place for the *Privacy* of Duty, or for secret *Lamentations*, as *Jeremiah* desired, *Jer.* ix. 1, 2. or to avoid the *Trouble* and *Snare* arising from our mixing with an Assembly of treacherous and wicked Men; this is no more than Care and Watchfulness. But when these Reasons urge not, or some of like Nature, but either out of *perrish* Discontent, or a *mopish* Reservedness, we withdraw from those Aids and Comforts which are necessary for our Support, we do strengthen Satan's Hands against us, and weaken our own.

CHAP. IV.

The Fourth Circumstance, the End wherefore Christ was led to the Wilderness. Holiness, Employment, Privileges, exempt not from Temptation. Of Temptations that leave not Impressions of Sin behind them. How Satan's Temptations are distinguished from the Lusts of our own Heart.

THE Fourth Circumstance was the *End*. There was no other Design in the Main, of Christ's being led up, and into the Wilderness, but that he might be *tempted*. In this two Things seem to be Matter of equal *Wonder*:

First, Why Christ would submit to be tempted. For this, many great and weighty Reasons may be given: As,

1*st*, Thus was Christ evidenced to be the *second Adam*, and the Seed of the Woman. His being tempted, and in such a Manner, doth clearly satisfy us that he was *true Man*; and that in *that Nature* he it was that was promised *to break the Serpent's Head*.

2*dly*, This was a fair *Prelibium* and *Earnest* of that *final Conquest* over Satan, and the breaking down of his Power.

3*dly*, There was a more peculiar Aim in God by these Means of Temptation to qualify him with *Pity and Power* to help; *For in that he suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted*, Heb. ii. 18. And having Experience of Temptation himself, he became a merci-

ful High-priest, apt to be *touched with the feeling of our Infirmities*, Heb. iv. 15.

4*thly*, The *Consequence* of this experimental Compassion in Christ, was a further Reason why he submitted to be tempted, to wit, that we might have the greater *Comfort and Encouragement*, in the Expectancy of tender Dealing from him. Hence the Apostle, *Heb.* iv. 16. invites to *come boldly to the Throne of Grace* at any *Time of Need*.

5*thly*, A further End God seemed to have in this, *viz.* To give a signal and remarkable Instance to us of the Nature of Temptations, of Satan's Subtilty, his Impudency, of the usual Temptations which we may expect; as also to teach us what *Weapons* are necessary for Resistance; and in what Manner we must manage them.

Secondly, It seems as strange that Satan would undertake a Thing so unfeasible and hopeless, as the tempting of Christ. What Expectation could he have to prevail against him, who was *anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows*? Some answer,

1*st*, That Satan might possibly doubt whether Christ were the *Son of God* or no. But the Improbability of this I shall speak of afterwards.

2*dly*, Others attribute it to his Malice, which indeed is great, and might possibly blind him to a desperate Undertaking. But,

3*dly*, We may justly apprehend the *Power of Sin* over Satan to be so great, that it might enforce him to the bold Attempt of such a *Wickedness*. We see daily, that wicked Men by the Force of their own wicked Principles, are *restlessly hurried* upon Acts of Sin, tho' they know the Prohibition, and are not ignorant of the threatned Danger. Satan is as great a Slave to his own internal corrupt Principles as any. And whatsoever blind Fury is stirred up in Man by the Power of his Lust, we may very well suppose the like in Satan.

4*thly*, There is a superior Hand upon the Devil, that *sways*, *limits*, and *orders* him in his Temptations. He cannot tempt when he would; neither always what he would; but in his own cursed Inclinations and the acting of them, he is forced to be subservient to God's Designs. And in this Particular (whatever might be Satan's proper End or Principle) it is evident that God carried on a gracious Design for the *Instruction* and *Comfort* of his Children.

The

The End of Christ's going to the *Wilderness*, being that he might be tempted; if together with this, the *Holiness* and *Dignity* of Christ in respect of his *Person* and *Office*, be considered, we may not from it,

Obs. 5.] *That neither Height of Privilege, nor Eminency of Employment, nor Holiness of Person, will discourage Satan from tempting, or secure any from his Assaults.* The best of Men in the highest Attainments may expect Temptations. Grace itself doth not exempt them.

For *1st*, None of these Privileges *in us*, nor Eminencies of Grace want *Matter* to fix a Temptation upon. The *Weaknesses* of the best of Men are such, that a Temptation is not rendred improbable, as to the Success, by their Graces: Nay, there are special *Occasions* and *Inclinations* in them, to encourage Temptations of Pride and Neglect. He found indeed nothing in Christ that might offer the least Probability of Prevalency; but in the best of Men, in their best Estate, he can find some Encouragement for his Attempts.

2dly, None of us are beyond the *Necessity* of such *Exercises*. It cannot be said that we need them not; or that there may not be holy Ends wherefore God should not permit and order them for *our Good*. Temptations (as they are in God's Disposal) are a necessary spiritual *Physick*; the Design of them is to *humble* us, *to prove* us, *and to do us Good in the latter End*, Deut. viii. 16. Nothing will work more of *Care*, *Watchfulness*, *Diligence* and *Fear* in a gracious Heart, than a Sense of Satan's Designment against it. Nothing puts a Man more to Prayer, breathing after God, desiring to be dissolved, and running to Christ, than the troublesome and afflictive Pursuits of Satan; Nothing brings Men more from the Love of the World, and to a Delight in the Ordinances of God, than the Trouble which here abides them unavoidably from Satan. This Discipline the best have Need of; there are such Remainders of Pride and other Evils in them, that if God should not permit these *Pricks* and *Thorns* to humble them, and thereby also awaken them to laborious *Watchfulness*; they would be careless, secure, and sadly declining. This made *Augustine* conclude that it was no Way *expedient* that we should *want* Temptations (*a*); and that Christ taught us as much,

(*a*) Non nobis expedit esse sine tentationibus; non rogamus ut non tentemur, sed ne inducat in tentationem. *Aug. in Psal.* 73.

when he directed us, not to pray that we ſhould *not be tempted*, but that we might not be *led into the Power, and Prevalency of Temptation.*

3*dly*, The Privileges and Graces of the Children of God, do ſtir up Satan's Pride, Revenge, and Rage againſt them. And tho' he hath no Encouragement to expect ſo eaſy a Conqueſt over theſe, as he hath over others, who are captivated by him at Pleaſure; yet hath he Encouragements to attempt them, for the ſingular *Uſe and Advantage* he makes of any *Succeſs* againſt them; the Difficulty of the Work being recompenced by the Greatneſs of the Booty. For the Fall of a Child of God (eſpecially of ſuch as are noted above others) is as when *a Standard-bearer faints* ; or as the Fall of an Oak that bears down with it the lower Shrubs that ſtand near it. How the Hearts of others fail for Fear, leſt they ſhould alſo be overcome. How the Hearts of ſome grow thereby bold and venturesome; how a general Diſgrace and Diſcredit thereby doth accrue to Religion, and the ſincere Profeſſion of it, are Things of uſual Obſervation. If ſuch Men had not in them ſomething of ſpecial Prey in Caſe of Conqueſt, his Pride would not ſo readily carry him againſt the Heads and Chief of the People, while he ſeems to over look the meaner and weaker. Out-houſes, tho' more *acceſſible*, are not the Objects of the Thief's Deſign; but the Dwelling houſe, tho' ſtronger built, and *better guarded*, (becauſe it affords Hopes of richer Spoil) is uſually aſſaulted. Neither do Pirates ſo much ſet themſelves to take *empty Veſſels*, tho' weakly manned; but *richly loaden* Ships (tho' better able to make Reſiſtance) are the Ships of their Deſire.

Applic. 1.] *Firſt*, This may be applied for the *encouraging* of thoſe that think it ſtrange that Temptations do ſo haunt them; eſpecially, that they ſhould (in their Apprehenſion) be *more troubled* by him, when they *fly furtheſt* from him. The Conſideration of this will much allay theſe Thoughts, by theſe Inferences which it affords.

Firſt, There is nothing *unuſual* befals theſe Complainants. Satan frequently doth ſo to others; they cannot juſtly ſay, their Caſe is ſingular, or that they are alone in ſuch Diſturbances; it is but what is *common to Man*. If they urge the *Uneaſineſs* of the Devil's Attempts; Chriſt and others have felt the like. If they object the peculiar *Strange-*

neſs

ness and *Horridness* of the Temptation: (as most unsuitable to the State of an upright Soul) Christ met with the like. He was tempted to *Self-destruction*, to *Distrust*, to *Blasphemy* itself in the highest Degree.

Secondly, There is a good Advantage to be made of them; they are *Preservations* from other Sins, that would otherwise grow upon us.

Thirdly, These Temptations to the Upright do but argue Satan's *Loss of Interest* in them, and their greater *Sensibility* of the Danger. The captivated Sinners complain not so much; because they are so inured to Temptation; that they mind not Satan's frequent Accesses. *He that studies Humility, is more sensible of a Temptation to Pride, than he that is proud* (a).

Secondly, This is also of Use to those that are apt to be *confident* upon their Successes against Sin through Grace. Satan (they may see) will be upon them *again*; so that they must behave themselves as *Mariners*, who when they have got the Harbour, and are out of the Storm; *mend* their Ship, and Tackling, and *prepare* again for the Sea.

Lastly, If we consider the unspotted Holiness of Christ, and his constant Integrity under these Temptations, that they left not the least of *Taint* or sinful *Impression* upon him; we may observe,

Obs. 6. *That there may be Temptations, without leaving a Touch of Guilt or Impurity behind them upon the Tempted.*

'Tis true, this is rare with Men, the best do seldom go down to the *Battle*, but in their very Conquests they receive some *Wound*. And in those Temptations that arise from our *own* Hearts, we are *never* without Fault; but in such as do solely arise from Satan, there is a Possibility, that the Upright may so keep himself, that the *wicked one may not so touch him*, as to leave the Print of his Fingers behind him.

Quest. But the great Difficulty is, how it may be known when Temptations are from *Satan*, and when from *ourselves*?

Answ. To answer this, I shall lay down these Conclusions.

First, The same Sins which *our own Natures* would suggest to us, may also be *injected* by *Satan*. Sometime *we begin* by the forward working of our own Thoughts upon *Occasions* and *Objects* presented to us from *without*, or from the *Power* of our own *Inclination*, without the Offer of external Objects, and then Satan *strikes in* with it; sometimes *Satan*

(a) Tentationem experiuntur ac sentiunt hi, qui ex animo pietati studeant. *Muscul.* in loc.

Satan begins with us, and by his injected Motions endeavours to *excite* our Inclinations; so that the *same* Thing may be sometime from *ourselves*, and sometimes *from Satan*.

Secondly, There is no Sin so *vile*, but our *own Heart* might possibly *produce* it without Satan, evil Thoughts of the very worst Kind, as of *Murders*, *Adulteries*, *Thefts*, *false Witness*, *and Blasphemies*, may (as Christ speaks, *Mat.* xv. 19.) be produced *naturally* from our own Hearts; for seminally all Sins, the very greatest of all Impieties, are there: So that from the *Greatness* and *Vileness* of the Temptation we cannot *absolutely* conclude, that it is from Satan, no more than from the *Commonness* of the Temptation, or its *Suitableness* to our Inclination, we can conclude *infallibly* that its *first Rise* is from *ourselves*.

Thirdly, There are many Cases wherein it is very *difficult*, if not altogether impossible to determine, whether our *own Heart*, or *Satan* gives the *first* Life or Breathing to a Temptation. Who can determine in most-*ordinary* Cases, when our Thoughts are working upon Objects presented to our Senses, whether Satan or our own Thoughts do run faster? Yea, when such Thoughts are not the *Consequent* of any *former* Occasion, it is a Work too hard for most Men to determine which of the Parents, Father, or Mother, our *own Heart*, or *Satan*, is *first* in the Fault; they are both forward enough, and usually *joyn* Hand in Hand with such *Readiness*, that he must have a curious Eye that can discover certainly to whom the first Beginning is to be ascribed.

The Difficulty is so great, that some have judged it altogether *impossible* to give any *certain* Marks by which it may be determined when they are ours, and when Satan's (*a*). And indeed the Discoveries laid down by some are not sufficient for a certain Determination, and so far I assent, that neither the *Suddenness* of such Thoughts (for the Motions of our own Lusts may be sudden) nor the *Horridness* of the Matter of them, are *sufficient* Notes of Distinction. That our own corrupt Hearts may bring forth that which is unnatural and terrible, cannot be denied. Many of the Sins of the Heathens mentioned in *Rom.* i. were the violent Productions of Lust against natural Principles, and to ascribe these to the Devil as to the first Instigator, is more than any Man hath Warrant to do; Yet though it be confessed that in *some* Cases it is impossible to distinguish, and that where a

(*a*) *Capel.* Tempt. Part 1, c. 4. § 1.

Diſtinction may be made, theſe Notes mentioned are not *fully* ſatisfactory, there may (I believe) be *ſome* Caſes wherein there is a Poſſibility to *diſcover* when the Motions are from Satan, and that by the *Addition* of ſome *remarkable* Circumſtances to the forenamed Marks of Difference.

Fourthly, Though it be true (which ſome ſay (*a*) that (in moſt Caſes) it is *needleſs* altogether to ſpend our Time in diſputing whether the Motions of Sin in our Minds are firſtly from our ſelves or from Satan, our *greateſt* Buſineſs being rather to *reſiſt* them, than to *difference* them; yet there are *ſpecial* Caſes, wherein it is very *neceſſary* to find out the *true* Parent of a ſinful Motion, and theſe are, when tender Conſciences are wounded and oppreſſed with *violent* and *great* Temptations, as *blaſphemous Thoughts*, *atheiſtical Objections*, &c. For here Satan in his furious Moleſtations aims mainly at this, that ſuch afflicted and toſſed Souls ſhould take all theſe Thoughts which are *obtruded* upon their Imaginations, to be the *Iſſue* of their *own* Heart. As *Joſeph*'s Steward hid the Cup in *Benjamin*'s Sack, that it might be a Ground of Accuſation againſt him: So doth the Devil firſt *oppreſs* them with ſuch Thoughts, and then *accuſeth* them of all that Villany and Wickedneſs, the Motions whereof he had with ſuch Importunity forced upon them; and ſo apt are the afflicted to *comply* with Accuſations againſt themſelves, that they *believe* it is ſo, and from thence conclude that they are given up of God, hardned as *Pharaoh*, that they have ſinned againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, and finally that there is no Hope of Mercy for them. All this befals them from their *Ignorance* of Satan's Dealings; and here is their great Need to *diſtinguiſh* Satan's Malice from their Guilt.

Fiftbly, Setting aſide *ordinary* Temptations, wherein it is neither ſo *poſſible*, nor ſo *material* to buſy ourſelves to find out whether they are Satan's or ours in *extraordinary* Temptations (ſuch as have been now inſtanced;) we may diſcover if they proceed from Satan (though not ſimply from the *Matter* of them, nor from the *Suddenneſs* and *Independency* of them, yet) from a due Conſideration of their *Nature* and *Manner* of proceeding, *compared* with the preſent Tempers and Diſpoſition of our Heart. As,

Firſt, When *unuſual* Temptations *intrude* upon us with an *high Impetuoſity* and Violence, while our *Thoughts* are *otherwiſe* concerned and taken up. Temptations more *agreeable*

(*a*) *Capel.* Tempt. Part 1. c. 4.

agreeable to our Inclination (*a*), though *suddenly* arising from Objects and Occasions presented, and gradually proceeding, after the Manner of the working of natural Passions, may *throng* in amidst other Thoughts, or Actions that have no *Tendency* that Way, and yet we cannot so *clearly* accuse Satan for them: But when Things that have not the *Encouragement* of our *Affections* are by a *sudden* Violence enforced upon us, while we are otherwise concerned, we may justly suspect Satan's Hand to be in them.

Secondly, While such Things are born in upon us, against the *actual Loathing*, *strenuous Reluctancy*, and *high Complainings* of the Soul, when the Mind is filled with *Horrour*, and the Body with *Trembling* at the Presence of such Thoughts (*b*). Sins that owe their first *Original* to ourselves, may indeed be *resisted* upon their *first* rising up in our Mind; and though a sanctified Heart doth truly *loath* them, yet are they not without some *lower Degree* of tickling Delight upon the Affections for the Flesh (in those Cases) presently *riseth* up with its *Lustings* for the sinful Motion: But when such unnatural Temptations are from Satan, their *first* Appearance to the Mind is an Horrour without any *sensible* Working of *Inclination* towards them; and the Greatness of the Soul's Disquiet doth shew, that it hath met with that which the Affections look not on with any amicable Compliance.

Thirdly, Our Hearts may bring forth that which is *unnatural* in itself, and may give Rise to a Temptation that would be horrid to the Thoughts of other Men, but that it should of its own Accord (without a Tempter) on a *Sudden* bring forth that which is *directly* contrary to its *present Light*, *Reason*, or *Inclination*; As for a Man to be haunted with Thoughts of Atheism, while he is under Persuasions that there is a God; or of Blasphemy, while he is under Designs of honouring him, is as unimaginable, as that our Thoughts should of themselves *contrive* our Death, while we are most *solicitous* for our Life; or that our Thoughts should soberly tell us it is Night, when we see the Sun shine. *Temptations that are contrary to the present State, Posture, Light, and*

(*a*) Illæ plerumque suggerunt, quæ naturæ gratiora, idque placide & gradatim, ita ut mens sui compos maneat in ipso æstu, hæ autem impetu plusquam humano irruentes, fulguris instar, acyus quam solent passiones dianoeticæ, &c. *Arrowsmith. Tract.* 1. *lib.* 2. c. 7. § 6. (*b*) Horrore sui si implent animum, ut tantum non pectus ipsum expectorare videantur, dum ea perpetim dictitari sentit, & dolet, ad quoque præsentiam, natura vel depravatissima contremiscet. *idem. ibid.*

and Disposition of the Soul, are Satan's; they are so unnatural as to its present Frame, that the Production of them must be from some other Agent.

4thly, Much more evident is it that such proceed from Satan, when they are of *long Continuance* and *constant Trouble*, when they so incessantly beat upon the Mind, that it hath no Rest from them, and yet is under grievous Perplexities and Anxieties of Mind about them.

Applic.] The Consideration of this is of great Use to those that suffer under the violent Hurries of strange Temptations.

First, In that sometime they can justly complain of the *Affliction* of such Temptation, when they have no Reason to charge it upon themselves as their *Sin*. 'Tis one Thing to be *tempted*, and another to *consent* or *comply*; *to be tempted, and not to be brought into Temptation, is not evil* (*a*). Satan only barks when he suggests, but he then bites and wounds, when he draws us to Consent (*b*).

Secondly, That not only the *Sin*, but the *Degree* also (by just Consequence) is to be measured by the *Consent* of the Heart; if we consent not, the Sin is not ours, and the less Degree of Consent we give, the less is in the Sin.

MATTH. iv. 2. *And when he had fasted forty Days and forty Nights, he was afterwards an hungred.*

CHAP. V.

Of Christ's Fast, with the Design thereof. Of Satan's tempting in an invisible Way. Of his incessant Importunities, and how he flies when resisted. Of inward Temptations, with outward Afflictions. Several Advantages Satan hath by tempting in Affliction.

I Am next to explain the *Fast* of Christ, the End and Design whereof (because 'tis not expressly mentioned) is variously conjectured; not to insist in this Discourse, which is designed for Practice, on the Controversy about the quadragesimal Fast, that which I shall first consider is the Opinion of

(*a*) Aliud est tentari, aliud tentationem recipere. Tentari & non in tentationem ferri non est malum, *Aug.* de bono persever. l. 2. c. 6. (*b*) Mordet Satan cum ad consensum trahit, latrat solum cum suggerit, *Bernard.*

of *Muſculus* (*a*), who (upon this Ground, that his *Faſt* was not the *principal* Thing for which the Spirit *led* him into the Wilderneſs, for he was led not to *faſt*, but to be *tempted*, thereupon) concludes, that this was only a *Conſequent* of his ſolitary Condition in the Wilderneſs, and no other Thing than what befel *Moſes* and *Elias*; who being engaged by God to *attend* him in ſuch a Service, where the *ordinary* Means of the Support of Life were wanting, were therefore *kept* alive by him in an *extraordinary* Way without them. Thus he thinks the Faſting was not (at leaſt principally) deſigned; but that he being to undergo a Temptation in a deſolate Wilderneſs, where he had no Meat to eat, there God reſtrained his Hunger, ſo that he neither deſired nor needed any. If we acquieſce in this, it will afford this Doctrine.

Doct. 1.] *That when God leads forth his Children to ſuch Services, as ſhall unavoidably deprive them of the ordinary Means of Help or Supply, there God is engaged to give extraordinary Support, and his People may expect it accordingly.*

This is a great Truth in itſelf, and a great and neceſſary Encouragement to all the Children of God that are called out to Straits; but I ſhall not inſiſt on this as the genuine Product of this Faſt.

If we look further amongſt *Proteſtant Divines*, we ſhall obſerve it taken for granted, that Chriſt faſted upon Deſign; and this is generally reduced to thoſe *two* Heads:

Firſt, Either for *Inſtruction*, as to ſhew that he was *God*, by faſting ſo *long*, and that under the *Trouble* of moleſting and diſquieting Temptations; whereas the Faſts of like Date in *Moſes* or *Elias*, were accompanied with the *quiet* Repoſe of their Thoughts; or to ſhew that he was *Man*, in that he really felt the *natural* Infirmities of the human Nature, in being *hungry*; or to teach us the *Uſefulneſs* of Faſting in the general, when fit Occaſions invite us thereto. Or,

Secondly, For *Confirmation* of his Doctrine, to put an *Honour* and Dignity upon his *Imployment* (*b*); as *Elias* faſted at the *reſtoring* of Prophecy, and at the Reformation; as *Moſes* faſted at the *writing* of the Law, ſo Chriſt *began* the Goſpel of the Kingdom with *Faſting*. However, that theſe Things cannot be ſpoken againſt, being Conclusions

(*a*) *Muſculus* in loc. (*b*) Vid. *Lightfoot Harm.* in loc.

cluſions warrantably deduceable from this Act of Chriſt's; yet theſe ſeem not (in my Apprehenſion) to come fully up to the proper End of this Undertaking of his, which ſeems not obſcurely to be laid before us in that Paſſage of *Luke* iv. 2. *Being forty Days tempted of the Devil, and in thoſe Days he did eat nothing*; where we ſee, that his being *tempted forty Days* was the *principal* Thing, and that his *Faſting* had a plain *Reference* and Reſpect to his Temptation. Thus far (I ſuppoſe) we may be ſecure, that we have the Deſign in the general, that his Faſting was in *order* to his Temptation; but then, whether this was deſigned as an *Occaſion* of the Temptations, or as a *Remedy* againſt them, 'tis not ſo eaſy to determine. That one of thoſe (at leaſt) was intended, cannot be denied by thoſe that will grant, that his Faſt related to the Combat; and it ſeems not to labour of any *Repugnancy* or Abſurdity, if we ſay, that 'tis poſſible, that *both* theſe Ends might be aimed at, and accordingly I ſhall proceed to obſerve upon them. There are only ſome other Things to be firſt diſpatched out of the Way: As

The *Continuance* of the Faſt, why it was forty Days, neither *more* nor *leſs*. Tho' ſome (*a*) adventure to give Reaſons for it, not only *Papiſts* (who according to their Wont are ridiculous and trifling in this Matter) but alſo *Proteſtants*, ſuppoſing that ſome Regard (was or ought to be) had to his *fulfilling* the Times of the *Faſts* of *Moſes* and *Elias*; yet I think 'tis neither pertinent nor ſafe to determine any Thing about it, only it obſerves to us, that the Continuance of this was a conſiderable Time.

We are more concerned to enquire, whether Chriſt was under any *Conflict* of Temptation *all that Time*, which tho' ſome (*b*) deny, leſt they ſhould favour a ſeeming Contradiction among the Evangeliſts; yet the Words of *Luke* are ſo expreſs [*being forty Days tempted of the Devil*, Luke iv. 2.] that no tolerable Evaſion can be found to caſt theſe Temptations to the End of the forty Days; for he tells us, he was not only tempted *after* the *Expiration* of the forty Days, but that he was tempted *during* the Continuance of the forty Days beſide; only there was a Difference in the *Kinds* of theſe Temptations, in regard of the *Way* wherein Satan managed them; and this alſo is fully ſet down by *Matth.* [*And when the Tempter came to him,*] which

(*a*) *Spanhem* dub. Evan. in loc. (*b*) *Spanhem.* in loc.

which with the other Expreſſion of *Luke* compared, ſhews us, that *during* the Space of the forty Days Satan *tempted* Chriſt, and yet *came not to him* till *afterward*, that is, he managed thoſe Temptations in an inviſible Way. Hence we may note,

Doct. 2.] *That Satan doth uſually tempt in an inviſible Way and Manner.* To explain this a little, I ſhall evidence it by a few Conſiderations. As,

First, That he hath a Hand in all Sins firſt or laſt, and then it muſt needs be in an *inviſible* Way, his Work is to tempt, to go about laying Snares to draw Men to Sin. *Wicked Men are of their Father the Devil*, John viii 44. and do his Works. Carnal Deſires are *his Luſts*; giving way to Anger, is *giving place to the Devil*, Eph. iv. 26, 27. and reſiſting of Sin is called in the general, a *reſiſting of the Devil*, &c. *Jam* iv. 7. In all this Work of Satan Men do not *ſee* him; when he *puts* evil Motions into their Hearts, they do not *perceive* him, and therefore doth he his Work in an inviſible Way.

Secondly, We have ſufficient Diſcoveries of theſe *private* Paths of his: For 1. Sometime he tempts by *Friends*; he tempted *Job* by his Wife, *Chriſt* by *Peter*. 2. Sometime by *external Objects*, as he drew out *Achan*'s Covetouſneſs, and *David*'s Uncleanneſs by the Eye. 3. Sometime by *injecting* Thoughts and Motions to our Mind. 4. Sometime by exerciſing an *inviſible Power* upon our Bodies, in ſtirring up the Humours thereof, to provoke to Paſſion or exceſſive Mirth. All theſe Ways (of which I have diſcourſed before more largely) are ſecret and inviſible, and by ſuch as theſe he moſt uſually tempts.

Thirdly, The Wiles, Depths, Secrets and Devices of Satan, which the Scripture tells us are his moſt familiar Ways and Courſes, they in their own Nature imply a ſtudied or deſigned *Secrecy* and *Imperceptibility*.

Fourthly, He hath peculiar *Reaſons* of Policy for his inviſible Way of Dealing; for the *leſs viſible* he is, the *leſs ſuſpicious* are his Deſigns; and conſequently the *leſs frightful*, and more taking. By this way he inſinuates himſelf ſo into our Boſoms, that he gets a *Party in us* againſt ourſelves, *before* we are aware; whereas in vain (he knows) he ſhould ſpread his *Net*, if his Deſigns and Enmity were *diſcovered* to us.

Appl.] This

Appl.] This muſt teach us to *ſuſpect* Satan where we ſee him not, and ſo to converſe with Objects and Occaſions, as ſtill fearing that there may be *anguis in herba*, a ſecret Snare laid for us to intrap us at unawares.

If we again caſt our Eyes upon what hath been ſaid, that Chriſt was tempted *all the forty Days*, it will then give us this Obſervation.

Obſ. 3.] *That Satan is ſometime inceſſant in Temptations, and ſets upon us with continued Importunities.*

Here we may note a Diſtinction of Temptations (beſides that of inviſible and viſible, of which I have ſpoken) that ſome are *moveable* and *ſhort Fits*, and as it were *Skirmiſhes*, in which he ſtays not long; and others are more *fixed* and durable; we may call them *ſolemn* Temptations, in which Satan doth as it were *pitch* down his Tents, and doth manage a long *Siege* againſt us. Of theſe laſt Sort is this Obſervation.

Thus he tempted *Paul*, 2 Cor. xii. 8. continuing his Aſſault for ſome Time before he departed. Thus alſo he dealt with *Joſeph*, Gen. xxxix. 10. who was ſollicited Day by Day for a long Time together. Of theſe I ſhall note a few Things: As,

1*ſt*, Such Temptations are not without a *ſpecial Commiſſion*. He cannot indeed tempt at all without Leave; but in the ordinary Courſe of his Temptations, he hath a *generak* Commiſſion, under ſuch *Reſtraints* and Limitations as pleaſeth the moſt High to put upon him; but in theſe he muſt have a *ſpecial* Order, as we ſee in *Job*'s Caſe.

2*dly*, Such Temptations have alſo a *ſpecial Ground*. Either the preſent *State* and Poſture of our Condition is ſuch, as Satan apprehends highly *advantageous* for his Deſigns and therefore he deſires to have the *winnowing* of us at *ſuch* a Seaſon; or there are more than *ordinary Diſpoſitions* and Inclinations in our Heart to what we are directly tempted to, or to *ſome other* conſequent Deſign. Theſe animate and encourage him to high Reſolves of proſecuting us more cloſely, upon an Expectation, that a continued Solicitation is moſt likely to prevail at the long Run.

3*dly*, It is poſſible that ſuch Temptations may *ſtand* out againſt the Endeavours of *many* Prayers, and that we ſhall find they are not ſo eaſily ſhaken off as the *Viper* that was upon *Paul*'s Hand. *Paul* (2 Cor. xii. 8.) prayed *thrice* againſt the Meſſenger of Satan; that is (as *Eſtius*

and others interpret) he prayed *often* and fervently, and yet it departed not.

4thly, Such Temptations give *no Reſt* nor Intermiſſion, Men are haunted and dogged by them; what way ſoever they go, they ſtill hear the ſame Things, and cannot command their Thoughts to give an Excluſion to his Motions, but ſtill by *renewed* Diſputes and Arguings, or by *clamorous* Importunities they are vexed and tormented, which ſurely ſhews an high Degree of Earneſtneſs and Impudency in Satan.

5thly, Theſe are conſequently very *burdenſome*, exceeding irkſome and tireſome to us. *Paul* calls them *Sufferings* for their Trouble and Moleſtation. Satan ſo moleſted *Job* in his Affliction by inward Accuſations and Troubles of Terror, that as an *overwearied* Man he cries out, he had no Quiet, and that he was diſappointed of his Hope of Eaſe in Sleep, becauſe he was then *ſcared with Dreams, and terrified with Viſions.*

6thly, Theſe are alſo upon a ſpecial Deſign *on God's Part*, either to *find us Work*, and to keep us doing, or to *prevent* Sin and Miſcarriage; to *keep* down our Pride, leſt we ſhould be *exalted above Meaſure*; to *awaken* us from Slothfulneſs and Security, leſt we ſhould *ſettle upon our Lees*; or to be an *Occaſion* of his *Grace*, and an *Evidence* of his *Power* in our Preſervation, ſatisfying us and others, that in the greateſt Shokes of our ſpiritual Battle, his *Grace is ſufficient for us.* Upon theſe, and ſuch like Deſigns as theſe, doth the moſt wiſe God permit it.

7thly, Satan doth not attempt Temptations of this Kind but upon a *ſpecial Deſign*, and that either becauſe he hopes by a violent and *pertinacious Impetuoſity* at length to prevail, or that he would *pleaſe* himſelf to moleſt us; for ſurely the Cries and Complainings of God's Children are Muſick in his Ears; or at leaſt, upon a Deſign to *diſcourage* us in our Services, and to make way for *other* Temptations of *Murmuring*, *Blaſphemy*, *Deſpair*, &c. which are as a Reſerve or Ambuſhment laid in wait for us. The Inferences from hence are theſe two.

Applic. 1.] That the Children of God under ſuch Temptations may be encouraged under a *patient Expectation*, by conſidering that Chriſt did undergo the *like Aſſaults* from Satan; 'tis in itſelf tedious and diſheartning, but they may ſee,

Firſt,

First, That this Way of Trouble is *usual*, and that to the *Best*, and therefore they should not faint under it.

Secondly, That Grace is *sufficient* to preserve from the *Prevalency* of the most earnest Temptations, even there where our heavenly Father thinks it not fit to *preserve* us from the *Trouble* of them. When *Paul* gives the highest Security that the Faithfulness of God can afford, that Temptations shall not be above *Strength*, 1 Cor. x. 13. or the Ability that shall be given them, he tells them, they are not to expect always such Aids, as shall presently *drive away* the Temptation, that it must immediately *vanish*, or that their Temptations shall become *light and contemptible*; but that God's Faithfulness will be no further engaged in the general, than 1. To make their Temptations tolerable, that *they may be able to bear them*, tho' not without much to do. 2. That the *Way of Escape* shall be *concurrent* with the *Continuance* of the Temptation; that tho' the Temptation abide, yet we shall be aided under it. 3. That yet he is as careful of our Help in Temptations, as he is ready to commissionate them, when Need requires: His Resolves that we should be tempted, and his Resolves that we should be succoured, they bear the same Date. *With the Temptation he will make a Way to escape.*

Thirdly, That such Temptations do not argue, 1. Either a *Likelihood*, much less a *Necessity*, that they should prevail. Nor 2. Any *Want* of Care and Love in God. Nor 3. Do they *always* evidence a *more than ordinary* Proneness and Inclination in us; for Christ (who was most averse to the least of Sin, who was highest in God's Love, against whom there was no Possibility he should prevail, yet) was thus tempted.

Applic. 2.] 2*dly*, In such continued Violences, it will concern us to make *stout* Resistances, according to the Counsel of *James* iv. 7. *Resist the Devil, and he will fly.*

Object.] But I have done so, and yet the Temptation is the same, and still continues.

Answ. 1.] 'Tis not enough to *resist*, but we must *continue* to do so. Some make *limited* Resistances, as besieged Persons, that set a Time for their holding out, and then if they be not relieved at that Time, they yield; but we must resolve a *perpetual Resistance*, as long as the Temptation *lasts*. When one Hand is beaten off, we must hold by another; when both are beaten off, we must (as it were) hold by our Teeth.

2*dly*, In a faithful Reſiſtance we may *caſt* the whole Matter *upon God*, and engage him in the Quarrel, as *David*; *I will ſay unto God, why haſt thou forſaken me*? &c.

Object.] But how is it conſiſtent with Truth that the Temptation ſhould continue, when *James* tells us, that Satan *will fly* upon *Reſiſtance*?

Anſw. 1.] It may be the Reſiſtance is not as it ought, and ſo the Blame is ours. If we be not *ſerious* (as ſome who defy the Devil in Words, and reſiſt him by croſſing themſelves, Things which doubtleſs the Devil laughs at) or if in the *Confidence* of a preſumptuous *Bravado*, or if not with that *Humility* and Care that is requiſite, it will be no Wonder if he depart not.

2*dly*, He doth *fly* at every Reſiſtance *more or leſs*; he doth give back and is diſcouraged, and is a Loſer by every Oppoſition.

3*dly*, Tho' the Scripture ſay that he ſhall fly (that is, ſooner or later) yet it doth not ſay, that he ſhall do ſo *immediately* (tho' moſt uſually he doth ſo, where he is peremptorily rejected) but in ſome Caſes Time muſt be allowed; for the Devil (as it is in *Chryſoſtom*'s Compariſon) ſtands like a *fawning Dog*, ſcratching and waving his Tail, and if any Thing be given him, it makes him importunate for more; yet tho' we give him nothing, we cannot expect, that the firſt or ſecond Denial ſhould make him ceaſe his Trouble; as he hath been encouraged by *former Compliances*, ſo will he not be diſcouraged, but with *many* and *continued* Denials.

If we conſider the *Faſt* of Chriſt, as an *Occaſion* deſigned by God for an *Advantage* to the Temptation, and then look upon his Condition in the Wilderneſs, being under *Hazards* from wild Beaſts, in *Want* of Neceſſaries, and without a *Poſſibility* of Supplies in an uſual Way; and alſo under the *Diſcomforts* of cold and long Nights (for according to the Conjectures of ſome (*a*), this was about our *October* and *November*) then we may obſerve,

Obſ. 4.] *That 'tis Satan's Way to ſecond outward Diſtreſſes and Afflictions with inward Temptations.* We ſee the like Carriage of Satan toward *Job*, his Affliction was followed with many Temptations; all his Friends, in urging him with Hypocriſy, were no other than Parties to Satan's Deſign, tho' they knew it not apparently; his Wife is

(*a*) *Lightfoot Harm.* in loc.

is set on by the Tempter, (as the Serpent against *Eve*) to provoke him to *curse God and die*. Besides all this, whosoever shall consider, what *inward Workings* of Heart, *spiritual* Trouble and Conflict, his Words frequently express: They will quickly find, that when God put *Job* into Satan's Hand, under that only Limitation of not touching *his Life*, he gave Satan a Liberty to pursue him with *inward* Temptations, as well as *outward* Vexations. When *Israel* was pinched with the Straits of the Wilderness, Satan was most busy with them, to put them upon Distrust, Murmuring, Revolt, disobedient Oppositions, Idolatry, and what not? *David* gives in his Experience to confirm this Truth, he never met with *outward* Troubles, but he had also *inward* Temptations with them, as *Fretting*, *Disquiet*, *sad Apprehensions of God's Wrath*, *Haste*, *Distrust*, *Fear*, &c. As the Relation of his several Straits do testify. And besides these, the Generality of God's Children find it so, outward Afflictions seldom pass alone; when they have *Fightings without*, they have *Fears within* usually; seldom have they a Sickness, or meet with a sad Providence, but they have Satan busy with their Souls, molesting their Peace, or endeavouring to ensnare them. Thus their Feet are never in the *Stocks*, but the *Iron* enters into their *Soul*. And for this Reason is it, that outward Afflictions and Troubles are called *Temptations* in Scripture, *Luke* viii. 13. because *Temptations* usually *accompany* them, 1 *Pet.* i. 6. and they are indeed the *solemn Seasons*, 2 Pet. ii. 9. that Satan desires to improve for that End; and for that is it that *Luke* expresseth that which we translate, *a Time of Temptation*, by Καιρος πειρασμὸ, which signifies an Occasion or Opportunity of Temptation.

The Temptations that Satan drives on, upon the Advantage of an afflicted Estate; are these.

First, To drive Men upon *impatient Outbreakings* against God, as the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, turn upon *Moses* with this, *Hast thou brought us into the Wilderness to slay us*? To this tended *Job*'s Temptation by his Wife, *Curse God and die*, as 'tis in our Translation, which cannot in anywise admit of the Excuse, that *Beza* makes for her, as if she gave wholesome Advice, *to die*, *blessing of God*; because he *reproves* her sharply, as having spoken *foolishly* and wickedly; but at best, 'tis an ironical Scoff at *Job*'s Integrity, *Dost* thou *bless* God while thou art *killed* by his

Diſpleaſure? if it be not a *direct* Suggeſtion of revengeful Deſpite. At ſuch Times Men are too apt to entertain cruel Thoughts of God, and ſadly reflective upon his Mercy or Juſtice.

Secondly, In this Poſture of Affliction he ſtrives to put them upon *direful Concluſions* againſt themſelves, as if God *called ſolemnly* their *Sin* to Remembrance, and that they are *forſaken* of God, and *marked* out for Deſtruction; the Pledge and Earneſt whereof, they take theſe Troubles to be. We may obſerve that *David*'s Afflictions awakened his Conſcience, to object Guilt and Miſcarriage, ſo that he is as earneſt to deprecate the Marking and Remembrance of his Sin, as he is to pray againſt his Troubles. For this ſee *Pſal.* xxv. 6, 7. and *Pſal.* xxxviii. 1, 4.

Thirdly, He puſheth them uſually upon *Contempt of Religion*, and abandoning the Ways of God: We are too apt to blame Religion for all our Troubles; and as we expect that our owning the Ways of God ſhould ſecure us from outward Affliction, ſo when we find it otherwiſe, we are too forward to ſay, *We have waſhed our Hands in vain*, &c.

Fourthly, The Sin of *Diſtruſt* is another Evil that he drives at; he would have Men conclude that God *cannot* or *will not* deliver. *Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderneſs?* ſaid the *Iſraelites*, by the Power of Temptation, when they were diſtreſſed.

Fifthly, Another Evil aimed at in ſuch a Caſe, is, to put us upon *indirect Courſes* and Ways to eſcape from our Troubles (*a*). *Saul* went to the Witch of *Endor*, when God anſwered him not. Diſtreſſes naturally prompt ſuch Things, and a little Temptation makes us comply, as is noted by the wiſe Man's Deſire, Give me not Poverty, leſt I put out my Hand and ſteal; Diſtreſſes of Poverty put Men upon Theft and unlawful Ways.

The Reaſons of Satan's tempting the Afflicted are theſe.

1*ſt*, That outward Afflictions are a *Load* and Burden; this gives a Probability, that his Deſigns may the better take Place. 'Tis eaſy to *overthrow* thoſe that are *bowed down*, to *break* thoſe that are *bruiſed*, to *maſter* thoſe that are *weary* and *weak-handed*.

2*dly*, An afflicted Eſtate is a Temptation *of itſelf*, and naturally dictates evil Things; It is Half of his Deſign brought

(*a*) Flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos, &c.

brought to his Hand, it affords Variety of Matter for a Temptation to work on.

3*dly*, Such a Condition ſtrongly *backs* a Temptation, and furniſheth many Arguments for a Prevalency; for Troubles are *ſerious* Things, they ſpeak to the Heart, and what they ſpeak, they ſpeak *fiercely*; they repreſent Things *otherwiſe*, than *common* Diſcovery can do, and for the meſt Part, they ſhew an Ingenuity in *multiplying* Fears, and *aggravating* Hazard, and *aſcertaining* ſuſpected Events, ſo that Satan can ſcarce deſire a fairer Hit, than what theſe offer him.

4*thly*, They alſo give him the Advantage of *Darkneſs*; for to ſuch, their *Way is hid*, and God hath hedged them in, they neither know *where they are*, Job iii. 23. whether their Trouble by a *Chaſtiſement* of Sin, or for *Trial*, or for *Prevention* of Miſcarriage, or to *make Way* for more comfortable Manifeſtations; and as little know they *how to behave themſelves* in their Trouble; or *how* and *when* to get out of it. In ſuch gropping Uncertainties, 'tis ſcarce poſſible, but they ſhould be put wrong.

5*thly*, An afflicted Condition brings on *Weakneſs* and *Indiſpoſition* to Duty, it makes the Hands weak, and the Knees feeble; this made *Job* to faint, *Job* iv. 5. this dried up *David's* Strength. The firſt Aſſault of an Affliction doth ſtound the Soul, and put it into ſuch a Confuſion, that *Hope* turns back, and *Faith* is to ſeek, and every *Grace* ſo out of Order, that a Man ſhall be unable to do any Thing of Duty, in a comfortable Manner.

6*thly*, In this Caſe Men are apt to conclude their *Prayers are not heard: I cry in the Day-time and thou heareſt not*, ſays *David*. *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* And with ſuch ſeeming Probability is this urged upon us by Affliction, that *Job* profeſſeth, he could not believe his own Senſe and Knowledge in ſuch a Caſe. *If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my Voice*, Job ix. 16.

7*thly*, Afflictions ſtrongly *fix* Guilt upon us, and repreſent God *ſearching out our Iniquities, and enquiring after our Sin*, Job x. 6.

8*thly*, They *imbitter* the Spirit, and beget Impreſſions upon the Mind, of very hard Thoughts of God.

9*thly*, They violently puſh Men on to ſpeak *unadviſedly*: There is ſuch a ſwelling *Ferment* of the old *Leaven* of Impatience and Diſtruſt in the Mind, that 'tis Matter of

Pain and Difficulty to be ſilent, *their Belly is as Wine that hath no Vent; it is ready to burſt like new Bottles*, and they are *weary with forbearing*, and *cannot ſtay*, and muſt ſpeak, *let come on them what will*, Job xxxii. 19.

All theſe Advantages doth an afflicted Condition bring to Satan; and who can think, that he who is ſo ſtudious of our Ruin, will be willing to miſs ſo fair an Opportunity?

Applic. 1.] *Firſt*, This muſt teach us to have a *watchful* Eye over *Affliction*, tho' at all Times we muſt expect Satan's Stratagems; yet in Troubles eſpecially prepare for them, according to the wiſe Man's Advice, *In a Day of Adverſity conſider.*

Secondly, Seeing Satan takes Advantage of the *ſharp Humours* of Impatience and Diſtruſt, we muſt be particularly careful, not to touch too much upon the *Harſhneſs* of our Troubles, becauſe this is that that ſets fretting and diſtracting Thoughts on Work. Afflictions (like the Pillar of the Cloud and Fire in the Wilderneſs) have a *Light* and *Darkneſs*; and accordingly theſe that converſe with the *dark Side* of Troubles, *envenom* their Imaginations, and *poiſon* their Thoughts with *dark* and *hideous Concluſions*, and in a word, draw forth nothing but the *Wormwood* and the *Gall*; whereas thoſe that ſtudy and view the *light Side* of them, are full of *Praiſe* and *Admiration*, for the gracious *Mixtures*, comfortable *Mitigations*, encouraging *Supports*, &c. which they obſerve. 'Tis Wiſdom then to keep upon the right Side of them.

Tho' it be the Deſign of God to turn the *dark Side* of the Cloud to us; yet may we have a *competent Light* to guide us, if we would *improve* it; when the *Sun* is ſet, the *Moon* may be up. Nay 'tis our Duty to ſtrive to *recover* the right Side of the Cloud; he *hides* that we may *ſeek*.

If this *Faſt* of Chriſt's be conſidered as a *Remedy* againſt Temptations, then we may obſerve; *That ſolemn Temptations are to be reſiſted with Faſtings and Prayer.* Of this I ſhall forbear to ſpeak, till I come to ſpeak of Chriſt's Anſwer, and the Repulſe of Satan.

MATTH.

MATTH. iv. 3. *And when the Tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these Stones be made Bread.*

CHAP. VI.

That Christ's Temptations were real and not in Vision; that Temptation is Satan's Employment, with the Evidences and Instances thereof. Of Satan's tempting visibly, with the Reasons thereof.

NEXT follows a particular Account of those more *eminent* Temptations wherewith Christ was assaulted by Satan. Before I speak of these, I must necessarily remove this Stumbling-block out of the Way, *viz.* whether Christ was *really* tempted, or only in a *Vision*. That this was but visionary, hath been supposed, not only by some, whose Conceits in other Things, might justly render their Supposals in this Matter less worthy of a serious Consideration (*a*). But also by very grave and serious Men, whose Reasons notwithstanding are not of that Weight, as to sway us against the *Letter* and *History* of these Temptations (*b*): Which give us a full Account of these Things as really transacted, without the least Hint of understanding them as done only in a Vision. For,

First, 'Tis a dangerous Thing to depart from the *literal Sense* of what is historically related; if we take such a Liberty, we may as well understand other *historical* Passages after the *same Rate*, and so bring the History not only of Christ's Suffering to a *visionary* and *phantastical* Cross, but also of all the New Testament to a very nothing (*c*).

Secondly, The *Circumstances* of the Temptation are so *particularly* set down; as the Devil's *coming* to him, *leaving* him, *taking* him to the Temple, &c. that if we may expect in any Thing to secure ourselves from a visionary Supposition, we may do it in this History (*d*).

Thirdly, This Imagination doth wholly *enervate* and make void the very End and Design of Christ's being *tempted*: For where were the Glory of this *Victory* over Satan

(*a*) *Hob's Leviathan*, c. 45. p. 354. (*b*) *Calvin, Scultetus.* (*c*) *Tenesen, Hob's Creed, Exam.* p. 65. (*d*) *Spanhem.* dub. Evan. in loc.

tan, if it were only a visionary Temptation, and a visionary Conquest? Or where were the *Comfort* and Encouragement which Believers (from the *Apostle's* Authority, *Heb.* ii. 18. and iv. 16.) might reap from this, that Christ imagined himself to be tempted, when really he was not so? Nay how impossible is it, to make that Expression of the Apostle, [*he was tempted in all Points like as we are*] to agree to an imaginary Temptation, except we also say, that we are only tempted *visionarily* and not *really*.

Fourthly, Neither is it a Plea of any Value against this Truth, that it seems to *derogate* too much from the *Honour* and Authority of our Saviour, that Satan should so impudently *assault* him with Temptations to worship him, and should carry him at Pleasure from Place to Place (*a*), when we find that he *voluntarily* submitted to *higher Indignities* from Satan's Instruments, and *turned not away his Cheek* from those that *smote* him, *spit* upon him, and contumeliously *mocked* him, and at last submitted to *Death*, *even the Death of the Cross*.

As for those Objections from πτερύγιον ἱερόν, the *Pinacle of the Temple*, upon which *Soultetus* thinks it was impossible for *Christ* to stand; as also the Objection of the Impossibility to shew the Kingdoms of the *World* from any Mountain: I shall answer them in their proper Place, in the mean Time I shall return to the Verse in Hand, in which I shall first pitch upon the *general Proemium*, or Introduction to these special Temptations, which is this, *The Tempter came to him*.

In this we are to take Notice of the Name given to Satan, and also the *Way* and *Manner* of the *Assault*, in that Expression, he *came to him*.

There are three distinct Names given to him in these Temptations. 1. His Name *Satan*, shews his *Malice* and *Fury*, which is the Ground and Fountain whence all that Trouble proceeds, which we meet with from him. 2. He is stiled the *Tempter*, and that signifies to us how he *puts forth* this Malice, his Way and Exercise in the exerting of it. 3. He is called the *Devil* or *Accuser*, expressing thereby the End and Issue of all. From this Name then here given, we may observe,

Obs. 1.]

(*a*) Non mirum est Christum permisisse se circumduci a Diabolo, qui permittit se a membris suis crucifigi. *Gregorius*.

Obſ. 1.] *Firſt, That it is Satan's Work and Employment to tempt Men.* We need not here diſpute whether it be proper to Satan to tempt, that is, *an ſoli, & ſemper competat*, whether it agree to him only, and always, which ſome indeed affirm in ſuch a Senſe as this (*a*), that *Men* do tempt *Men* as *Satan's Inſtruments*, the *World* tempts as it is the *Object*, and *Matter* of Temptations, but *Satan* tempts as the proper *Author* and *Engineer* of Temptations. Others there are that think, that Men can, and do properly tempt themſelves, according to *James* i. *Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Luſt.* But the Queſtion is altogether needleſs as to us, tho' we and others may be true and proper Tempters, yet this hindereth not but that it is moſt true, that Satan makes Temptation his very *Work* and *Buſineſs*. And therefore not only here, but in 1 *Theſ.* iii. 5. the Devil is deſcribed by his *Employment*, *Leſt by any Means the Tempter* (or he that tempteth) *hath tempted you*; which the ordinary Gloſs doth thus explain, *Diabolus, cujus eſt officium tentare.* This Name then is put upon Satan κατ' ἐξοχὴν by Way of *Emi-nency*; implying, 1. That though there be never ſo many Tempters, yet Satan is the *Chief.* 2. That he makes Temptation his proper Employment.

That Satan doth ſo, I ſhall evidence by theſe few Notes. 1*ſt*, Temptation is in itſelf a Buſineſs and Work: For if we conſider either the Work of any one Temptation (where Satan is oft put to it, after *Suggeſtion* to *perſuade*, and after *Perſuaſion* to *inſtigate* and provoke) or if we conſider what Furniture, Tools, Means, and Inſtruments are requiſite, and what it may coſt to bring all Things together into *fit Order* and *Method*; or if we think of the various Ways and Manners of Temptation; that ſome are *mediate*, ſome *immediate*; ſome *inward*, ſome *outward*; ſome *moveable*, ſome *fixed* and *ſolemn*; ſome *Inticements* to *Evil*, ſome *Affrightments* from *Duty*, others *Invaſions* of our Peace and Joy; or laſtly, if we call to Mind what *Study*, what *Art*, what *Fetches* and *Contrivances* the Devil is ſometimes put upon, we ſhall eaſily ſee, that it keeps him doing, and that *he eats not the Bread of Idleneſs* that hath that Employment to follow.

2*dly*, Sa-

(*a*) *Aquinas* Sum. Part 1. Q. 114. Art. 2. Homines inſtrumentaliter, mundus materialiter, Satanas efficienter. *Selgter* on 1 Theſ. 3. 5.

2*dly*, Satan *gives up himself* unto it, is wholly in it, *he walks to and fro*, goes *about* seeking Advantages of this Nature, *compasseth Sea and Land to proselite Men* to his Slavery, useth all *Means*, upon all *Men*, at all *Times*, with all *Diligence*; hence was it, that *Latimer* (in his homely Way of speaking) called him, a *busy Bishop in his Diocess*, and excited the Sluggish to learn Laboriousness of the Devil.

3*dly*, He takes a *Delight* in it, not only from a *natural Propensity*, which his Fall put upon him, whereby he cannot but tempt; as an evil Tree cannot but bring forth evil Fruits: But also from the Power of an *Habit acquired* by long Exercise, which is accompanied with some Kind of Pleasure; and further, whatever Pleasure may be supposed to arise from revengeful Pride or Companionship in Evil, he hath of that in full Measure, pressed down, and running over*.

4*thly*, All other Things in Satan, or in his Endeavours, have either a Subserviency, or some Way or other a Reference and Respect to Temptation. His *Power*, *Wisdom*, *Malice*, and other infernal *Qualifications*, render him able to tempt; his Labour and Diligence in other Things are but the Work of one that prepares Materials and Occasions; his other Business of *accusing*, *affrighting*, *destroying*, *tormenting*, are but the Ends and Improvements of tempting.

5*thly*, He cares not how it goes on, so that it go on; as a Man that designs to be rich, cares not how he gets it; which shews, that tempting in general is his Design. Of this we have many Instances; as, 1. He sticks not to lie and dissemble, he will tell them of the *Kingdoms of the World, and Glory of them*, and a thousand fair Promises which he never intends. 2. He will tempt for a *small Matter*, if he can but gain a little, or but molest us, yet he will be doing. 3. He will not give over for a Foil or Disappointment. 4. He is not ashamed to tempt *contradictory* Things, he tempted Christ against the Work of Redemption, *Master spare thyself*. He tempted *Judas* to further it in betraying him. 5. Any Temptation that he sees will hold, he takes up with; hence is it that he tempts not the *Jews* now to Idolatry, because he hath them fast in another Snare, being strongly led to an Opposition and Contempt of Christ. 6. He will sometime tempt where he hath not *Probability* to prevail, even against Hope. Thus he tempted *Christ* and *Paul*.

Appl.]

* Solamen miseris, &c.

Applic.] The Uſe of the Obſervation is this: If it be his *Buſineſs* to tempt, it muſt be our Work to *reſiſt*.

1. To reſiſt is a *Labour*, 'tis not an idle Formality, conſiſting in Words of Defiance, or a few ridiculous *Croſſings*, and Sprinklings of *holy Water*, or *ſpitting* at the Name of him, as ignorant People are wont to do.

2. We muſt *give up* ourſelves to this Work, always fighting and oppoſing.

3. It will be neceſſary to make uſe of all *Helps*, as Prayer, Faſting, the Counſel and Support of holy and experienced Men.

4. We muſt alſo caſt off all *Hinderances*, whatſoever in us is apt to take Fire, or give Advantage, muſt be laid off; as *Pride* (which doth prognoſticate a Fall) and *Security*, which betrays the beſt; or *Preſumption*, which provokes God to leave thoſe of higheſt Attainments, *Neh.* xiii. 16.

Secondly, In this general *Introduction*, we may caſt our Eye, upon the *Way* and *Manner* of the Aſſault; when 'tis ſaid, the *Tempter came unto him*, we are unavoidably forced to ſuppoſe, *another* Manner of Coming, than that whereby he tempted him for *forty Days* together. And when we call to Mind, that at his Coming here mentioned, he *carried* Chriſt to the *Temple*, and from thence to a high *Mountain*, and there propounded himſelf an Object of *Worſhip*; we can imagine no leſs, than that Satan here came *viſibly* to him; but in what Shape or Manner of Appearance, it is altogether uncertain, though 'tis moſt probable, it was not in the Form of a *Brute*, but in ſome Luſtre of Majeſty or Glory, as an *Angel*; becauſe a *deformed*, or baſe Appearance, had been *unſuitable* to the Boaſt of giving the *Kingdoms* of the World, or to his Deſire that Chriſt ſhould *fall down and worſhip him*. Hence we may obſerve:

Obſ. 2.] *That Satan ſometimes tempts in a viſible Appearance, and by Voice.*

Firſt, The Poſſibility of this, is evident from the *Apparitions* of Angels. Satan is ſtill an Angel (*a*), and there is nothing of a *natural Incapacity* in him as to an outward *Appearance* to our Eyes and Senſes, more than in glorified Spirits.

Secondly, In the *firſt* Temptation he did no leſs, when he uſed the *Serpent*, as *a* Trunk to ſpeak through, and an Inſtrument

(*a*) *Piſcat.* in loc.

ſtrument to act by; in *Poſſeſſions* he ſpeaks audibly, and evidenceth a real Preſence.

Thirdly, Undoubted *Inſtances* may be given of Satan's tempting and moleſting viſibly. I deny not but there are a great many *idle Stories* of this Kind, and a Number of ridiculous Figments, but it would be unreaſonable and highly prejudicial to the Truth of *Hiſtory*, and the common *Faith* of Mankind, to refuſe Credit to the ſerious Accounts of *ſober* Men, becauſe of ſome fooliſh and unwarrantable Fables. What is related of *Luther*, and his ſeveral Troubles from Satan this Way, is evident in the Story of his Life (*a*). *Cyrillus* tells us of one *Euſebius*, Diſciple of *Hierom*, who, when he was dying, cried out of the Devil's appearing to him. The like is ſtoried of St. *Martin* and others; and of theſe, you may read more collected by Mr. *Clark*.

If we would enquire into the Reaſons of Satan's appearing thus, we cannot more fitly pitch upon any other than theſe.

(1.) Either he thinks a great *Affrightment* neceſſary in ſome Caſes, and for that End appears: Or,

(2.) He ſees his Appearance needful, to give a greater *Evidence* and Certainty to the *Reality* of the Pleaſures of Sin which he promiſeth; that is the common Ground of his appearing in the Ways and Deſigns of *Witchcraft*.

(3.) Or in the Height of *Rage*, when he perceives other Ways not available, and when he hath to do with Perſons not ignorant of his Devices, where he ſees he hath no Need of a *Viſor*, or covert Ways of Dealing, then he ſticks not (if permitted) to tempt or moleſt openly.

This muſt teach us not to wonder at ſuch Temptations, much leſs to judge thoſe that may be ſo moleſted, as if Satan had a greater Share in them, ſeeing Chriſt was thus tempted.

CHAP.

(*a*) O fratres adjuvate me, ne peream, nonne videtis Dæmonum agmina, quæ me debellare, & ad Tartara ducere feſtinant, quid hic aſtas cruenta beſtia? Cl. Senarclæus in Epiſt. ad M. Bucerum, &c. *Tells of a Country Man, at* Tribury *in* Germany, *to whom the Devil appeared in the Shape of a tall Man, claiming his Soul, and offering to ſet down his Sins in a Scroll.*

CHAP. VII.

The general View of these Temptations. Of Satan's gradual Proceeding in Temptations. Of reserving a great Temptation last. What a great Temptation is, in what Cases to be expected. Of Satan's using a common Road, in comparing these Temptations, with the ordinary Temptations of Men. Of the Advantage Satan takes of natural Appetite, Sense, and Affections.

I HAVE done with the *Proemium* to the Temptations. Yet before I open them particularly, I shall take a *general View* of them. *First*, By comparing these with the other Temptations of Christ during the forty Days. *Secondly*, By comparing these with the Temptations of Men.

First, Then, if we compare these with the former Temptations, and observe that we have no *Account* given us of those Temptations, but only in the general, that he was *tempted*; whereas these are *particularly* set down and recorded, we cannot apprehend less than this, *That these last Temptations were certainly greater and more remarkable Temptations.* Hence note,

Obs. 3.] *That 'tis Satan's Method to be gradual in his Temptations, and that he keeps his greatest Temptations to the latter End.*

That Satan is *gradual* in his Temptations, this is true of him, if we regard,

1. The *Manner* of his Proceeding, That he drives *slowly*, entreats *gently*, and is very careful that he do not *overdrive* Men, but after they are *accustomed* to his Way, he puts on *Imperiousness* and commands them.

2. If the *Matter* of Temptation be regarded, he is gradual there also. He tempts to *little* Sins first, then to *greater*.

I shall illustrate both these Particulars by the Example of *Thomas Savage*, Apprentice to Mr. *Collins* Vintner at the *Ship Tavern* in *Ratcliff*, who suffered in *anno* 1668, for murdering his Fellow servant: He confesseth that the Devil took this Course with him; he first tempted him to *Neglect* of Duty, then to *Contempt* of Ordinances, and *Profanation* of the Sabbath, then to *Drinking*, then to *Fornication*, then to *Rob* and *Steal* from his Master, and last of all to *Murder*; and takes particular Notice that in this last

Tempta-

Temptation, to kill his Fellow-ſervant, there was a *violent* and more than ordinary *Power* of Satan upon him, to inſtigate him to that Wickedneſs. All this you may read at large in the printed Narration of his Life.

The Reaſons of his gradual Proceedings are,

(1.) He would diſcover *no more* of himſelf in any Temptation, than he is *neceſſitated* unto; for the gaining his End, leſt he croſs his own Deſign, and inſtead of drawing Men to Wickedneſs, ſcar or affright them from it.

(2.) Sins are *mutually preparatory* to each other, ſmaller Proffers and Temptations do inſenſibly prepare, and incline the Heart to greater.

Secondly, That he keeps his *greateſt* Temptations laſt, is a Conſequence of the former; for which (beſides what is now ſpoken) theſe Reaſons may be given:

1*ſt*, There is *Provocation* given him, in refuſing his *leſſer Aſſaults*. His *Head* is *bruiſed* by every Refuſal, he is ſet at Defiance, which calls him out to *ſtronger* Oppoſition. He perceives by often Repulſes that thoſe with whom he hath to do are not Subjects of his Kingdom, and that his *Time is ſhort*; and therefore no Wonder is it, if he aſſault moſt furiouſly, and with all his Strength.

2*dly*, There is alſo *Policy* in it, when he hath brought down our Strength and weakned our Courage, then a violent Onſet is fair to procure him a Victory.

But becauſe I mention a *great* Temptation, it may not be amiſs both for the further explaining of the Text, and Illuſtration of the Matter, to ſhew what is a great Temptation. Theſe were great Temptations to Chriſt, and there are ſeveral Things remarkable in them, which where-ever they appear, they will denominate the Temptation great, and the *more* of them are conjoined together, and in higher *Degree*, it may juſtly be called ſtill the greater. As

1. In theſe Temptations, we may note there were *external Objects*, as well as inſinuated *Suggeſtions*; inward *Motions* are *real* Temptations, but when they have the *Objects* and Things preſented to the *Eye* or the *Senſes*, then do they ſtrongly urge. At this Advantage the Devil tempted *Eve*, he urged her when the Fruit was within the View; thus he tempted *Achan*, when the Gold and Garment were in his Eye.

2. Theſe Temptations were *complex*, conſiſting of many various Deſigns, like a Snare of many Cords or Nooſes.

When

When he tempted to turn Stones to Bread, it was not one *ſingle* Deſign, but many that Satan had in Proſecution: As *Diſtruſt* on one Hand, *Pride* on another, and ſo in the reſt. The more complicated a Temptation is, 'tis the greater.

3. Theſe were alſo *perplexing*, entangling Temptations; they were *dilemmatical*, ſuch as might enſnare, either in the Doing, or Refuſal. If he had turned Stones into Bread, he had too much *honoured* Satan by doing it at his *Motion*. If he did not, he ſeemed to *neglect* his own *Body*, in not making neceſſary Proviſions for himſelf, being now hungry.

4. Theſe Temptations proceeded upon conſiderable *Advantages*, his *Hunger* urged a Neceſſity of turning Stones into Bread. His preſent *Straits*, and the Lowneſs of his Condition ſeemed to ſpeak much for the Reaſonableneſs of giving Proof of his *Divine Nature*, by caſting himſelf down from the Temple, and of doing any Thing, that might tend to a more *plentiful* Being and Support in the World. Advantages ſtrengthen Temptations.

5. Theſe Temptations were accompanied with a greater *Preſence* and Power of Satan, he appeared *viſibly* in them, and was permitted to touch and hurry the Body of Chriſt, and to depaint and ſet forth the Glory of the World, (doubtleſs in the moſt taking Way) to the Eye of Chriſt.

6. The Matter of theſe Temptations, or the Things he tempted Chriſt to, were great and *heinous* Abominations, (a Diſtruſt of Providence, a Preſumption of Protection, and a final Renunciation of the Worſhip due to him, and tranſferring it to the moſt unworthy Object, God's profeſſed Enemy) and yet were they ſeconded by the *ſtrongeſt*, moſt *powerful*, and moſt *prevailing* Means, as his preſent *Straits*, his infallible Aſſurance of *Sonſhip*, *Pleaſure*, and Glory. Where the *Matter* is weighty, and the *Medium* ſtrong and preſſing, there is the Temptation great.

7. All theſe Temptations pretended ſtrongly to the Advantage and *Benefit* of Chriſt, and ſome of them might ſeem to be done without any *Blame*, as to turn Stones to Bread, to fly in the Air. The more *Kindneſs* a Temptation pretends to us, it is the ſtronger.

8. Satan urged ſome of them in a daring, provoking Way; *If thou be the Son of God?* as if he had ſaid, I dare thee to ſhew thy ſelf what thou pretendeſt to be. Theſe Kind of Provocations are very troubleſome to the moſt modeſt and

ſelf-denying, who can ſcarce forbear to do what they are urged unto at ſuch Times.

9. Theſe Temptations ſeem to be deſigned for the *Engagement* of all the *natural* Powers of Chriſt, his natural *Appetite* in a Deſign of Food; his *Senſes*, in the moſt beautiful Object, the World in its Glory; the *Affections*, in that which is moſt Swaying, Pride, and Delight in extraordinary Teſtimonies; of Divine Power and Love, in ſupporting him in the Air, *&c.*

10. Some of theſe warranted as *Duty*, and to ſupply neceſſary Hunger, others depending upon the Security of a *Promiſe*, *He ſhall give his Angels Charge*, &c. The greater Appearance of Duty, or Warrantableneſs is put upon Sin, the greater is the Temptation.

By theſe *ten* Particulars may we (as by a Standard) judge, when any Temptation is great or leſs.

Applic. 1.] Let us then take heed of *ſmall* Temptations, or the *ſmoother* Proceedings of Satan, as we would avoid the *greater* Attempts that are to follow. Where he is admitted to beat out our Luſts with a *Rod* or a *Staff*, he may be ſuſpected to bring the *Wheel* over them at laſt.

Let us alſo after our Aſſaults, *expect* more and greater, becauſe the greateſt are laſt to be looked for. This holds true in three Caſes. (1.) In *ſolemn* Temptations where Satan *fixeth* his Aſſaults, there the utmoſt Rage is drawn out laſt. (2.) In the *Continuance* and Progreſs of Profeſſion, the further we go from him, and the nearer to God, be ſure of the higheſt Meaſure of his Spite. (3.) At the *End* of our Race: For if he miſs his *Prey* then, it is eſcaped for ever, as a *Bird* unto its Hill.

Object. But ſome may ſay, I am but a Meſſenger of ſad Tidings; and that by bringing ſuch a Report of *Giants*, and *walled Cities*, I may make the Hearts of the People to *faint*.

Anſw.] I anſwer; This is bad News only to the *Sluggiſh*, ſuch as would go to Heaven with Eaſe, and in a fair and eaſy Way, but to the *laborious* reſolute Soldiers of Chriſt this is no great Diſcouragement: For, (1.) It doth but tell them of their *Work*, which as they are perſuaded of, ſo it is in ſome Meaſure their *Delight*, as well as their *Expectation*. (2.) It doth but tell them, Satan's *Malice* and Fury, which they are aſſured of, and are moſt afraid of it ſometimes, when it ſeems to ly idle and as aſleep. (3.) It doth tell them that Satan's Thoughts concerning them are *deſpair-*

ing, he fears they are going, or gone from him. If they were his willing Servants, there would be no Hoſtility of this Nature againſt them.

I have thus compared theſe ſpecial Temptations with thoſe wherewith our Lord Chriſt was exerciſed during the forty Days. I ſhall,

Secondly, *Compare* theſe Temptations of Chriſt with thoſe that uſually befal his *Members*, in which there is ſo much Suitableneſs and Agreement, both in *Matter* and *Manner*, that it cannot be unuſeful to take notice of it, which will the better appear in Inſtances:

Firſt, Then let us conſider the firſt Temptation of *Eve*, *Gen.* iii. 6. And *when the Woman ſaw that the Tree was good for Food, and that it was pleaſant to the Eyes, and a Tree to be deſired to make one wiſe*, &c. Here are all the Arguments and Ways ſummed up, by which Satan prevailed upon her; It was *good for Food*, here he wrought upon the Deſire of the *natural Appetite*; It was *pleaſant to the Eyes*, here he took the Advantage of the *external Senſes*. It was *to be deſired to make one wiſe*, here he enflamed the *Affections*. Let us again call to Mind the general Account of Temptations, in the 1 *John* ii. 16. *All that is in the World, the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life*; where the Apoſtle deſignedly calls all off from a Love of the World; becauſe of the Hazard and Danger that we ly open unto, from the Things of the World, ſtriking upon and ſtirring up our *Luſts*; which he ranks into three *general Heads*, according to the *various* Ways whereby theſe outward Things do work upon us, in exciting our *natural* Powers and Apprehenſions to ſinful *Luſtings*: And theſe are ſo fully agreeing with thoſe three in *Eve*'s Temptation, that I need not note the Parallel. Let us now caſt our Eyes upon theſe Temptations, and the Suitableneſs of Satan's Ways and Dealings will immediately appear. When he tempted Chriſt to turn *Stones into Bread*, there he endeavoured to take Advantage of the *Luſt of the Fleſh* (which in the 1 *John* ii. I underſtand in a more reſtrained Senſe, not for the Luſtings of *corrupt* Nature, but for the Luſtings of the *Body* in its natural *Appetite*, according to that Expreſſion of Chriſt, *the Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh* or Body *is weak*: And if we ſhould not ſo reſtrain it in this Place, the Luſt of the Fleſh would *include* the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, contrary to the

clear Scope of the Text, for theſe are alſo the Luſtings of corrupt Nature. When he further tempted him to *caſt himſelf down*, he puſhed him upon the *Pride of Life*; when he ſhewed him the *Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them*, he attempted to gain upon him by the *Luſt of the Eyes*. From this Proportion and Suitableneſs of Temptation to Chriſt and his Members, obſerve,

Obſ. 4.] *That Satan uſually treads in a beaten Path, uſing known and experienced Methods of Temptation.* 'Tis true, in regard of *Circumſtances*, he uſeth unſpeakable *Varieties* in tempting, and hath many more Devices and Juggles than can be reckoned up, yet in the *general* he hath *digeſted* them into Method and Order, and the Things upon which he works in us, are the ſame; thus he walks his Round, and keeps much-what the ſame Tract, not only in different Perſons, but alſo in the ſame Men, uſing the ſame Temptations over and over, and yet this argues no *Barrenneſs* of Invention, or *Sluggiſhneſs* in Satan, but he hath theſe Reaſons for it:

1. Becauſe the ſame Temptations being ſuited to *humane Nature* in general, will with a ſmall Variation of *Circumſtance* ſuit all Men, their Inclinations generally anſwering to one another, as Face anſwers to Face in Water.

2. Theſe *ſtanding* Methods are famous with him, as *generally* powerful and taking, and it can be no Wonder if Satan *practiſe* moſt with theſe Things, that have the largeſt *probatum eſt* of Experience to follow them.

3. The more *experienced* he is in any Temptation, the more *dexterouſly* and ſucceſsfully ſtill he can manage it; ſo that we may expect him *more Cunning* and able in what he *moſt practiſeth*.

Applic.] This may be ſome Satisfaction to thoſe that are apt to think of themſelves and their Temptations; as *Elias* did in his Perſuaſion, *I alone am left.* Where Satan uſeth any Thing of Vigour and Fierceneſs, we are apt to ſay, *None are tempted as we*, none in *like Caſe*, we are *ſingular*, they are *peculiar* and *extraordinary* Temptations, &c. But 'tis a Miſtake; even that of *Solomon* may be applyed to theſe, *there is nothing new*, nor any Thing befallen us, which others have not undergone before us; and would but Chriſtians be ſo careful to *obſerve* the Way of the Serpent upon their Hearts, and as they might, and ſo *communicative* of their Experiences as they ought, the weak and heavy laden would not

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go ſo mourning under ſuch Apprehenſions, as commonly affright them, that none were ever ſo tempted as they are; it would be ſome *Support* at worſt, when the moſt helliſh Furies do oppreſs them, to know that others before them were in theſe *Deeps*, and as *fearful* of being overwhelmed as themſelves, and yet were *delivered*; *The Deliverances, of thoſe that have eſcaped the Danger, is Ground of Hope to thoſe that are at preſent under it.*

Obſ. 5.] *The uſual Advantages that Satan takes againſt us, is from our natural Appetite, our external Senſes, or our Paſſions and Affections.* All theſe are uſual Ways by which Satan works againſt us, as appears from what hath been ſaid, neither are any of them ſo mean and contemptible, but that we have cauſe to fear the Power and Influence of them. Hence the Scripture-cautions deſcend to the Eyes, *Look not upon the Wine when it is red in the Cup. Be ſober, be vigilant*, &c. The *Appetite* is not ſo eaſily kept in, but that it may prevail to *Gluttony* and *Drunkenneſs*: And ſome are ſo powerfully carried by this, that they are ſaid *to make their Bellies their God.* Of the Power of Senſe and Affection, elſewhere hath been ſpoken.

CHAP. VIII.

The Riſe of Chriſt's firſt Temptation. Of Satan's ſuiting his Temptations to the Conditions of Men. Of tempting Men upon the Plea of Neceſſity. The Reaſons and Cheats of that Plea. His Pretences of Friendſhip in tempting, with the Danger thereof.

HAVING thus conſidered theſe Temptations as they lay before us in their general Proſpect, I ſhall now ſpeak of this firſt ſpecial Temptation in particular, in which, (1.) The Riſe, or Occaſion, (2.) The Temptation itſelf, (3.) The Argument by which Satan would enforce it, are to be diſtinctly noted.

Firſt, As to the *Riſe* of it, it is queſtioned by ſome, why Satan begins with this firſt, the Cauſe they aſſign, (in Part at leaſt) is from his firſt Succeſs againſt *Eve*, in a Temptation about *eating*, as if this were the chief and moſt hopeful Arrow in his Quiver. But we need not go ſo far, when the Evangeliſt is ſo punctual in ſetting it down, in the latter

End of the former Verſe, *he was an hungred.* This the Devil took notice of, and from hence took the Riſe of his Temptation, that by *turning Stones to Bread* for the Satisfaction of his preſent Hunger, he might be induced to make Way for the ſecret Stratagems which he had prepared againſt him on this Occaſion. Here I note,

Obſ. 6.] *That where Satan hath a Deſign againſt any, he doth take the Advantage of their Condition, and ſuits his Temptation accordingly.* Thus, if Men be in Poverty, or in the Enjoyments of Plenty, in Sickneſs or Health, if in Afflictions, under Wrongs, in Diſcontents, or carried to Advancements and Honours, or whatever elſe may be conſiderable relating to them, he obſerves it, and orders his Deſigns ſo, as to take in all the Advantages that they will afford. That 'tis his Concern and Intereſt ſo to do, we may imagine, upon theſe Grounds:

1*ſt*, Our *Conſent* muſt be gained; this he cannot properly and truly *force*, but muſt *entice* and deceive us to a Compliance with him.

2*dly*, If our *Condition* ſpeak for him, and ly fair for the Furtherance of any Device of his, our Conſent is upon the Matter *half gained*; 'tis much, if ſo powerful an Advocate, as is *our preſent State*, do not influence us to an Inclination.

3*dly*, This doth his Work *eaſily* and effectually, he more generally prevails by this Courſe, and with leſs Labour.

Appl.] This Policy of Satan ſhould advantage us, by ſuggeſting fit *Memorials* to us, in our Expectations of Temptation. Tho' we know not all Satan's Thoughts, yet may we know where and how he will uſually make an Onſet, our *Condition* will tell us what to look for. The *Diſtreſſed* and Afflicted may expect a Temptation ſuited to their *Condition*, as of Murmuring, Repining, Revenge, Diſtruſt, Uſe of indirect Means, Diſpairings, &c. They that have *Peace* and Plenty may be ſure they ſhall be tempted *ſuitably*, to Pride, Boaſting, Covetouſneſs, Oppreſſion, Contempt of others, Security, or whatever may be fit to be engrafted on that Stock; the like may be ſaid of any other different Condition. How fairly are we forewarned, (by an Obſervation made upon Satan's Proceeding upon theſe Advantages) where to expect him, and how to provide againſt him.

Let us proceed to a further Enquiry, *How* the Devil managed this Advantage of Chriſt's Hunger; he plainly urgeth him with a *Neceſſity* of providing Supplies for himſelf,

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preading before him his Desire to eat, and the Impossibility f Help, in a barren and desolate Wilderness, as if he had aid, *The Want of the Body is to be provided for, Nature and Religion consents to this; the Wilderness affords no Help, ordinary Means fail; there is therefore a Necessity that some extraordinary Course be taken, therefore turn Stones to Bread; this is not unsuitable to the Condition and Power of him who is the Son of God.* At this Rate he pleads.

Obs. 7.] Observe then, *That Satan usually endeavours to run his Temptations upon the Plea of Necessity, and from thence to infer a Duty.*

When he cannot pretend a *fair* and direct Way to irregular Practices, he would *break* a Door and force a Way by *Necessity.*

Under this Notion of *Necessity*, the Devil marshals all those Pretences, that seem to be of more than ordinary Force, in their usual Prevalencies. Thus he teacheth Men to think they are *necessitated*, if they be carried by a strong *Inclination* of their *own*, or if there be an *Urgency* and Provocation from *others*, or if they be *in Straits* and Dangers; and sometime he goes so high, as to teach Men that a Necessity is included in the very Fabrick of their *natural Principles*, by which they presumptuously excuse themselves in being sinful, because by *Nature* they are so, and cannot be changed without *special* Grace; scarce shall we meet any Man with seasonable Reproof for his Iniquity, but he will plead such Kind of Necessities for himself, *I could not help it, I was strongly carried, or, I was compelled; I must do so, or else I could not escape such a Danger*, &c.

The Reasons of this Policy, are these.

1st, He knows that Necessity hath a *compulsive* Force, even to Things of (otherwise) greatest Abhorrencies: A Treasury of Instances is to be had in Famines, and besieged Places, where 'tis usual to eat unclean Things, not only Creatures that are vile, but even Dung and Entrails, *Deut.* xxviii. 56. nay, so *tyrannical* is Necessity, that it makes Inroads into, and Conquests upon Nature itself, causing *the tender and delicate Woman, which would not adventure the Sole of her Foot upon the Ground for Delicateness and Tenderness, to have an evil Eye towards the Husband of her Bosom, towards her Son, and towards her Daughter.* A like *Force* doth it exercise upon the Minds and *Consciences* of Men, it makes them rise up against their *Light*, it engageth

gageth Men to lay violent Hands upon their own *Convictions*, to ſtifle and extinguiſh them. How many mournful Examples have we of this Kind? How many have *apoſtatized* from Truth (being terrified by the urging Neceſſities of Danger) contrary to the higheſt *Convictions* of Conſcience.

2dly, Neceſſity can do much to the *darkning* of the Underſtanding, and *Change* of the Judgment, by the ſtrong Influence it hath upon the *Affections*. Men are apt to form their Apprehenſions, according to the Dictates of Neceſſity; what they ſee to be *hazardous*, they are inclinable to judge to be *Evil*; Men in Straits not only *violate* their Reaſon, but ſometime by inſenſible Steps (unknown to themſelves) *ſlide* into a contrary Judgment of Things, directly croſs to what they have *believed* and profeſſed. Which Perſwaſion they owe not to any further *Acceſſion* of Light, or new *Diſcovery* of Argument, (for oft-times, the *ſame* Arguments which in the Abſence of Trouble they have contemned as *weak*, by the Appearance of Danger put on another *Face*, and ſeem *ſtrong*) but to the Prevalency of their *Fears*. And thus many in all Ages have altered their Judgments and Thoughts, not becauſe they *knew more*, but becauſe they *feared more*.

The like Neceſſities do Men form to themſelves from exorbitant and greedy *Hopes* and Expectations of a better Condition, compared to that wherein they at preſent are, and the like Influence it hath in the Alteration of their Judgments. Let the *Biſhop* of *Spalato* be an Example of this, who loathed the *Romiſh* Religion firſt, and in *England* (whither he came for Refuge) writ againſt it; but ſaw a Neceſſity (from the Diſappointment of Expectation) to change his Mind, returned to *Rome* again, and perſwaded himſelf that that was *true* which he had formerly pronounced *falſe*; and ſo writ againſt the Church of *England*, as before he had done againſt the Church of *Rome*. To him we may add *Eccholius*, of whom *Socrates* (a) reports, that (according to the various Appearings of Hazards) he changed his Religion ſeveral Times: Under *Conſtantine*, he was a *Chriſtian*; under *Julian*, a *Pagan*; and under *Jovinian*, a *Chriſtian* again (*b*).

3dly, Neceſſity offers an *Excuſe*, if not a *Juſtification* of the greateſt Miſcarriages. *Lot* offered to expoſe his Daugh-

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(a) *Eccleſ. Hiſt.* l. 3. c. 11. (*b*) Antiochus *put* Eleazar *and the* Maccabees *in Mind of this Excuſe, If it be a Sin to do Contrary to your Law, Compulſion doth excuſe it.* Joſephus *on the Days of the* Maccabees.

ters to the raging Luſt of the *Sodomites*, for the Preſervation of his *Angel-ſtrangers*, which ſurely he would in no wiſe have done, but that he thought the preſent *Neceſſity* might have *excuſed* him. *Eſau* profanely ſells his Birth-right, but excuſeth the Matter ſo, *Behold I am at the Point to die, and what Profit ſhall this Birth-right do to me?* *Aaron* produceth a Neceſſity from the violent Reſolves of the People, in Juſtification of himſelf in the Matter of the golden Calf, *Thou knoweſt that this People are ſet on Miſchief*, Gen. xxv. 32.

Athly, Neceſſity is an *univerſal Plea*, and fitted to the Conditions of all Men in all Callings, and under all Extravagancies. The *Tradeſman* in his unlawful Gains or Over-reaching, pleads a Neceſſity for it, from the Hardneſs of the Buyer in other Things. The *poor Man* pleads a Neceſſity for *Stealing*, and the *rich* pleads the ſame Neceſſity for *Revenge*; and thus it ſerves all with a Pretext.

Theſe Conſiderations diſcovering this Courſe ſo hopeful, as to this Deſign of the Devil, he will be ſure to put us to this Pinch where he can. But beſides this, we may obſerve *three* Cheats in this Plea of Neceſſity.

Firſt, Sometimes he puts Men upon *feigning* a Neceſſity, where there is none. *Saul* ſacrificed upon a needleſs Suppoſal, that *Samuel* not coming at the Time appointed, there was a Neceſſity for him to do it. He ſpared alſo the Cattle upon the like Pretence, that it was a neceſſary Proviſion for Sacrifice. And thus would the Devil have perſwaded Chriſt, that there was an abſolute Neceſſity to turn Stones to Bread, when in Truth there was no ſuch Need.

Secondly, Sometimes he puts Men upon a Neceſſity of their own *ſinful Procurements*. *Herod* ſware to gratify the Daughter of *Herodias*, and this is preſently pleaded as a Neceſſity for the cutting off *John Baptiſt's* Head. *Saul* forbad the taſting of Meat, and ſealed the Penalty by an Oath and Curſe; and this is by and by made a Neceſſity for the taking away of *Jonathan's* Life (who had taſted Honey, not knowing his Father's Curſe) had not the People reſcued him.

Thirdly, Sometime he *ſtretcheth* a Neceſſity further than it ought; he knows that God hath ſuch a Regard to *real* Neceſſities, that upon that Ground he will *diſpenſe* with his Sabbath, and the preſent Performance of Duty. Theſe Inſtances he lays before Men, and endeavours to perſwade them, that in like Manner God will (upon a Neceſſity) diſpenſe with *this*, as well as with the preſent Opportunity

of

of *Service*. What a Covering (in all Ages) Men have made of Neceſſity, for their higheſt Outrages and Extravagancies, and with what Confidence they have managed ſuch Pleas, would be endleſs to relate.

This muſt warn us, not to ſuffer ourſelves to be *impoſed* upon by the higheſt Pretences of Neceſſity. Whatever it may diſpenſe with (as in *ſome Caſes* it will ſuſpend a preſent *Service*, and warrant the Performance of a Duty, *beſides* the common Rule and Way wherein it ought ordinarily to be managed) it muſt never be pleaded to give Warrant to any Thing in its *own Nature* ſinful (*a*). Neceſſity will not juſtify Lying, Stealing, Covetouſneſs, Adulteries, *&c.*

Beſides, we muſt be *wary* in judging what is a Neceſſity. Men are apt to plead a Neceſſity where there is none; and if we *give way* to a facile Admittance of Excuſes of this Kind, we ſhall preſently *multiply* Neceſſities, and have them to ſerve us at every Turn. Some would warrant Sin by Neceſſity, others would turn off Duty and Rule, by pretending a Neceſſity where none is; both are to be avoided as Snares of Satan.

Once more (before we diſmiſs this Riſe of the Temptation of Chriſt in hand) let us obſerve, that in perſwading him to turn Stones to Bread, he ſeems to expreſs a great Deal of *Care* and Tenderneſs to Chriſt, with an *invidious Reflection* upon the Love and Providence of God; as if he ſhould ſay, *I ſee thou art hungry, and this Wilderneſs affords nothing to eat, and God hath not taken Care to ſpread a Table for thee; I therefore pitying thy Condition, as a Friend, adviſe thee to turn Stones to Bread.*

Obſ. 8.] Note, *That Satan manageth his moſt cruel Deſigns under the higheſt Pretences of Friendſhip.* He did ſo with *Eve*, *The Lord knoweth that ye ſhall be as gods*; as if he had a greater Regard to them than God himſelf. He tempted Chriſt in the Mouth of *Peter* to *ſpare himſelf*, under the Shew of great Kindneſs; and no leſs are his common Pretences to all Men. This is a deep Policy; for by this Means the *Miſchief* intended is the better *concealed*, and the leſs *Care* and Proviſion made againſt it; and beſides, the *Affections* and Deſires are ſtirred up to an *haſty* Embracement of the Motion, and an eager ſwallowing of the Bait.

So great a Subtilty is in this Manner of Dealing, that thoſe

(*a*) Egrenda magis omnis neceſſitas, quam perpetranda aliqua iniquitas. *Aug.*

those who affect the Name of great *Politicians* in the World, have learned from Satan, to shew greatest *Respects*, and a most friendly Countenance to those whom they most *hate* and intend to ruine. Thus our *Richard* the Third of *England* constantly dealt with those for whose Blood he lay in wait; and the Precepts of *Machiavel* are fitted to this, That 'tis Wisdom *to hug those whom we desire to destroy.* *Ehud*'s Present made way for his Dagger. *Joab*'s Sword could not so well have dispatched its Errand upon *Abner*, if he had not ushered it in with a Kiss.

Applic.] This should make us most *suspect* those Temptations that offer us most *Kindness* and Advantage, and such as are most gratifying to our Humours and Desires. For can it be imagined in good earnest, that Satan intends us a real Good? Can the Gifts of Enemies (*a*) pass for Courtesies and Favours with any, but such as are bewitched into a blockish Madness? Satan is more to be fear'd when he *flatters*, than when he *rageth*; and tho' such Offers may be looked upon by some as more benign, and less odious Temptations (as some Kind of *familiar Spirits* are more kindly treated by some, under the Notion of *white Devils*) yet may we say of them, as *Cornelius Agrippa* speaks of some unlawful Arts and Ways of *Thurgia*, *Eo sunt pernitiosiora, quo imperitis diviniora*, they have the greatest Danger that pretend the highest Friendship. Thus much for the Rise of the Temptation.

CHAP. IX.

A particular Consideration of the Matter of the first Temptation, what Satan aimed at, in bidding him turn Stones into Bread. Of Satan's moving us to Things good or lawful; the End of such a Motion. How to know whether such Motions are from Satan or the Spirit. What to do, in case they be from Satan. Of his various Aims in one Temptation. What they are, and of his Policy therein. Of his artificial Contrivement of Motions, to make one Thing infer another.

NEXT follows the Temptation itself, *Command that these Stones be made Bread.* There is no great Difficulty

(*a*). Timeo Danaos & dona ferentes.

Gaulty in the Words. The *Greek* indeed hath a remarkable Suitableneſs to the Suppoſition, on which Satan inſiſts, taking Chriſt to be the *Son of God*, 'tis very pertinently ſpoken, *Say* or *ſpeak* (*a*), that theſe Stones be made Bread; for if God *ſpeak*, it muſt be *done*.

'Tis not worth the while to inſiſt upon ſo ſmall a Variety of Expreſſion, as is betwixt this *Evangeliſt*, who hath it [*theſe Stones*,] and *Luke*, who ſpeaks it in the ſingular Number [*this Stone*;] for beſides that (as ſome (*b*) ſuppoſe) this Expreſſion of *Luke* might (for any Thing that appears to the contrary) be Satan's *lowering* his Requeſt to *one* Stone, when Chriſt had denied to turn *many* into Bread (upon his firſt asking) this *one Stone* in *Luke*, taken collectively for the whole Heap, will ſignify as much as theſe *Stones* in *Matthew*, or the Phraſe (*theſe Stones*) in *Matthew* (by an Imitation of a common *Hebraiſm*) may be no more but *one of theſe Stones*, or *this Stone*, as it is in *Luke*; as 'tis ſaid, *Jephthah* was buried in the *Cities* of *Gilead*, that is, in *one* of the *Cities* (*c*).

The Thing urged, was the turning or changing the *Form* of a Creature, which is a Work truly *miraculous* and wonderful, and ſuch as had neither been *unſuited* to the Power of Chriſt, nor *unlawful* in itſelf. 'Tis from hence juſtly queſtioned, where the Sting of this Suggeſtion lay, or in what Point was the Temptation couched. 1*ſt*, It was not in the *Unlawfulneſs* or Sinfulneſs of the Thing mentioned; for Chriſt did as much as would amount to all this, when he turned *Water* into *Wine*, and when he fed Multitudes by a miraculous *Multiplication* of a few Loaves and Fiſhes.

2*dly*, It was not *unſuitable* to his Condition as *hungry*; for ſo it ſeemed a Duty to provide for himſelf, and which Satan took for granted.

3*dly*, Neither ſeemed it any *Derogation* to his Power and Divine Nature, but rather an *Advantage* and fit Opportunity to give a full Proof of it, to the *ſtopping* of Satan's Mouth for ever.

Notwithſtanding theſe, there was *Poiſon* and Malignity enough in the *Suggeſtion*, and under theſe green *Leaves* of plauſible Pretences, lay hid many *Snakes*: For (1.) By this was he ſecretly tempted to admit of a *doubting* of the Truth of the divine *Teſtimony*, lately declaring him to be the *Son of God*. (2.) As alſo further to *queſtion* his Father's Providence and Love. (3.) And unneceſſarily to run out of the

(*a*) Ἐιπὲ ἵνα. (*b*) *Spanheim* Sub. Evan. in loc. (*c*) *Lightfoot Harm.* in loc.

the *ordinary* Way of Supply, and to betake himself to *indirect* Means or extraordinary Courses. (4.) And all this to the Abuse and undervaluing of his Power, in prostituting it to Satan's Direction or Persuasions; and the Devil had gained a considerable Advantage, if he could have prevailed with him to do such a Thing by his Instigation. (5.) It may be, he further thought this might entice to an high Esteem of himself, and so make Way for a vain Ostentation of his Power, and Interest in God. All or most of these seem to be the Design that the Devil was driving forward. Several Things are hence observable.

Obs. 9.] *That where Satan doth not judge it his present Interest, to suggest to us Things in their own Nature sinful, he will move us to Things good in themselves, in Hopes thereby to lead us into Evil.* This Way of tempting is from a more refined Policy, than down-right Motions to sin; and doubtless 'tis less suspected, and consequently more taking. The Evils that Satan would introduce by this Method, are such as these:

1*st*, Sometime when he tempts us to that which is good, it is, that he might affright us from it; his Approbation is enough to put a Discredit, and disgraceful Suspicion upon any Thing. Such a Design had he, when he gave *Testimony* for Christ, *That he was the Son of God*, Matth. viii. 29. or for the *Apostles*, that they were the Servants of the *most high God*, Acts xvi. 17. It was not his Intention to honour him or them, by bearing them Witness, but to bring them under Suspicion and Trouble.

2*dly*, There are a great *many Ways* to miscarry in a *lawful* Action, either by propounding *bad Ends*, or by *Failures* in the Manner of Performance, or by a *Misimprovement* of the whole. These Miscarriages (and the Possibility, and Probability of them) Satan carries in his Mind; yet doth he not at first *propound* them, but moving us unto the Thing, he hath an *Expectation* that we will slide into them of ourselves, or be inclined by some suitable Touches of Suggestion upon our Minds; together with the Tendency, or Improveableness of the Thing or Action, to such Evils as are properly consequent to it. Satan did not here tempt Christ to these sinful Ends directly, but to an Action which he hoped might insensibly produce them.

3*dly*, Another Evil hereby aimed at, is the Hindrance of a greater Good, not only as a Diversion to turn us off a better

better or more profitable Occasion, but also as an *unseasonable Interruption* of something at present more concerning us: Thus he makes the Suggestion of good Things the Hindrance of Prayer or hearing.

Quest. Some will say, this is a perplexing Case, that in Things good or lawful in themselves Men should be in such Dangers, and will thereupon desire to know, how they may *distinguish* Satan's *Contrivances* and Motions, from those that have no Dependance upon him, or are from the Spirit of God?

Answ. In Answer to this, 1*st*, Let us (when we fear thus to be circumvented) look well to what Impressions are upon our Spirit, when we are moved to what may be lawful. For together with the Motion (if it be Satan's) we shall find either a corrupt Reason and End privately rising up in our Mind; or we may observe that our Hearts are *out of Order*, and perversly inclined; this is oft unseen to ourselves. When the Disciples moved Christ to bring down Fire from Heaven, if they had considered the present revengeful selfish Frame of their Spirits, (which our Lord tells them they were ignorant of) they might easily have known that the Motion had proceeded from Satan.

2*dly*, The concurrent Circumstances of the Thing or Action, are to be seriously weighed; for from thence we may take a right Measure of the Conveniency or Inconveniency of the proceeding in it. What is from Satan, it will be either unseasonable as to the Time, Place, and Person, or some other Thing will appear that may give a Discovery. As here Christ refuseth to turn Stones to Bread, because not only the Way and Manner of the Proposal doth sufficiently lay open the Design, but also the *Circumstances* of Christ's Condition at that Time, shewed the Motion to be unseasonable and inconvenient: For if Satan had urged the Necessity of it for the Satisfaction of his Hunger, Christ could have answered, that the Experience that he had of God's Support for forty Days together, was sufficient to engage him to rely yet further upon him. If he had urged farther, that by this Means he might have had a full Proof of God's Love and Care, or of his *Sonship:* It was at Hand to tell him, that it was needless to seek a further Evidence, when God had given one so full a little before: If again he had pleaded it to have been an useful Occasion to give a Testimony of his Power to the Satisfaction of others: He could

could have told him, that it had been impertinent to have done it then, when he was in the *Wilderneſs*, where none could have the Benefit of it: So that nothing Satan could have propounded as a Reaſon for that Miracle, but it might have been repelled from a Conſideration of his preſent Condition.

Appl.] The Inſtruction that may be gathered from this, is, That we muſt not entertain Thoughts of doing *lawful Things*, without a due Enquiry into the Temper of our own Hearts, and a full Conſideration of all *Circumſtances* round about, with the probable Tendencies, and Conſequences of it.

Queſt. But (may ſome ſay) if I judge ſuch a Motion to be a Thing *lawful*, which doth proceed from Satan, what am I to do?

Anſ. I anſwer, *Firſt*, Conſider whether the Good be *neceſſary* or not; if it be neceſſary, 'tis a Duty, and not to be forborn, only the Abuſes are to be watched againſt, and avoided.

Secondly, If it be a Duty, conſider whether it be *ſeaſonable* or *unſeaſonable*, *neceſſary* or *not*, as to the preſent Time; if it be *not*, it may be ſuſpended, and a fitter Opportunity waited for.

Thirdly, If it be only *lawful*, and not *neceſſary*, we ought to abſtain from it wholly, after the Example of *David*, Pſal. xxxix. 2. who *abſtained even from Good*, (that is, from lawful Bemoanings of himſelf, or Complainings againſt *Abſalom*, that had rebelled againſt him) becauſe it was not neceſſary, and (the Circumſtances of his Condition conſidered) very dangerous, leſt Vent and Way being given, he might have been eaſily drawn to ſpeak paſſionately, or diſtruſtfully againſt God, and fooliſhly againſt Providences.

That the Thing unto which Satan moved Chriſt was lawful, hath been noted. Next, let us conſider what *Ends* Satan might propound to himſelf in this Motion, and we ſhall ſee (as hath been ſaid) that he did not ſo narrow and contract his Deſign, as that only one Thing took up his Intentions, but ſeveral. Hence have we this Obſervation,

Obſ. 10.] *That in one ſingle Temptation Satan may have various Aims and Deſigns.*

Temptation is a complicated Thing, a *many-headed Monſter*. Satan hath always many Things in his Eye.

Firſt,

First, In every Temptation there is a direct and principal Design, a main Thing that the Devil would have.

Secondly, There are several Things subservient to the main Design, as Steps, Degrees, or Means leading to it; the lesser still making Way for the greater. If Satan design *Murder*, he lays the Foundation of his Work in inward *Grudgings* and *Hatreds*; next he gives *Provocations*, by reproachful Words, or disdainful Carriages and Behaviours, (as our Saviour notes in the Expressions of *Raca* and *Fool*, Matth. v. 22.) and so by Degrees enticeth on to Murder. The like we may observe in the Lusts of Uncleanness, and other Things.

Thirdly, Besides these there are usually *Reserves*; something in *Ambushment* to watch our *Retreats*; for Satan considers what to do in Case we repel, and refuse his Motion, that so he may not altogether labour in vain. A contrary Extreme watcheth those that fly from a Temptation; *Pride*, *Security*, *Self-confidence*, and *Boasting*, are ready to take them by the *Heel*: So truly may it be said of Satan, that *he knoweth the Way that we take; if we go forward, he is there; if backward, we may also perceive him; on the left Hand, he is at Work; and on the right Hand, he is not idle.* All these we may particularly see in this Temptation in Hand: He had a main Design, (of which more presently) he prepares Means and Seconds, to help it forward; such were those Pleas of *Necessity* and *Conveniency*, which the Hunger and Want of Christ did furnish him withal, and there wanted not the *Reserves* of *Presumption* and *Self-neglect* in Case he resisted the Motion.

The Reasons of this Policy are these.

First, When Satan tempts, he is not certain of his *Prevalency*, even when the Probabilities are the greatest, and therefore doth he provide himself with several Things at once; that if the tempted Party nauseate one Thing, there may be another in Readiness that may please his *Palate*. God gives this Advice to the spiritual Seedsmen, *In the Morning sow thy Seed, and in the Evening with-hold not thine Hand; for thou knowest not what shall prosper, whether this or that.* Satan, that Seedsman of the *Tares*, imitates this; and because he knows not what shall prosper, therefore doth he use Variety.

Secondly,

Secondly, Where many Things are at once designed, 'tis an hundred to one they will not all return empty: 'Tis much if many Snares miss, he that hath broken one or two, may not only be inticed with a third Temptation, (as being either wearied out with the Assaults, or made pliable with the Allurements of the former) but may also sit down secure, as having (in his Supposal) passed all the Danger, and so unawares fall into an unseen or unsuspected Trap.

Applic.] This may 1. By Way of Caution assure us, that we have no Cause to think that *all Fear* is over, when we have avoided the more obvious and conspicuous Designments of a Temptation, but rather to suspect some further Train than we yet have discovered. 2. That there is a Necessity for us to be circumspect every Way, and *Janus* like to have an Eye before and behind, that we may make timely Discoveries of what Satan intends against us.

As we have taken a View of the various Designments of Satan in one Temptation, so 'tis also remarkable, that these various Ways of his in this Temptation, do give *Strength one to another*, and have, as close a Connection as Stones in an Arch. Christ was pleased to commend the *Wisdom* of the unjust Steward, tho' he intended not the least Approbation of his Dishonesty: So may we turn aside and observe the cunning Artifice of the Devil, in the Management of this Argument against Christ, which is to this Purpose, as if he had thus proceeded; *If thou art the Son of God, (as the Voice from Heaven lately testified) it can be no Inconvenience, but every Way an Advantage to give a further Proof of it: Thy present Condition of Want and Hunger seem to contradict it; for how strange and unbeseeming is it; for the Son of God to be in such Straits? Yet if thou beest what thou says thou art, 'tis easy for thee to help thyself; God that made the World of nothing, by the Power of his Command, can much more change the Forms of Things that are made already; 'tis but speaking, and these Stones that are before thee will be turned into Bread; and besides that, in so doing thou mayest seasonably vindicate thyself from the Eclipse of thy present Condition. Necessity and Duty (for 'tis Duty to supply the Want of the Body, which cannot be supported without its proper Nourishment) compel thee unavoidably to it, except thou fearest not to contract the Guilt of Self destruction, especially seeing I do not urge thee to provide Delicacies, but only*

Bread, and such as is needful to keep in the Lives of the poorest Men, in the poorest Manner.

Obſ. 11. Hence note, *Satan in driving on a Temptation, uſeth ſuch an artificial Contrivement of Motives and Things, that ſtill one doth infer another, one ſtrengthens another. Temptations are like a Screw, which if once admitted, will improve its firſt Hold to draw in all the reſt.* By theſe Arts doth Satan, like a cunning Serpent, *wriggle* himſelf into the Affections of Men.

CHAP. X.

Of Satan's chief End in this Temptation, his Skill in making the Means to ſin plauſible. The Reaſons of that Policy with his Art therein. Mens Ignorance his Advantage. Of the Differences of Things propounded to our Uſe.

THE various Aims of Satan, and their cloſe Dependance one upon another, having contributed to us their ſeveral Obſervations, it remains, that we ask after the main and chief Thing that Satan principally intended. And to make Way to this, it muſt be noted, that in grand Temptations eſpecially, the main Deſign of Satan comprehends theſe two: The chief End, and the chief Means conducing to that End. About theſe ſome Authors conjecture variouſly, whoſe Differences we have no great Occaſion to mention, ſeeing the Text gives ſo great a Satisfaction in this Matter.

For *firſt*, The main End of Satan, we have (not obſcurely) expreſſed to us in theſe Words, [*If thou be the Son of God*] which if we compare with *Matth.* iii. 17. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, we ſhall eaſily apprehend, that here Satan doth but *ecchо* to that Voice which came down from Heaven; as he did with *Eve*, *God had ſaid, of the Tree in the Midſt of the Garden ye ſhall not eat*, Satan (having as it were the Sound of this yet in his Ears) in a clear Reference to it, ſaith, *Yea, hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat*? So here is alſo an evident *Reſpect* to God's *Teſtimony* concerning Chriſt, as if he had ſaid, *Hath God ſaid, thou art his Son*? *If thou beeſt indeed ſuch as he teſtified, give ſome Proof of it*, &c. By which it appears that his Deſign was to undermine this Teſtimony, or ſome

Way

Way or other to defeat it; neither need it pass for an Objection against this, that Satan doth not directly mention his Doubt or Distrust, nor positively suggest to Christ a questioning or Misbelief of his *Sonship*, for it was not suitable to his Policy, so to lay open his main End; that must have been expected afterward, as the *last* in Execution; (if it had taken Effect) tho' it were *first* in Intention.

Secondly, The chief Means by which he would have brought this End about, may be understood from Christ's Answer to the Temptation: For it cannot but be imagin'd, that Christ knew the Bottom of Satan's Policy, and that his Answer must fully confront the Means by which Satan endeavoured to ensnare him. His Answer was; *Man lives not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* If we can then come to a certain Understanding of this Scripture (which is not difficult) we shall evidently know the Mind of the Temptation, to which this is a direct Answer.

These Words are cited out of *Deut.* viii. 3. which some interpret to this Sense (*a*); as if Christ had said, Man hath not only a Life of the Body (which is mentioned by Bread) to look after, but another Life of the Soul, which is of so great Concernment, that the bodily Life is to be neglected, rather than that of the Soul to be endangered. This is a Truth in itself, but is apparently besides the Meaning of *Deut.* viii. Neither doth it afford so full and particular an Answer as (doubtless) Christ intended. But let us consider the Text, and we shall find more in it; for *Moses* first sets down God's dealing with *Israel* in the Wilderness, in that he suffered them to hunger, and took from them the ordinary Means of Life, which (as the latter Part of the Verse shews) is to be understood of ordinary Bread, and then to supply that Want, he fed them by an extraordinary Means, (such as they had never heard of before) this was by *Manna*. Next, he makes an Inference from this Way of God's proceeding, improving this Particular to a general Rule, *That he might make thee know that Man lives not by Bread only; but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Lord doth Man live*; which is clearly of this Import, that Man lives not by ordinary Means only, but that God can provide for his Life in an extraordinary Way, by appointing any Thing to that End, through

(*a*) Vide *Lightfoot Harmon.* in *Matth.* 4. *Pool* Synopsis in *Deut.* 8.

his mighty and powerful Word, and good Pleasure: So that Things never so unusual, or unfit in themselves for Nourishment, will become strengthning to us, if he shall give out his Command. Christ then applying this, in this Sense, did (as it were) thus say to Satan, *Tho' I want ordinary Means of Life, which is Bread, yet I know God can make any Thing which he pleaseth, to nourish me instead of it. So that I will not cast off a Dependance upon the Providence of God in this Strait, and without Warrant run to an extraordinary Course for Supply.* Hence it is evident that to bring about this main End, (which was to distrust of his Relation to God) he used this Means, that by Reason of his Strait, in the Failure of ordinary Supply, he should distrust Providence, and without Warrant provide for himself. Observe,

Obs. 12.] *That where Satan carries on a main Design and End, he bestows most of his Pains and Skill in rendring the Means to that End plausible and taking.* The End is least in mention, and the Means in their fit Contrivance takes up most of his Art and Care. The Reasons whereof are these:

First, The End is apparently bad, so that it would be a Contradiction to his Design to mention it, 'tis the Snare and Trap itself, which his Wisdom and Policy directs him to cover; his ultimate End is the Destruction of the Soul, this he dare not openly avouch to the vilest of Men; he doth not say to them, *destroy your Souls, bring eternal Miseries upon yourselves*, but only tempts them to that which will bring this Misery upon them; and as for those *intermediate* Ends, which are the formal Acts of Sin, he useth also a Kind of Modesty in their Concealment; he doth not usually say, *Go and murder, or commit Adultery*; but rather puts them upon Ways or Means that will bring them up to those Iniquities, except that he sometime have to deal with those that are so hardned in Sin, that they *make a Sport to do wickedly*, and then he can more freely discover his Ends to such in the Temptation.

Secondly, The Means to such wicked Ends have not only an innate, and natural Tendency in themselves, which are apt to sway and byas Men that Way, but are also capable of artificial Improvement, to a further Intricement to the Evils secretly intended, and these require the Art and Skill for the exact suiting and fitting of them. The End

cannot

cannot be reached without the *Means*, and *Means* ſo ordered (without the Aid of Grace) will ſcarce miſs of the End.

Thirdly, The Means are capable of a *Varniſh* and Paint, he can make a Shift to ſet them off, and colour them over, that the proper Drift of them cannot eaſily be diſcovered; whereas the Ends to which theſe lead cannot receive, (at leaſt ſo eaſily with ſome) ſuch *fair* Shews. 'Tis far eaſier to ſet off Company-keeping, with the pleaſurable Pretences of Neceſſity or *refreſhing Divertiſement*, than to propound *direct* Drunkenneſs, (the Thing to which Company-keeping tends) under ſuch a Dreſs.

Query, If it be *demanded*, How and by what *Arts* he renders the Means ſo *plauſible*? I ſhall endeavour a Satisfaction to that *Query*, by ſhewing the *Way* that Satan took to render the Means he made Uſe of in this Temptation, *plauſible* to Chriſt, which were theſe;

1*ſt*, He repreſents it, as a *harmleſs* or lawful Thing in itſelf; Who can ſay it had been ſinful for the Son of God to have turned Stones into Bread, more than to turn Water into Wine?

2*dly*, He gives the Motion a further Pretext of Advantage or *Goodneſs*, he inſinuated that it might be an uſeful *Diſcovery* of his Sonſhip, and a profitable *Supply* againſt Hunger.

3*dly*, He ſeems alſo to put a *Neceſſity* upon it, that other Ways of Help failing, he muſt be conſtrained ſo to do, or to ſuffer further Want.

4*thly*, He forgets not to tell him, that to do this was but *ſuitable* to his *Condition*, and that it was a Thing well-becoming the *Son of God* to do a *Miracle*.

5*thly*, He doth urge it at the Rate of a *Duty*, and that being in Hunger and Want, it would be a *ſinful Neglect* not to do what he *could* and *might* for his Preſervation.

The ſame Way doth he take in *other* Temptations, in ſome Caſes pleading *all*, in ſome *moſt* of theſe Things, by which the Means conducing thereunto may ſeem plauſible. If he preſents to Men *Occaſions* of ſinning, he will tell them ordinarily, that they may *lawfully* adventure upon them, that they are *harmleſs*, nay of *Advantage*, as tending to the recreating of the Spirits, and Health of the Body; yea, that 'tis *neceſſary* for them to take ſuch a Liberty, and that in doing ſo, they do but what *others* do that profeſs Religion. And often he hath ſuch Advantage from the *Circumſtances* of the Thing, and the *Inclination* of our Heart,

that he makes bold to tell us. 'Tis no leſs then *Duty*, ſuch did the Outrage of *Demetrius* ſeem to him, when he conſidered, how much his Livelihood did depend upon the *Diana* of the *Epheſians*; *Paul's* Zeal made him confident that *Perſecution* of Chriſtians was his *Duty*: Neither is there any Thing which can pretend to any *Zeal*, *Advantage* or colourable *Ground*, but preſently it takes the Denomination of *Duty*.

If any wonder that ſuch *poor* and ſhallow Pretences are not *ſeen* through by all Men, they may know that this happens from a *fourfold* Ignorance.

Firſt, From an Ignorance of the *Thing itſelf*: How eaſily may they be impoſed upon, who know not the Nature, or the uſual Iſſues of Things? As Children are deluded to put a Value upon an uſeleſs or hurtful Trifle; ſo are Men deceived and eaſily impoſed upon in what they do not underſtand. And for this Cauſe, are Sinners compared to Birds, who are eaſily *enticed* with the Bait propoſed to their *View*, as profitable and good for them, becauſe they know not the *Snare* that lies hid under it; This Ignorance cauſing the Miſtake mentioned, is not only a *ſimple* Ignorance, but alſo that Ignorance which owes its Riſe to a *wilful* and perverſe Diſpoſition, (for there are ſome that are *willingly ignorant*) doth often lay thoſe open to a Deluſion, who through *Preposſeſſion* or *Idleneſs*, will not be at *Pains* to make full Enquiries.

Secondly, This alſo comes to paſs from an Ignorance of *our Spirits*: For while we either engage in the Things propoſed by Satan upon the *general Warrantee* of a *good* Intention, or that we have no *evil* Meaning in it, we are kept from a *Diſcovery* of the intended Deſign. Hence *Paul* ſaw nothing, in his perſecuting the *Church* of God, of what Satan aimed at; or while upon the *Pretence* of a good *Intention*, our ſecret corrupt *Principles* do indeed move us *underhand* to any Undertaking, we are as little apt to ſee the Ends of Satan in what he propounds to us. *Jehu* and the *Diſciples* pretending a *Zeal* for God, *Luke* ix. 55. but really carried on by their own *furious Tempers*, did as little as others ſee what the Devil was doing with them.

Thirdly, The Means of a Temptation are rendred leſs ſuſpicious, from an Ignorance of the *Circumſtances*, and Concomitants that do attend them.

Fourthly, As alſo from an Ignorance of our own *Weakneſs*,

ness, and *Inclination*, while we are *confident* of greater *Strength* to resist, than indeed we have, of a greater *Averseness*, than is in us, to the Evil suspected; we *contemn* the Danger of the Means as below us, and so grow bold with the Occasions of Iniquity, as pretending no Hazard or Danger to us.

Applic.] This may teach us a Piece of Wisdom, in the Imitation of the Devil; we see his *Malice* appears in the bloody and destructive *Aims* or Intendments, which he discovers against us, but his *Skill* and Cunning in a suitable *Disposal* and ordering of the *Means*. So should we learn to employ all our *Care* and Watchfulness about those *plausible* Ways or *Introductions* to Sin, that Satan puts in our Hand; and as his eager Desire of gaining his End, makes him industrious about the offering of Means fit to compass it, so our *Fear* of his Design and *End* should make us *jealous* of every *Overture* propounded to us. They that from *Wilfulness* or *Neglect* shall admit the *Means* of Evil, cannot expect to avoid the *Evil* to which they lead, or if they may (unexpectedly) be rescued from the End, while they use the Means (by Grace interposing, as between the Cup and the Lip) 'tis no *Thanks* to them, and often they come not off so clear, but that some *Lameness* or other sticks by them.

Quest. I may suspect this will be retorted back as an Advice scarce *practicable*: For if all Means leading to Sin are to be avoided, then can we use *nothing*, but rather (as the Apostle saith in another Case) *we must go out of the World*, seeing every Thing may lead to Evil.

Answ.] I answer, We are not by any *Command* of God put into any such *Strait*, Things that are or may be *improvable* against us, may be used by us with due *Care* and Watchfulness; yet all Things are not alike neither, for we must look upon Things under a *threefold* Consideration.

1*st*, If that which is propounded or laid before us, as a Means to Sin, be *in itself* sinful, the *Refusal* of both is an undoubted *Duty*.

2*dly*, We must look upon Things under the Consideration of the *Suspiciousness* which they carry with them of a further Evil; some *Circumstances*, or *Postures* of an Opportunity and Occasion offered, are of such a *threatning Aspect*, that they fairly warn us to hold off. To keep *Company* with a Friend may be admitted, when yet that Society in a *suspicious Place*, as *Tavern*, or *Whore-house*, is to be avoided.

3*dly*, We must further consider Things as we are *free*, or *engaged* to them, and accordingly where there is *Appearance* of Danger, or the *Fear* of it, we must keep at a Distance, if we are engaged to such Things either by the Obligation of the *Law of Nature*, or *lawful Calling*, or *Command of God*, or *unavoidable Providence*, or *Relation*, where these Ties are upon us, we cannot avoid the Thing or Action, but are the more concerned to take Heed of being *over reached* or overtaken by them.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Temptation to Distrust upon the Failure of ordinary Means. Of the Power of that Temptation, and the Reasons of its Prevalency. Of unwarrantable Attempts for Relief, with the Causes thereof. Of waiting on God, and keeping his Way. In what Cases a particular Mercy is to be expected.

I Have particularly insisted upon the *Aims* of Satan in this Temptation, in their *Variety*, and also the cunning *Connexion* and Coherences of them: I have also singled out his *chief* Design. I am now in the last Place to present you with the *Suitableness* and Respects that the *subordinate* Means carry to the *Principal*, and that Proportion which may be found in all these to the End designed by them.

The chief *Means* (in Reference to the End designed) was a *Distrust* of Providences; and the *subordinate* Means to bring on that Distrust, was the *Failure* of ordinary Means of Supply. For so he endeavoured to improve his Hunger and Want in the Wilderness, as a manifest Neglect of Providence towards him, for which (as he tacitely suggests) there was no Ground to wait or rely upon it any further, but to betake himself to another Course. Hence note,

Obs. 13.] *That the Failure of ordinary Means of Help, is by Satan improved as his special Engine to bring Men to a Distrust of Providence, and from thence to an unwarrantable Attempt for their Relief in an extraordinary Way.*

That the *Failure* of *ordinary* and usual Supplies hath by the Devil's Subtilty brought a *Distrust* of Providence, and run Men beyond all *Hopes* of Help, is a Thing commonly and notoriously known. When Men are afflicted, and brought unto unusual Straits, and the ordinary Ways of Relief are out of Sight, they are soon tempted to distrust God and Man, and

to conclude they are cut off, and that their *Hope is perished*, and that *their Eye shall no more see Good.* *David* distressed proclaims *all Men Liars*, Psal. cxvi. 11. (*a*) concludes that he should at last *be cut off*, Psal. xxxi. 22. *Jonah* in the Whale's Belly thought that all Hope was gone, and that he *was cast out of* God's Sight, *Jon.* ii. 4. The Church of *Israel* in Captivity *forgat Prosperity* (notwithstanding the Promise of Deliverance after seventy Years) and thought no less, than that *her Hope and Strength was perished*, Lam. iii 18 And from the Scriptures mentioned, we may also see the Strength and Prevalency of the Temptation, especially when 'tis reduced to Particulars. As,

1st, 'Tis not a Thing altogether of no Weight, that such a Temptation should prevail against *such* Persons as *David* and *Jonah*, and the whole *Church* of *Israel*, that the manifold *Experiences* that some of them have had of God's *Faithfulness* in delivering, and the *Seasonableness* of Help at Times of greatest Hazard, the particular *Promises* that all of them have had (how dismal and black soever Things have seemed) have given the fullest *Assurances* imaginable, that what he had spoken should certainly be performed; the gracious *Qualifications* of such Persons, as eminently *holy*, and *skilled* in the Duties of Trust, and in the *Ways* of Providence, and the special *Advantage* which some of them (as Prophets) have had above others, to enable them to improve that *Skill*, *Experience*, *Knowledge* and *Grace*, to a firm *Adherence* to such special *Promises*, that all these Things should not be sufficient to keep them off Distrust (tho' at present the Ways of Deliverance were hid from them) seems strange.

2dly, 'Tis also wonderful, to what an *Height* such a prevailing Temptation hath carried some of them. *David* seems to be a little outragious, and did upon the Matter *call God a Liar*, when he said *all Men are Liars*, Psal. cxvi. 11. which (however that some interpret, as if it had been *David*'s Trust in God, and his confident *Avouchment* of his Enemies *Prognostications* of his Ruin, to be but Lies, and that this he spake from his firm Belief of the Promise, *I believed, therefore have I spoken*) yet the Acknowledgment of his *Haste* (which (compared with *Psal.* xxxi. 22.) is declared as his Weakness) will force us to conclude it an ingenuous *Confession* of his *Distrust* at the

(*a*) *Pool* Synopsis in loc.

the *firſt*, when he was greatly afflicted (tho' he recovered himſelf afterwards to a Belief of the Promiſe) and that in that Diſtemper he plainly *reflected* upon *Samuel*, and calls the Promiſes of God given by him *a very Lie*.

3*dly*, 'Tis ſtrange alſo, that preſent *Inſtances* of God's Providences working out *unexpected Deliverances*, ſhould not relieve the Hearts of his Saints from the Power of ſuch Diſtruſt; that when they ſee God is not unmindful of them, but doth hear them in what they fear'd, they ſhould ſtill retain in their Minds the Impreſſion of an unbelieving Apprehenſion, and not rather free themſelves from their Expectations of future Ruin, by concluding, that he that *hath* and *doth* deliver, will alſo *yet* deliver. *David* had this Thought in his Heart, that he ſhould *one Day periſh by the Hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. even then when God had ſo remarkably *reſcued* him from *Saul*, and forced *Saul* not only to acknowledge his Sin in proſecuting him, but alſo to declare his Belief of the Promiſe concerning *David* (*a*). One would have expected, that this ſhould have been ſuch a *Demonſtration* of the Truth of what had been promiſed, that he ſhould have caſt out all *Fear*; and yet contrariwiſe, this Pledge of God's Purpoſe to him, is received by a Heart ſtrongly *prepoſſeſſed* with miſgiving Thoughts, and he continues to think, that *for all this* Saul would one Day deſtroy him.

4*thly*, The *Pangs* of this Diſtruſt are alſo ſo *remarkable*, that after they have been delivered, and have found that the *Event* hath not anſwered their *Fears*, they have in the Review of their Carriage under ſuch Fears, recounted this their *Weakneſs* among other remarkable Things, thereby ſhewing the *Unreaſonableneſs* of their Unbelief, and their *Wonder* that God ſhould paſs by ſo great a Provocation, and notwithſtanding ſo unexpectedly deliver them. *David* in the Places before cited, was upon a thankful Acknowledgment of God's Love and wonderful Kindneſs, which he thought he could not perform, without leaving a Record of his ſtrange and unworthy Diſtruſt; as if he had ſaid, *So greatly did I ſin, and ſo unſuitably did I behave myſelf, that I then gave off, and concluded all was loſt.*

To open this a little further, I ſhall add the Reaſons why Satan ſtrikes in with ſuch an Occaſion as the Want of Means, to tempt to Diſtruſt, which are theſe:

1*ſt*, Such

(*a*) See Chap. xxvi.

1ſt, Such a Condition doth uſually *tranſport* Men beſides themſelves, puts them as it were into an *Extaſy*; and by a ſudden *Rapture* of Aſtoniſhment and Fear, forceth them beyond their *ſettled* Thoughts and Purpoſes. This *David* notes as the Ground of his inconſiderate raſh ſpeaking; *It was my Haſte*, I was tranſported, *&c.* Now, as Paſſion doth not only make Men *ſpeak* what otherwiſe they would not, but alſo to put bad *Interpretations* upon Actions and Things, beyond what they will *bear*, and *haſten* Men to *Reſolves* exceedingly unreaſonable; ſo doth this State of the Heart (under an Amazement and Surprize of Fear) give Opportunity to Satan, to put Men to *injurious* and unrighteous Thoughts of the Providence of God, and by ſuch Ways to alienate their Minds from the Truſt which they owe him.

2dly, *Senſe* is a great *Help* to Faith. Faith then muſt needs be much hazarded, when Senſe is at a Loſs or contradicted, as uſually it is in Straits.

That Faith doth receive an *Advantage* by Senſe, cannot be denied. To believe what we *ſee*, is *eaſier* than to believe what we *ſee not*; and that in our State of Weakneſs and Infirmity, God doth ſo far *indulge* us, that by his Allowance we may take the *Help* of our Senſes, is evident by his Appointment of the *two Sacraments*, where by *outward viſible Signs* our *Faith* may be quickned to apprehend the *ſpiritual Benefits* offered. *Thomas*, reſolving to ſuſpend his Belief, till he were ſatisfied that Chriſt was riſen, by the utmoſt Trial that Senſe could give (determining not to credit the Teſtimony of the reſt of the Diſciples, till by putting his *Finger* into his Side he had made himſelf more *certain*) Chriſt not only *condeſcended* to him, but alſo pronounceth his *Approbation* of his Belief, *accepting* it, that he had *believed* becauſe he had *ſeen*. But when outward uſual Helps fail us, our *Senſe* (being not able to ſee afar off) is wholly *puzzled* and overthrown; the very *diſappearing* of Probabilities gives ſo great a *Shake* to our Faith, that it commonly ſtaggers at it; and therefore was it given as the great Commendation of *Abraham*'s Faith, that he (notwithſtanding the Unlikelihood of the Thing) *ſtaggered not at the Promiſe*, noting thereby, how *extraordinary* it was in him at that Time, to keep up againſt the *Contradiction* of *Senſe*, and how uſual it is with others to be beaten off all Truſt by it. 'Tis no Wonder to ſee that *Faith* (which uſually

uſually called Senſe for a *Supporter*) to *fail*, when 'tis deprived of its *Crutch*. And he that would a little underſtand, what *Diſadvantage* this might prove to a good Man, when Senſe *altogether fails* his Expectation, he may conſider with himſelf, in what a Caſe *Thomas* might have been, if Chriſt had *refuſed* to let him *ſee* his Side, and to *thruſt* his Finger into the Print of the Nails, in all *Appearance* had it been ſo, he had gone away *confirmed* in his *Unbelief*.

3*dly*, Tho' Faith can act *above* Senſe, and is imployed about Things *not ſeen*, yet *every* Saint at *all* Times doth not act his Faith ſo *high*. Chriſt tells us, that to believe where a Man hath not had the Help of *Sight* and *Senſe*, is *noble* and *bleſſed*, John xx. 29. yet withal he hints it to be rare and difficult; *He that hath not ſeen, and yet hath believed*, implies, that 'tis but *one* amongſt many that doth ſo, and that 'tis the *Conqueſt* of a more than ordinary *Difficulty*. Hence it is, that to *love* God when he *kills*, to *believe* when Means *fail*, are reckoned among the *high* Actings of Chriſtianity.

4*thly*, When Senſe is *nonplus'd*, and Faith fails, the Soul of Man is at a great *Loſs*; having nothing to *bear* it up, it muſt needs *ſink*; but having ſomething to throw it *down*, beſides its own *Propenſity* downward to Diſtruſt, it hath the Force of ſo great a *Diſappointment* to puſh it forward; and ſuch *Bitterneſs* of Spirit, heightned by the *malignant* Influence of Satan, that with a Violence (like the *Angels* throwing a *Milſtone* into the Sea) it is caſt into the Bottom of ſuch *Depths* of Unbelief, that the *Knowledge* of former Power and extraordinary Providences, cannot keep it from an abſolute Denial of the like for the future. *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs when they came to the Want of Bread, tho' they acknowledged he *clave* the *Rock*, and gave them Water in the like Strait; yet ſo far did their Hearts *fail* of that due Truſt in the Power and Mercy of God, which might have been expected, that tho' they *confeſſed* the one, they as diſtruſtfully *queſtion* and deny the other. *He clave the Rock, but can he provide Fleſh? Can he give Bread?* Strange Unbelief! that *ſees* and acknowledgeth Omnipotency in *one* Thing, and yet *denies* it in *another*.

5*thly*, *Providence* hath been an old *Queſtion*; 'tis an *Atheiſm* that ſome have been guilty of, to deny that God *ordereth* all Affairs relating to his Children here below, who yet have not ſo fully *extinguiſhed* their *natural Impreſſions*,

as

as to dare to deny the *Being* of God. *That God is*, they confeſs, but withal they think *that he walketh in the Circuit of Heaven*, and as to the *ſmaller* Concerns of Men, neither doth *Good nor Evil.* This being an *old Error*, to which moſt are but too *inclinable*, (and the more, becauſe ſuch Things are permitted) as the Puniſhment of his Children, and their Trials, (while others have all their Heart can wiſh) as ſeem ſcarce conſiſtent with that Love and Care, which Men look for from him to his Servants) they are apt enough to *renew* the Thoughts of that Perſuaſion upon their Minds (for which the Failure of ordinary Ways of Help, ſeems to be an high Probability) that he keeps himſelf *unconcerned*, and therefore there ſeems to be no ſuch *Cauſe* of *Reliance* upon him. The Pſalmiſt ſo expreſſeth that Truth, [*Men ſhall ſay, Verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth,*] that it is diſcovered to be a ſpecial *Retrivement* of it, (by many and ſignal convincing Evidences) from that *Diſtruſt* of God, and his Providences that Men uſually *ſlide* into upon their *Obſervation* of the many ſeeming *Failures* of outward Means of Help.

Secondly, The other *Branch* of the Obſervation, *That from a Diſtruſt of Providence, he endeavours to draw them to an unwarrantable Attempt for their Relief*, is as clear as the former, *Gen.* xvi. 2. *Sarah* being under a Diſtruſt of the Promiſe for a Son, becauſe of her Age, gave her Hand-maid to *Abraham*, that in that Way (the Promiſe ſeeming to fail) ſhe might obtain Children by her. *David* becauſe of the many and violent Purſuits of *Saul*, not only *diſtruſted* the Promiſe, thinking he might *one Day periſh* by him, but reſolves to *provide* for his own Safety, by a ſpeedy *Eſcape* into the Land of the *Philiſtines*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. a *Courſe* which (as appears by the Temptations and Evils he met with there) was altogether *unwarrantable*. That from a Diſtruſt, Men are next put upon unwarrantable Attempts, is clear from the following Reaſons:

Firſt, The *Affrightment* which is bred by ſuch Diſtruſts of Providences, will not ſuffer Men to be *idle*. Fear is *active*, and ſtrongly *prompts* that ſomething is to be *done*.

Secondly, Yet ſuch is the *Confuſion* of Mens Minds in ſuch a Caſe, that tho' many Things are propounded, in that Hurry of Thoughts they are *deprived* uſually of a true *Judgment* and Deliberation, ſo that they are oppreſſed with a Multitude of

of Thoughts (as *David* on the like Occasion takes Notice, *In the Multitude of my Thoughts within me*, &c.) and (as he expresseth the Case of Seamen in a Storm) they are at their Wits End.

3*dly*, The *despairing* Grievance of Spirit makes them take that which comes *next to Hand*, as a *drowning* Man, that *grasps* a Twig or *Straw*, tho' to no Purpose.

4*thly*, Being once turned off their *Rock*, and the true *Stay* of the Promise of God for Help, whatever other *Course* they take must needs be *unwarrantable*; if they once be out of the *right* Way, they must needs *wander*, and every *Step* they take must of Necessity be *wrong*.

5*thly*, Satan is so *officious* in an evil Thing, that seeing any in this Condition, he will not fail to *proffer* his Help, and in place of God's Providence, to set some *unlawful Shift* before them.

6*thly*, And so much the rather do Men *close* in with such Overtures, because a sudden Fit of passionate Fury doth *drive* them; and out of a bitter Kind of *Despite* and *Crossness* (as if they meditated a Revenge against God for their Disappointment) they take up an *hasty* wilful *Resolve* to go that Way that seems most agreeable to their *Passion*, saying with King *Joram*, *What wait we upon the Lord any longer for?* We will take such a Course, let come on us what will.

Applic.] The Service which the Observation (well digested) may perform for us, is very fully contained in an Advice which *David* gives on the like Occasion, *Psal.* xxxvii. 34. which is this, *Wait on the Lord, and keep his Way.* Failures of ordinary Means should not fill us with Distrust, neither then should we run out of God's Way for Help. He that would practise this, must have these *three* Things which are comprehended in it.

First, He must have *full Perswasions* of the Power and Promise of God. I do not mean the bare *Hearsay*, that God hath *promised* to help, and that he is *able* to deliver; but these Truths must be *wrought* upon the Heart to a *full Assurance* of them, and then we must *keep our Eye* upon them; for if ever we lose the *Sight* of this, when Troubles beset us, our Heart will *fail* us, and we shall do no otherwise than *Hagar*, who, when her Bottle of Water was spent, and she saw no way of Supply, sat down, gave up her Son and self for lost, and so falls a weeping over her helpless Condition. This was that *Sight* of God (in regard of his

Power,

Power, Goodneſs, Faithfulneſs, and Truth, which are Things *inviſible*, Heb. xi. 17.) which kept up the Heart of *Moſes*, that it ſunk not under the Preſſure of his Fears, when all Things threatned his Ruin.

Secondly, He that would thus wait upon God, had need to have an *equal Balance* of Spirit, in Reference to *ſecond Cauſes*; *deſpiſe* or neglect them he may not, when he *may have* them, for that were intolerable *Preſumption*, and ſo to *center* our Hopes and Expectations upon them, as if our *Welfare* did certainly *depend* upon them, is an high *Affront* to God's *Omnipotency*, and no leſs than a ſinful *idolizing* of the Creature; but the Engagements of our *Duty* muſt keep carefully to the *firſt*, and the Conſideration of an *Independency* of an *Almighty* Power, as to any *ſubordinate* Means or Cauſes, muſt help us againſt the *other* Miſcarriage. When all Means *viſible* fail us, we muſt look to live upon omnipotent *Faithfulneſs* and Goodneſs, which is not tied to any Thing, but that *without* all Means, and *contrary* to the Powers of *ſecond Cauſes*, can do what he hath promiſed, or ſees fit.

Thirdly, There is no waiting upon God and keeping his Way, without a *particular Truſt* in God, to this we are not only *warranted* by frequent *Commands*, *Truſt in the Lord*, I ſay, *Truſt in the Lord*; but highly *encouraged* to it, under the greateſt Aſſurances of Help. *Pſal.* xxxvii. 5. *Truſt in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs. Truſt in the Lord and do good, and verily thou ſhalt be fed*, Ver. 3. The Lord ſhall help and deliver them, becauſe they *truſt* in him. And this we are to do at *all Times*, and in the *greateſt Hazards*, and with the *higheſt Security*. *I laid me down and ſleept, I will not be afraid of ten Thouſands of People, that have ſet themſelves againſt me round about*, Pſal. iii. 5, 6.

Quæſt.] But ſome (poſſibly) may ſay, Is it our Duty to *ſit ſtill* in ſuch a Caſe? When all the uſual Ways of Supply fail us, muſt nothing be attempted?

Anſw. 1.] I anſwer, *Firſt*, At ſuch Times greater *Care* and Diligence is neceſſary in *outward* Things, that what *one* lawful Courſe *cannot* help, *another* lawful *Courſe* may; and as to *ſpiritual Diligence*, it ſhould be *extraordinary*, we ſhould be more earneſt and frequent in Prayer, Faſtings, Meditations, and the Exerciſe of Graces.

adly,

2*dly*, While we are in the Purſuit of *Duty*, and where the *Subſtance* of it may be preſerved *entire*, if our *Straits* and Wants *unavoidably* put us *out of the Way*, we may be ſatisfied to *go on*, tho' ſome *Circumſtances* be neceſſarily *waved* and hindred. *Phineas* might kill *Zimri* and *Cozbi* upon the Command of *Moſes*, Numb. xxv. 5. And conſequently, in Proſecution of Duty, tho' (other Circumſtances conſidered) it was in ſome Reſpects extraordinary.

3*dly*, But let the *Strait* be what it will, we muſt not forſake Duty; for ſo we go out of God's Way, and do contradict that Truſt and Hope which we are to keep up to Godward.

Queſt. But (it may be further urged) muſt we when all Means fail, *poſitively* truſt in God for thoſe *very* Things which we might expect in an ordinary Way?

Anſw. 1.] In ſome Caſes, our Duty is *Submiſſion* to his Will, and the particular Mercy neither *poſitively* to be *expected*, nor yet *diſtruſted*. Thus did *David* behave himſelf, when he fled from *Jeruſalem* upon *Abſalom*'s Rebellion; *Let him do what ſeemeth him good.*

But there are other Caſes wherein 'tis our Duty to *fix* our Truſt upon the *particular* Mercy or Help. I ſhall name *Four*, and poſſibly a great many more may be added As,

(1.) When Mercies are *expreſly* and particularly *promiſed*; as when the Kingdom was promiſed to *David*. When a Son was promiſed to *Abraham*. Whatever had been the *Improbabilities* of their obtaining the Thing promiſed, it was their Duty *poſitively* to believe. This is indeed not a general Caſe.

(2.) When God leads us into Straits by *engaging* us in his *Service*, as when *Iſrael* followed the Lord into the Wilderneſs, in order to an Enjoyment of a further Mercy, which was the Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*; when they had no Water to drink, nor Food to eat, and ſaw no *natural* Poſſibility of Supply in that Wilderneſs, they ought poſitively to have expected Supplies from God in an *extraordinary* Way, and it is reckoned up againſt them as their Sin, that they did not believe. This was the very Caſe of Chriſt under this Temptation, the Spirit led him into the Wilderneſs upon the Proſecution of a further Deſign; when there was no Bread there to ſatisfy his Hunger, he *refuſeth* to work a Miracle for his Supply, but leans upon an *extraordinary* Providence.

(3.) When

(3.) When the Things we want are *common universal Bleſſings*, and ſuch as we cannot *ſubſiſt* without; if we have *nothing* to *eat*, and *nothing* to *put on*, yet ſeeing the *Body* cannot *live* without both, we muſt *poſitively* expect ſuch Supplies from Providence, tho' we ſee not the Way whence they ſhould ariſe to us. This Kind of Diſtruſt (which reflects upon the general neceſſary Providence of God, by which he is engaged to preſerve his Creatures in their Stations, *To cloath the Graſs of the Field, to feed the Birds of the Air*, &c. *Mat.* vi. 30.) Chriſt doth ſeverely challenge, *Shall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little Faith?* He hath little or no Faith (and in that Regard a very *Prodigy* of Diſtruſt) that will not believe for Neceſſaries. Hence *Hab* iii. 17. the Prophet reſolves upon a rejoicing Confidence in God, when neither *Tree*, nor *Field*, nor *Flock* would yield any *Hope* in an ordinary Way.

(4.) When God is *eminently engaged* for our Help, and his Honour lies at Stake in that very Matter; ſo that whether God *will* help or no, or whether he is *able*, is become the *Controverſy*, upon which *Religion* in its Truth, or the *Honour* of God is to be tried; then are we engaged to a *certain* Belief of Help. The three *Children* upon this Ground did not only aſſert, that *God was able to deliver them*, or that their Death and Martyrdom they could *bear* (which is all that moſt Martyrs are able to ariſe up to) but they aſſerted poſitively, that *God would deliver them*, and that the Fire ſhould not burn them. They ſaw evidently, that the Conteſt, whether the *Lord* was *God*, was managed at ſo high a Rate, that God was more concerned to *vindicate* his *Honour* by their Preſervation, than to *vindicate* their *Grace* and Patience by their Conſtancy in *Suffering*. Another Inſtance we have in *Matth.* viii. 26. where Chriſt rebukes his Diſciples for Unbelief, in their Fears of Shipwreck in a great Storm; not that every Seaman *ordinarily* lies under that Charge, that gives himſelf up to the Apprehenſions of Danger; the Ground of which Charge was this, that *Chriſt* was *with* them; and conſequently it had unavoidably *contradicted* his Deſign, and *reflected* upon his Honour, if he had ſuffered his Diſciples at *that Time* to be drowned: Their not minding how far Chriſt was engaged with them, and not ſupporting themſelves againſt their Fears by that Conſideration, made Chriſt tax them for their *little Faith*.

CHAP. XII.

Of Satan's proceeding to infer Diſtruſt of Sonſhip from Diſtruſt of Providences. Inſtances of the Probability of ſuch a Deſign. The Reaſons of this Undertaking. Of Satan's Endeavour to weaken the Aſſurance and Hopes of God's Children. His general Method to that Purpoſe.

LASTLY, We are to conſider the *Suitableneſs* of the *Means* to the *End*; he had (as we have ſeen) fitly proportioned the *ſubordinate* Means to the *chief* and principal. The Failure of ordinary Means of Help was ſhrewdly proper to infer a Diſtruſt of Providence. Now let it be noted, how fitly he improves this *Diſtruſt* of *Providence*, to bring about the End he aimed at, which was a *Diſtruſt* of his *filial* Intereſt in God, as if he ſhould have thus reaſoned: *He that in Straits is forſaken, as to all the uſual Supplies that may be expected in an ordinary Way, hath no Reaſon to rely on Providence; and he that hath no Reaſon to rely on Providence for the Body, hath leſs Cauſe to expect ſpiritual Bleſſings and Favours for the Soul.* Hence note,

Obſ. 14. *That 'tis Satan's Endeavour to make Men proceed from a Diſtruſt of Providence, to a Diſtruſt of their ſpiritual Sonſhip, or filial Intereſt in God.* 1ſt, I ſhall evidence, that this is Satan's Deſign; and, next, I ſhall give the Reaſons of it. The former I ſhall make good by theſe ſeveral Conſiderations.

First, We ſee it is an *uſual* Inference that others make of Men whoſe Heart fails them, under an Abſence or Diſappearance of all Means of Help in their Diſtreſſes; if Providence doth not *appear* for them, they conclude God hath *forſaken* them. *Bildad* thus concludes againſt *Job*, chap. iv. 6 *Is not this thy Fear, thy Confidence, thy Hope, and the Uprightneſs of thy Ways?* Which muſt not only be underſtood as an *ironical* Scoff at the *Weakneſs* of his Confidence and Hope, as not being able to ſupport him againſt fainting in his Trouble, but as a direct *Accuſation* of the *Falſeneſs* and Hypocriſy of his ſuppoſed Integrity, and all the Hopes and Confidence which was built upon it; and *ver.* 7. doth evidence, where he plainly declares himſelf to mean, that *Job* could not be innocent or righteous, it being

(in

(in his Apprehenſion) a Thing never heard of, that ſo great Calamities ſhould overtake an upright Man, *Whoever periſhed being innocent?* The Ground of which Aſſertion was from *ver.* 5. *It is now come upon thee, and thou fainteſt.* That is, Diſtreſſes are upon thee, and thou haſt no viſible Means of Help, but deſpaireſt ever to ſee a Providence that will bring thee out; therefore ſurely thou haſt had no real Intereſt in God, as his Child. *Eliphaz* alſo ſeconds his Friend in this uncharitable Cenſure, *If thou wert pure and upright, he would awake for thee*, Job viii. 6. that is, becauſe he doth thus overlook thee, therefore thou art not pure and upright.

If *Men* do thus aſſault the Comforts of God's Children, we have Reaſon enough to think that *Satan* will; for beſides that we may conclude, they are ſet on Work by the Devil (and what he ſpeaks by them, he will alſo by other Ways promote, as being a Deſign that is upon his Heart;) we may be confident, that this being a *Surmiſe* ſo *natural* to the Heart of Man, he will not let ſlip ſo fair an Advantage, for the forming of it in our own Hearts againſt our ſelves.

Secondly, The beſt of God's Children in ſuch Caſes eſcape it very *hardly* (if at all;) which declares not only the Depth and Power of that Policy, but alſo how uſual it is with Satan to urge the Servants of God with it. *Job*, chap. xix. 25. recovered himſelf to a firm Perſwaſion of Sonſhip, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, &c. but by the Way his *Foot had well nigh ſlipt*, when *ver.* 10, 11. he cries out, *He hath deſtroyed me on every Side, and I am gone; he hath alſo kindled his Wrath againſt me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his Enemies.* His *earneſt Reſolve*, not to give up his Truſt in God, and the *Confidence* of his Integrity, is ſufficient to diſcover Satan's eager *Endeavours* to have him bereaved of it.

Thirdly, Satan's *Succeſs* in this Temptation over the Saints of God (who ſometime have actually failed) ſhews how much it is his Work to caſt down their Hopes of Intereſt in God, by overthrowing their Truſt in his Providences. If he attempts this (and that ſucceſsfully) on *ſuch*, whoſe frequent Experiences might *diſcourage* the Tempter, and in Probability *fruſtrate* his Undertaking, we have little Cauſe to think, that he will be more *ſparing* and gentle in this Aſſault upon thoſe that are more *weak*, and

and leſs acquainted with thoſe *Clouds* and *Darkneſſes*, that overſhadow the Ways of Providence. *David*, for all the Promiſes that he had received, and notwithſtanding the manifold Trials that he had of ſeaſonable and unexpected Deliverances; yet when he was *diſtreſſed*, he once and again falls into a Fear of his *Soul*, and a queſtioning of God's Favour. He complains as one utterly forſaken, *Why haſt thou forſaken me?* Pſal. xxii. 1. In *Pſal.* lxix. he expreſſeth himſelf *ver.* 1. *ſinking in the deep Mire*, as a Man that had no firm Ground to ſtand upon, and that his Troubles had brought him to fear the State of his Soul, not only as *deprived* of God's Favour (and therefore *ver.* 17. begs that his *Face* may be no longer *hid*) but alſo as ſuſpecting the *Loſs* of it, *ver.* 18. *draw nigh unto my Soul, and redeem it*, Pſal. lxxvii. upon the Occaſion of *outward* Troubles. *Aſaph* falls into ſuch a Fit of Fear, about his ſpiritual Condition, that no Conſideration of former Mercies could relieve him, *He remembred God*, ver. 3. but *was troubled*; he *conſidered the Days of old, called to Remembrance his Songs in the Night.* But none of theſe were effectual to keep him from that ſad Outcry of Diſtruſt, *ver.* 7. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? is his Mercy clean gone for ever? hath God forgotten to be gracious?* &c. Which, upon the Review, in the compoſing of the *Pſalm*, he acknowledgeth an unbelieving Miſcarriage. I ſaid, *this is mine Infirmity.*

Fourthly, 'Tis alſo a common and ordinary Thing with moſt, to entertain *Miſapprehenſions* of their ſpiritual Condition, when they meet with *Diſappointments* of Providence. Hence the Apoſtle, *Heb.* xii. 5, 6. when he would quiet the Hearts of Men under the Lord's Chaſtening, doth of purpoſe make Uſe of this Encouragement, that God *ſpeaks* to them in the Rod, as to *Children*, and ſuch as are under his Care and Love, *My Son, deſpiſe not the Chaſtening of the Lord. Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth*, &c. Which certainly tells us thus much, That 'tis ordinary for Men to doubt their *Sonſhip*, becauſe of their *Afflictions*. We may conjecture what the *Malady* is, when we know what is prepared as a *Medicine*. This would not have been a common Remedy (*that we may be Children, tho' we be ſcourged*) if the Disbelief of this had not been the uſual Interpretation of Afflictions, and a common Diſtemper.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, We may further take Notice, that those *Disquiets* of Mind, that were only occasioned by *outward* Things, and seem to have no *Affinity* (either in the Nature of the Occasion, or present Inclination of the Party) with a *spiritual* Trouble; yet if they continue *long*, do wholly *change* their Nature; they that at first only troubled themselves for Losses or Crosses, forget these Troubles, and take up Fears for their Souls.

Sometime this ariseth from a natural *Softness* and Timorousness of Spirit, such are apt to misgive upon any Occasion, and to say, Surely *if I were his Child, he would not thus forsake me, his fatherly Compassions would some way or other work towards me.*

Sometime this ariseth from *Melancholy, contracted* or heightned by outward *Troubles*. These when they continue long, and pierce deep, put Men into a *Spirit of Heaviness*, which makes them refuse to be comforted. Here the Devil takes his Advantage: *Unlawful Sorrows* are as delightfully improved by him, as *unlawful Pleasures*; they are *Diaboli balneum*, his Bath in which he sports himself, as the *Leviathan* in the Waters. When for temporal Losses or Troubles Men fall into Melancholy, if they be not relieved soon, then their Grief changeth its Object, and presently they disquiet themselves, as being out of God's Favour; as being estranged from God; as being of the Number of the Damned; such against whom the Door of Mercy is shut, and so cry out of themselves as hopeless and miserable. The Observations of *Physicians* afford Store of Instances of this Kind. *Felix Platerus* gives (*a*) one of a Woman at *Basil*, who first grieved for the Death of her Son; and when by this Means she grew melancholy, that changed into an higher Trouble; she mourns that her Sins would not be pardoned, that God would not have Mercy for her Soul. Another, for some Loss of Wheat, first vexeth himself for that, and then at last despairs of the Happiness of his Soul; with a great many more of that Kind.

Sometimes a *desperate* Humour doth (from the same Occasion) *distract* Men into a *Fury*; of which *Mercennus* gives one Instance (*b*) from his own Knowledge, of a Person,

(*a*) Alii damnatos se putant, & quod Deo curæ non sunt, *Platerus Tract. Melan.* cap. 33.

(*b*) Quis est ille Deus, ut serviam illi? quid proderit si oraverim? si præsens est, cur non succurit? cur non me carcere, inedia, squalore confectum liberat? &c. Absit a me hujusmodi Deus. *Mercennus* ad *Gen.* c. 11. *fol.* 232.

who upon the Diſtreſſes which he met with, fell into a Rage againſt God, uttering Speeches full of Horror and Blaſphemy, not fit to be related

If there be ſuch an *Affinity* betwixt Diſtruſt of Providence, and Diſtruſt of Sonſhip, that the one ſlides into the other naturally. If this be *common* to all Men under Troubles, to ſuſpect their Souls; if the *beſt* do here actually miſcarry; if thoſe that do not, yet *hardly* eſcape; and if *By ſtanders* commonly give this Judgment of Men in Straits, that there is no Help for them in their God; we cannot but *collect* from all this, that it is an Advantage which Satan will not neglect, and that he doth very much imploy himſelf to bring it about:

The Reaſons of it are theſe.

Firſt. Diſtruſt of Providence hath in it the very *formal* Nature of Diſtruſt of Sonſhip. If the Object of Diſtruſt were but changed, it would without any further Addition work that Way. He that truſts Providence acknowledgeth that God *knoweth* his Wants (*a*), that he is of a *merciful* Inclination to give what he ſees he hath Need of; that he hath manifeſted this by *Promiſe*, that he is ſo *faithful* that this Promiſe cannot be neglected, and that he hath *Power* to do what he hath promiſed. He that diſtruſts Providence *diſbelieves* all theſe, *conſequentially* at leaſt; and he that will not believe that God takes any *Care* of the *Body*, or that he is of a merciful Diſpoſition toward him, or thinks either he hath made no ſuch Promiſe, or will not keep it, if any ſuch were made; cannot believe (if that Doubt were but once ſtarted) that God is his *Father*, or that he hath Intereſt in the Privilege of a Son, *Seeing it is impoſſible to believe a Sonſhip, while his Care, Mercy, Promiſes, and Power are diſtruſted.* In this then Satan's Work is very eaſy, it is but his moving the Queſtion about the Lord's Mercy to the Soul, and preſently (as when new Matter is miniſtred to a raging Flame;) it takes hold upon it, and with equal (nay greater) Force it carries the Soul to diſtruſt ſpiritual Mercies, as before it diſbelieved temporal Kindneſſes.

Secondly, The *ſame* Reaſons, which any Man doth gather from the ſeeming Neglect or Oppoſition of Providence; upon which he grounds his Diſtruſt of the Lord's Kindneſs in Reference to *outward* Things, will alſo *ſerve* as Argum nts for a Diſtruſt of *ſpiritual* Favours. The Diſtreſſes of Men ſeem

(a) Dr. Reynold's Sermon on *Hoſea* 14. Sermon 4.

ſeem to argue, (1.) That there is Sin and Provocation on their Part. (2.) And that there is a Manifeſtation of *Anger* on God's Part. (3.) And from theſe Apprehenſions ariſeth *Bitterneſs*, Anxiety, Fear, and Dejection of Spirit, which *intercepts* all the Help and Conſolation which might ariſe from other *Conſiderations* of the Lord's *Promiſe*, or *Mercy*, for the quieting of the Heart, and fortifying it againſt ſuch Apprehenſions; theſe ſame Grounds, with the prevailing Fears and Perplexities, ariſing from them, are enough to make us ſuſpect, that we are not yet under any ſuch peculiar Favours, as may beſpeak us his Children by Adoption; ſo that from the ſame Premiſes Satan will conclude, that as he hath no *Care* for our *Bodies*, ſo no *Love* to our Souls; that we neither love God nor are beloved of him, betwixt the one Concluſion and the other there is but a *Step*, and with a ſmall Labour he can cut the Channel, and let in that very Diſtruſt, to run with all its Force againſt our ſpiritual Intereſt in God.

Thirdly, To truſt God for the Soul is an *higher* Act, than to truſt him for the Body, the Soul being of greater *Excellency* than the Body; and the Mercy neceſſary for the Happineſs of it, being more *precious* and *leſs viſible*, it muſt require an *higher* Confidence in God, to aſſure of this, than ſatisfy us in the other; 'tis more eaſy to believe a *leſſer* Kindneſs from a Friend, than a ſingular or *extraordinary* Favour; he then that cannot truſt God for *temporal* Mercies, ſhall be more unable to believe *eternal* Bleſſings; If we run with *Footmen*, and they have *wearied* us, ſhall we be able to contend with *Horſemen*? If the *ſhallow* Brooks be too ſtrong for us, what ſhall we do in the *Swellings* of *Jordan*?

Fourthly, When Faith is weakned as to *one* Object, 'tis ſo *tainted* and diſcouraged, that 'tis generally weakned as to *all* other; if the Hand be ſo weakned that it cannot hold a Ring, it will be leſs able to graſp a Crown; when we are baffled in our Truſt for temporal Mercies, if Satan then put us to it not to believe for ſpiritual Bleſſings, how can we expect but to be much more at a Loſs in them? So that he is ſure of the Victory before he fights, and he that is ſo ſedulous to take Advantage againſt us, will not loſe ſo conſiderable a Conqueſt for want of Purſuit. There is indeed one Thing that may ſeem fit to be objected againſt this, which is, that Men may retain their *Faith* in one Thing,

when yet they *diſtruſt* in another, as the *Iſraelites* diſtruſted the Power and Goodneſs of God for *Bread* and *Fleſh* in the Wilderneſs, when yet they believed, that as he had given *Water* out of the Rock, ſo he could do it again if there were Need. *Pſal* lxxviii. 20. *He ſmote the Rock, and the Waters guſhed out, But can he give Bread?* As if they had ſaid, we believe he can give Water, but 'tis impoſſible he ſhould provide Bread. But they that would thus object, may conſider, that the Reaſon of Mens Confidence in one Thing, (whilſt Diſtruſt is in other Things prevailing) is not from any real *Strength* of their Faith, but a preſent *Want* of a Temptation; if ſuch a Confidence were put to it, it would quickly be ſeen that it were truly nothing. As confident as the *Iſraelites* were, that they could believe for a Supply of Water, we find that neither that Experience, nor the other of ſupplying them with *Manna* and *Quails*, were ſufficient to keep up their Truſt in God, but that at the next Strait all was to ſeek, *Ver.* 32. *For all this they ſinned ſtill, and believed not for his wondrous Works.*

Fifthly, Beſides all the forementioned Advantages that Satan hath in raiſing this Temptation, of diſtruſting Sonſhip out of a Diſtruſt of Providence, we may ſuppoſe him the more earneſt in this Matter, becauſe 'tis ſo *provoking* to God to diſtruſt his Providence; that he often (as a juſt Chaſtiſement of that Evil) puniſheth it; by giving them up to diſtruſt him for their Souls; the Height of the Provocation may be meaſured by this, that 'tis not only a *Denial* of God that is above, but uſually a *veſting* ſome mean and contemptible Thing, with thoſe Attributes which only ſuit a God *infinite* and *eternal*. As *Iſrael* did not only forſake the Almighty by their Diſtruſt, *Hoſ.* xiv. 2, 3. but place their Hopes upon *Aſſur*, upon their own Horſes and warlike Preparations, and at laſt, upon the Works of their Hands, which they called their Gods. How offenſive this is to the Lord, we may obſerve by that notable Check which the Prophet gave *Ahaz*, *Iſa.* vii. 8, 13. notwithſtanding his Compliment of refuſing a Sign, (which God offered him for the ſtrengthning of his Hope) upon a Pretence that he would truſt without it, (tho' indeed he abſolutely diſtruſted him, as appears by 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 20.) that it was a *wearing* and tyring out the Patience of a long ſuffering God; *Is it a ſmall Thing for you to weary Men, but will you weary my God alſo?* God is ſo active and jealous of all *Incroach-*

ments

ments of this Kind, that they may expect he will *give up* such Offenders to be punished by the Terrors of an higher Distrust. He that is not owned as a God in his Providences, will not be owned as a Father for spiritual Mercies; they that *will* not own him for the Body, *shall* not be able to lay hold upon him, or his Strength, to be at Peace with him for their Souls, and by this Piece of just Discipline he often cures the Distrust of Providence in his Children, who when they see themselves plunged into Terrors and Fears about their everlasting Welfare, do not only call God just, and accept of the Punishment of their Iniquity, in distrusting him for smaller Matters, but now wish with all their Hearts, that they might have no greater Thing to trouble them than what relates to the Body, or this Life.

To sum up all these Reasons in one Word; Satan hath, from the forementioned Considerations, a certain Expectation of Prevalency. For not only in this Case doth God as it were, fight for him, by *giving them up*, to distrust their *filial* Interest, that have *provoked* him by a Distrust of Providence; and our Faith is also so *weakned* by the former Overthrow, that 'tis not able to maintain its Ground in an higher Matter, but also this Distrust carries that in the *Nature* and *Grounds* of it; that will of itself work up to a Disbelief of spiritual Mercies. He knows then that this Piece of the Victory is an easy Consequence of the former, and we may say of it, as the Prophet *Nahum*, *Chap.* iii. 12. of the Strong holds of *Nineveh*, 'tis like *a Fig tree with the first ripe Figs, if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the Mouth of the Eater.* This Temptation of distrusting our Sonship falls into Satan's Mouth with a little Labour, when once he hath prevailed so far, as to make us distrust the Providence of God in outward Matters.

Applic. This must warn and caution us against any unbeseeming unbelieving Entertainment of *Jealousy* against the Lord's Providence; we are but too apt in our Straits to take a greater Liberty to *question* his Mercy and Power, not foreseeing how closely this borders upon a greater Evil; we may say of it, as the *Apostle* speaks of *babling in Controversies*, that they *lead to more Ungodliness*, and that such Words *eat as a Canker*; so doth this Distrust usually carry us further, and when we fall out with God for small Matters, he will be angry in Earnest, and withdraw from us our Consolations in greater. In the Depth of your Distresses when your

your Fears are round about you, and God seems to compass you about with his Net; when Lover and Friend forsakes, and when there is no Appearance of Help, endeavour (for the keeping hold of your Interest in God) to behave yourselves according to the following Directions.

First, Look upon the Providences of God to be as a great *Deep*, the Bottom of whose Ways and Designs you cannot reach; think of them as of a *Mystery*, which indeed you must *study*, but not *throw* away, because you cannot at first understand it. Providences are not to be dealt with as *Alexander* did by *Gordius* his Knot, who when he could not loose it, he cut it. If you see not the End of the Lord, or cannot meet with a Door of Hope in it, yet *lay your Hand upon your Mouth*, speak not, think not evil of Things you know not, but wait till the Time of their *bringing forth*.

Secondly, You must keep up in your Hearts *high* and honourable *Thoughts* of God, yea, of his Mercy and Goodness, and where you cannot see your Way, or God's Way before you, yet (as it were by a Kind of *implicite* Faith) must you believe that he is *holy* and *good* in all his Ways.

Thirdly, Tho' you may read your *Sins*, or God's *Displeasure* in them, and accordingly endeavour to humble yourselves, and call yourselves vile, yet must it be always remembred, that *eternal Love* or *Hatred* is not to be *measured* by them.

Fourthly, *Restrain Complainings*. 'Tis indeed an Ease to complain; *I will speak*, saith *Job*, *that I may be refreshed*, Job xxxii. 20. notwithstanding [illegible] being given, 'tis difficult to keep within *Bounds*. Our Complainings *entice* us to distrust, as may appear in *Job*, who took a Boldness this Way, more than was fit; as *Chap.* x. 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? and that thou shouldest despise the Work of thine Hands?*

All this hath been said in the opening of the Temptation itself, now must I consider the *Motive* that Satan used to bring on the Temptation by; *If thou be the Son of God*, &c.

The *Question* that is here moved by some, is, Whether Satan really *knew*, or truly *doubted* Christ to be the Son of God? Several learned Men think that he was in *Doubt*(a), and the Reasons are variously conjectured. *Cyprian* conceives

(a) Barn. Chemnitius. Serm. de Jejunio & tempt. Christi. Unitas naturarum celabat Satanam.

ceives that *the Unity of the two Natures in one Perſon did blind him*, he knew it to be impoſſible that the divine Nature ſhould hunger, and might think it ſtrange that the humane Nature ſhould faſt ſo long. *Cornelius* a *Lapide* thinks that Satan *knew* that there ſhould be *two Natures* united in one Perſon, and that this occaſioned Satan's Fall, while he proudly ſtomached the Exaltation of the humane Nature, but he imagines Satan's Doubt aroſe from a *doubtful Senſe* of that Phraſe, *This is my beloved Son*, as not knowing whether Chriſt were *the natural*, or an *adopted* Son of God.

But notwithſtanding theſe Apprehenſions, others conceive that Satan knew very well who Chriſt was, and that being privy to ſo many Things relating to him, as the *Promiſes* which went before and directly pointed out the Time, the *Angel's Salutation* of *Mary* at his Conception, the *Star* that conducted the wiſe Men to him, the *Teſtimony* from Heaven concerning him, with a great many Things more, he could not poſſibly be ignorant that he was the *Meſſias*, and the Son of God by Nature; neither doth that Expreſſion, *If thou be the Son of God*, imply any *doubting*, ſeeing that that is uſually expreſſive of the greateſt *Certainty* and Aſſurance, as in the Speech of *Lamech*, *If* Cain *ſhall be avenged Seven-fold*, that is, as certainly he ſhall be avenged; ſo Satan might uſe it to this Senſe, *If*, or *ſeeing thou art the Son of God.* Now whereas it may ſeem ſtrange, that he ſhould ſet upon Chriſt, if he knew who he was, I have anſwered that before, and ſhall here only add, that tho' Satan did believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, yet ſo ſtrongly did the Power of *Malice* work in him, that he would have had him to have doubted that he was not ſo. From all this, we have this Obſervation,

Obſ. 15.] *That the great Deſign of Satan is to weaken the Aſſurance and Hopes of the Children of God, in their Adoption.*

This is the Maſter piece of his Deſign, the very Center in which moſt of his Devices meet; we may ſay of him, as *Eſau* ſaid of *Jacob*, *is he not rightly called Jacob*, a Supplanter? he firſt ſtole away our *Birth right* at the *Creation*, and now he ſeeks to take away our *Bleſſing* in Chriſt the *Redeemer.*

The Reaſons of this Undertaking I ſhall not here inſiſt on; 'tis ſufficiently obvious, that the greateſt Perplexity and Sorrow ariſeth to the Children of God from hence, and that

a Troop of other spiritual Evils (as Impatience, Fury, Blasphemy, and many more) doth follow it at the Heels, besides all that Inability for Service, and at last, plain Neglect of all Duty. All I shall further do at this Time, shall be to shew in a few Particulars, (from Satan's Carriage to Christ in this Temptation) how and after what Manner he doth manage that Design, in which note.

First, That 'tis his Design to *sever* us from the *Promise*, and to weaken our Faith in that; when *Eve* was tempted, this was that he aimed at, that she should *question* the *good Earnest* of the Prohibition, *Hath God said so? Was he real in that Command, that you should not eat at all*, &c. The like he doth to Christ, *Is it true? Or can it be so as that Voice declared, that thou art the Son of God?*

Secondly, Though this be his Design, yet his Way to come to it, is not at *first to deny it*, but to *question and enquire*, yet after such a Manner, as may *imply* and withal *suggest* a *Doubting* or Suspicion that it is not so; he doth not come to Christ thus, *Thou art not the Son of God*; *or*, *that Voice that gave thee that Testimony, was but a Lie or a Delusion*: But he rather proceeds by questioning, which might *seem* to *grant*, that he was so, yet withal might possibly beget a Doubt in his Mind.

Thirdly, Next he more *plainly* suggests something that may seem to argue the *contrary*; for thus he aggravates Christ's present Condition of Want, *Can it be that God would leave thee to these oppressing Straits, if thou wert his Son?* At this Rate he deals with us, improving the *Failure* of outward Means of Help, the *Permission* of Temptation, the *Want* of Comfort, the *Continuance* of Affliction, notwithstanding Prayers, *&c.* as *Probabilities* that we belong not to God.

Fourthly, After this, he urgeth Christ to a sinful Miscarriage, to *distrust* Providence, and to rely no longer on the Care of his Father; if Christ had been prevailed with in this, he would have made use of it, as an Argument to prove that he was not the Son of God indeed. *'Tis usual in his Disputings with us about Adoption, to put us upon something, which may be as an Argument out of our own Mouths against us.* Christ might have answered him in this, as the Man answered *Joab*, *If I should do so, then thou thyself wouldst set thyself against me.*

Fifthly, When at last, he hath *gradually* ascended to that Confidence as to *deny* our Adoption, then (at a very great

Diſadvantage) he puts us upon the *Proof*, in which he puts by the *ordinary* Evidences, and inſiſts on *extraordinary* Proofs as neceſſary. The Servants of the Lord that are under this Exerciſe, do find, that in this Caſe the ordinary Evidences of Repentance, Mortification, Love to the Brethren, *&c.* do nothing for them: Satan puts their Spirit upon clamouring for higher Evidences, nothing will ſerve, except they may view the *Records of Eternity*, and read their Names inrolled in the *everlaſting Decrees*; or except God will *ſpeak from Heaven* in an extraordinary Way, to teſtify of them; as *Thomas* reſolved, that no leſs ſhould ſatisfy his Doubt, than the feeling and ſeeing of the *Print of the Nails*. To this Purpoſe ſome ſtand upon no leſs than a Miracle, for Proof of Sonſhip, of which we have two (*a*) Inſtances of later Years, the one Mrs. *Honywood*, the other Mrs. *Sarah Wight*, who in their Diſtreſſes for their Souls, were tempted by Satan to make an haſty Experiment, the one by throwing a *Venice Glaſs*, the other by throwing a *Cup* againſt the Wall, with this or the like Expreſſion, *If I muſt be ſaved, then let not this Glaſs break.* A deſperate Temptation! their Manner of deſiring Satisfaction is ſo provoking, that it cannot be expected God will give an Anſwer by it, but rather the contrary; and if he ſhould not condeſcend, as he is not bound (tho' he ſtrangely preſerved the Cup and Glaſs forementioned from breaking) what a dangerous Concluſion would Satan draw from it? Of this *Nature* and Deſign was that Propoſal of Satan's to Chriſt, *Command that theſe Stones be made Bread*, that is, do it as a Proof of thy Sonſhip.

Applic.] By this we muſt learn this Skill, not too *eaſily* to give up our Hopes, or to be *prodigal* of our Intereſt in Chriſt, ſo as to part with it *ſlenderly*. If Satan would *chiefly* rob us of this, we may learn thence, to put a *Price* upon theſe *Jewels*, and to account that precious, and of ſingular Concernment, which he uſeth ſo much Cunning to bereave us of. Many of the Lord's Servants may juſtly blame themſelves for their *laviſh Unthriftineſs* in this Matter, who (as if it were a neceſſary Piece of *Humility* or *Modeſty*) will readily conclude againſt themſelves, that they are not God's Children, that they are not yet converted, *&c.* Thus as *unawares* they give up to Satan without a *Stroke* all that he ſeeks for.

Queſt.]

(*a*) See their Relations in Print.

Queſt.] But you will ſay, Muſt all Men be confident of Adoption?

Anſw.] No, I mean not ſo, yet all Men muſt be *wary* how they caſt away their Hopes; particularly,

1*ſt*, Tho' it be a dangerous *Arrogancy* for a *ſinful* wicked Creature to bear himſelf up in a *Belief*, that he is *converted*, and actually inſtated into the Adoption of Sons; yet 'tis as *dangerous* on the other Hand for that Man to caſt off *all Hope*, and to ſay he is *reprobated*, and ſuch a one as cannot expect Pardon and Grace.

2*dly*, Thoſe that are converted, tho' they may and ought to *humble* themſelves *deeply* for their ſinful *Miſcarriage*, and ſincerely *acknowledge*, that they *deſerve* not to be called his Children, yet muſt they be careful *not to renounce their filial Intereſt*. They may ſay they are *prodigal*, yet keep to this, that *they are Sons*; tho' they are *wandering* Sheep, yet muſt they ſtick here, that they are *Sheep* ſtill, and that God is ſtill a *Father*, tho' a *provoked Father*, otherwiſe their *Folly* will *give* more, than all his *Fury* could *get*, at leaſt ſo quickly and eaſily.

MATTH. iv. 5. *Then the Devil taketh him up into the holy City, and ſetteth him on the Pinacle of the Temple.*

CHAP. XIII.

The Preparation to the ſecond Temptation. Of his Nimbleneſs to catch Advantages from our Anſwers to Temptation. That Satan carried Chriſt in the Air. Of his Power to moleſt the Bodies of God's Children. How little the ſuppoſed Holineſs of Places privileges us from Satan. Of Satan's Policy, in ſeeming to countenance imaginary Defences. Of his pretended Flight in ſuch Caſes, with the Reaſons of that Policy. Of his improving a Temptation to ſerve ſeveral Ends.

I Omit Chriſt's Anſwer to the firſt Temptation at preſent (purpoſing to handle his Anſwers to all the Temptations together.) And now the ſecond Temptation is before us, in which, *Firſt*, I ſhall obſerve a few Things in Satan's Preparation to the Temptation, which takes in, 1. The Time. 2. The Manner of his carrying him. 3. The Place where he acted it.

Firſt,

First, For the Time, that is noted in the Word [*then:*] Which 1. Points at the *immediate Succession* of this to the former Assault. The *Evangelist Luke* puts this Temptation last; but he only had Respect to the Substance of the Temptation in his Narration, not regarding the Order of them, which *Matthew* hath punctually observed, as appears by his close connecting of them with the Particles *then* and *again*, ver. 5, 8. Besides, whosoever shall consider, that in the first Satan tempted Christ to Distrust (which he repelled, by telling him that it was his Duty (in the Failure of outward Means) to rely upon Divine Providence, seeing Man lives not by Bread alone, *&c.*) he will see so much of Connection in the Matter of the Temptations, that he will easily perswade himself, that the second Place belongs to this; for this is but (as it were) a fit and pertinent Reply to Christ's Refusal; as if Satan had said, *Since thou wilt rely upon the Help and Providence of God, in an extraordinary Way of Working, give an Experiment of that, by casting thyself down, which thou mayst with greater Confidence do, because he hath promised an extraordinary Help, and hath given his Angels Charge concerning thee*, &c. Hence observe,

Obs. 1.] *That Satan is not discouraged easily, nor doth he always desist upon the first Repulse, but frequently renews the Assault, when he is strongly and resolutely resisted.*

This Word [*then*] doth also (2.) tell us of Satan's *Nimbleness*, in catching a present Advantage for a new Temptation from Christ's Answer, he declared his Truft in Providence, this he presently lays hold on, as a fit Opportunity to tempt him to Presumption. Here note,

Obs. 2.] *That when Satan is upon any Design, if an occasional Advantage occur, from our Way of Refusal, he will not let it slip, but improves it to what it may lead to, though it be contrary to that which he was first labouring for.*

This was the Policy which *Benhadad*'s Servants used in their Address to *Ahab*, 1 Kings xx. 33. the Men did diligently observe whether any Thing would come from him, and did hastily catch it: If any Thing come from us, we are under his Temptation, he is diligent to observe it, and prosecutes it accordingly; which may serve to satisfy the Wonder that some have, concerning the *Contrariety* in the Temptations to which they are urged. They admire how it comes to pass that their Temptations should so suddenly

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alter, that when Satan ſeems to be ſo intent upon one Deſign, he ſhould ſo quickly change, and urge them preſently to a different, or contrary Thing; but they may know that the Devil watcheth the Wind, and ſpreads his Sail according to the Advantage which ariſeth from our Anſwer or Repulſe. So that if we would but plow with our own *Heifer*, and obſerve our Frame of Spirit, we ſhould eaſily find out this *Riddle*. For as it is in Diſputings and Arguings of Men, *Replies* beget new Matter for *Anſwer*, and ſo do they multiply one another; thus are Temptations altered and multiplied, and out of the *Aſhes* of one Aſſault repelled, another doth quickly *ſpring* up.

The *ſecond* Circumſtance of Preparation is, *Satan's taking him up, and ſetting him on the Temple.* That this was not a viſionary or an imaginary Thing hath been proved before. Yet granting it to have been real, (as in Truth it ſeems to have been) it is diſputed what was the *Modus*, the Way and Manner of it. Some think this was no more than Chriſt's voluntary *following* of Satan (a) who guided and conducted the Way; partly becauſe the Words, παραλαμβανει and αγει, are in Scripture accommodated to a Man's taking of any as a Companion under his Guide, and Conduct of the Way, and to a Diſpoſal of them in any Kind of Station. Thus, where 'tis ſaid, *Joſeph took Mary, and the young Child to go to Egypt*, Matth. ii. 13. the ſame Word is uſed: And when Chriſt tells his Diſciples, that they ſhall bring the Aſs and the Colt which they ſhould find tied, *Matth* xxii. 2. the ſame Word which expreſſeth Chriſt's being ſet on the Temple, is there uſed. Partly alſo, they think it below the Dignity of Chriſt to be thus violently hurried.

Others think that Satan was permitted to take up the *Body* of Chriſt, and by his Power to have conveyed him in the *Air*. And indeed the whole Series of the Narration, with all the Circumſtances thereof, are evident for it. The *Diſtances* of Places, the *Quickneſs* and Speedineſs of the Removals, the more proper *Applications* of the Words, *taking* and *ſetting*, to Satan as the Actor, and the *Declaration* of his Power therein, as able to do great Things; theſe make the Matter ſo clear, that it ſeems to be an unnatural forcing of the Text, to give it any other Interpretation. Beſides, the former Opinion of Satan's taking of Chriſt, as a *Manuductor* or Guide, ſeems every Way unreaſonable: For if Chriſt

(a) *Spanhem.* dub. Evan. in loc.

Chriſt only followed Satan, then it muſt have been either by a *Land journey* on Foot, or in the *Air*. This latter it could not be; for if Chriſt had ſupported himſelf in the Air by his own Power, he had *anticipated* the Temptation, and it would have been Folly and Madneſs for Satan to have urged him to fly in the Air, after ſuch an Evidence of his Power; and who can imagine that Chriſt followed Satan on *Foot* from the Wilderneſs to the Temple, or that his *Acceſs* to the Roof of the Temple was ſo eaſy, in ſuch a Way when the Temple was always ſo ſtrictly guarded? Note hence,

Obſ. 3.] *That Satan is ſometime permitted to exerciſe his Power upon the Bodies of thoſe that are dear to God.* That he hath Power to carry the Bodies of Men in the Air, is ſufficiently confirmed by what he doth frequently to Witches (*a*), who are uſually carried (if we can give any Credit to the Stories that are writ of them) in the Air, to Places far remote from their Dwellings. And that this Power is permitted him upon others, than ſuch as are in Compact with him, is as evident from what is teſtified of thoſe, whoſe forward Curioſity hath led to imitate Witches in their Anointings, who have thereupon been conveyed after them to their Aſſemblies, and when the Company hath been ſuddenly diſmiſſed, they have been found many Miles diſtant from their Dwellings: Such Inſtances we have in *Bodin* (b), and among other Things, that of *Domina Roſſa* mentioned by him, whom Satan would ſometime bind to a Tree, ſometime to a Table, or to a Bed's-foot, or to a Manger; ſometime one Hand bound to another; the Devil thus moleſted her from eight Years old, a long Time. This Power of conveying Perſons in the Air, is not uſual, yet there are ſome in *this Place* (c), that have known One frequently moleſted by Satan at this Rate. However, if we take notice of his Power, to abuſe the Bodies of holy Perſons more generally, we ſhall find it frequent. *Mary Magdalen* was poſſeſſed. Chriſt mentions a Daughter of *Abraham* bowed down by him many Years; *Job* was filled with Botches and Sores; and there are many Diſeaſes wherein Satan hath a greater Hand, than is commonly imagined. *Phyſicians* frequently conclude ſo much, while they obſerve ſome Diſtempers to elude ſuch Remedies, as are uſually ſucceſsful upon other Perſons under the ſame Diſeaſes.

(*a*) Equitatio cum *Diana* aut *Herodiade*. (*b*) *Bodin* pag. 147. (*c*) *Newcaſtle*.

Applic.] From this we may infer (1.) the great *Power* of Satan; Who can tell the Extent of it? doubtleſs (if he were permitted) we ſhould ſee ſad Inſtances hereof daily. (2.) This diſcovers the wonderful *Care* and Providence of God over us in our Preſervation from his Fury. (3.) We may further note, that the Abuſe of the Bodies of Men by Satan, will be no *Evidence*, that therefore God doth *diſregard* them, or that they are not precious to him. Chriſt did undergo this Abuſe, to give ſuch as ſhall be ſo moleſted ſome Comfort in his Example.

The third Circumſtance, which is that of *Place*, is ſet down firſt in general, The *holy City*, that is *Jeruſalem*, for ſo *Luke* ſpeaks expreſly, *Luke* v. 6.] *Jeruſalem* was ſo called, becauſe of God's *Worſhip* there eſtabliſhed, and his *peculiar* Preſence there; but that it ſhould be called ſo, at this Time may ſeem ſtrange, ſeeing it might now be lamented as of old, *How is the faithful City become an Harlot? Righteouſneſs lodged in it, but now Murderers.* In anſwer to this, we muſt know, that God having not yet given her a *Bill of Divorce*, he is pleaſed to continue her Title and Privilege. This might be profitably improved; but I will not ſuffer myſelf to be diverted from the Matter of Temptation, which is the only Thing I propound to proſecute from hence. I ſhall here only obſerve,

Obſ. 4.] *That the Holineſs or Sanctity of a Place, will be no Privilege againſt Temptations.* He is not ſo fearful (as many imagine) as that he dares not approach a *Churchyard* or a *Church*, neither *Place*, nor *Duty* can keep him off. I do not believe the Popiſh Fiction of their St. *Benzet*'s Viſion, wherein they tell of his ſeeing but one Devil in a Market, and Ten in a Monaſtery; yet I queſtion not the Truth of this, that the Devil is as buſy at a *Sermon*, or *Prayer*, as at any other *Imployment*.

But to ſearch a little further into this Matter. It ſeems undeniable, that Satan had a Deſign in Reference to the Place, (of which afterward;) and I ſee no Reaſon to exclude our Suſpicion of a Deſign from the *Name* and *Title* which the *Evangeliſt* here gives to *Jeruſalem*. 'Tis an Expreſſion which (to my Remembrance) we meet not with oft in the *New Teſtament*. At the Suffering of Chriſt, when the Bodies of the Saints aroſe out of their Graves, 'tis ſaid, *they went into the holy City*; Matth. xxvii. 53. but 'tis evident, that it is there ſo ſtiled upon ſpecial Deſign, as if

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the *Evangeliſt* would by that point at the *ſtaining of their Glory*; and that in a little Time their Boaſt of the Temple and holy City ſhould ceaſe, and that all ſhould be polluted with the Carcaſes of the Slain; and by the ſame Reaſon may we ſuppoſe, that Satan (intending for Chriſt a Temptation of Preſumption, and backing it with the Promiſe of a Guard of Angels) had in his Eye the uſual Confidence that the *Jews* had of that City, as a Place where the Preſence of Angels might be more expected than elſewhere; ſo that it ſeems Satan intended to *impoſe* upon Chriſt a *Confidence*, in order to Preſumption. From the Privilege of the *Place* here obſerve,

Obſ. 5.] *That Satan is willing to gratify us with nominal and imaginary Privileges and Defences againſt himſelf*; he will willingly allow us ſuch *Defences*, as are altogether *inſignificant* and deluſive; and his Policy here is center'd upon theſe two Things:

Firſt, He doth induſtriouſly *prompt* us to *ſelf deviſed Inventions*, ſuch as were never appointed or bleſſed of God to any ſuch Uſe, but only found out by the bold Superſtitions of Men: Of this we have an Inſtance in *Balack*, who carried *Balaam* from Place to Place, in his Proſecution of his Deſign of curſing *Iſrael*; neither can we imagine, that a commodious Proſpect of *Iſrael* was all he aimed at, ſeeing he diſcovers his Mind in this Variation of Places. *Peradventure it will pleaſe God that thou mayſt curſe them from thence*, Numb. xxiii. 27. clearly implying, that he had a Confidence, that the Place might contribute ſomething to his Deſign, and that there was ſome inherent *Virtue* in thoſe *conſecrated* Places; and therefore did he begin with the high Places of *Baal*, Numb. xxii. 41. and then to the Field of *Zophim*, chap. xxiii. 14. and then to the Top of *Peor*, ver. 28. Among the Papiſts we find too much of this (*a*), what Power they attribute to *holy Water*, *bleſſed Salt*, *Sign of the Croſs*, *hallowed Earth*, *conſecrated Places*, *Relicts*, *baptized Bells*, *Exorciſms*, and Abundance of ſuch Stuff,

(*a*) Plurimum ſunt præſervativa locorum, hominum & jumentorum verba tituli triumphalis noſtri Salvatoris, dum ſcilicet per quatuor partes loci, in modum crucis inſcribuntur Ieſus†Nazarenus†Rex†Judæorum†, Ritibus Eccleſiæ ſervatis & veneratis, ut aquæ benedictæ aſperſionem per ſalis conſecrati ſumptionem & candelarum in die purificationis & frondium in die palmarum conſecratorum uſum licitum vires Dæmonis immuniunt, ſe muniunt *Spreng.* Malleus maleficarum *Part* 2. *Q.* 1. licitum eſt aqua benedicta, quæcunque honeſta loca, hominum & jumentorum, in ſalvationem hominum & jumentorum aſpergere *&c. ibid.*

may be seen in many of their Writings, too tedious to be related.

Secondly, He is also willing that Men use those *real Defences* and Helps which God hath commanded, so that they use them in a *formal Manner*, which indeed deprives them of all the Life and Efficacy, that might be expected from an instituted Means; thus he readily permits ignorant Persons without any Disturbance or Molestation, to use the Repetition of the *Lord's Prayer*, *Ten Commandments* and *Creed*, or any other Prayer, while they persuade themselves, that the very *saying* of the Words, is a sufficient *Defence* against the Devil all that Day.

The Reasons of Satan's Policy in such Gratifications are these:

1*st*, While we are *kept doing* with these, we are *diverted* from that which might be really helpful; he puts a broken *Reed* into our Hand, that we might be deprived of a *Staff*. Experience confirms this, those that with *greatest Devotion* use these empty *Inventions*, are usually careless in the Use of *God's own Appointments*.

2*dly*, Besides that he thus betrays them by these *lying* Helps, he doth by this Means cast them on a further Iniquity, of *idolizing* these foolish *Calves* of their own *Invention*. In this Case Men have a presumptuous Expectation from such Usages, of that which God never promised to do by them, neither ever entred into his Heart so to do; seeing he answers them all with this, *Who hath required these Things at your Hands*? And accordingly their Consciences are more concerned for the *Omission* of one of these *Fooleries*, than for the *Neglect* of the *greater* Things of the Law; such are more troubled for the Neglect of the *Sign* of the *Cross* or *holy Water*, than for their constant *Carelessness*, and Want of *Faith*, by which their Hearts should be guarded against their Enemy.

3*dly*, In the mean Time, he makes Work for his own Triumph over them, that dote upon these sottish Inventions. If we can suppose Satan to have Pleasure or Mirth at any Thing, we may be sure he will laugh at such Preparations for a spiritual Welfare; it being as truly *ridiculous* for any Man to go out with these *Weapons* against Satan, as for a Combatant to assail a *Giant*, with a *Paper-helmet*, a *Wicker-shield*, and a *Wooden dagger*. And indeed when Satan counterfeits a Flight, or Fear of such Matters, (as for his Advantage

vantage he ſometimes doth) it is but in Deſign to *beget* or confirm in Men a Confidence of a *Vertue* or Strength in theſe *Uſages* againſt his Power; that ſo they may fix upon them to the Neglect of God's own Inſtitutions, which he moſt dreads. Thus we read, that he cunningly ceaſed his *Oracle* at *Daphne* (a), upon a Pretence of the ſilencing Power of the Bones of the Martyr *Babilas*, which were buried near the Place; on Purpoſe to lead unwary Chriſtians to the *Adoration* of *Saints* and their *Reliques*. Many ſuch Inſtances we have in *Sprenger* of the Devil's feigned Flight at the *Sign* of the *Croſs* (b), the ſprinkling of *holy Water*, the angelical *Salutation*, St *Bernard*'s *Staff*, or certain *Words* and *Verſes* hung about the Neck, and a great deal of ſuch Stuff we may meet with in moſt of their Writers; all which are but cunning Contrivances of Satan, to advance a Belief of the Vertue of theſe Things, and ſo to *ſtop* Men there, to the *Neglect* of thoſe ſpiritual *Weapons*, which the Scripture recommends.

Theſe we have obſerved from the Place in general, the holy City: Let us go on to the Place in particular, where Satan *acted* all this; *the Pinacle of the Temple*. Various are the Conjectures of Men about this, whether it were ſome *Fane*, or the Top of ſome *Spire*, or the Place whence the Apoſtle *James* was thrown down, or the Top of the *King's Porch*, which was erected to a great Height, over a deep Valley, or ſome *Battlement*, &c. But we are not concerned in ſuch Enquiries, only here I ſhall take notice of *Scultetus*, who ſuppoſing the Place to be the Top of a Fane or Spire, and reading in *Joſephus* (c) that the Points of ſuch Broaches were ſo *ſharp*, that a Bird could not reſt upon them, without piercing its Foot; was therefore willing to conclude, that theſe Temptations were not *really*, and *hiſtorically* acted, but in *Viſion* only; all this ariſeth from a wrong Interpretation of πτερύγιον, which our *Engliſh* renders *Pinacle*: (d), whereas it properly ſignifies any *Battlement*, or *angular* Prominency, jutting out over the reſt like a Wing, which would afford a ſufficient Footing or Support.

'Tis more profitable to enquire after Satan's *Reaſon* for the Choice of a *ſuch* a Place; no queſtion but it was upon Deſign; for elſe he might with *equal* Convenience, have tempted Chriſt to caſt himſelf down from ſome *Tree* or *Precipice*

(a) Zozomen, Eccleſ. Hiſt. *l.* 5: *c.* 18. (b) Mal. Maliſic. Part II. Q. II. *c.* 1. (c) In *Delic.* Evang. (d) *Spanhem* dub. Evan. in loc.

cipice in the Wilderneſs; but then what that Deſign was, is not ſo eaſy to determine; it ſeems plain, that he might ſuppoſe that Chriſt might be the rather *animated* to the Undertaking of flying in the Air, by the Hopes of *Glory*, which might be expected from ſuch a Performance, before ſo many *Spectators*. But ſome think that he had a Deſign alſo upon the Men of *Jeruſalem* (a), and intended ſome Deluſion to the *Jews*, which I am not unwilling to cloſe with, partly becauſe the Experiences that we have of his Devices, aſſure us that in *one* Temptation, his *Ends* are oft *manifold*, and I cannot but think that Satan would make all Things *ſure*, and provide (in his projecting Mind) againſt all Events; for if Chriſt ſhould have yielded and evidenced ſo great a *Power* in the Sight of all the People, it might have been a *Conviction general*, that he was the *Meſſias*, about that Time univerſally expected; and partly I am ready to think ſo, becauſe (in caſe Chriſt had done ſo) it lay ſo fair, to *confirm* the *Jews* in a *Miſapprehenſion* of the perſonal coming of *Elias* (b), of whom they underſtood the Prophecy of *Mal.* iii. 1. *Behold, I will ſend my Meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the Way before me; and the Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his Temple, even the Meſſenger of the Covenant.* If the *Jews* expected *Elias* to come from Heaven to the Temple, how ſtrongly would they have been confirmed in this Opinion, if they had ſeen a Man fly from the Temple in the Air, and by this Means *John* the *Baptiſt* (who was the *Elias* that was to come) ſhould have been neglected, and *Chriſt* himſelf (tho' honoured as *Elias*) not owned for the *Meſſias*.

Obſ. 6.] Obſerve then, *That Satan's Deſigns are large, and that he projects the enſnaring or deluding of others by ſuch Temptations, as ſeem only to concern thoſe that are under the immediate Trouble of them.* He tempts Chriſt to caſt himſelf down, and alſo by it (at leaſt) intends a Deluſion to the *Jews*, he tempts one Man upon the Back of another, one is tempted to *Error*, another by that Man's Temptation, is tempted to *Atheiſm*, and rejecting of all Religion. One Man is tempted to *Profaneneſs*, another is tempted by that to an *uncharitable* Diſreſpect of him; 'tis eaſy to multiply Inſtances of this.

CHAP.

(a) *Lightfoot Harm.* in loc. (b) *Dr. Kimchi* in loc.

CHAP. XIV.

That Presumption was the chief Design of this Temptation. Of tempting to Extreams. What Presumption is. The several Ways of presuming. The Frequency of this Temptation, in the generality of Professors, in Hypocrites, despairing Persons, and in the Children of God. The Reasons of Satan's Industry in this Design. His deceitful Contrivance in bringing about this Sin. Preservatives against it.

NEXT to the *Preparation* which Satan made for the second Conflict, (already explained) the *Temptation* intended offers itself to our View, which is this. *Cast thyself down.* What Satan chiefly intended by it, we may collect from Christ's Answer, as well as from the Thing itself; for he thus replies; *It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Christ doth not use this Scripture to any such Sense as this, that he should hereby prohibite *Satan* to tempt him, because he was Satan's Lord and God, but he mentions this Scripture as a *Rule* of Obedience, as if he should say, *I may not cast myself down, and so rely on extraordinary Help, seeing I can go down another Way,* for the *Neglect* of ordinary Means, when we have them, is a *tempting* of God, which may not be done. So that it appears by this, that Satan here tempted Christ to *Presumption.* There is only this Objection in our Way; that *Deut.* xvi. 16. (the Place by Christ cited) refers to the Temptation of the *Israelites* in *Massah,* mentioned *Exod.* xvii. 2. where they chid with *Moses* for Water; and there it would seem their tempting the Lord, was rather in *despairing* of his Power and Help, than *presuming* in the Neglect of the ordinary Means. I answer, Tho' the *Occasion* and *Matter* of that Temptation be *different* from this of Christ's, yet the *presumptuous Experiment* that they there made of God's Presence and Power was the *same* with this which Satan designed: For *Ver.* 7. (where the Account of that Tempting is given) 'tis said, *Because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?* they put it to this Issue, that the *Being* and Power of God should be *tried* by the giving or not giving of Water. The Manner then of that Temptation being so agreeable to this,

Chriſt very pertinently applies that Command to its Preſumption being the Thing which Chriſt was tempted to. It might occaſion ſome Wonder in us, to ſee Satan take ſuch ſtrange Steps; he was before tempting him to *Deſpair*, now to *Preſumption*; but 'tis no Argument of his *Lightneſs*, or uncertain Roving in his Way of tempting, but rather of his *Depth* and Subtilty. Note then,

Obſ. 7.] *That 'tis Satan's Policy in tempting, to run from one Extreme to another.* The *Corinthians* were firſt tempted to a ſinful *Compliance* with the adulterous Perſon, and were averſe to his Excommunication; afterwards they were tempted to the contrary *Severity*, and were as backward to receive him again. The ſame Men that have been overcome by Prodigality and Exceſs, when they begin to ſee the Evil of that, are oft tempted to Worldlineſs or Covetouſneſs, the contrary Diſpoſition. Reaſons of this Policy are,

1*ſt*, The avoiding of one *Extreme* gives the Soul ſuch a *Swing* (if Care be not uſed to prevent it) that they are caſt more than half Way upon the other. *Peter* in an Extreme of Modeſty, refuſed the *waſhing* of his Feet by Chriſt; but when he underſtood the Danger, then he runs as far wrong another Way, *Not my Feet only, but my Hands and my Head*, John xiii. 9. Thus ſome are ſo for *Purity* of Churches, that they exclude the Weak; others ſo for *Unity*, that they admit the open ſcandalous and prophane.

2*dly*, While Men avoid one Extreme, by running into another, they carry with them ſuch ſtrong *Impreſſions* of the Evil they would avoid, and ſuch *fierce* Prejudices, that 'tis not an ordinary Conviction will bring them *right*, but they are apt to be confident of the Goodneſs of the Way they take, and ſo are the more bold and fixed in their Miſcarriage.

Preſumption being the great Deſign of Satan in this Temptation, we may further obſerve,

Obſ. 8.] *That as Diſtruſt on the one hand, ſo Preſumption on the other is one of his grand Deſigns.* Of theſe two we may ſay, as it was ſaid of the Sword of *Hazael* and *Jehu*, That of all thoſe that are ſlain by the Devil, whoſe [illegible] hath eſcaped the Sword of *Diſtruſt* and Deſpair, the Sword of *Preſumption* hath ſlain. To explain this I ſhall,

Firſt, Shew what Preſumption is. 'Tis in the general *a Confidence without a Ground*. *Firſt*, 'Tis made up of

Audacity

Audacity (which is a bold and daring undertaking of a Thing) and *Security*.

Secondly, The Ground of it is an *Error* of Judgment (a blind or a miſled Judgment doth always nouriſh it;) and this is either a Miſtake of the *Nature* of ſuch Means on which we rely for Aſſiſtance (as when a Man lays as much Streſs upon a Threed as upon a Cable, or expects as much Nouriſhment from a Stone as from Bread;) or a Miſtake of the *Will* of others, from whom we expect Aid and Help, without a *Warrant* for ſuch a Confidence.

Thirdly, In its Way of Working 'tis directly *oppoſite* to Diſtruſt, and is a Kind of *exceſſive* (tho' irregular) Hope; not that in this Caſe a Man believes or hopes over much (for there can be no Exceſs properly in the Exerciſe of Divine Graces) but that he hopes too *raſhly* or lightly, without a ſolid *Foundation* or Reaſon (*b*). Hope hath for its Object that which is *Good*, under the Conſiderations of *Futurity*, *Poſſibility* and *Difficulty*; on the one Side Deſperation looks upon that Good as *future*, but under ſo great a *Difficulty*, that it forgets the *Poſſibility* of it, and thereupon *ſurceaſeth* all Endeavours. Preſumption on the other hand is ſo *keenly* apprehenſive of the *Poſſibility*, that it never regards the *Difficulty*, and ſo thruſts forward into *irregular* Endeavours or Expectations. The Nature of this will be better underſtood, when the particular Inſtances of Preſumption are before us.

1*ſt* then, 'Tis Preſumption, when from *external* or *ſubordinate* Means, Men expect that for which they were never *deſigned* nor appointed of God. To expect *Grapes of Thorns*, *or Figs of Thiſtles*, would be a Preſumption, becauſe God never deſign'd them for ſuch Fruits; and no leſs is it, when in any other Caſe Men look for high and *extraordinary* Things from any *created* Good, *above* what God hath put into it by the *Law* of *Creation*.

2*dly*, When Men do expect thoſe Fruits and *Effects* from any Thing unto which it is appointed, in *Neglect* or *Oppoſition* to the *ſupreme* Cauſe, without whoſe concurrent Influence they cannot reach their proper Ends; That is, our Hopes are wholly centered upon Means, when in the mean Time our Eye is not upon God. Thus, *to make Gold our Hope*,

(*a*) Reynolds *on Paſſions*, c. 23. p. 238. (*b*) Non ideo peccatur, quia nimis ſperat in Deum... Sed quia nimis leviter ac temere ſine ullo fundamento. *Ames. Medul.* l. 2. c. 6. § 33.

Hope, Job xxxi. 24, *to make Flesh our Arm*, Jer xvii. 5. *to make* Ashur *a Saviour*, Hos. xiv. 3. or to trust to any Creatures whatsoever, is in Scripture condemned as a presumptuous *Reliance*; and (in regard of the necessary Disappointment) a *trusting in a Lie*; in which Sense 'tis said, that *every Man is a Liar*, Psal lxii. 9. The like Presumption it is, when we boast great Things of our selves, and (as *Peter*) make confident Engagements (in our own Strength) that we will avoid such a Sin, or perform such a Duty; for we are but frail, and all our Sufficiency is from the Lord; so that it can be no less than intolerable Arrogance, to promise any Thing of our selves without him; neither can Men promise to themselves the *Continuance* of that Good or Advantage, which they have already received from second Causes (if their Confidence builds itself upon that sole Consideration) without a just *Blame*. *Job* had said he should *die in his Nest*, and *David* that *he should never be moved*; but both of them afterward noted these Confidences to have been no other than deceitful Presumptions.

Thirdly, 'Tis a Presumption to expect Things above the *Reach* of our present *State* and Condition (*a*); as for a *mean* Man to beg of God *Authority* and Rule, or to expect to be set with *Princes*; or for *ordinary* Christians to look for *Miracles*, *Signs* from Heaven, *Visions*, *Revelations*, *extraordinary* Answers to Prayers, and the like; all which Expectations are groundless, and the Issue of a presumptuous Pride.

Fourthly, When Men expect Things *contrary* to the *Rules* that God hath set for his *Dispensations* of Mercy, they boldly presume upon his *Will*. God hath promised Preservation to his Children, while they are in *God's Way*; but if any shall go out of that Way, and *sinfully* put himself into *Dangers* and Hazards, it would be Presumption in him to expect a *Preservation*. 'Tis the same in spiritual Things. God promiseth eternal Life, and the Blessings of his Covenant, to such as give up themselves to him and his Laws. Will it not be intolerable Presumption for Men *to bless themselves in their Heart*, with Expectations of reigning with him in Glory, while in the mean Time they *contradict* his own Rule, and neglect his *Order*, walking in Prophaneness, and living to themselves? This is an high Presumption of Mercy against

(*a*) Sperare non speranda.

againſt his expreſs Will. Hence are ſuch Courſes called *preſumptuous Sins*, Pſal. xix. and ſuch Sinners tranſgreſs with an *high Hand.*

Fifthly, 'Tis alſo a Preſumption to expect any Mercy, tho' common and uſual, without the *ordinary Means*, by which God in Providence hath *ſettled* the uſual *Diſpenſations* of ſuch Favours; as when Men look for his Aid and Help, for Supply of corporal Wants, while they throw off all Care, and refuſe their own Endeavours, which are the Ways of God's Appointment, in the conſciencious Uſe whereof ſuch Mercies are to be expected. The Heathen (upon the Conſideration of the neceſſary Connection of Means and the End) have uſually judged ſuch ſluggiſh Expectations to be no better than ſolemn Mockings of a Deity (*a*). In ſpiritual Things 'tis no leſs preſumptuous to expect *Converſion*, and an Intereſt in Chriſt, and Heaven, while they refuſe the careful Uſe of his Ordinances, and therefore we are commanded to pray for ſuch Bleſſings, *to cry after Knowledge, and to lift up the Voice for Underſtanding*, Prov. ii. 3, 4, 5. and to ſecond theſe Prayers with our own utmoſt Endeavours; *to ſeek for it as for Silver, and to ſearch for it as for hid Treaſures*, and in ſo doing to expect the finding of the Knowledge of God.

Sixthly, When ordinary or *extraordinary* Mercies are expected for an *unlawful* End, as when the *Iſraelites* at *Maſſa* called for Water, (which they ought to believe God would ſupply them withal, their Condition conſidered) but for a Teſt and Proof of the Being of God; for they ſaid, *Is God among us or not?* Exod. xvii. 7. 'Tis by *James* made a Piece of ſpiritual Unfaithfulneſs, and *Adultery*, to ask any Thing of God with a Deſign *to ſpend it upon a Luſt*. *Ahaz* his refuſing a Sign when God offered it, (however he made a Shew of Modeſty and believing) argued no other Thing, but that he was conſcious to himſelf, that (in caſe he had accepted it) he ſhould have abuſed that Favour to an unlawful End, and have tempted God by it, as putting it upon this Experiment whether there was a God or not. This is alſo another Act of Preſumption; when a Man becomes guilty of any of theſe Miſcarriages, he is preſumptuous.

Secondly, I further add to this Diſcovery of the Nature and Kinds of Preſumption, that this is one of Satans's grand Engines; which I prove by two Demonſtrations.

1*ſt*, By

(*a*) Admora manu invocanda eſt Minerva.

1*ſt*, By Satan's common *Practice* in this Kind upon *all* ſorts of Men, in moſt Occaſions: That which is his frequent Practice upon moſt Men, and on moſt Occaſions, muſt of Neceſſity be underſtood to be chiefly deſigned. Some Men may poſſibly be free from the Trouble of ſome particular Temptations, (as *Hieronimus Wallerus* ſaith of *Luther* his Maſter, that he heard him often report of himſelf, that he had been aſſaulted and vexed with *all Kind* of Temptations, ſaving only that of *Covetouſneſs*) but none can ſay, they have not been aſſaulted with this. I ſhall make it out by an Induction of Particulars.

Firſt, The Generality of Men that live in the Profeſſion of Religion, are *preſumptuous*; nay, the greateſt Part of the blind World are ſo; they preſume of Mercy and Salvation, the Devil preacheth nothing elſe, but all Hope, no Fear, and in theſe *golden Dreams* they ſlide down to Hell: If we look into their Way of ſinning, and then into their Hopes, we can judge no leſs of them, they ſtick not at the moſt grievous Abominations, the Works of the Fleſh, and in theſe they continue; 'tis their *Trade*, their *Life*, they make *Proviſions for them, they cannot ſleep except they do wickedly, he that reproveth is derided by them*; they make but a Mock and Sport of thoſe Things, which, as the Shame and Reproach of Mankind, ſhould rather fly the Light, and hide themſelves, as Things of Darkneſs; theſe Things they practiſe without Regret or Sorrow of Heart, without ſmitting upon the Thigh, and in all this they have the Confidence to ſay, *Is not the Lord among us?* They can call themſelves Chriſtians, and have as bold Expectations of eternal Happineſs, as if the committing of theſe Evils were made by God the neceſſary Qualifications to everlaſting Happineſs; what is more common? and yet what more preſumptuous? For, 1. Theſe Men audaciouſly hope and expect Mercy, expreſly contrary to the peremptory Threatnings of God. God ſaith, *There is no Peace to the Wicked*, they ſay, *We ſhall have Peace.* 2. Theſe run upon the greateſt Hazards of Ruin and Wo, with the leaſt Fear, in the Contempt of all Danger, *as the Horſe ruſheth into the Battle, who mocketh at Fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth his Back from the Sword*, Job xxxix. 22. 3. They dare God to do his worſt; they provoke God to Jealouſy, and that to his *Face*; hence was it that *Nimrod* was ſaid to be a mighty Hunter *before the Lord*, Gen. xxxviii. 7. And *Er* the Son

of

of *Judah*, that he was wicked *before the Lord*; becauſe ſuch audacious Sinners will not (as we may ſay) go behind his Back to ſin.

Secondly, *Hypocrites* whoſe Carriage is more ſmooth, they alſo are preſumptuous: For while they hide their Sin, they do againſt Dictates of Conſcience preſume, *that he that made the Eye doth not ſee*, and that there is a Poſſibility to cheat God as well as Men; beſides, their Boaſtings and Hopes have a ſpecial Mark ſet upon them in Scripture, as audaciouſly falſe, *the Hope of the Hypocrite ſhall be cut off*, their Confidence of the Temple of the Lord is *but a Lie*, and ſo termed expreſly by the Prophet.

Thirdly, Even deſpairing Perſons are not always free of Preſumption. The Act of Self murder is a terrible preſuming upon infinite Juſtice. *Spira*'s Deſire to know the worſt, was of the ſame Kind. Theſe are indeed extraordinary, but there are ſome other Kinds of Deſpair that come nearer to Preſumption, as that ſenſual Deſpair which ariſeth out of an exceſſive Love of carnal Delights, and a ſecure Contempt of ſpiritual Things: For when Senſuality prompts them to *eat and drink* while they may, deſpairing and hopeleſs of a future Happineſs, *for to morrow they ſhall die*, and their Pleaſure ceaſe, they highly preſume againſt the Patience and Goodneſs of God.

Fourthly, The beſt of Men are too frequently overcome by it; 1. Not only while they are *overtaken* with Sins more *grievous*, and above the Rate of Sins of Infirmity, to which how liable the holieſt Saint may be, (upon Temptation) may be gathered from *David*'s Prayer, *Keep thy Servant from preſumptuous Sins, that they have not Dominion over me.* 2. But by their earneſt Proſecutions of their own Wills, when contradicted by Providence. 'Tis by the Prophet *Iſa.* ix. 9. called a *Pride and Stoutneſs of Heart*, to contend with Providence, to attempt to build with *hewen Stone, when the Bricks are fallen*, or to ſtrive for *Cedars*, when divine Wrath hath cut down the Sycamores. 3. How frequently are they guilty of preſuming upon their *Privileges*, their *Strength*, their *Graces*, and upon that Score venture themſelves upon *Occaſions* of Sin; or bear high above others upon a Conceit of their higher Attainments, or when they boldly put themſelves upon *Suffering*, or upon *doing*, while they want that due Humility and Care that ſhould balance them. 4. There is alſo a preſumptuous Raſhneſs, upon which the Zeal and good Intentions of holy Men may

ſometimes *precipitate* them. Such was *Uzzah*'s putting forth his Hand to hold the *Ark*, for which the Lord ſmote him. All theſe Inſtances put together, will ſufficiently demonſtrate that Preſumption is one of Satan's Maſter deſigns.

The *ſecond* Demonſtration of this Truth is from the general *Subſerviency* of other Things to this. Moſt of Satan's Endeavours and Temptations aim at this Point, and this is the Reſult and Conſequence of moſt Sins; that muſt needs be *Chief* to which ſo many Things do but *ſerve* and miniſter. In this Center do moſt of the Lines of his Policy meet, *Pride*, *vain Glory*, *conceited Privileges*, *ſuppoſed Advantages*, and many Things more were but *Under agents* to this Temptation, which the Devil attempted upon Chriſt, as hath in Part, and preſently ſhall be further evidenced.

Thirdly, Having thus proved that Preſumption is one of the great Things he aims at, I ſhall next diſcover the Reaſons of his Earneſtneſs and Induſtry in his Deſign, which are theſe.

(1.) 'Tis a Sin very *natural*, in which he hath the Advantage of our own *Readineſs* and Inclination. However that ſome from a *melancholly* Temper, are inclinable to *Fears* and Diſtruſt at ſome Time, when theſe *black* Apprehenſions are *exalted*, yet (theſe excepted) *Hopes* are more predominant than Fears; and *Self love*, which provides Fewel to theſe Hopes, is a natural Principle in all; when ſo many Things give him ſuch Advantages, and promiſe him a Succeſs, we may well ſuppoſe he will not miſs ſuch an Opportunity.

(2.) As 'tis eaſy for Satan's Attempt, ſo 'tis *remote* from *Conviction*, and not rooted out without great Difficulty: 'Tis a Sin that is *covered* with a *Pretext* of an higher Degree of *Hope*: Men in many Ways of this Iniquity are under *Perſuaſions* of Duty, and by Reaſon of that Confidence, *Fear* (which is the Soul's *Centinel*) is *aſleep*, hence do they not ly ſo fairly open to Counſel or Reproof. The *Iſraelites*, *Deut.* i. 27, 28. being under Diſcouragement, refuſe to go up to *Canaan*, when they were upon the Border of the Land; but being convinced of their Sin, in diſtruſting the Arm of the Lord, by God's declared Wrath and Threatning againſt them, they fall upon the contrary Extream of Preſumption, and then, *ver.* 41. *they would go up and fight*: And the *Conviction* of their *former* Sin, made them ſo confident that this was their preſent Duty, (for thus they argue,

argue, *We have sinned against the Lord, we will go up and fight, according to all that the Lord our God commanded us;* that tho' they were expresly *forbidden* from God, *ver.* 42. *Go not up, neither fight, for I am not among you*; yet were they so strangely carried by their former Perswasion, that they refused to be convinced, *and went presumptuously into the Hill.* By which Instance we see, what great *Pretences* lead on Presumption, and how *difficultly* they are removed; which two Things do no less than tempt Satan to lay out himself to the uttermost in that Design.

(3.) The *Greatness* of the Sin when 'tis committed, is another Reason of his Diligence in the Pursuit of it; 'tis not only from a simple Error or Mistake, but that *Error* ariseth from *intolerable Pride*; they say and do such Things from the *Pride* and *Stoutness* of their Heart, *Isa.* ix. 9. He that is presumptuous is self-willed, 2 *Pet.* ii. 10. Hence these Sins, which we translate presumptuous, are in the Original called *Prides* or *Arrogancies*, Psal. xix. 13. Besides, they are *Contradictions* to God's *Order*, *separating* those Things that God hath *joined* together, *Deut.* xvii. 12. as the *Means* from the *End*, or the *End* from the *Means*, as if the *Earth should be turned out of its Place* for us. And in some Cases, 'tis no less than the open *affronting* of God, by abusing his own Favours against himself; for thus they deal with him, who are *opinionated* in Sin because of his *Mercy*, concluding by an irrational Consequence, that they *ought* to be wicked because God is *good*, or that they may *freely offend*, because he doth *not punish*.

(4.) The dangerous *Issues* and Consequences of this Way of sinning do not a little animate Satan to tempt to it. In some Cases it was to be punished by Death, *Deut.* xvii. 12. *The Man that doth presumptuously,* —*Even that Man shall die*; and most usually it is plagued with sad Disappointments, by a severe Engagement of God's Displeasure against it. *The Hypocrites Hope shall perish, it shall be as the giving up of the Ghost*, Job viii. 13. and xi. 20. And generally, *He that* thus *blesseth himself in his Heart, when he heareth the Words of the Curse*, Deut. xxix. 19, 20. *the Lord will not spare him, but then the Anger of the Lord and his Jealousy shall smoke against that Man, and all the Curses that are written in this Book shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his Name from under Heaven.*

Fourthly

Fourthly and *laſtly*, I ſhall lay before you the *deceitful Contrivance* of Satan, in bringing this Sin about, by ſhewing the Particulars of his Craft againſt Chriſt herein. As,

1. He takes *Advantage* from his *Reſolve* to rely upon Providence, contrary to the former Temptation of turning Stones to Bread; Chriſt had refuſed that, telling him it was Duty to truſt him, who not only by the ordinary Means of Bread could feed him, but alſo by any other Appointment. To this Satan rejoins, by offering an *irregular Opportunity of ſuch a Truſt*, in caſting himſelf from the Pinacle of the Temple; as if he ſhould ſay, *If thou wilt thus rely upon Providence, do it in this*; wherein we may note, *That from an obedential Dependence, he would draw Chriſt to an irregular Preſumption.* He retorts Chriſt's Argument back again upon him thus, *If God is to be relied upon by a certain Truſt for Food, by the like Truſt he is to be relied upon for Preſervation; if the Belief of Supply of Bread can conſiſt with a Neglect or Refuſal of ordinary Means for the Procurement thereof, then may the Belief of Preſervation in caſting thy ſelf from the Pinacle of the Temple conſiſt alſo with a Neglect of the ordinary Means.* Thus like a cunning *Sophiſter*, he endeavous to conclude *Sin* from *Duty*, from a ſeeming Parity betwixt them, tho' indeed the Caſes were vaſtly different. For tho' it be Duty to depend upon Providence, when *God* (in the *Purſuit* of *Service* and Duty) brings us out of the *Sight* and Hopes of *outward Means*; yet it can be no leſs than *ſinful* Preſumption, for us to make ſuch *Experiments* of Providences, when we *need* not, and when *ordinary* Means are at hand. After the ſame Manner doth he endeavour to put Fallacies upon us, and to cheat us into preſumptuous Undertakings, by arguing from a *neceſſary Truſt* in ſome Caſes, a *Neceſſity of preſuming* in others, upon a ſeeming Likeneſs and Proportion.

2. It was no ſmall Piece of Satan's Craft to take this Advantage, while the *Impreſſion* of Truſt, in the Want of outward Means, was *warm* upon the Heart of Chriſt, he hoped thereby the more eaſily to draw him to an Exceſs. For he knows that a *zealous Earneſtneſs* to avoid a Sin, and to keep to a Duty, doth *often* too much *incline* us to an Extreme; and he well hoped, that when Chriſt had declared himſelf ſo *poſitively* to depend upon God, he might have prevailed to have *ſtretched* that Dependence beyond its due

due Bounds, taking the Opportunity of his Sway that Way, which (as a Ship before Wind and Tide) might soon be overdriven. And this was the Design of his *Haste* in this second Temptation, because he would strike while the *Iron was hot*, and closely pursue his Advantage, while the Strength and Forwardness of these Resolves were upon him.

3. He endeavours to animate him to this Presumption by *popular Applause*, and to tickle him into an Humour of affecting the Glory and Admiration, which by such a *strange* Undertaking might be raised in the Minds of the *Spectators*, and therefore did he bring him to the most conspicuous Place of a great and populous City, not thinking the Matter so feasible if he had tempted him to it in a solitary Desert.

4. He propounds to him a *plausible End*, and a seeming Advantage, *viz.* the clear and undoubted *Discovery* of his *Divine Nature* and near Interest in God; urging this as a necessary Duty, for his own Satisfaction, and the Manifestation of his Sonship to others.

5. To drive out of his Mind those *Fears of miscarrying* in his Attempt, which otherwise might have been a Block in his Way: He is officious in strengthning his Confidence, by propounding *treacherous Helps* and Preservatives, suggesting a Safety to him from the *Privilege* of the *Place* where this was to be acted, an *holy City* and *Temple*, producing more of a Divine Presence for his Safety than other Places.

6. To make all sure, he backs all this with a *Promise of Preservation*; that nothing might be wanting to his Security.

By this Method applied to other Things and Cases, he endeavours to bring us to Presumption.

Applic.] The Consideration of this should put us upon a special *Care* and Watchfulness against *Presumption*; it is more designed, and hath a greater Prevalency, than Men are aware of. *Two* Things I shall only at present propound for our Preservation, out of *Psal.* xix. 12. 13.

First, He that would be kept from *presumptuous* Sins, must make Conscience of *secret* Sins, to search for them, to mortify them, to beg Pardon for them. With what Face or Hope can we expect from God Help against these, when we provoke him to leave us to our selves, by indulging our selves in the other?

Secondly, He that would avoid them, must be under the *Awe* and Fear of being *overcome* by them: He that *slights*

and contemns such visible Hazards, shall not long be *innocent* (*a*). *David* here, first shews his Conscience to be concerned with *secret Sins*, and then begs to be kept from *presumptuous Sins*; and by such earnest Begging, he next shews how much he *dreaded* such Miscarriages.

CHAP. XV.

Self-murder another of his Designs in this Temptation. How he tempts to Self-murder directly, and upon what Advantage he urgeth it. How he tempts to it indirectly, and the Ways thereof. Of necessary Preservatives against this Temptation.

WE have seen and considered the *main* End of Satan in this Temptation. Let us further consider whether this was the *sole* End that he propounded to himself: We have little Reason to think that he would confine himself to one, when the Thing itself doth so clearly suggest another, which might possibly have followed. In most Cases, the Ends of the *Devil* are manifold: We may therefore easily suppose (and several have noted (*b*) it) that the *Devil* (that great Murderer) had herein a secret Design against the Life of Christ, and that he tempted him here (indirectly) to *Self-murder*. And indeed (supposing that Christ had attempted to fly in the Air, and had failed in the Interprise,) what else could have followed but Death and Ruin? Hence let us note,

Obs. 9.] *That Satan seeks the Ruin of our Bodies, as well as of our Souls, and tempts Men often to Self murder.* That the *Devil* goes about seeking how he may destroy Men, by putting them upon Attempts against their own Lives, is evident, not only from the Experience and Confessions of such as have suffered under Satan's *Suggestions* to that End; (and it is a Temptation more common, than we think of, because most Men are unwilling to lay open themselves to others in this Matter) but also from those many *sad Instances* of Men over whom Satan so far prevails, that they *execute* upon themselves this Design, by destroying themselves. Yet by the Way we may note, That such Thoughts are often in the Minds of Men, where Satan is not *industriously* designing their Destruction; for he often casts

(*a*) *Dickson* in loc. (*b*) *Dickson* in loc. *Capel* Tempt. Part 2. cap. 9.

casts in such Thoughts, not only to *try* how Men take with them, but to *affright* and disquiet them, and 'tis usually with Men of sad and *melancholly* Tempers to *mistake* their own *Fears* of such a Temptation, for Satan's *Endeavours* against them, when indeed their Fear and Trouble *lest* they should be so tempted, makes them think they *are* tempted indeed.

Satan drives on the Design of Self murder, two Ways.

First, Directly, when in *plain Terms* he urgeth Men to destroy themselves. This (because 'tis directly repugnant to the Law of Nature, which vehemently urgeth them to Self preservation) he cannot effect, but by the Help of some *Advantages*; yet some Ways and Methods, by Experience, he hath found to be so available to such an unnatural Resolve, that he frequently puts them in Practice. As, *1st*, He works upon the *Discontents* of Men, and improves the Disquiet of their Minds, (upon the Occasion of any Loss, Vexation, Disappointment, or Disgrace,) to as great an Height as he can, and when their Lives are made *bitter* to them, and they are sufficiently prepared by the *Uneasiness* of their Condition; then he propounds Death, as the only Remedy to set them at Quiet; wherein, besides his Officiousness to provide them with *Instruments* of Cruelty and *Opportunity* for their Use, he follows them with *Arguments*, drawn from the Sense of their present Condition; the great Intendment whereof is to *aggravate* their Smart, and to make their Burden seem intolerable, and then Self-ruin is but a natural Consequence. We may see enough of this in the Discontents of good Men, and that they naturally work this Way; *Job* speaks the general Apprehensions of Men in Trouble, *Job* iii. 20, 21. *The bitter in Soul value not Life, they long for Death, and dig for it more than for hid Treasures; they rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the Grave.* *Jonah* in his Discontent prefers Death before Life, *It is better for me to die than to live*; *Elias* doth the like, and *Job* seems impatient for it. All this is from the Power and Working of this Temptation, though God held their Hand that it did not fully prevail. In *Ahithophel*, the Ground of Discontent was more a fancied than a real Disgrace; his Counsel was rejected (which was in itself no great Dishonour) and this works up such a perplexing *Resentment* in his Mind, that Satan prevails with him to hang himself very *deliberately*.

Secondly, He moſt frequently draws on Men to deſtroy themſelves by *Terrors* and deſpairing Troubles of *Conſcience*; theſe, as they afford *greater* Diſquiet and Diſtreſs of Mind than other Kind of Diſcontentments, ſo doth he *more* prevail by them; for a wounded Spirit is above ordinary Strength, and hard to bear: Only it may ſeem ſtrange, that thoſe who ſo experimentally feel how *fearful a Thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living God*, ſhould entertain ſuch a Temptation, as (to their Apprehenſions and Knowledge) will *certainly plunge* them into the very *Ocean* of everlaſting *Vengeance*. This no doubt Satan finds to be no ſmall Obſtruction to his Deſign, but here he uſeth his Skill to *open* a Way for them that would *out-run* their Lives on the one Hand, as he labours to *purſue* them with *Senſe* of Wrath and Indignation on the other Hand. To this Purpoſe, he tells them, (1.) That all the Hell they are to meet with is *in their Conſciences*, and that Death will *free* them from all, or at leaſt that Death will give a preſent *Eaſe*, and that till the *Reſurrection* they ſhall be in Quiet. Thoſe that are willing to receive theſe Apprehenſions, may eaſily be prevailed with to haſten their own Death, ſeeing they have already fixed this Concluſion with themſelves, that there is *no Hope* nor Pardon for them; that they are *Reprobates* and cut off, for their Thoughts can *meditate* nothing but the *Terrors* of ſuch Concluſions. (2.) He ſometimes endeavours to perſwade them, that by executing this Revenge upon themſelves, they may make ſome Kind of *Satisfaction* and Amends for the Sins they have committed: Which though moſt falſe, yet 'tis a Wonder how far ſuch ungrounded Surmiſes may poſſeſs the Minds of the Deſperate. That *Judas* might have ſome ſuch Thought when he deſtroyed himſelf, is conjectured by ſome (*a*): But that muſt be but a Conjecture, ſeeing none can pretend to know his Thoughts; but we may ſpeak with greater Freedom of thoſe, who have declared the Working of ſuch Apprehenſions upon their Minds. (3.) A more plauſible Pretext he uſeth when he endeavours to perſwade them, that they may *kill* themſelves, and yet *go to Heaven* for all that; to this Purpoſe the ſubtile Adverſary is not backward to tell them, what have been the *charitable Expreſſions* of ſome Men, who have ſuppoſed

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(*a*) Capel *Tempt.* Part 9. cap. 9 *citing* Aug. *for it.*

a Poſſibility of Repentance, *inter pontem & fontem*, as we ſay, betwixt the Stroke or Halter, and the Death. *Capel* (*a*) is ſo apprehenſive of the miſchievous Improvement of this Charity, for an Encouragement to Self-murder, that he with great Earneſtneſs *cautions* all Miniſters againſt ſuch *liberal* Expreſſions. I have known ſome, and heard of others that have been ſo poſſeſſed with this Imagination, of being ſaved, notwithſtanding that having purpoſed to deſtroy themſelves, (tho' God prevented them that they did it not) they have firſt by *Prayer* recommended themſelves to God, and ſo prepared themſelves to die. (4.) Sometime tho' ſuch afflicted Ones, have no ſuch Perſwaſion, but that from *Death* they go immediately to *Hell*: Yet are they puſhed forward, by a certain fearful *Curioſity* of knowing the *worſt*. At that Rate did *Spira* expreſs himſelf, when he deſired to be freed of his Life that he might know the utmoſt of thoſe Torments which he feared; as if the Affrightments of his fearful Expectations, were worſe than the real feeling of them. (5.) But moſt of all doth he prevail againſt that Objection of *greater Miſery* after Death, by running Men up to a *deſperate Diſtraction* in their Terrors; their preſent Anguiſh is made inſupportable, ſo that they *haſten* out of Life, *without Care* or Conſideration of what ſhall follow.

Thirdly, He tempts Men directly to deſtroy themſelves from a Principle of *heroick Boldneſs*, and ſeeming Fortitude of Mind: A Thing very common among the *Romans*; who impatient of Injuries, and from Pride of Heart, not willing to ſubject themſelves to Affronts, choſed rather to tear their own Bowels, than to live to ſee themſelves abuſed. *Lucretia* being forced by *Tarquinius*, and not willing to outlive her Diſgrace, ſtabb'd herſelf. *Cato* not being able to endure the Victory of *Cæſar*, puts an End to his Days. Innumerable Inſtances of this Kind Hiſtories do every where afford (*b*). Theſe tho' they conſulted their own Paſſions, and knew of nothing that prompted them, but their own *Generoſity* or Magnanimity, yet were they not without a Tempter to ſuch cruel Actions. Satan (undoubtedly) pleaſed himſelf by exerciſing his Cruelty upon them ſo eaſily, by the Help of ſuch an *Humour*, which paſſed (among

(*a*) *Capel* Tempt. ibid. (*b*) *Sen.* de Provident. *c.* 2: Liquet mihi cum magno ſpectaſſe gaudio Deos.. dum gladium ſacro pectore infigit. Non fuit eis immortalibus ſatis ſpectare *Catonem* Semel.

these blind Heathens) for the higheſt Proof of *Vertue* and Fortitude. To this Height it came, inſomuch that we find *Seneca* highly applauding *Cato*, for procuring his Liberty by his own Death; and ſetting forth that Fact as the moſt delightful Spectacle to the Gods. Tho' indeed (as *Auguſtine* notes (*a*)) it is not *Fortitude*, but *Weakneſs*, and a clear Evidence of *Impatience*, which cannot bear other Mens Inſolencies, or their own Hardſhips. And if we examine the Matter to the Bottom, tho' there be Audacity in it, to undertake their own Death, yet is this led on by no better Principles, than Pride, Impatience and Deſpair: Which may the better be diſcovered, if we conſider ſuch Kind of Attempts, as they ariſe from more ignoble and baſe Occaſions. *Paterculus* tells us of a *Tuſcan* Southſayer who being carried to Priſon with his Friend *Fulvius Flaccus*, and deſpairing of Pardon, deſperately runs his Head againſt the Priſon door and daſhed out his Brains; and yet this Man was moved to attempt his Deſtruction, upon the ſame general Principles by which *Cato* deſtroyed himſelf.

Fourthly, 'Tis alſo ſufficiently known that Satan by the Force of *Cuſtom* in ſeveral Countries (*b*), doth as it were *neceſſitate* Men to cut off their own Lives; in ſome barbarous Places, at the *Death* of the Huſband, the Wife in a brutal Affection of the Praiſe of *Love* and Loyalty, caſts herſelf to be devoured by the ſame *Flame*, in which the dead Body of her Huſband is conſumed. And there are found in other Places Cuſtoms of Self deſtruction for the avoiding the tedious Inconveniencies of *old Age*, where 'tis uſual for old Perſons, with Joy to prepare their own *funeral Pile*, and to make a quick Diſpatch of their Lives, and rather to die at once, than by Piece-meal, as *Seneca* expreſſeth it (*c*). *Calanus* an *Indian* Philoſopher, being Dyſenterical, obtained Leave of *Alexander* to burn himſelf for more quick Diſpatch.

Fifthly, There is yet another Way by which Men are tempted ſometime (tho' rarely) to haſten themſelves out of the World, and that is by a Pretence of an *earneſt* and impatient Deſire of *Happineſs* to come. That *Longings* for ſuch Enjoyments, do become the beſt of *Saints*, and is indeed

(*a*) *Aug.* de civit. Dei, *l.* 1. *c.* 22. Major animus merito dicendus eſt, qui vitam ærum noſam magis poteſt ferre quam fugere. Et humanum judicium pro Conſcientiæ luce ac puritate contemnere. (*b*) As in the Kingdoms of *Biznagar*. *Purchas Pilgr. l.* 5. c. 11. and in the *Philippian* Islands, ibid. *c.* 16. (*c*) Perire membratim & toties per ſtillicidia amittere animam. *Sen. Epiſt* 101. *Q. Curtius*.

deed their *Excellency*, cannot be denied; but to make such a *preposterous* Haste, must be a *Cheat* of Satan. That there is a Possibility of this, may appear in the Story (*a*) of *Cleombrotus* mentioned also by *Augustine* (b) who reading *Plato*'s *Phædo* of the Immortality of the Soul; that he might hasten thither, threw himself Head long from a Wall, and died. Now tho' it be hard to find such an Instance among Christians, yet we have Reason to believe, that where Satan perceives such a Temptation may take Place, he will not be wanting in the Prosecution. And if we may conjecture *Augustine*'s Thoughts, by that *Question* which he propounds, *viz. Whether it be lawful for a Man to kill himself for the avoiding of Sin* (c). (which he solidly confutes;) We may conclude, that such Thoughts, were the *usual Temptations* of good Men in his Time (*d*), and the rather because in the Close of that Chapter, he applies that Discourse particularly to the Servants of Christ, that they should not think their Lives a *Burden*.

Secondly, Satan promotes the Design of Self-murder, not only *directly*, as we have heard, but also by some *indirect* Ways he undermines the Life of Man: That is, when he doth not formally say to them destroy yourselves, but tempts them to such *Things*, as he knows will *let in Death* upon them. This Way of subtil Malice I shall explain under these Heads.

1*st*, Upon highest Pretexts of *Zeal* for God's Glory, he sometimes lays a Snare for our Lives; I cannot believe but Satan had a Hand in that Forwardness of *ancient Christians*, who by an *open* Profession of their Faith before persecuting *Judicatures*, did, as it were, *court* a Martyrdom; and I have the same Perswasion of the *painful Earnestness* of many holy Preachers, who lavish out their Strength in a *Prodigality* of Pains for the Good of Souls, which (like a *Thief* in the *Candle*) wastes them immediately (*e*); whereas a *better husbanded* Strength might be truly more advantagious, as continuing the Light the longer: And yet so sincere are their Ends, so pleasant is their Work, that they seldom observe, as they ought, that Satan (when he can do no better) is glad of the Opportunity to destroy them with their *own Weapon*; and therefore in this Case, they may ex-

(*a*) *Cicero* i. *Tus. quest.* Nihil urgebat aut calamitatis aut criminis ... sed ad capessendam mortem ... Sola affuit animi magnitudo. (*b*) De Civ Dei, *l.* 1. *c.* 22. (*c*) De Civit, Dei. *l.* 1. *c.* 27. (*d*) Non itaque vobis ô Fideles, Christi; fit tedio vita vestra. (*e*) Vid. *Boyle*'s *Reflections*, Sec. 2. Med. 10.

pect he will do all he can to *heighten* and forward their *Zeal*, not only by adding all the *Fuel* he can to their inward *Propenſity* of Laborioufneſs, but alſo by *outward* Encouragement, of the declared *Acceptations* and *Expectations* of their Hearers.

2*dly*, Upon baſer Pretences of the full Enjoyment of *ſenſual Pleaſures*, and carnal Delights, he doth unawares *puſh* Men forward to *Death* and Dangers. Thus the Voluptuous, the Glutton, the Drunkard, *dig* their own *Graves*, and invite Death to cut them off, before they have lived out Half their Time. While Satan tempts Men to ſuch Exceſſes of Riot, he labours not only the *Deſtruction* of the *Soul*, but alſo of the *Body*; not only that they be miſerable, but that they may be ſo with all *Expedition*.

3*dly*, Beſides all theſe, he hath other ſubtile Ways of contriving the Death of Men, by putting them upon Ways and *Actions* that are attended with *Hazard*. Thus he ſought the Death of *Chriſt* not *directly*, but *indirectly*, by urging him to an *Action* which he thought would unavoidably bring him to *Death*; for a Fall from ſo great a Precipice, would eaſily have bereaved any Man of Life. And ſometimes when Men are beſotted with *enthuſiaſtical* Deluſions, he can more eaſily beguile them with ſuch Stratagems: That Inſtance of *Stucker* is famous, who cut off his Brother's Head, upon a fooliſh Perſwaſion, that God would magnify his great Power in giving him Life again. If Satan can befool ſuch bewitched Slaves into ſuch abſurd and unreaſonable Apprehenſions in regard of others, what hinders but that he may ſo far impoſe upon them, that they may be willing to practiſe upon themſelves. I remember ſomething to this Purpoſe, of one whom the Devil had well-nigh prevailed with, to make a *Hole in his Breaſt* (a), (which of Neceſſity muſt have let out his Life;) upon a pretended Promiſe of *giving him eternal Life*, and was accordingly *forced* to take up a *Knife*, and to carry it to his Throat. In *Anno* 1647, in *York-ſhire*, a Company of People were ſeduced to ſacrifice certain Creatures to God, among the reſt they *ſacrificed their aged Mother*, perſwading her ſhe ſhould riſe the *third* Day, and for this they were executed at *York*.

Applic.] This may awaken all to be aware of this Temptation; ſome are ſadly concerned in it, many are the Com-

plaints

(a) See the *Narrative* of *John Gilpin*, called *the Quakers ſpoken*.

plaints which ſome of us have met withal about it in private, and the Apprehenſions of ſuch Hazards are ſadly diſquieting. Thro' ſuch Fears Thouſands of God's dear Children have *paſſed*, and many, too many, have been *overcome* by this Weapon; thoſe of us that have not yet known Temptations of this Nature, do not know how ſoon we may be aſſaulted in this Kind; 'tis neceſſary for all to ſtand upon their Guard, and for that End, it behoves us to have at Hand theſe Defences againſt it.

Firſt, 'Tis uſeful to conſider, that this is one of Satan's *great Plots*; and when we meet with it *cloathed* with never ſo many *Pretexts*, *enforced* with never ſo many ſeeming Neceſſities, yet muſt we look upon it as the *Counſel* of an *Enemy*, who certainly intends us no Kindneſs, let him pretend what he will; and therefore may we be ſure, it will be our ſad Inconvenience and Diſadvantage.

Secondly, It muſt be fixed in our Minds, that the Thing in itſelf is an *high Iniquity*, a moſt grievous Provocation; no Inſtance of Self murder (properly ſuch) can be met withal in Scripture, as practiſed by any holy Perſon: The Command is directly againſt it, *Thou ſhalt not kill.* If we may not *murder another* (as *Auſtin* argues (*a*)) we may not *murder ourſelves*: *For he that kills himſelf kills no other than a Man*; nay, we may much leſs lay Hand upon our own Life. 'Tis a greater Violation of the *Law* of Nature and of *Love*. Every Man is neareſt to himſelf; and his Love to himſelf, is the *Pattern* of his Love to another. Self-murder muſt then be a Sin of *higher Aggravations* by far, than the Murder of another Perſon. And the wiſer *Heathens* were far from countenancing any ſuch Cruelty; if *Plato* had thought it beſt for an *immediate Enjoyment* of Immortality, (which is the higheſt Pretence of Self-murder imaginable) to make an End of Life violently, he would certainly have *practiſed* it himſelf, or *recommended* it to others, but he is ſo far from this, that he ſpeaks againſt it as a *great Wickedneſs* (*b*).

Thirdly, 'Tis neceſſary that Men keep in Mind the *Danger* that *follows* ſuch an Act. Death brings God's unalterable *Mittimus*, and *ſeals* up the Condition of every Man, ſo that in the ſame Poſture he comes to Judgment, it puts an End to all Hopes and Endeavours. Suppoſe then ſuch tempted Creatures to have Fears and *Terrors* as *great* as you can imagine them

(*a*) De Civit. Dei *l.* 1. *c.* 20. Non occides, non alterum, ergo nec te, neque enim qui ſe occidit, aliud quam hominem occidit. (*b*) *Aug.* de Civit. Dei. *l.* 1. *c.* 22. Et *Conſent* Lod. Viv. ibid.

them to be, yet there is a *Possibility* that they may be *deceived* in them, that their Case is not so bad as they fear, or (if it be bad enough at present) that it may be *better* afterwards (for many that have in their Anguish resolved against themselves, have been prevented of the Execution of their Resolves, and have *lived* to see the *Lord and his Salvation*;) And who is able to determine that Secret, *that their Name is not in the Book of Life*? Who can say, he is certainly excluded out of God's Decree? What Madness is it then to rush into *certain* Ruin, when our Fears that distress us may be but *Mistakes*. It is not so *certain* that Men *shall* be damned, because of what they *feel* or fear at present, as it *may* be if they *destroy* themselves.

Fourthly, To prevent Occasions to this Temptation, it must be our Care not to give *way to Discontents* for outward Things, nor to *distressing* Fears (such as are despairing and hopeless) for our spiritual Estate; or if we have a Burden either Way upon our Mind, we must avoid as much as may be impatient *Fretfulness*, *lest Satan get Advantage of us*. *Discontented Moods* and *casting away Hope*, are sad *Occasions* for this Temptation. If we find ourselves thus burdened, we must look to it *betimes*, and not suffer it to go too far. And if this Temptation *come*, we must take heed we keep not the Devil's *Counsel*, but *discover* the Matter to some that are wise and faithful, able to advise and pray for us; remembring still, that if *only outward* Things trouble us, we have a *better* way of Ease and Remedy, by *submitting* to a chastising Providence; if *spiritual* Troubles move this Way, we should not run *from him*, but rather resolve to *perish at his Foot*, as humble Suppliants for Mercy and Pardon.

Fifthly, The Temptation must also be opposed with *Fasting and Prayer*; if this be sincerely practised, it will go away at last.

Sixthly, Something may also be said for Caution against *unnecessary thrusting* ourselves (while under such Temptations) into Places of *Danger*, or into a Converse with *Instruments* of Death; this may be too great a daring of the Temptation, and in the Consequence a Mischief; yet on the other hand, we must not be so *cowardly*, as to be afraid of such *Places* and *Things*, unto which our *Callings* and lawful Imployments do *engage* us; not to dare to go over a *Bridge*, or to walk by a *River* or a *Pit*, if it be our *necessary*

ceſſary Way, is but to give an Advantage to Satan, to keep us under continual *Affrightments*; and therefore I ſubſcribe to *Capel's* Advice (*a*), *We muſt abide by it, and fight it out by Faith; we muſt not fly the Way, the Place, the Imployment, but go on and look to God, and at laſt we ſhall make Satan fly.*

Obj.] But if ſome object to this, That their Weakneſs is great, and their Fears are ſtrong, and Satan never idle, and that therefore they have *little* Ground to expect an *Eſcape*.

Anſw.] I ſhall deſire they would conſider ſeriouſly the *Inſtance* of Chriſt in this Particular, when he was upon the *Pinacle* of the Temple, a ſmall *Puſh* might have overthrown him, and yet it was not in Satan's Power to do it *himſelf*, tho' he *tempted* Chriſt to caſt himſelf down; which may ſufficiently ſatisfy us, that there is a ſure *Hedge* of Providence about us; and that Satan cannot do us the leaſt Hurt, by *puſhing* us into a Pit or River, or any ſuch Danger.

CHAP. XVI.

Of Pride, Satan's chief Engine to bring on Preſumption. What Pride is, and how it prepares Men for ſinning preſumptuouſly. Conſiderations againſt Pride. The Remedies for its Cure. Pride kindled by a Confidence of Privileges and popular Applauſe.

THE *Aims* of Satan in this Temptation being thus explained, I muſt now offer to your Conſideration the *Means* by which he ſought to bring his End about, which we have noted already was *Pride*: This he endeavoured to raiſe up in him two Ways.

1*ſt*, By urging to him the *Privileges* of his Condition, as taking himſelf to be the *Son of God*.

2*dly*, By offering him the Occaſion of *popular Applauſe*, to which Purpoſe he brought him into the *holy City*, where he might be ſure of many *Spectators*. I ſhall hence note,

Obſ. 10.] *That Pride is Satan's proper Engine to bring Men on to Preſumption.*

If we ſhould trace the *Hiſtory* of preſumptuous Sins, we ſhall ever find it to have been ſo. *Adam's* firſt Sin was an high

(*a*) *Tempt.* Part 2. Cap. 9.

high Presumption against God's express Command, but Pride was the Stair by which he knew they must ascend to it; and therefore he used this Argument to corrupt the Hearts of our first Parents, *Ye shall be as gods.* The Presumption of *Uzziah* in burning Incense upon the Altar, was from his Pride, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 16. *His Heart was lifted up, because he was become strong.* *David*'s Presumption in numbering the People was from hence. Thus might we run through many Instances; but *Satan*'s own Case may be instead of all; his first Sin (tho' we have but Conjecture what it was particularly) is concluded by all to have been highly *presumptuous*, and the Scripture expressly asserts, that it was his *Pride* that brought him to it, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. He that is lifted up with Pride, *falls into the Condemnation of the Devil.* And in the general, we are told by the Prophet, *Hab.* ii. 4. *That the Soul that is lifted up, cannot* be so *upright*, as patiently to wait upon God in a Way of *believing*, but it will be presuming to evade a Trouble by *indirect* Contrivances.

To explain the Observation, I shall do no more but shew what Pride is, and how fit it is to beget Presumption.

Pride is a self idolizing; an Over-valuation or Admiration of ourselves, upon a real or supposed Excellency, inward or outward, appertaining to us. 'Tis in Scripture frequently expressed by the *lifting* up or *Exaltation* of the *Soul*; and this is done upon the Consideration of any Kind of Thing, which we apprehend makes us *excel* others; so that *inward Gifts* of Mind, as Knowledge, Humility, Courage, *&c.* or *outward Gifts* of the Body, as Beauty, Strength, Activity, *&c.* or *additional Advantages* of Riches, Honour, Authority, *&c.* or any Thing *well done* by us, *&c.* may all be abused to beget and nourish Pride, and to fill us with high and lofty Thoughts concerning ourselves; and being thus *blown* up, we are *fitted* for any presumptuous Undertaking. For,

First, The Mind thus corrupted begets to itself Apprehensions of a *Self-sufficiency*; and therefore, as it is not apt to remember from what *Fountain* all those Excellencies come, and to what *Ends* they are to serve, so it brings them to a *Contempt* of others, and to a *Confidence* of themselves. Thus are Men by Degrees so intoxicated by their own Humour, that they mount up to irrational and absurd Conceits, fancying that they are more than they are, and that they can do

do far more than is possible for them to accompliſh, till at laſt they become apparently fooliſh in the Purſuit of their Imaginations. I need not inſtance in the Follies of *Alexander*, who being elated in Mind, would be *Jupiter*'s Son, and go like *Hercules* in a Lion's Skin; or in the mad Frenzies of *Caius*, who, as he would need fancy himſelf a *god*, ſo would he change his *godſhip* when he pleaſed; To-day he would wear a *Lion's Skin* and *Club*, and then he muſt be *Hercules*; To-morrow in another Garb he conceits himſelf *Appollo*; a *Caduceus* made him *Mercury*, a *Sword* and *Helmet* made him *Mars*, &c. Or in *Xerxes*, who would *whip* the Seas, and fetter *Neptune*. The Scripture affords enough of this Nature, as the Boaſt of *Nebuchadnezzar*; *Is not this great Babel that I have built?* In the Inſolency of *Nineveh*, Zeph. ii. 15. *I am, and there is none beſides me.* The Blaſphemy of *Tyre*, Ezek. xxviii. 2. who ſet her Heart *as the Heart of God, ſaying, I am a god, I ſit in the Seat of God.* The Arrogancy of *Sennacherib*, Iſa. xxxvi. 19, 20. *Where are the gods of Hamath—that the Lord ſhould deliver Jeruſalem out of my Hand?* Tho' *all* Pride in all Men *ariſeth not* to ſo great an Height of Madneſs, yet 'tis the *Nature* of it, and none have any of it, without this Humour of *conceiting themſelves above themſelves*, which ſtrangely prepares them for any Preſumption.

Secondly, He that is proud, as he looks upon himſelf in a *flattering* Glaſs, and meaſures himſelf by the *Length of his Shadow*; ſo doth he *contemn* and undervalue Things that ly before his Attempts, as eaſy and ſmall; hence doth he put himſelf upon Things that are far beyond him. *David* notes the working of a proud Heart, *Pſal.* cxxxi. 1. in this Particular, *Neither do I exerciſe myſelf in great Matters, or in Things too high for me*; ſhewing that 'tis the Guiſe of Pride to *outbid* itſelf in its Attempts.

Thirdly, It is not only forward to attempt, but alſo *deſperate to execute*, without Conſideration of Hazard. Difficulty and Danger, when they ſtand in the Way, ſhould uſually deter Men from their Enterprize; but Pride *hardens* the Heart, and in a blind Rage engageth it to *contemn* all Inconveniencies. If Sin and the Breach of God's Law be ſet before a Perſon, whoſe Pride engageth him to an unlawful Undertaking, he overlooks it as a Thing of Naught, *Through the Pride of his Countenance he will not ſeek after God, God is not in all his Thoughts*, Pſal. x. 4.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Pride ariseth up to a *scornful Competition* with any Thing that oppoſeth it; and the more 'tis oppoſed, the more it rageth; for the Conteſt is for having its Will. This was the Voice of Pride in *Pharaoh*, *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould ſerve him?* Hence Men are ſaid to *deſpiſe the Commandments of God*, when in the Strength of their Pride they are carried on to an open Conteſt for their own Ways and Deſires, againſt peremptory Commands and Threatnings.

Fifthly, All this is done by a *pleaſing Allurement*; 'tis a *Witchcraft* that ſtrongly holds Men, and they think they are ſufficiently rewarded if they be but gratified (*a*); tho other Things go to *Wreck*, yet they apprehend, if Credit and Honour be *kept up*, 'tis enough. *Saul* (when *Samuel* had declared that God would forſake him) yet ſought to pleaſe himſelf, by keeping up his Eſteem and Authority, *Honour me*, ſaith he, *before the People*.

If all theſe Particulars be weighed, what preſumptuous Act can be propounded by Satan, which Pride may not lead to? He that ſwells himſelf to a Conceit of *Abſoluteneſs*, that will needs be *attempting Things too high*, that contemneth all Hazards, and is made more forward by Oppoſition, and yet *pleaſeth* himſelf in all, as in a *golden Dream*, he is as much prepared for any Figure or Shape that Satan is ready to impreſs upon him, as melted Mettals for their Mould or Stamp.

Applic.] Hence muſt we be warned againſt Pride, as we would avoid Preſumption; if we admit this, we cannot well eſcape the other. And we are the more concerned to reſiſt Pride,

1ſt, Becauſe 'tis a *natural* Sin; it was the *firſt* Sin, and our *Natures* are ſo deeply tainted with it, that it is a Sin that firſt ſhews itſelf in our Infancy: For Children will expreſs a Pride in their Cloaths very early; and 'tis a general Infection, from which none are exempted in ſome Degree or other. The Apoſtle's Phraſe 1 *John* ii. 16. ſhews, that our whole Life, and all the Concerns thereof, is but the Sphere in which *Pride* acts; and therefore, whereas he reſtrains other Luſts, to ſome particular Ends, or peculiar Inſtruments, he calls this Iniquity, the *Pride of Life*, implying how impoſſible it is to confine it in a narrow Compaſs.

2dly, It

(*a*) Amabilis inſania mentis gratiſſimus error.

2dly, It is a subtile Sin, and often lyes where 'tis least suspected. Every Man sees it, as 'tis expreſt in *haughty Looks*, in *boasting Speeches*, in *gorgeous Apparel*, in *insolent Behaviour*; but often Men are insensibly possessed with this Sin and know not of it: Under an *affected Contempt* of Honours and fine Cloaths, they secretly hug themselves in their private Conceits, and raise up in their own Thoughts *imaginary Trophies* of Honour and Victory, for *despising* what others so much dote upon. It was observed of *Diogenes* that he did *intus gloriari*, inwardly boast, and with *greater Pride* contemned Honour, Riches, Plenty, &c. than they were troubled with that enjoyed them. Some *decry Pride* in others, vehemently declare against it as a Sin, *recommend Humility* as an Ornament of great Price in the Sight of God, and yet are proud that they are above others in a *fancied Humility*; and in the *Management* of themselves in their Reproofs and Exhortations, expreſs such sad Symptoms of an insulting Humour, that the latent Pride of their Heart doth appear by it. 'Tis possible for Men to give Thanks to the Almighty for all they have, and yet to be proud of what is in them: The *Pharisee* was proud, (for so Christ calls him) *that he was not as other Men*, and yet he could thank God, as ascribing all to him; nay he that is truly sensible of the working of this Pride in himself, and dares not approve it, yet he shall find in his Heart such a Delight when he is stroaked or praised, and when some Actions (Praise-worthy) are *not taken Notice of*, the best shall find that (without great Watchfulness) they shall not be able to hold from giving some Hints to others as a Memorial to them, of observing their Excellency, or from some Insinuations of their own Commendation.

3dly, Pride is a Sin no less dangerous than subtile; there are no Attempts so strange, unreasonable, monstrous or absurd, but it may prompt to them. It was a strange Arrogancy in *Herod* to deify himself in his own Thoughts, and yet the Acclamations of the People swelled him into such a *blasphemous Imagination*, that God thought fit to chastise him, and instruct others by so dreadful a Judgment, as clearly baffled his Insolency, and made him and his Flatterers confess, he was but a *poor frail Man*. Ordinarily Pride is attended with a Judgment, 'tis the very *Prognostick* of Ruin; *Pride goeth before Destruction, and an haughty Spirit before a Fall*, Prov. xvi. 18. But these Judgments

have ſomething in them *peculiar* (which other Judgments for other Sins do not always expreſs) to a Manifeſtation of a *ſpecial Abhorency* in God againſt Pride; as 1. He commonly ſmites the *Thing for which* they are proud. *Stauſitius* boaſted of his Memory, and God ſmote it: *Hezekiah* boaſted of his Treaſure, and for that God deſigned them for Captivity: *David* gloried in the Multitude of his People, but God leſſened them by Peſtilence: *Nebuchadnezzer* is proud of his *Babel*, and God drave him from the Enjoyment of it: Men are proud of Children or Relations, and God oft removes them, or makes them a Shame and Sorrow. 2. He doth not only this, but alſo orders the Judgment ſo that it ſhall bring a Shame and Contempt upon Men in that Thing wherein they *prided* themſelves; he will not only puniſh, but alſo ſtain their Pride: The haughty Daughters of *Sion* were not only plagued by removing their Ornaments, Bracelets, and the reſt of their Bravery, but over and above he *ſmites with a Scab the Crown of their Head, and diſcovers their ſecret Parts, and brings a Stink and Baldneſs upon them inſtead of a ſweet Smell, and well-ſet Hair, and Burning inſtead of Beauty*, Iſa. iii. 17, 24.

So ſad a Diſtemper ſtands in Need of a ſpecial Cure, and for that End we ſhould,

1*ſt*, In all Things we have or do, not ſo much conſider what is *excellent*, or wherein we excel, as what we *have not*, and wherein we *come ſhort*. We ſhould be ſtrange to our ſelves, and deſign that the *Right-hand ſhould not know what the Left-hand doth*, which muſt be, by having our Eye upon the *Imperfections* that attend us at the beſt.

2*dly*, It muſt be your Care to be ſuſpicious of the working of Pride in us, and alſo by an induſtrious Watchfulneſs to give a Stop or Check to Thoughts of this Nature when they ariſe.

3*dly*, The Conqueſt of this cannot be expected without a ſerious and conſtant Labour herein. An humble Soul is compared by *David* to a *weaned Child*, Pſalm cxxxi. 2. But a Child is not weaned eaſily, *Worm-wood* muſt be laid on the Breaſt, and Time allowed before the Child will forget it. He only that is content to exerciſe a *Diſcipline* upon himſelf, and by frequent Practices to *habituate* himſelf to *low* and *careful* Thoughts, is likely to overcome it.

Pride

Pride (we have ſeen) was Satan's great Engine to bring on Preſumption, the Means by which he endeavoureth to beget Pride (as was before noted) were,

Firſt, The Conſideration of *Privileges*, as being *the Son of God.* For this Expreſſion, [*If thou art the Son of God*] is now urged in a Senſe different from that which it had in the firſt Temptation; there he propounded it as unlikely that he ſhould be the *Son of God*, and yet be under ſuch a Diſregard of Providence. In this Senſe it notably ſuited his Deſign of drawing him to a Diſtruſt of God's Care, and conſequently of his Sonſhip. Here he is upon a contrary Temptation, and therefore propounds this as a Thing of which Chriſt was aſſured, and from that Aſſurance he thus diſputes, *Thou believeſt thou art the Son of God; and doſt well depend on his Care; therefore needeſt thou not to diſtruſt thy Preſervation, if thou caſteſt thyſelf down.*

Secondly, To help his Confidence forward to the Undertaking, he ſuggeſts what Credit and Honour it would be to him, in the Sight of all the People to be ſo miraculouſly kept from Hurt. Hence note,

Obſ. 11.] *That Satan doth uſually kindle and nouriſh Pride, by a perverſe Confidence of our Privileges.*

It is very hard for Chriſtians to carry their Aſſurance even: Not but that Grace in its proper Working begets Humility, and a watchful Care againſt Sin and Folly, but ſuch is our Infirmity, that we are eaſily drawn to be proud of our Mercies, and to perſuade ourſelves, that we may make bold with God becauſe we are his Children. Hence was that Paradox of Mr. *Fox*, *That his Sins did him moſt Good, and his Graces moſt Hurt*; he means, Sins occaſioned his Humility, whereas his Graces were apt (through his Weakneſs) to make him proud. And *to hide this Pride from Men*, God is forced to keep them ſometime from the Sight of their Aſſurance, or to diſcipline them by other Temptations, (as he did with *Paul*) leſt they ſhould be *exalted above Meaſure.*

Obſ. 12.] Note further, *That popular Applauſe Satan finds* (*and uſeth accordingly*) *to be a great Inſtigator to Pride.*

The great Thing that moved the *Phariſees* in their often Faſtings, and large Charity, was that they might have *Praiſe of Men* (*a*), and therefore took they care to be *ſeen*

(*a*) Populo monſtrari, & dicere hic eſt.

of Men. The Heathens noted this to be the great Feeder of that Humour which animated them, as a Drum or Trumpet animates Soldiers to adventurous Acts (*a*). And some good Men have found no small Difficulty to carry steddily, when they have been hoisted up by the Breath of Mens Praise; which hath also occasioned those serious Cautions against the Danger of Flattery, and high Commendations, *A flattering Mouth worketh Ruin*, Prov. xxvi. 28.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Satan's Subtility in urging that of Psalm xci. 11, 12. *to Christ. Of his imitating the Spirit of God in various Ways of teaching. Of his pretending Scripture to further Temptation. The Reasons of such Pretendings, and the Ends to which he doth abuse it. Of Satan's Unfaithfulness in managing of Scriptures. Cautions against that Deceit. The Ways by which it may be discovered.*

THE Ways of Satan (hitherto insisted on) to engage Christ in this Act of Presumption, were secret Insinuations, and under hand Contrivances: But that which he openly and expressly urged to this Purpose, was an Argument drawn from the Promise of God, (though sadly abused and misrepresented) *He shall give his Angels Charge concerning thee*, &c. This we are next to consider, in which (as cited by him) we may easily see, (1) That Satan affected an Imitation of Christ, in the Way of his Resistance; Christ had urged Scripture before, and now Satan endeavours to manage the same Weapon against him. (2.) 'Tis observable that Scripture is the Weapon that Satan doth desire to weild against him; in his other Ways of dealing he was *sly*, and did but *lay them* in Christ's Way, offering only the Occasion, and leaving him to take them up; but in this he is more confident, and industriously pleads it, as a Thing which he could better stand to, and more confidently avouch. (3.) The Care of his Subtilty herein, lay in the *Misrepresentation* and Abuse of it, as may be seen in these Particulars; 1. In that he urged this Promise to promote a sinful Thing, contrary to the general End of all Scripture, which was

(*a*) Quis vero tam bene modulo suo metire se novit, ut eum assiduæ & immodicæ laudationes non moveant. *H. Steph.*

was therefore written *that we ſin not.* 2. But more eſpecially in his clipping and mutilating of it; he induſtriouſly leaves out that Part of it, which doth limit and confine the Promiſe of Protection to lawful Undertakings, (ſuch as this was not) and renders it as a *general Promiſe* of abſolute Safety, be *the Action what it will.* It is a Citation from *Pſal.* xci. 11, 12. which there runs thus, *He ſhall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways*; theſe laſt Words, [*in all thy Ways*] which doth direct to a true Underſtanding of God's Intention in that Promiſe, he deceitfully leaves out, as if they were needleſs and unneceſſary Parts of the Promiſe, when indeed they were on Purpoſe put there by the Spirit of God, to give a Deſcription of thoſe Perſons and Actions, unto whom in ſuch Caſes the Accompliſhment of the Promiſe might be expected: For albeit the Word in the Original†, which is tranſlated [*Ways,*] doth ſignify any Kind of Way or Action in the general, yet in this Place it doth not; for then God were engaged to an abſolute Protection of Men, not only when they unneceſſarily thruſt themſelves into Dangers, but in the moſt abominably ſinful Actions whatſoever; which would have been a direct *Contradiction* to thoſe many Scriptures wherein God threatens to *withdraw his Hand, and leave Sinners to the Danger of their Iniquities*: But 'tis evident that the Senſe of it is no more than this, *God is with you while you are with him.* We have a *Paraphraſe* of this Text to this Purpoſe, in *Prov.* iii. 23. *Then ſhalt thou walk in thy Way ſafely, and thy Foot ſhall not ſtumble*: Where the Condition of this Safety (pointed to in the Word [*then,*] which leads the Promiſe) is expreſly mentioned in the foregoing Verſes, *My Son let them* (that is, the Precepts of Wiſdom) *not depart from thine Eyes—Then* (not upon other Terms) *ſhalt thou walk in thy Ways ſafely.* The *Ways* then in this Promiſe (cited by Satan) are the *Ways of Duty*, or the Ways of our *lawful Callings*. The Fallacy of Satan in this dealing with Scripture is obvious, and Chriſt might have given this Anſwer, (as *Bernard* (*a*) hath it) that God promiſeth to keep him in *his Ways*, but not in *ſelf created* Dangers, for that was not his *Way* but his *Ruin*; or if a *Way*, it was Satan's *Way*, but not *his*. 3. To theſe two ſome add another Abuſe, in a ſubtile Concealment of the follow-

† *Hebr.* VERABIM. (*a*) *In* Pſalm 14. In viis, nunquid in præcipitiis, non eſt via hæc ſed ruina, & ſi via, tua eſt non illius. *Bernard.* ibid.

ing Verſe, in the xci. *Pſalm, Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion and Adder.* This concerned Satan, whoſe Cruelty and poiſonous Deceits, were fitly repreſented by the *Lion* and the *Adder*, and there the *Promiſe* is alſo explained to have a Reſpect to Satan's Temptations; that is, God would ſo manage his Protection, that his Children ſhould not be led into a Snare.

Obſ. 13.] Hence obſerve, *That Satan ſometimes imitates the Spirit of God by an officious Pretence of teaching the Mind of God to Men.*

This our Adverſary doth not always appear in one Shape: Sometime he acts as a *Lion* or *Dragon* in Ways of Cruelty and Fierceneſs: Sometimes as a filthy Swine, in Temptations to beſtial Uncleanneſs, and ſenſual Luſts: Sometimes he puts on the Garb of Holineſs, and makes as if he were not a ſpiritual Adverſary, but a ſpiritual Friend and Counſellour; that this is frequent with him, the Apoſtle tells us 2 *Cor.* xi. *Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of Light.* Angels of Light are thoſe bleſſed Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for the Good of the Elect, whoſe Miniſtry God uſeth not only for our Preſervation from *bodily Hurts*, but alſo for Prevention of Sin, and Furtherance of Duty. Satan (as wicked as he is) doth counterfeit that Employment, and takes upon him to give Advice for our Good, pretending to teach us in the Truth, or to direct and further us in our Endeavours*.

That he deſigns an Imitation of God and his Spirit, may be diſcovered by expreſſing a great many Particulars of God's Ways and Appointments, wherein Satan (as God's Ape) partly out of Mockery and Scorn, partly upon other Grounds of Advantage to his Intendments, doth counterfeit the *current Coin* of the Lord's *Eſtabliſhments* by a very cloſe Imitation. But I ſhall here confine myſelf to the Point of Teaching and Inſtruction, wherein how he proceeds, we ſhall the better underſtand, by conſidering how many Ways God hath of old, and now ſtill doth uſe, in declaring his Mind to his People; the Sum of all we have, *Heb.* i. 1, 2. Heretofore he ſignified his Mind in *divers Manners by the Prophets*, and *in theſe laſt Days by his Son*, in all which we ſhall trace the Steps of Satan.

Firſt,

* Authores ſi vitæ ſceleſtæ immundæque teſtantur, perhibentur tamen in aditis ſuis ſecretiſque penetralibus dare quibuſdam bona præcepta de moribus, quibuſdam velut electis ſacratis ſuis, quod ſi ita eſt, hoc ipſo callidior advertenda eſt & convincenda malitia ſpirituum noxiorum. *Aug.* Civit. Dei, *l.* 2. *c.* 29.

First, God revealed himself sometime by Voice, as to *Abraham*, *Moses*, and others: The Devil hath dared to imitate this. There want not Instances of it in the Temptation, which is now under Explanation, he did so; and his confessing Christ, *I know thee who thou art*, &c. doth shew that he is ready enough to do it at any Time for Advantage. *Sprenger* (*a*) tells us a Story of the Devil's preaching to a Congregation in the Habit and Likeness of a Priest, wherein he reproved Sin, and urged Truth, and seemed no Way *culpable* for false Doctrine; but I suspect this for a *fabulous Tale*: However, it is undeniable, that he sometime hath appeared to Men with *godly Exhortations in his Mouth, of living justly, and doing no Man Wrong*, &c. Except we resolve to discredit all History, and the Narrations of Persons (and some such are known to some in this Auditory) who solemnly affirm, they have met with such Dealing from him.

2*dly*, God hath sometime revealed himself to Men in *Extasies* and *Trances*; such was that of *Paul*, Acts xxii. 17. *I was in an Extasy* or *Trance* (*b*). This also hath the Devil imitated. *Mahomet* made this Advantage of his Disease (the *Epilepsy* or Falling sickness) pretending that at such Times he was in an *Extasy*, and had Converse with the *Angel Gabriel*. But what he only in *Knavery* pretended, others have *really* felt; the Stories of *Familists* and deluded *Quakers* are full of such Things, they frequently have fallen down, and have lyen as in a Swoon, and when they have awaked, told wonderful Stories of what they have heard and seen.

3*dly*, *Visions* and Dreams were usual Things in the Old Testament, and famous Ways of Divine Revelation. But Satan was not behind in this Matter, his Instruments had their *Visions* too: In *Ezek.* xiii. 7. we have Mention of *vain Visions* and *lying Divinations*; and such satanical Dreams are also noted, *Deut.* xiii. 1. *If there arise among you a Dreamer of Dreams*. Those Days of Confusion, that are not yet out of Memory, afforded Store of these; while unstable *giddy headed* People began to dote on *Novelties* and Questions in Religion, they gave Opportunity to Satan to *beguile* them; for he taking Advantage of their *nauseating* of *old* Truths, and their Expectation of *sublime Discoveries* (which had sufficiently prepared them for any

(*a*) Mal. Malefic. Part 2. Q. 1. c. 9. (b) [illegible]

Impreſſion) did ſo overwork their Fancies, that they eaſily conceited themſelves to have had *Divine Revelations*; and nothing was more ordinary than to hear Stories of *Viſions* and *Dreams*. And this ſpread further by a Kind of *Infection*, for it grew into a *religious Faſhion*, and he was not eſteemed, that had not ſomething of this Nature to *Experience*. And tho' the Folly and *Impertinencies* of ſuch Things generally (and ſometime the *apparent Wickedneſs* of them, as contradicting *Truth* and the Divine Rules of *Holineſs*) were *ſufficient Diſcoveries*, that Satan's Hand was in them; yet until *Time*, *Experience*, and the *Power* of God had *cooled* the intemperate Heat of this *raving* Humour, it continued in the *good Liking* and Admiration of the more *inconſiderate Vulgar*. And ſometime thoſe, from whom more *Seriouſneſs* and Conſideration might have been expected, fell into a *Reverence* for theſe Pretences in others, and *helped* forward this *ſpiritual Witchcraft* by their Countenance and Arguings, often abuſing that Text in *Acts* ii 17. *Your young Men ſhall ſee Viſions, and your old Men ſhall dream Dreams*, by applying it to a Juſtification of theſe apparently fooliſh Dotages. And indeed the Effect hath diſcovered they were no better; for many of thoſe Things which with great Confidence were *avouched* as *certain*, were by *Time* proved to be *falſe*; many Things were *uſeleſs*, *vain*, *ridiculous*, and ſome were brought to lament and confeſs their Folly, after they proceeded far in theſe Ways; and at laſt (when the former Opportunities are worn out) Satan grew *weary* of that Deſign (as being no longer proper to be inſiſted on) there is now a great Calm; ſo that 'tis but ſeldom that we hear of ſuch Things talked of. It were needleſs to give particular Inſtances, when you may at your Leiſure fetch them from Hundreds of Pamphlets commonly known.

4*thly*, One of the moſt noted Ways by which God diſcovered his Mind was that of *Inſpiration*, by which ſome eminent Perſons (called therefore Prophets) ſpake the Will of God, *as they were moved* or acted *by the Spirit of God*. The Devil had alſo his *falſe* Prophets, ſuch are frequently taxed in the Old Teſtament, and foretold in the New. *Falſe Chriſts and falſe Prophets ſhall ariſe*, Mat. xxiv. 24. *There were falſe Prophets among the People, as there ſhall be falſe Teachers among you*, 2 Pet. ii. 1. Many falſe Teachers are gone out into the World. Such an one was *Montanus* in *Tertullian*'s Time, *David George*, *John*

of *Leyden*, *Hacket* our Countryman, were such, and a great many such there have been in all Ages; 'tis notoriously known that Satan hath thus inspired poor *possessed Wretches*, who have uttered *Threatnings* against Sin, and Woe to Sinners. The *Sayings* of such possessed Creatures have not long since been gathered into a *Volume* (*a*), and published, as containing very *persuasive Arguments* to Repentance and Amendment of Life. Besides these, our own Times afford too many Examples of this Kind, many have put on the *Guise* of the old Prophets, in a foolish (tho' adventurous) Imitation of their Actions and Prophecies. Some have in our Streets resembled *Jonah* in *Nineveh*, *Yet forty Days*, &c. Some fancied to walk *naked* like *Isaiah*; others have come with their *earthen Pitchers* and broken them, imitating these and other *Types* by which God in his true Prophets foresignified his Judgments to come; in all which Actions and Garbes, with much Earnestness, and in an *affected Tone*, they have called out for Repentance, in a confident Denunciation of Woes and Miseries, with a bold limiting of the Time of *forty Days* (that the same might carry a Parallel to *Jonah*'s Prophecy) and sometime giving (which is the surest Way) an unlimited uncertain Time. How the Devil acts in these Matters, and by what Ways he seduceth them to believe they are inspired of God, or have real Visions and Revelations, 'tis not my Business now to enquire, only let those that think such Things strange, consider, that the Devil hath the Advantage of *deep fanciful Apprehensions*, and a *working Melancholy* in such Persons, by which he can easily work them to *conceit* any Thing, and confidently to *believe* what they have conceited.

5thly, Sometime God notified his Mind by *Signs* and Miracles. Satan hath also his *lying Signs and Wonders*; a Power God hath permitted him this Way, which is very great, and the Delusions wrought thereby are *strong*, hazarding the Deception of the *Elect*. This Power of doing Wonders the Devil usually applies to *false Doctrines*, to strengthen and countenance Errors; the Apostle testifies, 2 *Thess.* ii. 9. that Satan shall imploy this Power for the Advancement of the *Man of Sin*, *whose coming shall be with Signs and lying Wonders*. The Beast arising out of the Earth, *Rev.* xiii. 14. *he shall deceive by the Means*

(*a*) Jean D'Espaigne *popular Errors*. p. 76.

of those Miracles which he hath Power to do. And accordingly the Popish Legends are full of Stories of Miracles, whereof (tho' most be Lies, Forgeries, and the false Contrivements of those who sought to bring the People to receive their Doctrines, the Credit and Advancement of which they sought by such Ways;) some notwithstanding (tho' not *true* Miracles) yet were *truly acted*, to countenance those Errors which are pretended to be established by them.

6thly, God doth teach and lead his People by *Impulses*. Christ was thus *led of the Spirit into the Wilderness*, and *Paul* was *bound in Spirit to go to Jerusalem*. 'Tis common for Satan to imitate such Impulses. We have clear Instances of diabolical *Impulses* to *Sin* in Scripture; a strong Impulse was on *Ananias*, Satan *filled his Heart*; a strong Impulse on *Judas*, Satan *entred into his Heart*: And what then more easy to apprehend, than that Satan can counterfeit better Impulses, and violently stir up the Hearts of Men to Actions seemingly good or indifferent. Some Hypocrites are *moved strongly* to pray or preach (Satan therein aiming at an Increase of Pride or Presumption in them;) and they know no other, but that it is the Spirit of God. God's Children may have *Impulses* from Satan, upon Pretences of *Zeal*, as the Disciples had, when they called for *Fire from Heaven*. In these Impulses Satan doth not so act the Heart of Man as the Spirit of God doth, whose Commands in this Case are *irresistible*; but he only works, by *altering the Disposition of our Bodies in a natural Way*; and then having *fitted* us all he can for an Impression, he endeavours to *set it on* by *strong* Perswasions. Some memorable Instances of these Impulses might profitably illustrate this. *Matth. Parisiensis* takes Notice of a Boy (*a*), in *Anno* 1213 (of whom also *Fuller* makes Mention) who (after some Loss which the *Christians* had received in the War against the *Turks*) went up and down singing this Rhime:

Jesus Lord redeem our Loss,
Restore to us thy Holy Cross.

And by this Means he gathered a Multitude of Boys together, who could not by the severest *Menaces* of their Parents be hindred from following him to their own

Ruin

(*a*) *Hist. Maj.* A. 3. *ad* 24.

Ruin. Anoother Inſtance of a *ſtrange* Impulſe we have in. *Joſephus a)*; one *Jeſus* the Son of *Ananus*, about four Years before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, at the Feaſt of *Tabernacles*, begins to cry out *Wo, Wo to the Eaſt and Weſt, to Man and Woman*, &c. and could by no Means be reſtrained Night or Day; and when his Fleſh was beaten off his Bones, he begged no Pity nor Eaſe, but ſtill continued his uſual Crying.

7*thly*, God doth alſo by his Spirit teach his People in *bringing Things to their Remembrance*, John xiv. 26. Satan alſo in Imitation of this, can put into the Minds of Men (with great Readineſs and Dexterity) *Promiſes*, or *Sentences* of Scripture, inſomuch that they conclude that all ſuch Actings are from the Spirit of God, who (as they conclude) ſet ſuch a Scripture upon their Heart: Thus dealt Satan with Chriſt, he urgeth the Promiſe upon him, wherein upon the Matter he doth as much, as when he ſecretly ſuggeſts ſuch Things to the Heart without an audible Voice. In this Way of *Craft* Satan doth very much *reſemble* the *true* Work of the Spirit. (1.) In the *Readineſs* and Quickneſs of ſuggeſting; (2.) In ſeeming *exact ſuiting* Scripture ſuggeſted, with the preſent Occaſion; And, (3.) In the *Earneſtneſs* of his urging it upon the Fancies of Men. Yet when all this is done, they that ſhall ſeriouſly conſider all Ends, Matter and Circumſtances, will eaſily obſerve it is but the cunning Work of a Tempter, and not from the Holy Spirit.

Obſ. 14.] Obſerve alſo, *That whatever be the various Ways of Satan's Imitation, yet the Matter which he works and practiſeth upon is ſtill Scripture: To this he confines himſelf:*

Firſt, Becauſe the Scriptures are generally (among Chriſtians) received as the *undoubted Oracles* of God, the *Rule* of our Lives and Duties, and the *Grounds* of our Hope. It would be a vain and bootleſs Labour to impoſe upon thoſe that retain this Belief, the Sayings of the *Turkiſh Alcoran*, the Precepts of Heathen *Philoſophers*, or any other Thing that may carry a viſible *Eſtrangement* from or *Contradiction* to Scripture, he could not then poſſibly pretend to a *divine Inſtruction*, nor could he ſo *transform himſelf into an Angel of Light*: But by uſing this Covert of divine Command, Promiſe, or Diſcovery, he can more eaſily beget a Belief, that *God hath ſaid it*, and that there is neither Sin nor

a) *Wars of the* Jews, lib. 7. c. 13.

nor Danger in the Thing propounded, but Duty and Advantage to be expected; and this is the very Thing that makes Way for an easy Entertainment of such Delusions. Poor Creatures believe that it is all *from God*, and that they are *acted by his Spirit*, and that with such Confidence that they *contemn* and *decry* those (as ignorant of *divine Mysteries*, and of the Power of God) who are not so *besotted* as themselves.

Secondly, The Scriptures have a glorious *irresistible Majesty* in them peculiar to themselves, which cannot be found in all that *Art* or *Eloquence* can contribute to other *Authors*. 'Tis not *Play-book Language*, nor *Scrapes* of *Romances* that Satan can effect these *Cheats* withal; and therefore we may observe that in the *highest* Delusions Men have had *Pretences* of Scripture, and their strong Perswasions of *extraordinary* Discoveries, have striken Men into a *Reverence* of their Profession, because of the Scripture words and Phrases, with which their boldest Follies are woven up: For let but Men enquire into the *Reason* of the Prevalency of *Familism* of old, upon so vast a Number of People as were carried away with it, and they shall find, that the great *Artifice* lay in the *Words* they used, a Language *abstracted* from Scripture, to signify such *Conceits* as the Scripture never intended. Hence were their Expressions always *high*, *soaring*, and relating to a more excellent and *mystical Interpretation* of those *divine Writings*. This may be observed in *David George*, *Henry Nicholas* and others, who usually talk of being *consubstantiated* with God, *taken up into his Love*, *of the angelical Life*, and a great deal more of the same Kind. The *Ranters* at first had the like Language, and the *Quakers* after them, affected such a *canting* Expression. And we may be the more certain of the Truth of this Observation, that such a *Kind of speaking* (which borrows its *Majesty* from the *Stile* of the Scripture) is of *Moment* to Satan's Design; because we find the Scripture itself gives particular notice of it; the false Teachers in 2 *Pet.* ii. 18. are described (among other Things) by their *swelling Words of Vanity*, which the *Syriack* renders to be a *proud* and *lofty Way of speaking*, the *Original* signifies no less (*a*), they were Words swelled like *Bladders*, tho' being pricked, they be found to be empty Sounds, and no Substance: There are indeed *swelling* Words of *atheistical*

(*a*) ὑπέρογκα.

cal Contempt of thoſe, who, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* lxxiii. 9, 11. ſet their Mouths againſt Heaven; but this Paſſage of *Peter*, as alſo the like in *Jude* ver. 16. ſignify big *ſwoln* Words, from high *Pretenſions* and Fancies of knowing the *Mind of God more perfectly*, for they that uſe them pretend themſelves *Prophets* of God, *Ver.* 1. and as to their Height in Profeſſion, are compared to *Clouds* highly *ſoaring*; and in 2 *Cor.* xi. 14. they are ſaid to be *transformed into the Apoſtles of Chriſt*, and to the Garb of the *Miniſters of Righteouſneſs*. And that which is more, this *particular* Deſign of Satan, is noted as the *Riſe* of all; *no marvel, for Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of Light.*

Having ſeen the Reaſons why Satan chuſeth Scripture, as his *Tool* to work by, I ſhall next ſhew to what *baſe* Deſigns he makes it *ſubſerve.*

Firſt, He uſeth this Artifice, to beget and propagate *erroneous Doctrines.* Hence no Opinion is ſo vile, but pretends to Scripture as its Patron. The *Arians* pretend Scripture againſt the *Divinity* of Chriſt. The *Socinians*, *Pelagians*, *Papiſts*, yea and thoſe that pretend to *Inſpirations* for their *Rule*, and diſclaim the bind n; Force of thoſe *antiquated Declarations* of the Saints Conditions (as they call them) yet *conform* all their Sayings to the Scripture-expreſſion, and endeavour to prove their Miſtakes by its Authority.

Secondly, He makes *abuſed* Scripture to *encourage* ſinful Actions; he can cite Paſſages of God's *Patience* and Long-ſuffering, of his *pardoning Grace*, and Readineſs to forgive, and a Thouſand more upon no other Deſign, than the *turning of the Grace of God into Wantonneſs.* When Profeſſors turn looſe and negligent, when they adventure too far upon ſinful Pleaſures, they *lick* themſelves *whole*, by an over-forward *graſping* at ſuch Paſſages of Scripture, which Satan will, with great Readineſs, ſet upon their Hearts, and then they pretend to themſelves that their Peace is made up with God, and that they have no leſs than a *ſealed Pardon* in their Boſoms; which notwithſtanding may be known to have *only* Satan's *Hand and Seal* at it, by their *overly and formal Sorrow* for ſuch Miſcarriages, and their *Readineſs* to return to the ſame Follies again.

Thirdly, By this Imitation of the Commands and Promiſes of God, he doth ſtrangely engage ſuch as he can thus delude

delude, unto *desperate Undertakings*. The *Familists* of *Germany* were perſwaded by this Deluſion (*a*), to expoſe themſelves *unarmed* to the greateſt Hazards, upon vain Pretences of Promiſes *ſet home* upon them, as that *God would fight for them*, that they muſt *ſtand ſtill and ſee the Salvation of God*. Some of later Times have paid their Lives for their bold Miſapplication of that Promiſe, *One ſhall chaſe a Thouſand*. *Judas* of *Galilee*, and *Theudas* were prompted by Satan to gather Multitudes together, (tho' to their own Ruin) upon a vain Perſwaſion that they were *raiſed up of God*, and that God would be with them (*b*).

Fourthly, He ſometimes procures *groundleſs Peace* and Aſſurance in the Hearts of careleſs Ones, by Scripture miſapplied. Many you may meet with, who will roundly tell you a *long Story*, how they were *caſt down*, and *comforted* by ſuch a Scripture *brought to their Minds*, when (it may be much feared) they are but deceived, and that as yet God hath not ſpoken Peace to them.

Laſtly, This Way of Satan's ſetting home Scriptures, proves ſadly effectual to beget or heighten the *inward Diſtreſſes* and Fears of the Children of God. 'Tis a Wonder to hear ſome diſpute againſt themſelves, ſo nimble they be to object a Scripture againſt their Peace, (above their Reading or Ability) that you would eaſily conclude there is one at Hand that prompts them, and ſuggeſts theſe Things to their own Prejudice. And ſometime a Scripture will be ſet ſo *croſs* or *Edge-way* to their Good and Comfort, that many Pleadings, much Time, Prayers, and Diſcourſes cannot remove it. I have known ſome that have ſeriouſly profeſſed, Scriptures have been thrown into their Hearts like *Arrows*, and have with ſuch Violence *fixed a falſe Appreheſion* upon their Minds, (as that God had cut them off, that they were reprobate, damned, *&c.*) that they have born the tedious *reſtleſs Affrightments* of it for many Days, and yet the Thing itſelf, as well as the Iſſue of it, doth declare that this was not the *Fruit* of the Spirit of God, (which is a Spirit of Truth, and cannot ſuggeſt a Falſhood) but of Satan, who hath been a Liar from the Beginning.

Obſ. 15.] Obſerve laſtly, *Tho' Satan uſeth Scripture in theſe deceitful Workings, yet he never doth it faithfully.*

1ſt, Becauſe it is *againſt his Nature*, as 'tis now corrupted

(*a*) *Funcius* in his *Chronol.* tells the like of one in *Crete*, that called himſelf *Moſes*, *Anno* 434. who perſwaded the *Jews* to follow him, for the repoſſeſſing of *Canaan*. (*b*) *Joſephus* [illegible]

ed by his Fall; there is no Truth in him: *When he speaketh a Lie, he speaketh of his own*; John viii. 44. for he is a Liar, not that he *cannot* speak a Truth, but that he *usually* is a Liar, and that he never *speaks Truth*, but with a Purpose to *deceive* (a).

2*dly*, To *deal faithfully*, in urging Scriptures upon the Consciences of Men, is also contrary to his Interest; he hath a Kingdom which he endeavours to uphold. This Kingdom being directly contrary to that of Christ's (which is a Kingdom of *Light*) is therefore called a Kingdom of *Darkness*, being *maintained* and propagated only by *Lies* and Deceits. He cannot then be supposed to use Scripture faithfully, because that is the true Scepter of *Christ's Kingdom*, for then should Satan (as Christ argues, *Matth.* xii. 26.) *cast out Satan, and be divided against himself.*

This unfaithful Dealing with Scripture is *threefold.*

First, The Unfaithfulness of his *Design*, tho' he speaks what is true, yet he doth it with an *evil Mind*, aiming at one of these *three* Things.

1*st*, To *deceive* and delude. If he applies *Promises*, or insists upon the *Privileges* of God's Children, it is to make them *proud* or presumptuous; if he urge *Threatnings*, or stir up the Conscience to accuse for Sin, 'tis to bring them to *Despair*; if he object the *Law*, 'tis to *enrage* Lust; and that *Sin by the Commandment might become exceeding sinful.*

2*dly*, His Design is sometime to bring the Scripture under *Suspicion* or *Contempt*; he puts some weak Christians upon *unseasonable* or *imprudent* Use of Scripture, and then tempts others to *laugh* at them, and to despise in their Hearts those Ways of Religion, which some Zealots with too much Weakness do manage. Men are apt enough to scoff at the most serious and weighty Duties of Holiness, even when performed in a most serious Manner. If *David* put on *Sackcloth*, and afflict himself with fasting, it is presently *turned to his Reproach*, and *the Drunkards make a Song of it*; but much more Advantage hath the Devil to raise up Scorn and Loathing in the Minds of debauched Persons, by the *affected* and *unskilful* Use of Scripture. Some by a narrow Confinement of the Words *Brother* and *Sister* to those of their own *Fellowship*, (as if none else were to be owned by them) have occasioned the Scoff of *holy Brethren*, (a Phrase notwithstanding used with a *grave Seriousness* by the

(a) Etsi semel videatur verax millies est mendax & semper fallax.

the Apoſtle) in the uſual Diſcourſes of thoſe, who wait all Occaſions to harden themſelves againſt the Power of Religi- on. The like Obſervations they make of other Ways and Forms of ſpeaking, which ſome have accuſtomed themſelves unto, in a conſcientious Conformity to Scripture-phraſe: In all which the Devil obſerving the *Weakneſs* and Injudiciouſ- neſs of ſome on the one Hand, and the *ſcornful* Pride of o- thers on the other Hand; is willing to provide Matter for their *atheiſtical Jeers*, by putting all the Obligations he can upon the Conſciences of the Weak, to continue in the *Uſe of* theſe Expreſſions. For ſome Proof of this Matter, we may note the ſecret Deceit of Satan, in that literal Pro- feſſion of Chriſt to be *the Son of God*, Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34 *I know thee who thou art, the holy One of God*: Here was Truth ſpoken by him, and (one would have thought) with great Ingenuity, but yet he cunningly inſi- nuated into the Minds of the Hearers a Ground of Suſpici- on, that he was not the Son of God; and for that End calls him *Jeſus of Nazareth*, as if Chriſt had been born there; he knew well that the *Jews* expected no *Meſſiah* from *Na- zareth*, and therefore on ſet Purpoſe uſed he that Expreſſi- on, that he might draw him into Contempt. And accor- dingly we find this very Miſtake (that Chriſt was born at *Nazareth*) became an Argument againſt him, *John* vii. 41. while ſome were convinced and ſaid, *This is the Chriſt*, others ſaid, *Shall Chriſt come out of Galilee*?

3*dly*, Another Part of his Deſign in the Uſe of Scrip- tures, is to put a *Varniſh upon Hypocriſy*. He is ready to ſerve Men by putting Scripture-*Expreſſions* in their *Mouths*, and *enuring* them to a conſtant Uſe of the *Phraſes* of thoſe divine Writings, that they may *leſs ſuſpect* themſelves of the Pride, Formality and ſecret Wickedneſs of their Hearts; and to help on their Miſtakes concerning their ſpiritual Con- dition, he can urge upon their Conſciences thoſe Scriptures that ſerve to engage them in *external* Obſervances of Re- ligion. It may appear by the *Phariſees* Boaſt of faſting *twice a Week*, of *paying Tithes*, of *giving Alms*, Luke xviii. 11. that their Conſciences were ſome Ways concer- ned in theſe Things, ſo that tho' they were left without Check of Conſcience, to *devour Widows Houſes*, yet were they urged to make *long Prayers*. Suitable to this is that which *Solomon* ſpeaks of the Harlot, who to colour over her Wickedneſs, had her *Offerings* and *Vows*, and when her

Con-

Conſcience is appeaſed with theſe Performances, ſhe can excuſe herſelf in her Way of ſinning, *She eats and wipes her Mouth, and ſaith I have done no Wickedneſs*, Prov. xxx. 20. Satan doth but hereby help to *paint a Sepulchre, gild* a *Potſheard*, and to furniſh Men with Excuſes and Pretexts in their Way of ſinning. Not unlike to this was that Service which the Devil with great Readineſs performed (as I was informed from ſome of good Credit) to a young Student, who had fallen upon ſome Books of *Magick* in a *College* Library, into which having ſtoln privately one Night in Purſuit of that Study, was almoſt ſurpriſed by the *Preſident*, who ſeeing a Candle there at an unſeaſonable Time, ſuddenly opens the Door, to know who was up ſo late, in which Strait the Devil (to gratify his *Pupil* with a ready Excuſe) *ſnatcheth* away his Book, and in a Moment lays *Montanus* his Bible before him, that he might pretend that for his Imployment.

Secondly, Another Point of Satan's unfaithful Dealing with Scripture, is his *falſe Citation* of it; 'tis nothing with him to *alter*, *change*, or *leave* out ſuch a Part as may make againſt him. If he urge *Promiſes* upon Men, in order to their Security and Negligence, he *conceals the Condition of them*, and *baniſheth* the *Threatning* far from their Minds, repreſenting the Mercy of God in a falſe Glaſs, as if he had promiſed to ſave and bring to Heaven every Man upon the common and eaſy *Terms* of being *called* a Chriſtian. If it be his Purpoſe to diſquiet the Hearts of God's Children, to promote their Fears, or to lead them to Deſpair, then he *ſets Home* the *Commands* and *Threatnings*, but *hides the Promiſes* that might relieve them; and (which is remarkable) he hath ſo puzzled ſome, by ſetting on their Hearts a Piece of Scripture, that when the *next Words*, or *next Verſe* might have *eaſed* them of their Fears, and *anſwered* the ſad Objections which they raiſed againſt themſelves from thence (as if their Eyes had been holden, or as if a Miſt had been caſt over them) they have not for a long Time been *able* to conſider the *Relief* which they might have had. This *hiding* of Scripture from their Eyes (ſetting aſide what God may do for the juſt Chaſtiſement of his Childrens Folly) is effected, by the *ſtrong Impreſſion* which Satan ſets upon their Hearts, and by *holding* their Minds *down* to a *fixed Meditation* of the dreadful Inferences which he *preſents* to them

them from thence, not suffering them to *divert* their Thoughts by his incessant *Clamours* against them.

Thirdly, He unfaithfully handleth Scriptures, by *wresting* the true Import and Sense of them. We read of some, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. who *wrest the Scripture.* The Word in the Original (*a*) signifies a *racking* or torturing of it, as Men upon a Rack are stretched beyond their due Length, to a Dislocation of their Joints, and sometimes forced to spake what they never did nor intended; so are the Scriptures used. Those that do so are Satan's Scholars, and taught of him, (though in regard of the Spirit's *true* Teaching, they are called *unlearned*) which is sufficient to shew Satan's deceitful Dealing: He often lays his dead and corrupt Sense (as the Harlot did with her dead Child in the room of the living Infant) in the Place of the living Meaning of the Scripture: This may be seen evidently,

1. In *Heresies* or Errors, these are Satan's Brood, and there are none so vile (that pretend to Christian Religion) but they claim a Kindred to Scripture, and are confident on its Authority for them. Now seeing Truth is but *one*, and these Errors not only contradictory to *Truth*, but to *each* other, Satan could never spin out such Conclusions from the Divine *Oracles*, but by wresting them from their true Intendments; and he that would contemplate the great Subtilty of Satan in this his Art, need but consider what different, strange and monstrous Shapes are put upon the Scripture, by the several Heresies which march under its Colours. The *Quakers* in their Way represent it like an *old Almanack* out of Date, and withal in the Use *they make* of it, they render it as a Piece of *nonsensical* furious Roving. The *Socinians* take down the sublime Mysteries of Christ's Satisfaction, and Justification by Faith, with external Rewards and Punishments, to a Strain as low as the *Turkish Alcoran.* The *Papists* make it like a few Leaves of an imperfect Book, wanting Beginning and End, and so not fit to be set up as a *sufficient* Rule. The *Ranters* make it seem rather like Language from *Hell*, than the Commands of the pure and holy God. Some will have it to countenance most *ridiculous Inventions* in Worship, others will have it to discharge all *outward Observations* and Ordinances, as childish Rudiments! Some raise it all to the Pitch of *enigmatical* unintelligible Mysteries; others can find no more in

(*a*) στρεβλοῦσι

in the Precepts of it than in *Ariſtotle's Ethicks.* Thus by diſtorting and wreſting, Satan hath learned theſe unskilful Ones to make it ſerve their vileſt Luſts and Humours.

2. The ſame Art of wreſting Scripture is obſervable in his *ſecret Suggeſtions.* If he would encourage any in Sin, he can wreſt Scripture for that, and tell him that God is merciful, that Chriſt died for Sinners, that there is Hope of Pardon, that Saints have done the like; Things very true in themſelves, but perverted by him to another Senſe than ever they were intended to by God, who hath ſpoken theſe Things that we ſin not. If he would *diſcourage* a Saint, he can tell him, when he finds him doubting his Eſtate, that the *Fearful and Unbelieving have their Part in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimſtone,* Rev. xxi. 8. when he finds him under a *known* Sin, he tells that of the Apoſtle, *If we ſin wilfully after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sins.* When he obſerves them *diſcompoſed* and wandering in Duty, then he objects, *They draw nigh me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me.* If he ſees them *dull* and without Conſolation at the Lord's Supper, then to be ſure they hear of him; *he that eats and drinks unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himſelf,* 1 Cor. xi. 29. If he find him *bemoaning* that he is not ſo apprehenſive of Mercies or Judgments, as he would be, then he ſets home ſome ſuch Scripture as this, *This Peoples Heart is waxed groſs, and their Ears are dull of Hearing,* &c. Matth. xiii. 15. Theſe Scriptures are frequently perverted by Satan from the true and proper Meaning of them. I have had Complaints from ſeveral dejected Chriſtians, of theſe very Scriptures urged upon them to their great Trouble, when yet it was evident, that none of theſe were truly applied by Satan's Temptation againſt them.

Applic.] Theſe Things give us Warning not to take any Thing of this Nature upon *Truſt.* If Satan can ſo imitate the Spirit of God in Applications of Scripture, and bringing it to our Remembrance, we have great Reaſon to beware, leſt we be impoſed upon by Satan's Deſign clothed in Scripture Phraſe; not that I would have Men eſteem the ſecret ſetting of Scripture upon their Minds, to be in all Caſes a *Deluſion,* and to be diſregarded as ſuch. Some indeed there are that ſo *ſeverely* remark the Weakneſſes of Profeſſors of Religion, that they raiſe up a *Scorn* to that

which is of moſt neceſſary and ſerious Uſe; becauſe the Devil prevails with ſome *Hypocrites* to gild themſelves with Scripture-phraſe, and others through *imprudent Inadvertancy*, are (unknown to themſelves) beguiled by Satan, to Miſapplications of Scripture to their own Eſtate, or to other Things; they therefore decry all the *inward Workings* of the Heart, as *Fancy*, or affected *Singularity*: Theſe do but the Devil's Work. But that the Spirit of God (whom Satan treacherouſly endeavours to imitate) doth *ſet home* Scripture Commands, Threatnings and Promiſes upon the Hearts of his People, is not only atteſted by the *Experience* of all that are inwardly acquainted with the Ways of God, but is one of the great Promiſes which Chriſt hath given for the Comfort of his People in his Abſence *John* xiv. 26. *But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father ſhall ſend in my Name, he ſhall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you.* This then being granted as a firm unſhaken Truth, our Care muſt be in diſcovering and avoiding Satan's Counterfeit uſing of Scripture, and in this we ſhould be more wary;

Firſt, Becauſe we are not ſo apt to *ſuſpect* what we meet with in ſuch a Way, when 'tis brought to us in the *Language* of Scripture.

Secondly, And thoſe that are *not exerciſed* in the Scripture, will be at a *ſad Loſs* as not knowing how to extricate themſelves from ſuch Difficulties, as may ariſe to them from Satan's Sophiſtry.

Thirdly, Warineſs is alſo more neceſſary, becauſe we are inclinable to believe what *ſuits* our *Deſires*, and *Conſcience* awakened is *averſe* to the rejecting of that which anſwers its *Fears*.

Queſt. You may ſay, What is there of Direction for us in this Caſe?

Anſw. The Anſwer is ready; Two Things are given us in Charge. (1.) That we be *wiſely ſuſpicious*. A facile haſty Credulity is treacherous. Chriſt forbids, (when he foretells the riſing of falſe Chriſts, *Matth.* xxiv. 26.) the *Forwardneſs* of a ſudden Belief, taxing thereby thoſe that are preſently taken with every new Appearance. 'Tis childiſh to be carried with every Wind; we are warned alſo of this, 1 *John* iv. 1. *Believe not every Spirit.* (2.) We are commanded to bring all *Pretences* whatſoever to *Trial*, though immediate

immediate *Revelation* or *Vision* be pretended, or *extraordinary* Commiſſion, yet muſt all be brought to the Touch-ſtone, we muſt *prove all Things*, 1 Theſſ. v. 21 *and try thoſe that ſay they are Apoſtles*, Rev. ii. 2: Nay, the *Spirits* are to *be tried whether they be of God*, 1 John iv. 1.

Queſt. You will ſay, How muſt we try?

Anſw. I anſwer, God hath given a *publick*, *ſufficient* and *certain* Rule, which is the *Scripture*, and all muſt be tried by that: So that if there be *Impulſes*, or *Diſcoveries*, or *Remembrances* of Scripture upon any, it muſt not be taken for *granted* that they are of God, becauſe they *pretend* ſo high, (for ſo we ſhall make Satan Judge in his own Cauſe) but lay all to the *Line and Plummet* of the written Word, and if it anſwer not that, call it confidently a Deluſion, and reject it as *accurſed*, though it might ſeem (in other Regards) to have been ſuggeſted by an *Angel from Heaven*.

Object. But it will be ſaid, Satan pretends to this Rule, and it is Scripture that is urged by him.

Anſw. I anſwer, though it be ſo, yet he uſeth not Scripture in its *own* Intendment, and Senſe, for the Diſcovery of his unfaithful Dealing.

1*ſt*, *Compare* the Inference of the Suggeſtion with *other Scriptures*. If it be from a *dark* Scripture, compare it with thoſe that are more *plain*, and in every Caſe, ſee whether the *general Current* of the Scriptures ſpeak the ſame Thing (*a*): For if it be from Satan, he either *plays* with the *Words* and Phraſes, from doubtful and equivalent Terms making his Concluſion; or his Citation will be found *Impertinent*, or (which is moſt uſual) *contrary* to Truth or Holineſs; if any of theſe appear, by a true *Examination* of the *Import* of the Scripture which he ſeeks to abuſe, or by *comparing* it with the *Scope* and *Genius* of other Scriptures, you may certainly pronounce that it is not of God, but Satan's Deceit.

2*dly*, Conſider the *Tendency* of ſuch Suggeſtions: Let no Man ſay that this will come *too late*, or that it is an *After-game*: I do not mean that we ſhould ſtay ſo long, as to ſee the Effects; (though this is alſo a certain Diſcovery of Satan's Knavery in his higheſt Pretences; the phanatick

(*a*) *Though it was Scripture that Satan urged to Chriſt, yet he rejects his Inference as falſe, becauſe contrary to other plain Scriptures prohibiting not to tempt the Lord.*

Furies of the *German Enthuſiaſts* do now appear plain to all the World to have been *Deluſions*, by their *End*, *Fruits*, and *Iſſue*) But that *while* theſe Concluſions are *obtruded* upon us, we ſhould obſerve to what they *tend*: Which we ſhall the better know, if all *Circumſtances* round about be conſidered. Sometimes Satan doth covertly *hint* his Mind, and ſend it along with the Suggeſtion; ſometimes our *Condition* will enough declare it, and there is no Caſe but it will afford ſomething of *Diſcovery* if ſeriouſly pondered. If he either prompt us to Pride, vain Glory, or Preſumption, or that our Condition ſway us that Way, it will be ſufficient Ground of Suſpicion that 'tis Satan that then urgeth Promiſes or Privileges upon us. If we are of a wounded Spirit inclined to Diſtruſt, or if we be put on to Deſpair, it is paſt Denial, that 'tis Satan that urgeth the Threatnings, and preſſeth the Accuſations of the Law againſt us. He that *gathers* Stones, Timber, Lime, and ſuch Materials together, as are uſually imployed in Building, doth diſcover his *Intention*, before he actually build his Houſe; and thus may Satan's *End* be known by his *Preparations*, compared with the *Sway* and Inclination of our preſent *Temper*.

3*dly*, It muſt be remembred that *with* theſe Endeavours, we often *ſeek* the Face of the Lord for Help and Counſel; and that we *apply* our ſelves to ſuch of the Servants of God, as being *more knowing* than our ſelves, and *leſs prepoſſeſſed* in their Judgments (becauſe not concerned) are *better* able to ſee into the Nature of our Straits, and to help us by their Advices.

MATTH. iv. 8.

Again the Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and sheweth him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Manner of Satan's shewing the Kingdoms of the World. Of Satan's Preparations before the Motion of Sin. Of his confronting the Almighty by presumptuous Imitation; and in what Cases he doth so Of his beautifying the Object of a Temptation, and how he doth it. His Way of engaging the Affections by the Senses. Of his seeming Shyness.

THIS is the Preparation to the third Temptation; in which we have, 1. The Place where it was acted. 2. The Object set before him there.

First, The Place was *an exceeding high Mountain.* What Mountain it was, *Nebo*, *Pisgah*, or any other, 'tis needless to enquire: 'Tis of more Use to ask after the Reasons of Satan's Choice of such a Place. The Text doth clearly imply one that has the *Commodiousness of Prospect*; Satan intending to give him a View of the Kingdoms of the World, chuseth a Mountain as fittest for that End. But that this was not all the Reason, is not only intimated by some (*a*), but positively affirmed by others (*b*), who think that Satan in this imitated the like in God to *Moses*, who was called up to Mount *Nebo*, to view the Land which God promised to *Israel*. Whether these Circumstances of the Mountain, and the View of the Kingdoms of the World, were of Purpose contrived to affront God by such an Imitation, I will not be positive in it: But we may with greater Evidence affirm, that in offering the Kingdoms of the World, as Things altogether in his Disposal, he doth directly out brave God by an insolent Comparison of his Power with that of the Almighty's, whose is *the Earth and the Fulness of it*, and to whom the Sovereignty of the Disposal of it doth belong.

Secondly, That which Satan sheweth Christ from the Mountain, is said to be *the Kingdoms of the World, and the*

(*a*) *Lightfoot Harm.* in loc. (*b*) *Perkins Con.* in loc. Deut. 32. 49. and 34. 1.

the Glory of them. Here ſome buſy themſelves to conjecture what Kingdoms were thus pointed at; ſome keep ſo ſtrictly to the Word [*all*] that they are forced to take up with that Opinion, that all theſe Temptations were only in *Viſion* (*a*); for they conſider that no one Mountain in the World can give a Proſpect over one whole Hemiſphere, or if it could, yet no Eye would be able to diſcern at ſo great a Diſtance. But the Inconveniencies of this Surmiſe have been pointed at before, and 'tis enough to ſhew that the Text may admit of an Interpretation which ſhall not be incumbred with this ſuppoſed Impoſſibility.

Others reſtrain this to the Land of *Canaan*, as if Satan only ſhewed this as a famous Inſtance of the Glory of all Kingdoms. Some think the *Roman* Empire (which was then moſt flouriſhing, and lifted up its Head above other Kingdoms) was the great Bait laid before Chriſt, as if he had a Deſign to divert Chriſt from the Buſineſs of his Office, by offering him the Seat and Power of *Antichriſt* (*b*): But the Text runs not ſo favourably for any of theſe Opinions, as to conſtrain us to ſtay upon them [*Kingdoms of the World*] ſeem to intend more than *Canaan*, or the *Roman* Empire, the Word κοσμὸς uſed here, and οἰκουμένη in *Luke*, which we tranſlate *the World*, do ſo apply to one another in a mutual Accommodation, that we cannot ſtretch the World to the largeſt Senſe of the whole Glob of the Earth, becauſe 'tis expreſſed in *Luke* by οἰκουμένη, which ſignifies ſuch a Part of the World which is more cultivated and honoured by Inhabitants; nor can we ſo reſtrain it to the *Roman* Empire, (though when they ſpake their Apprehenſions of their own Empire, they ſeem to engroſs all, *Luke* ii. 1.) becauſe *Matthew* uſeth the Word κοσμὸς, a Word of greater *Freedom*. It ſeems then that *many* Kingdoms, or the *moſt conſiderable* Kingdoms of the then known World were here expoſed to his Sight. But then the Difficulty ſtill remains how the Devil could ſhew them to his Eye. That it was not a viſionary Diſcovery to his Mind hath been ſaid; ſome think he ſhewed theſe partly by ocular Proſpects of thoſe *Cities*, *Caſtles*, *Towns*, *Vineyards*, and *Fields* that were near, as a *Compend* of the whole; and partly by Diſcourſe of the Glory, Power, and Extent of other Kingdoms that were out of the Reach of the Eye: But becauſe the Expreſſion

(*a*) Hob's *Leviathan*, c. 45. p. 354. (*b*) *Lightfoot Harm.* in loc.

preſſion which *Luke* adds [*in a Moment of Time* †,] intimates that the Way which Satan took, was different from common proſpecting or beholding; others are not ſatisfied with that Solution of the Difficulty, but fly to this Suppoſition, that Satan uſed only Jugling and Deluſion, by framing an *airy Horizon* before the Eyes of Chriſt; ſhewing not the *Kingdoms themſelves*, but a *Phantaſm* of his own making. But ſeeing this might have been done in any Place, and that an *high Mountain* was choſen for furthering the Proſpect, I think 'tis ſafeſt to conclude that the Proſpect was *ocular* (*a*), and not *phantaſtical* but real, only helped and aſſiſted by Satan's Skill and Art, as a great *Naturaliſt*, and as a Prince of the Power of the Air, by which Means, in Reflections, or extraordinary Proſpectives, he might diſcover Things at vaſt Diſtances; which we may the rather fix upon, becauſe we know what Helps for Proſpect, Art hath diſcovered by Glaſſes and Teleſcopes, by which the Bodies of the Sun, Moon, and Planets (at ſuch unſpeakable Diſtance from us) have in this latter Age been diſcovered to us, beyond ordinary Belief. And we have Reaſon to think that Satan's Skill this Way far exceeds any Thing that we have come to the Knowledge of, and ſo might make real Diſcoveries of Countries far remote, more than we can well imagine.

Theſe Things thus explained, I ſhall note ſeveral Obſervations.

Obſ. 1.] *Firſt*, If we conſider this great Preparation that Satan makes, as introductory to the Temptation to follow, we may obſerve, *That where Satan hath a ſpecial Deſign, he projects and makes ready all Things relating to the Temptation before he plainly utter his Mind.* He provides his Materials before he builds, and lays his Train before he gives Fire. What is his Method we may learn from the Practice of thoſe that are trained up in his Service. They in *Rom.* xiii. *ult.* are ſaid to *make Proviſion for the Fleſh* (*b*), to fore-contrive their Sins, and to project all Circumſtances of Time, Place, Occaſion, and Advantage for their Accompliſhment. This is not to be underſtood of all Sins; for in ſome that are inward in the Mind, (as vain Thoughts, Pride of Heart, &c.) there needs not ſuch Proviſions; we may ſay of them, *their Times are always*

† ἐν σιγμῇ χρόνου. (*a*) *So alſo* Lucas Brugenſis *thinks* in loc. (*b*) πρόνοια.

always, and in many Cases the *House is swept and garnished* to his Hand, he finds all Things ready, by the Forwardness of those who are free in his Service, and the sudden accidental Concurrence of Things. But where the Temptation is solemn, and where the Thing designed (in the perfecting of it) relates to exterior Acts, there he useth this Policy, to have all in Readiness (though it cost him the Labour of *compassing Sea and Land* for it) before he expressly speak his Purposes. His Reasons are these;

First, If Things necessary for the Encouragement and Accomplishment of a Temptation, lay *out of the Way*, and were not at Hand, his Suggestions would perish as soon as they were born, and would be rejected as impossible or inconvenient. To tempt a Man to steal, when he knows not where, nor how, or to revenge when he hath no Enemy, nor Provocation, seem to be no other than if they should be commanded to remove a Mountain, or to fly in the Air, which would quickly be declined, as Motions affording no Ground of Entertainment: And therefore that his Temptations may not bring a Reason of Refusal with them, as being unseasonable, he takes Care to fit his Servants with all Things requisite for the Work he puts them upon.

Secondly, As Temptations (of this Kind) would be no Temptations, (because not feasible) without their Preparations; so must we not think that it is the bare Suggestion of Satan that makes a Temptation to pierce. The Reason of its *Prevalency* is not barely because Satan breaks such a Motion to us, but because such a Motion comes accomplished with all suitable *Preparations*. When it prevails, it is the sinful Motion that wounds, but *Preparations* are as the Feathers that wing his Arrows, without which they would neither fly nor pierce.

Applic.] Let this, *first*, renew our Caution and Suspicion in every Thing, and every *Place*, that Satan is at Work against us, though we see no visible Snare.

Let it put us upon such a watchful Carefulness in every of our Ways, that we may resolve to undertake nothing for which we have not a good and warrantable Reason at Hand, that if our Conscience say to us, *What dost thou here?* we may be able to give a good Account.

Secondly, If we mind the Behaviour of Satan in these *Preparations* and Offers, we see him act after the *Pat-*

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tern of higheſt Sovereignty, diſpoſing of earthly Kingdoms at ſuch a Rate, as if all Power were in his Hand. Hence we may obſerve, *That when Satan tempts to Sin of higheſt Contempt and Inſolence againſt God, he then thinks it concerns him to bear himſelf out, by confronting the Almighty, in imitating his Authority and Power.* [Obſ. 2.

This Carriage of Satan is not to be found in all his Temptations: For in moſt Caſes he acts with greateſt Secrecy, and as a Thief that is afraid of Diſcovery, he uſeth all Ways poſſible for Concealment; but when he ſets up himſelf as *the God of the World*, and ſtands in Competition with the Lord, claiming an Intereſt in the Fear and Devotion of Men, then he boldly avoucheth himſelf, and labours to out-vie God in Point of Greatneſs, that he might poſſeſs them with a Belief that he only ought to be feared. This Arrogancy of Satan againſt God, may be ſeen in three Things:

Firſt, In *imitating divine Ordinances* and Inſtitutions. There is not any Part of divine Worſhip, the Obſervation whereof God hath enjoyned to Men, but Satan hath ſet up ſomething like it for himſelf. As God appointed his *Temple*, *Prieſts*, *Altars*, *Sacrifices*, *Offerings*, *Tithes*, *Sanctuaries*, *Sacraments*, &c. ſo hath Satan had his *Temples*, *Prieſts*, *Altars*, *Sacrifices*, *Offerings*, *Sanctuaries*, *Sacraments*, &c. This is ſufficiently known to any that read his Hiſtories; and I could give a full Account of it from Heathen Authors, but that I have done already when I ſpoke of Satan's Subtilty in promoting Idolatry in the World I ſhall only add here that which *Varro* relates of the Books of *Numa Pompilius* (*a*), which were caſually caſt up by the Plough of one *Terentius*, coming too near the Sepulchre of *Numa*, where theſe Books had been buried. This *Numa* was the ſecond King of the *Romans*, who inſtituted the Rites and Ceremonies of *Pagan Worſhip* for his Subjects, and in theſe Books, (which he thought fit to conceal, by burying them with him) he had laid open the Bottom of theſe deviliſh Myſteries, ſo that when they were brought to the Senate, they (judging them unfit to be known) adjudged them to the Fire. Which is a clear Ground of Suſpicion that he had there diſcovered ſo much of the Cauſes of theſe Rites, or of the Way whereby he came to be inſtructed

(*a*) Varro de cultu Deorum.

inſtructed in them, that the publick Knowledge thereof conſiſted not with the Intereſt of their Heatheniſh Religion. This Conjecture *Auſtin* (*a*) hath of the Matter, who alſo notes, that *Numa* pretended familiar Converſe with the Nymph *Ægeria*, as a plauſible Cover to that deviliſh Art of *Hydromantia*, by which he was inſtructed in ordering the Ceremonies of Idolatry, which he eſtabliſhed.

Secondly, Satan with no leſs Arrogancy, takes upon him to imitate God, in his *Acts of Power* for the *countenancing* of his Worſhip in the World. He had his Miracles frequently, of which I have ſpoken elſewhere, ſo had he his Oracles, as at *Delphos* and other Places. Here it ſhall ſuffice to note, that as the ſending the Lord Jeſus into the World, furniſhed with ſuch Power of doing Miracles for the Confirmation of that Office and Authority, which he had received from God, for the Redemption of Man, was the higheſt Inſtance that can be given of the mighty Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of God; ſo Satan ſet himſelf with greateſt Induſtry to imitate that. Chriſt was almoſt no ſooner aſcended to the Father, but we hear of *Simon Magus*, Acts viii. 9. who was cried up as an Inſtance of the *great Power of God*; and after that at *Rome* he gave out that he was *God*, confirming the People in ſuch a Belief, by the ſtrange Things which he there did among them, that a Statue was erected for his Honour, with this Inſcription, *To* Simon *a great God.* Long after this the Devil raiſed up *Appollonius Tyanæus*, a Man of an abſtemious and commendable Life; him the Devil did deſign to match Chriſt in his Miracles, which were ſo many and ſo ſtrange, that *Philoſtratus* doth not only compare him to Chriſt, but prefer him as the more honourable Perſon. Chriſt himſelf foretold this Stratagem of Satan, that he ſhould raiſe up *falſe Chriſts* with *lying Signs and Wonders*. And to omit Inſtances of former Days, it is not beyond the Memory of moſt of you, that the Devil renewed this Policy in *James Nayler*, who in a blaſphemous Imitation of *Chriſt's riding to* Jeruſalem, rode to *Briſtol* with a great Company before him, crying, *Holy, holy*, and *Hoſanna to the Son of* David, and ſtrewing the Way with Branches of Trees: The Authority that was then, taking Notice of this and other blaſphemous Outrages, ſentenced him to exemplary Puniſhment: But here alſo the Devil renewed his Mockery; for a cer-

(*a*) De Civit. Dei, *l.* 7. *c.* 34. & 35.

a certain Citizen of *London* of good Note, being overcome with Deluſion, printed a Book of *Nayler*'s Sufferings, wherein the Devil had Opportunity to vent his Malice more fully; for he compared all the Parts of his Puniſhment to the Sufferings of Chriſt; his *Whipping* he ſaid was, that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by *Matthew*, *And Pilate delivered him to be ſcourged*; his *ſtigmatizing* he ſaid was, that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the Prophet, *His Viſage was marred more than any Man's*; the *boring* of his Tongue with an hot Iron, he ſaid was the fulfilling of that, *And they crucified him*: And after other Particulars of Compariſon, (in all which he equalled him to Chriſt) he at laſt takes notice that the Multitude of Spectators held off their Hats, while his Tongue was bored thorow, (a Thing common in a Croud, to give Opportunity of Sight to thoſe that are behind) and to this Act he applies that of the *Evangeliſts*, *The Vail of the Temple was rent from the Top to the Bottom.*

Thirdly, In Acts of Empire and Sovereignity he imitates God; that is, as God propounds himſelf as the only Lord God, and enjoins himſelf to be worſhipped accordingly, by Promiſes of Advantage in caſe of Obedience, and Threatnings of Miſeries and Plagues in Caſe of Diſobedience; ſo doth Satan ſet up himſelf in the World as God to be adored and worſhipped, and him do all Idolaters worſhip, as God teſtifies, *Deut.* xxxii. 17. *They ſacrificed unto Devils, not to God.* Pſal. cvi. 37. *They ſacrificed their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils.* 1 Cor. x. 20. *The Things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to Devils, and not to God.* And tho' it be true, that many of theſe blind Worſhippers did not formally worſhip the Devil, but thought they had worſhipped God, yet by ſuch cunning did he engage them to take up with Ways of Worſhip of his preſcribing, that it was in Reality a Service done to him. But beſides this, in thoſe Places of the World, where he hath greater Power, he formally propounds himſelf to be worſhipped, and doth accordingly often appear to them in a viſible Shape; ſo that many of theſe blind Heathens acknowledge *two Gods*, one good, and another cruel and hurtful, which latter they ſay they muſt worſhip, leſt he deſtroy or harm them. By this Satan conteſts with God for an Empire in the World; and to promote it the more, he ſometimes deals by fair Promiſes of Riches, Advancement,

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Pleaſure, and ſuch other Baits, to allure Men to his profeſſed Service; thus are *Witches* drawn to a Compact with him. Thus *Sylveſter* the Second gave up himſelf to the Devil for the *Popedom*, and ſo did ſeveral others. When this is not enough to prevail, he adds *Menacings*, and breathes forth cruel Threatnings, by which Means many Heathens are kept in Awe by him, and worſhip him, *ne noceat*, for no other Reaſon but to preſerve themſelves from Hurt by him. In this Temptation he propounds himſelf to Chriſt as the Object of divine Worſhip, and boaſts of the Kingdoms of the World as Things of his Diſpoſal; by which he ſeeks to draw him to fall down before him.

This Courſe Satan takes for theſe *Reaſons*.

Firſt, As this proud and malicious *Oſtentation* of his Power, is ſome Kind of *Satisfaction* to his revengeful Humour againſt God: So *ſecondly*, He doth hereby raiſe up himſelf and his wicked Inſtitutions of *Idolatry*, into Credit and Eſteem with Men. *Thirdly*, As this is a *Mockery* to true Religion, and a Scorn caſt upon the *Ways* of God's Service, to bring it into *Diſgrace* and *Diſcredit*: So *fourthly*, By this *Means* he *hardens* the *Hearts* of Men againſt God. This was the Conſideration by which *Pharaoh* hardened his *Heart*, when *Moſes* turned his Rod into a Serpent, changed *Waters* to Blood, and did ſo many Signs before him; his *Magicians* did the like; upon which the King might thus reaſon with himſelf, that *Moſes* had no other Power, but what his *Magicians* had, tho' he might think him a more skilful *Magician*; and therefore there was no Reaſon to believe his *Meſſage* as being from God, ſeeing his *Miracles* might be no other than the Effect of his Art, to countenance a pretended Command from Heaven.

Applic.] This Inſolency of Satan may inform us, *Firſt*, Of the great *Patience* of God, that ſees theſe outragious Mockings, and yet doth not by a ſtrong Hand put a Stop to them. *Secondly*, Of the great *Power* and *Pride* of Satan, that he both can (tho' not without Permiſſion from God) and dare attempt Things of this Nature. *Thirdly*, The great Power of Deluſion that can ſo blind Men, that they not only are drawn to act a Part in ſuch Deſigns, but believe confidently a divine Impulſe and heavenly Warrant for their ſo doing. *Fourthly*, The *miſerable Slavery* of ſuch Vaſſals of Satan, that are thus led by him, who are therefore

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ſadly to be pitied and lamented, as being under ſuch ſtrong Chains of Captivity.

Obſ. 3] *Thirdly*, We cannot paſs by the *Art* which the Devil here uſeth to ſet off the Temptation, and to make it plauſible; he ſets before him the World in all its *Glory*. Here obſerve, *That Satan in his Temptaions to worldly Pleaſures, doth uſually paint the Object with all its utmoſt Beauty.*

When I have ſometime obſerved a *Mountebank* upon a Stage, giving exceſſive Commendations of a *trivial* Medicine, aſſerting it good almoſt for *every* Diſeaſe, and with a great many Lies and Boaſtings, *enforcing* it upon the credulous Multitude: It hath put me in Mind of this ſpiritual *Mountebankry* of the Devil; how doth he *gull* and delude the Fooliſh, by laying out the Pleaſures of Sin? And no otherwiſe doth he keep them at a *gazing Admiration* of worldly Pomp, Delights and Satisfaction, which he promiſeth them from Iniquity, than the Serpent *Scyrale* doth with Paſſengers, whom ſhe ſtays, by amazing them with her beautiful olours, till ſhe have ſtung them. The Art of Satan in this Matter lies in four Things.

1*ſt*, If there be any Thing that can be called a *Delight*, or may any Way conduce to a Satisfaction in any *Sin*, he will be ſure to ſpeak of it in its *higheſt Praiſes*; he not only ſtreacheth his *Rhetorick* to the Height in giving Commendations to the moſt noted Pleaſures that Men propound to themſelves: But he ſeeks out the *hidden* Things of Delight, and raiſeth in Men an *Itch* of Deſire after the Improvement of Delight, by the *Contrivances* of Wit or Art. Thus he tells them of Jollity, raviſhing Mirth, high Satisfaction, and (if they will believe him) of unſpeakable Delight to be had by giving themſelves up to the World, and the Courſe of it. Nay he hides nothing that will bear any Praiſe, the *leaſt* Advantage, the *ſmalleſt* Gratification that any Sin can afford to human Deſire, he will be ſure to ſpeak of it.

2*dly*, He carries on this Deſign by *Lying*, he promiſeth more than ever Sin can give, and he ſends his *Proſelytes* out after Sin under the *higheſt Expectations*, and when they come to enjoy it, they often find the Pleaſure *falls ſhort* of his Boaſt; he *whiſpers Honours*, Preferments, and Riches, in the Ear of their Hearts, and often pays them with *Poverty* and Diſgraces, and gives them *pro theſauro carbones*,

Stones

Stones for *Bread*, a *Serpent* for a *Fish*. Witches give frequent Accounts of Satan's lying Promises, he tells them of Feasts, of Gold, of Riches, but they find themselves deluded; he sends them oft hungry away from those Banquets, so that they have no more than when a Man *dreams* he eats. He gives that which seems Gold in Appearance, but at last they find it to be Slaits or Shells. We find in this Temptation he is liberal and large in his Offers to Christ, and what he requires he will have in *present Payment*, but the Reward for the Service is *future*: 'Tis his Business to engage Men in Sin, by his *Promise* of Advantage; but being once engaged, he takes not himself concerned in Honour or Ingenuity for *Performance*. Hence doth the Scripture fitly call the Pleasures of Sin, *lying Vanities*, a *vain Shew*, a *Dream*, thereby warning Men from a forward Belief of Satan's Promises, in that they find by Experience they shall be at last but Lies and Disappointments.

3*dly*, To make his Bait more taking, he conceals all the *Inconveniencies* that may attend these worldly Delights. He offers here the Kingdoms of the World to Christ, as if all were made up of Pleasure; these Cares, Troubles, and Vexations, that attend Greatness and Rule he mentions not; their Burden, Hazard, and Disquiet he passeth over. Thus in comm on Temptations, he is careful to hide from Men the Miseries that follow these empty Pleasures: So that often Men do not consider the Mischief, till *a Dart strike through their Liver*, Prov. vii. 23. and till a *dear-bought Experience* doth inform them of their Mistakes.

4*thly*, His Power and Work upon the Fancies of Men, is none of the least of his Ways, whereby he advanceth the Pleasures of Sin. That he hath such a Power hath been discoursed before, and that a Fancy *raised* to a great Expectation, makes Things appear *otherwise* than what they are, is evident from *common Experience*; the *Value* of most Things depends rather upon *Fancy* than the internal Worth of them, and Men are more engaged to a Pursuit of Things by the *Estimation* which *Fancy* hath begot in their Minds, than by *certain* Principles of Knowledge. Children by Fancy have a Value of their Toys, and are so powerfully swayed by it, that Things of far greater Price cannot stay their Designs, nor divert their Course. Satan knows that the best of Men are sometimes childish, apt to be led about by their Conceits, and apt in their Conceits

ceits to apprehend Things far otherwise than what they are in Truth. Hence is it (as one observes (*a*) that of *Thousands* of Men that return from *Jerusalem*, or from Mount *Sion*, or from the River *Jordan*, scarce can we find *one*, which brings back the Admiration which he had conceived before he had seen them. Fancy doth *pre-occupate* the Mind with an high Opinion of Things, and these exorbitant Imaginations pass to such an Excess, that Men think to find a Satisfaction beyond the Nature of these Pleasures they aim at, which hath these *two* Inconveniencies, the *one*, that this *effects* and draws as powerfully, as if they were all as *real* and high as they are conceited to be; the *other*, that Sight and Fruition *takes away* the Estimation, and by a Disappointment, doth deaden and dull the Affections to what may be really found there. Thus Satan by one Deceit makes Men believe that Sin hath Pleasure, which indeed it hath not, and by that Belief *leads* them on powerfully to endeavour an Embracement of them, and at last urgeth them with a *Delusion*.

Applic]. In Opposition to this Deceit of the Devil, we must learn to esteem worldly Delights as *low* as he would value them *high*. And to this Purpose the Scripture speaks of them, in undervaluing Language, calling worldly Pomp, an *Opinion*, a *Phantasy*, a *Fashion*, or *Figure* (*b*), an *Imagination* rather than a Reality; and further injoyns us not to *admire* these Things in others, not to *envy* them that Enjoyment of them, nor to *fret* at our Want of them, much less to be *transported* with any angry Passion about them, nor to concern ourselves in any *earnest* Pursuit of them (*c*).

Obs 4] *Fourthly*, Satan in this Temptation did not bravely speak of these Things, nor only make an Offer in Discourse, but he thought it most conduceable to his Design, to present them *to his Sight*; he knew full well, that the Heart is more affected by *sensible Discoveries*, than by *rational Discourses*.

Note here, *That Satan in Temptations of worldly Pleasure, endeavours to engage the Affections by the Senses.*

That 'tis Satan's great Business to work upon the Affections, I have shewed at large. Here he endeavoured to prepare the *Affections* of Christ, that so the Motion (when

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(*a*) D'Espaigne *popular Errors*, § 1. cap. 4. (*b*) Δόξα. Φαντασία. Σχῆμα. (*c*) Isal. xxxvii. 1. and xlix. 16. Jer. xlv. 5.

it came) might not *die*, as a Spark falling upon wet Tinder, but that the Affections being ſtirred up, might *cheriſh* the Offer, and that the Offer by a *mutual Warmth*, might more *enflame* the Affections that were heated before.

To this End he works by the Senſes, and would have Chriſt's *Eye* to raiſe his *Affections* of Love, Deſire, Hope, and whatever elſe might wing his Soul to Activity. There is a great *Connection* betwixt the Senſes and the Affection, the Senſes bring *Intelligence* unavoidably, and are apt to ſtir up our Powers to Action: As the *Jackal* is ſaid to hunt the Prey for the *Lion*, ſo do the Senſes for the Affections, and both for Satan.

It is alſo remarkable, that Satan endeavouring to make the Eyes of Chriſt Traitors to his Affections, and that he thinking it neceſſary to give him a View of what he proffered him, ſhould not give him *Time* to take a *full Survey* of theſe Kingdoms, but ſhould *huddle* it up in ſuch an *Haſte*, that all (as *Luke* tells us) was done in a *Moment of Time*: Was Satan in Haſte? Or was he unwilling to part with what he ſo liberally proffered? Surely no, but this *tranſient View* was his *Subtilty*, to entice him the more, and to *enflame* his Heart with greater Deſires.

Obſ. 5.] Obſerve then, *That where Satan is moſt liberal in his Proffers, he there manageth his Overtures of Advantage with a ſeeming Shyneſs.* And this he doth, *1ſt*, To *heighten* the Worth of them in our Eſtimation, as if they were *Jewels* not to be gazed at, or *curious Pieces*, not fit to be expoſed to common View. *2dly*, By this Art he makes Men more *eager* in the Purſuit. Our natural *Curioſity* preſſeth us with great Earneſtneſs after Things of *difficult* Acceſs, and we have alſo ſtrange Deſires kindled in us from a *Prohibition* (a), ſo that what we liſt not to *chuſe* if we have a Liberty of Enjoyment; when we are forbidden, we are troubled with *impatient Longings* for it, and cannot be at Quiet till we do enjoy it.

When Satan makes *nice* with Men, offering the Pleaſures of the World, and yet hedging up the Way with Difficulties: They ſhould make no other Conſtruction of it, but that Satan doth (ſo far as he is concerned) more *ſtrongly entice* them (*b*). He plays at *Peep* with them, that he may make them more earneſt to follow him, and to *bid high* for the Poſſeſſion of theſe Delights.

CHAP.

(*a*) Nitimur inveitum (*b*) Malo me *Galatea* petit. ::: Et fugit ad ſalices, & ſe cupit ante videri.

CHAP. XIX.

Satan's Ends in tempting Christ to fall down and worship him. Of blasphemous Injections. What Blasphemy is. The Ways of Satan in that Temptation, with the Advantages he takes therein, and the Reason of urging Blasphemies upon Men. Consolations to such as are concerned in such Temptations. Advice to such as are so afflicted.

THESE Observations, which the *Preparation* to the Temptation hath afforded us, being dispatched, the *Temptation itself* follows, which is this, *Fall down and worship me.*

This Motion, from such an one as *Satan*, to such an one as *Christ*, who was holy and undefiled, God and Man, seems to be an incredible Piece of *Arrogancy*, Pride and Malice. For to propound himself as the Object of divine Worship, was certainly a *desperate* Assault. It includes (1.) The highest *Blasphemy*. (2.) The grossest *Idolatry* imaginable (*a*) (both these are frequently noted as the Design of this Temptation:) But (3.) The Comprehension of this Motion takes in the whole *withdrawing of the Mind from God and Religion*, or the Care of the Soul and eternal Life; in which Sense Satan doth frequently practise this Temptation upon Men by the Motive of worldly Pleasures. I shall consider the Temptation first as blasphemous, and so it will give us this Observation.

Obs. 6.] *That the best of God's Children may be troubled with most vile and hideous blasphemous Injections.*

Blasphemy in the largest Sense, is any Thing spoken or done, by which the *Honour* and Fame of God may be *wounded* or *prejudiced*; but the *Formality* of Blasphemy lies in the *Purpose or Intendment of reproaching God.* Such was the Blasphemy of the *Israelitish* Woman's Son recorded in *Levit.* xxiv. 11. where Blaspheming is explained by the Addition of the Word *Cursing*, which in the Original (*b*) comes from a Word that signifies to *set Light by one.* So that hence, and from the Circumstances of the Story, we may safely conjecture, that this Man having an *Egyptian* to his Father (which probably might in Scorn (*c*) be objected

(*a*) *Perkin's Combate* in loc. *Musculus* in loc. (*b*) PHALAL. (*c*) Levis, nullius ponderis, leviter de aliquo sentire. *Jackson* in loc.

to him by his contending Adversary) he more readily might be drawn out to vilify the true God: But (be it what it will) it was certainly more than that Blasphemy which the *Rabbins* fancy to be in the Repetition of naming the Word *Jehovah* (which in Reverence they either leave out (as when they say, *the Arm of the Almighty* (a)) or change it into some other, as *Adonai* or the like:) And accordingly we may observe, that *reproaching* God, and *blaspheming* God are joined together, as *Psal.* xliv. 16. *Isa* xxxvii. 23.

In Blasphemy, (as the *Matter*) there must be Thoughts, *Words* or *Actions* that may *aptly express* a Contempt or Reproach of God; so also (as to the *Form* of it) there must be an *Intendment* of reproaching. Now, tho' this be a Sin which the Heart of a Servant of God would most abhor, yet Satan doth sometimes trouble the best with it. We have an Instance in *Job*, his Design was to bring him to curse God, for so he professeth in express Terms, *Chap.* i. 11. and ii. 5. *Lay thine Hand upon him, and he will curse thee to thy Face:* And in Prosecution of this his Boast, he breaks the Matter plainly to him, by his Wife, *Chap.* ii. 9. *Curse God and die.* Whatever may be spoken of the Word, as signifying *Blessing* (tho' some affirm the Word *BARECH* in the proper Idiom of that Language, (and not by an *Antiphrasis* or *Euphemismus*, as some think (*b*)) signifies as properly to *curse* as to *bless*, and is determinable to its Signification either Way by the Circumstances of the Place) or whatever Men endeavour to excuse his Wife, 'tis plain not only by *Job*'s Answer that it was evil Counsel, but also by Satan's avowed Design that it was directly for cursing God. Besides this Instance, if we consider the Expression of *fiery Darts*, Eph. vi. we shall find that this Temptation is more common to all Sorts of Christians than we would imagine; 'tis plain that these Words allude to the *poisoned Arrows*, which *Scythians* and others used; these not only wounded but poisoned, and the Venom enflamed with a fiery Heat the Part or Member pierced. By this Similitude it must be granted, that not *common* Temptations are hereby understood, but such as were more than ordinarily hurtful, vexing and dangerous: It may be *Persecutions* are one of these Darts (*c*), but all reckon Temptations of *spiritual Terrors*, and *Blasphemy* to be undoubtedly pointed at.

The

(*a*) *Paol.* Synopsis Crit. in loc. (*b*) Seldenus, Leigh. Cr. Sacr. (*c*) *Beins* in loc. *Arrowsmith* Tract. Sacr. *l.* 2, *c.* 8.

The Ways of Satan in this Temptation are three.

First. He endeavours to bring Men to blaſpheme, by *ſecret* and ſubtile Ways of enſnaring them, and this is moſtwhat practiſed in *conſequential* and covert Blaſphemies. When tho' Men do not directly intend an *open Out rage* againſt God, yet Satan brings them to that which might be ſo *interpreted.* This ſeems to have been the Caſe of *Job*'s *Sons*, according to his Jealouſy of them, *Job* i. 5. *It may be my Sons have ſinned, and curſed God in their Heart*; not that they were open Blaſphemers, for they were ſurely better educated, neither doth *Job* expreſs ſuch a Fear of them; but that in their *Mirth* their Hearts might have been ſo *looſned from the Fear of God*, that they might be tempted to *undue* Thoughts of God, *ſlighting* his Threatnings or Goodneſs. To this Purpoſe *Broughton* tranſlates (*a*), *They have little bleſſed God in their Hearts.* The ſame Thing we may obſerve in *Job* himſelf, when the Devil could not prevail with him to *charge God fooliſhly*, Job. i. 22. yet he preſſed him ſo hard by his Miſeries, that he hoped at laſt to bring him to utter the Anguiſh of his Mind in impatient and reflecting Expreſſions, and ſo far prevailed, that he bitterly *curſeth the Day wherein he was born*, Job ii. 3 and wiſheth that he had *given up the Ghoſt when he came out of the Belly*: Which tho' it came far ſhort of what Satan had boaſted of in his *Atchievement* againſt him, yet it had ſuch an unwarrantable Tendency that Way, that when his Friend *Eliphaz* took Notice of his Expreſſions, as ſavouring of too much Diſtruſt, he is forced to make *Apology* for himſelf, and to excuſe it by the Deſperateneſs of his Condition; *Job* vi. 26. *Do you imagine to reprove Words, and the Speeches of one that is deſperate.* In ſuch Caſes the Devil provokes Men beyond their Intentions to ſpeak in their Haſte ſo inconſiderately, that they know not, or mind not the juſt Conſequence of their Speeches. It was a *Degree* of Blaſphemy in *David*, to ſay (tho' in his Haſte) *that all Men were Liars*; it was an unbelieving Reflection on the Promiſe given him by *Samuel.* In *Mal.* iii. 13. the People did not believe that they had *ſpoken ſo much againſt God*, when yet their *Words* had been *ſtout againſt him.*

Secondly, Satan endeavours this by violent *Injections* of blaſphemous Thoughts that are *directly* ſuch. In this I ſhall note to you,

(*a*) *Caryl* in loc.

1*ſt*, That the *vileſt* Thoughts of God, of his Ways and Providences, of Scripture, and of Chriſt, are frequently ſuggeſted; Things of *greateſt Outrage* againſt Heaven, and Contempt of the Almighty, as *Bernard* expreſſeth it, *Terribilia de fide, horribilia de divinitate*; as that there is *no God*, or that he is *not juſt*, or *not faithful* to his Promiſes; or that Chriſt was but an *Impoſtor*: He ſticks at nothing in this Kind, tho' never ſo contrary to the Hope and Perſwaſion of thoſe whom he thus moleſts.

2*dly*, Theſe are frequently *reiterated* upon them, and their Minds ſo troubled by them, that they cannot free themſelves from ſuch Thoughts, but he *follows* on, and *clamours* in their Ears (as *Gerſon* obſerves (*a*) *Nega Deum, maledic Deo*, deny God, curſe God.

3*dly*, And this with ſo great a *Force* and *Impetuoſity*, that they are compelled to *form* theſe Thoughts in their *Minds*, and to ſpeak *contrary* to what they would; as if their Thoughts and Tongues were not under their *own Government*, the Devil not ſatisfying himſelf to bear in theſe Thoughts upon them, but he endeavours, as it were, to make them *ſay after him*, and to caſt his Suggeſtions into their *own Mould*, that ſo they might ſeem properly to be their own: And this they are forced to whether they will or no, even then when their *Minds* are filled with *Horror*, their *Heart* with *Grief*, and their *Body* with *Trembling*. I have diſcourſed with ſome who have bitterly complained that their Tongues and their Thoughts ſeemed not to be their own, but that Satan *ruled* them at his *Pleaſure*; and that when in Oppoſition to the Temptation they would have formed their Tongues to ſpeak, *Bleſſing of God*, they have ſpoken *Curſing* inſtead of *Bleſſing*; and that when a blaſphemous Thought had been *caſt* into their Mind, they could not be at reſt till they had *thought it again*.

4*thly*, Theſe troubleſome Temptations are oft of *long Continuance*. *Joannes Climacus* tells us of a *Monk* (a) that was troubled with blaſphemous Thoughts for *twenty Years* together, and could not quit himſelf of them, tho' he had macerated his Body with Watchings and Faſtings. Some have them *going* away, and *returning* again by *Fits*, according as the Prevalency and Ferment of their *Melancholy* gives Satan the Advantage of dealing thus with them. For if we enquire why it is thus, eſpecially with the Children of God, we

(*a*) Tom 4. Col. 973. (*b*) Scala Paradiſi. gradu. 23.

we muſt *partly* reſolve it into the *unſearchable Wiſdom of God*, who for holy Ends of *teaching* and *diſciplining* his Servants, permits Satan thus to moleſt them; and *partly* into thoſe *particular Advantages* which Satan hath againſt them, according to the Variety of their *Conditions*, which uſually are theſe:

1*ſt*. He takes Advantage of ſuch *bodily Diſtempers*, as do deprive Men of the Uſe of their *Reaſon*, as *Fevers*, *Frenzies*, *Madneſs*; in theſe he oft forms the Tongues of Men to horrid blaſphemous Speeches.

2*dly*, A Preſſure of outward *Afflictions* gives him his deſired Opportunity, and this he knows to be generally ſo ſucceſsful, that he promiſed himſelf by this Means a Victory over *Job*. Ordinarily *Straits* and Miſeries do produce *Blaſpheming*, Iſa. viii. 21. the Prophet notes, that when the People ſhould be *hardly beſtead and hungry*, they ſhould *fret themſelves, and curſe their King and their God, and look upward*, as avouching what they had done.

3*dly*, Worldly *Plenty*, Fulneſs and Pleaſure lay often Foundations of this Temptation; when their Cups are *full*, and their Hearts *high*, Satan can eaſily make them ſet their *Mouth againſt Heaven*. A proud Heart will readily ſay, *our Tongue is our own*, or *who is the Lord?* This was the Engine which the Devil managed (if it were as *Job* ſuſpected) againſt the Sons and Daughters of *Job*, to make them curſe God in their Hearts; and by this did he ſeek to prevail upon Chriſt in this blaſphemous Temptation.

4*thly*, A *melancholy* Diſtemper doth uſually invite Satan to give blaſphemous Suggeſtions; the *diſturbed* and *pliable* Fancies of ſuch are the Advantages which he improves againſt them.

5*thly*, Inward *Terrors* and Diſtreſſes of *Conſcience* are alſo an Occaſion to Satan to move them (as by a deſperate Humour) to utter hard Things of God, and againſt themſelves.

But there is yet a *third* Way by which Satan tempts Men to Blaſpheming, by *ſudden Glances* of *blaſphemous Imaginations*, which like Lightnings do aſtoniſh the Heart, and then ſuddenly vaniſh; theſe are very common, and the beſt of Men obſerve them frequently. Satan ſeems as it were rather to *frolick* and *ſport* himſelf in theſe Suggeſtions, than to intend a *ſerious* Temptation; their Danger is not ſo much, yet are they not to be *deſpiſed*, leſt theſe often Viſits (careleſly entertained, and not diſmiſſed with *juſt Abhor-*

venoy) do secretly *envenom* the Soul, and prepare it for stronger Assaults.

I shall next enquire into the Reasons of this Trouble, which Satan gives the Children of God.

1. These Temptations are very *affrighting*, tho' they prevail not, yet they are full of perplexing Annoyance. *Corrupt Nature* startles at them, and receives them not without Dread and Horrour; 'tis sadly troublesome to hear *others* blaspheme God. *The Reproaches of those that reproached thee* (saith *David*) *fell upon me*; it was as a *Sword in his Bones*, to hear the blasphemous Scoffs of the Wicked, when they said to him, *Where is thy God?* And if it were Confusion and Shame to him to hear the *Enemy reproach* and *blaspheme* (as he professeth it was, *Psal.* xliv. 15, 16.) how sadly afflicting would it be for any Child of God to observe such Things in his *own* Imaginations? If there were no more in it than this, it is enough to put Satan upon that Design, because tis a troublesome Kind of (*a*) *Martyrdom*.

2. This is also a *spiteful Revenge* against God, all he can do is to blaspheme and rage; and 'tis a Kind of Delight to put this Force upon those that carry his own *Image*; he would do all he can to make his own *Children* to *vilify* and reproach their heavenly *Father*, and to render Cursing for Blessing.

3. This Temptation, tho' it have not the *Consent* or Compliance of God's Children, yet it *opens* a Way to many *other Sins*, as Murmuring, Distrust, Despair, Weariness of God's Ways and Services. When we find Satan thus to run upon us, it is apt to breed *strange Thoughts of God*, that thus *permits* Satan to take us by the Throat, or to make us *judge of our selves* as rejected of God, and given up to Satan's Power; and if it do this, his Labour is not in vain: We are (as one (*b*) observes) more to fear his Subtilty in bringing us by this into *other Snares*, than the Violence of the Adversary in *this Suggestion*.

4. This is a Stratagem for laying the *Foundation* of direful *Accusations*; the Devil in this doth as the *Russians* are (*a*) reported to do; they, when they have a Spite against any

(*a*) Spiritus blasphemiæ, scaturigo aut cogitationum adeo horribilium, adeoque molestarum ut ejus tentatio plerumque quasi martyrium est. *Guil. Paris.* lib. de anima & resurr. (*b*) Magis a dolo metuendum est quam a violentia adversarii; cavent ægri ab impatientia, infidelitate, murmuratione, aliisque peccatis quæ clam irrepunt. *Jackson Therapeut. sacra.* lib. 2. c. 29. (*c*) Hylin Cosmogr.

any of their Neighbours, hide ſecretly ſome of their Goods in their Houſes, and then accuſe them of Theft. When blaſphemous Thoughts are injected, and Men refuſe to conſent, then Satan raiſeth an Accuſation againſt them (as *Joſeph*'s Miſtreſs did) as if they were *guilty* of all that Blaſphemy that he tempted them unto; and 'tis a difficult Task to perſwade them, that theſe Things ſhould be *in their Minds*, and that they ſhould not be the *proper Iſſues* of their own Heart. And very often doth he from hence accuſe them of ſinning againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, becauſe of the hideous Blaſphemies which he had firſt ſuggeſted to them.

Applic.] *Firſt*, This will give us Conſiderations of Conſolation, and that 1. In regard of *others*; we obſerve often our *ſick* Friends ſpeak what we would not willingly hear, and it cannnot chooſe but be ſadly afflictive, to hear their Curſes and blaſphemous Speeches; but when we conſider the Advantage that Satan takes of their *Diſtemper* (if their Lives heretofore have been *pious* and religious) we comfort ourſelves in this, that it is more *his Malice* than their *own Inclinations*; neither ſhould we ſuffer our Hope or Charity to be diſtreſſed on their Behalf. 2. It is the like Ground of Conſolation for *ourſelves* or others, that are violently afflicted with blaſphemous Thoughts. For,

1*ſt*, If we call to Mind that our *Lord* and *Maſter* ſuffer'd *ſuch* Things, we that are of his *Houſhold* need not think we receive a ſtrange or *unuſual* Meaſure, in that we are moleſted as he was. 2*dly*, If we conſider that Chriſt was tempted *without Sin* on his Part, then may we fetch this Concluſion from it, *That it is poſſible that ſuch Thoughts ſhould be caſt upon us, and yet that we may not be chargeable with them as our Iniquities.* 3*dly*, We may hence ſee, that ſuch Temptations are more *frightful* than *hurtful*; theſe (as one (*a*) obſerves) ſeldom *take*, they carry with them ſo much *Horrour* (to thoſe that believe and love the true God) that it keeps them from a *Participation* with Satan in the Sin itſelf, nay it fills them with *Fear* and *Striving* againſt it; they rather as *Bugbears*, *ſcar* and diſquiet them, than produce the *real Effects* of Compliance with them.

2*dly*, The Conſideration of this Kind of Temptation may fill the Hearts and Mouths of thoſe of us, as have not hitherto been troubled with it, with *Praiſe* for ſo merciful a Preſervation.

(*a*) *Capel* Tempt. Part 2. *c.* 3.

ſervation. If we have not been under this Kind of Exerciſe, it is not from any *good Will* that Satan hath to us, but becauſe our God with-holds a *Commiſſion* from him. A poor weak Chriſtian wonders that Satan hath not made him a *Mark for this Arrow*, that he hath not *broken* him with this *Tempeſt*. To anſwer that *Wonder*, he may know that the ſame Tenderneſs in God, that will not put *new Wine into old crazy Bottles*, nor a *new ſtiff Piece of Cloth into an old tender Garment*, nor that will oppreſs the *Weak* and *Infirm* with ſtrong Exerciſe or Burdens, that ſame Tenderneſs of a compaſſionate Father doth keep off ſuch Trials, becauſe he will not ſuffer them *to be tempted above what they are able*.

3*dly*, This Temptation calls for *Advice* to thoſe that are under it, to whom I ſhall direct a few Things:

1*ſt*, When any are troubled with blaſphemous Thoughts, let it be conſidered *in what State and Temper their Body is*: If it be diſtempered with *Melancholy*, (as is moſt uſual) then the Preſcription of an able Phyſician is neceſſary in the *firſt Place*, without which he that would ſpiritually adviſe or counſel, ſhall but *beat the Air*, and his Words be ſo far from the Faſtneſs of Nails, that they ſhall be as Wind. I have known many under great Complaints and Fears by Reaſon hereof, that have been cured by *Phyſick alone*; for when (in this Caſe) the Feuel is withdrawn, the Fire goes out: Correct the melancholy Temper that gives the Devil this Advantage, and the Trouble will ceaſe.

2*dly*, It is of great Conſequence to underſtand the *Nature of theſe Temptations*: If the Tempted could ſee theſe to be their *Sufferings*, rather than their *Sins*, they would with greater Eaſe bear it as an *Affliction*. And to thoſe that *complain*, *abhor*, *reſiſt* and *pray* againſt them they are not *Sins*, no more than when an *Harlot* layeth her Child at an honeſt *Woman*'s Door, that Child is to be reckoned as the Fruit of her *Wickedneſs*. A Giant may daſh the Son againſt his Father, but ſo far will the Father be from imputing it as *rebellious Inſolence* in his Child, that he will pity him the more, as ſuffering by a double Injury; for 'tis not only againſt his *natural Affection*, and Reverence to his Parent, but 'tis a bodily Hurt beſide: Thus will God much more pity his Children under theſe Sufferings.

3*dly*,

3*dly*, We must not suffer such Thoughts to lodge in us, but before they settle (if possible) we must repel them; as *Abraham* drove away the Fowls that came down upon his Sacrifice. I know the Tempted will say, this Advice is not practicable, they find these Thoughts swarm about them as Bees, and when one is driven back, another straight comes in its Place. But to them I answer, that blasphemous Thoughts are repelled two Ways; 1. By *stout and resolute Resistance.* This, tho' it doth not extinguish them, nor free us of the Trouble, yet it keeps them from settling upon us, and us from the Guilt of them. 2. By *Diversion*, which the Work of a lawful Employment, or good Society and other Discourses may do; this may give some Ease from the Molestation, and the other preserves us innocent.

4*thly*, In Temptations to Blasphemy, confident Refusals do better than Disputings; here we are to resist with Courage, and a holy Contempt of Satan (*a*): If we be too timerous and fearful, he insults the more upon us: As Dogs when they are observed, follow the Passenger with greater Eagerness and Noise. *Abhorrencies* and *positive Discharges* (like that of Christ in the same Case, *Get thee hence Satan*) do more for us than to debate the Matter with him.

CHAP. XX.

The Nature of Idolatry. Satan's Design to corrupt the Worship of God. The Evidences thereof, with the Reasons of such Endeavours. His general Design of withdrawing the Hearts of Men from God to his Service. The Proof that this is his Design, upon whom he prevails. That Professions and Confidences are no Evidences to the contrary. His Deceit of propounding Sin as a small Matter. The Evidences of that Method, and the Reason thereof.

THUS have I considered the Temptation as *blasphemous*. I proceed next to consider it as *idolatrous*, the Words ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς, *if thou wilt fall down and worship*, do give us the true Notion of Idolatry. The Word which we call *Worship* comes from κύω, which signifies *to kiss*, or from

(*a*) Exeda tentatio magis vincitur fugiendo quam aggrediendo. *Gerson ten.* 9. *Col.* 976.

from κυων, which signifies a *Dog*, both being to the same Purpose, and signifying any *Action of Reverence* by wh ch we signify the *Respect of our Minds*: To kiss the Hand, or to fawn as a Dog, are Gestures which express the Honour we would give, and being applied to *divine Worship* before, or with Respect unto an *undue Object*, is *Idolatry*; and as such, doth Christ reject it in his Answer, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* We worship God, when in Ways and Actions commanded or prescribed, we testify our Belief and Resentment of his *incommunicable Attributes.* It is Idolatry, when either we use the same Actions of *prescribed Worship* to that which is *not God*, or when we testify our Respects to the true God in an undue *Way* of our own devising. Here might I take Occasion to shew the Vanity of the *Popish* Subterfuges, their Distinction of *Latria* and *Dulia* is (as Doctor *Moore* * observes) hereby overthrown: Satan doth not here set himself up as the *Omnipotent God*, for he acknowledgeth one superior to himself, in that he confesseth that the Power he had of the Kingdoms of the *World was given to him*, Luke iv. 6. and therefore not the *Latria*, but the *Dulia* is required of him; and yet this Christ denies him as being *Idolatry*, in that no *religious Worship* (for that must needs be the Sense of his Answer) *is due to any but God alone.* Their other Distinction of worshipping *an Idol*, (Saint, Angel, Cross, &c.) and before such a Creature, is also hereby crushed (as is commonly observed) for what the Evangelist *Matthew* expresseth by προσκυνήσης μοι, *Luke* calls ἐνωπιόν μου, *before me* (a); so that the Scripture makes no Difference betwixt these two, shewing it to be Idolatry to use religious *Worship* to that which is not God, or before it, but these Things I shall not prosecute: Keeping therefore to my Design, I shall observe,

Obs. 7.] *That it is one of Satan's great Designs to corrupt the Worship of God.* That this is so, will appear,

First, If we consider what Varieties of *Worship* hath been in the *World.* God gave a fixed and stable Law, and yet this so little prevailed, that Men were upon new Inventions presently. I shall not need to reckon up the (almost numberless) Varieties of this Kind among the Heathen. The Instance is plain enough, in those that professed the Name of

* *Mystery of Iniquity*, lib. 1. cap. 9. (a) *Musculus* in loc. *Perkins* in loc.

of the true God, they were ſtill changing for new Faſhions in Religion, borrowing Patterns from their Neighbours, ſo that if there were but a new Altar at *Damaſcus*, or a new Idol in any ſtrange City, they muſt preſently have the like, till (as the Prophet tells them) *according to their Cities ſo were their Gods.* He that will call to mind, that the Huſbandman did firſt *ſow good Seed in his Field*, and that there is ſuch Variety of *Tares* and falſe *Worſhip*, notwithſtanding the plain and poſitive Command of God, fixing and determining his *Worſhip*, muſt needs conclude that an *Enemy*, Satan, hath done it.

Secondly, If we call to mind, how in all Ages there hath been a Conſtancy in this inconſtant Variety; we hear of it among the Heathens, we read enough of it among the *Jews*, and when they were out of the Humour of more ſhameful Idolatries, they yet corrupted the *Worſhip* of God by their Traditions; and of theſe they were ſo fond, that they cauſed the Law of God itſelf to give Place to them, and made it void by them. The Times of the Goſpel were not free; tho' Chriſt came to ſeek ſuch *Worſhippers as ſhould worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth*, yet before the Apoſtles Deaths, while yet they were perſuading to the contrary, there aroſe up ſome that corrupted the *Worſhip*, by leading the People back again to the *Jewiſh Ceremonies*, and others laboured to bring in *worſhipping of Angels*, and at laſt *to eat Things offered to Idols*, with greater Defilements. Since the Apoſtles Days the ſame Deſign hath been carried on in the Churches. *Rome* hath patched together a great deal of *Jewiſh* and *Heathenish* Ceremonies; and when the *Man of Sin* ſhall be revealed, yet an higher Flood of ſuch Abominations is to be expected. Who hath wrought all this but Satan? This is ſtill the ſame Deſign, and tho' the Work be not in all Parts like itſelf, yet the whole of it evidenceth the working of the ſame ſpirit in all.

Thirdly, Let us obſerve how *early* this began. We cannot ſay, but that in the Days of *Adam*, (who doubtleſs had received particular Commands from God, in which he would not fail to inſtruct his Children;) they were ſeeking to themſelves *many Inventions*, Gen. iv. 26. At the Birth of *Enos* (as ſome conjecture) they were ſuch Defilements brought into Uſe in *Worſhip*, that *Seth* had Reſpect to it when he called his Son *Enos* ſorrowful, as *lamenting*

that

that *Prophanation* which was then begun in *calling upon the Name of the Lord*, for so do many interpret that Passage, which in our *English* we read thus, *Then began Men to call upon the Name of the Lord*, the Word in the *Original* is HUHAL, which signifieth both to *prophane*, and to *begin*, and may be as properly translated, then *prophaned they in calling upon the Name of the Lord*. And there are several Reasons that move learned Men to fix upon this Translation(*a*) : As (1.) That it is not probable that Men began *then* to call upon God, or *publickly* to do so (as some would interpret) and *not before*, as the present *English* would imply. (2.) That Age was noted as corrupt, and therefore it is noted (as a Rarity) that *Enoch* walked with God. (3.) The *Rabbins* generally translate HALAL to prophane; but if we should grant the present *English*, *Then began Men to call upon the Name of the Lord*, it would imply that the *Worship* practised by *Adam* and *Abel* had *been corrupted*, and now it was *restored* again and reformed, which will make the Corruption of *Worship* to be yet more early. And after that we read of Corruption crept into the Family of *Seth* (as well as now in the Family of *Cain*, Gen. vi. 2.) so that the *Worship* of God stood not long in its Honour, though *Adam* and *Seth* were alive to instruct them; which shews that it was a rebellious Departure from the Way, fomented and brought on by the malignant Spirit Satan.

Fourthly, But to make all sure, the Scripture lays all these Kinds of Corruption of Worship at *Satan*'s Door. The Defilements of Worship taught in *Thyatira* by *Jezebel*, are called the *Depths of Satan*, Rev. ii. 24. the Corruptions introduced by *Antichrist*, are from the *Workings of Satan*, 2 Thess. ii. 9. What was promoted by false Apostles to that Purpose they had it from their great Teacher Satan, who *transforms himself* for such Ends *into an Angel of Light*, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14. So that Nothing can be more plain than that this is an old and constant Design of Satan.

The particular Ways by which Satan effects this Design I shall not now touch, but shall in lieu of that give you the Reasons of his Endeavours this Way.

First, He knows that this is a Sin of an *high Provocation*. Worship is the proper *Tribute* that is due to God, and 'tis peculiarly his *Prerogative* to *prescribe* the Way and Manner

(*a*) *Drusius*, *Lightfoot*, *Trem.* &c.

ner of it; neither of these *Honours* will he *give to any other*, but will express his Jealousy when any Invasion is made upon these his *sole Prerogatives*. Now his Worship cannot be corrupted, but *one* of these at least will in some *Degree* or other be *touched*. If we set up *another Object* of Worship, we *deny* him to be *God*: If we worship him in a *Way* of our *own Invention*, we *deny* his *Wisdom*, and set up ourselves above him, as if we could *order* his Worship *better* than he hath done in his *Word*.

Secondly, If the Worship be corrupted, all the *Exercise* of the Affections of the Heart, and all the *Service* it self is *lost*, and become unacceptable; he knows that such Worshippers shall meet with this Answer, *Who hath required this at your Hands?*

Thirdly, Corruption in Worship, Satan by long Experience knows to have been the Ground of those *Hatreds*, Quarrels, Persecutions and Troubles under which the Church hath groaned in all Ages, every *Difference* imposing their Way and *Perswasion* upon all *Dissenters*, to the *Disturbance* of *Peace*, Breach and Decay of *Love*, Hinderance of the Growth of *Piety*, to the *biting* and devouring of one another.

Fourthly, Besides God is provoked by this to *leave his Sanctuary*, to remove his Glory and his *Candlestick*; to make his Vineyard a Desolation, and his Churches as *Shiloh*.

Fifthly, Satan is the more industrious in this, because his Ways are capable of many *Advantages* to further his Design, and many *specious Pretences* to cover it. In *Col.* ii. 8. he made use of *Philosophy* to corrupt Religion, and by unsound Principles of some Heathens famous for that Learning, introduced *worshipping of Angels*; what that could not effect he laboured to perform by the *Traditions of Men*, and where that came short, the *Rudiments of the World* (the *Mosaical* Ceremonies were so called here, and in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*) were his Engine by which he battered the plain Worship of the New Testament. And as to Pretences, the Apostle doth there, and elsewhere note, that *Decency* and *Order*, *Humility*, *Wisdom*, and *Self-denial*, are Things very taking, and yet usually pretended for such bold *Innovations* as may corrupt the pure Streams of the Sanctuary.

Applic.] Hence may I leave with you a few Memorials.

1. This may make us *jealous* of any Alterations in the Way of God's Worſhip. We have Reaſon under the moſt plauſible Pretexts to ſuſpect the Hand of Satan, becauſe 'tis one of his main Buſineſſes to corrupt the Worſhip.

2. This may juſtify thoſe that out of a *conſcientious Fear* of complying with Satan's Deſign, dare not admit of a *Pin in the Tabernacle* beſide what God hath preſcribed, nor leave behind a *Shoe latchet* of what he hath enjoyned.

3. This will tell us that that Worſhip is *beſt* and *ſafeſt* that hath *leaſt of Mixture* of *human Invention*. We cannot offend in keeping cloſs to the Rule, though the Worſhip thereby become more *plain*, and not ſo *gorgeous* in outward Appearance. We may ſoon *overdo* it by the leaſt *Addition*, and cannot be ſo certain of God's *Acceptation*, as we are of pleaſing the *Senſes* of Men by ſuch Introduce-ments.

This Motion of Satan, *Fall down and worſhip me*, is now in the laſt Place to be conſidered as a particular Inſtance of Satan's *general* Deſign, *of drawing the Hearts of Men from God, his Service and Ways, to the Pleaſures of Sin*: As if he ſhould ſay to him, *Follow my Advice, give up thy ſelf to my Service, and thou ſhalt be gratified with all the Delights that the World can give thee*: To this doth the Bait here offered moſt fitly agree. Hence obſerve,

Obſ. 8.] *That it is Satan's general Deſign to withdraw the Hearts of Men from God, that they may be enſlaved to him in the Service of Sin.*

That the Devil doth level all his Endeavours to this, cannot be doubted: For, 1. He hath a *Kingdom* in this World, from which he is denominated the *Prince of this World*. And this is not only a Rule of *exterior* Force, ſuch as Conquerors have over their captivated Slaves, who are compelled to ſubject their Bodies, while yet their Minds are full of Hatred againſt him, who hath thus forced them to Subjection; but it is a Rule over the *Hearts* and Affections of Men, working in the *Children of Diſobedience* a Love and Liking of theſe Ways, and begetting in them the *Image* of Satan; ſo that what Work he impoſeth they are pleaſed withal, and *love to have it ſo*: Therefore he is not only called their *Prince*, but their *God*, and their *Father*: *Ye are of your Father the Devil*, in that with a Kind of *inward Devotion* they will and endeavour to perform the *Luſts* which he propounds to them.

Secondly,

Secondly, This Kingdom is *contrary* to God's *ſpiritual* Kingdom; that being of Darkneſs, this of Light: And it is managed by Satan with an envious Competition and *Corivalſhip* to that of God; ſo that as God invites Men to the Happineſs of his Kingdom, and ſends his Spirit in his Word and Ordinances to perſwade them, Satan doth the like, he ſends out his Spirit, which the Apoſtle calls *the Spirit of the World*, 1 Cor. ii. 12. and employs all his Agents to engage Men for him; he *requires the Heart* as God doth, he promiſeth his *Rewards* of Pleaſure, Honour, Riches, if they will fall down and worſhip him. Now 'tis ſo natural to proſecute an *Intereſt* thus *eſpouſed* in a Way of *Oppoſition*, eſpecially to any other that ſet up for themſelves in a contradictory Competitorſhip, that the very natural Laws of Satan's Kingdom will engage him to ſtand up for it, and to enlarge it all he can.

Thoſe upon whom he prevails are of two Sorts.

1. Some are *viſibly* in his Service; theſe anſwer the Character which was given of *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 20. *Who ſold himſelf to work Wickedneſs in the Sight of the Lord.* The *firſt* Expreſſion ſhews, that ſuch are *wholly* in Satan's Power and Diſpoſal, as Things *ſold* are in the Poſſeſſion and Power of the *Buyer*, they are at Satan's Will; if he ſay to them, *Go, they go*; and if he ſay, *Come, they come*; their Bodies and Spirits are Satan's, they are not their own; and they are his for the Ends of Sin, for that Imployment only; ſo that they are *wholly corrupt and abominable.* The *latter* Expreſſion that he did ſo in the *Sight of the Lord*, manifeſts their *ſhameleſs Impudency* in Sin, that they *declare their Sin as* Sodom, *and hide it not*, that they do not bluſh, but openly wear the Devil's Livery, and avouch his Service: As the *Works of the Fleſh are manifeſt*, ſo theſe in their Practice of ſuch Works are *manifeſtly* Satan's Subjects. Theſe Kind of Men are frequently in the Old Teſtyment ſtiled *Sons of Belial (a)*, a Name very ſignificant, ſhewing either their *devoting* of themſelves to the Devil's Service, in that they reject the Yoke of God's Law, in that they *break his Bonds, and caſt his Cords from them*; or their *Pride*, that they will have none above them, not conſidering that there is a God, or that the moſt High rules; or

(a) BELIGNAL, *vel a* BELI *non &* HIL *jugum abſque jugo, vel a* BELI *non &* HAL *ſupra, vel a* BELI *non &* IGNAL *profuit homo inutilis.*

or their *Averſeneſs* to what is good, being *wholly unprofitable, and to every good Work reprobate.*

2. Some are *ſecretly* his Servants, they come to the Devil (as *Nicodemus* did to Chriſt) by Night; they will not openly profeſs him, but yet their Hearts are wholly his; ſuch are called by the Name of *Hypocrites*. The Phariſees and Scribes ſeemed to declare for God, called themſelves *Abraham's Seed*, faſted, gave Alms, made long Prayers, and yet were a *Generation of Vipers*, and *of their Father the Devil*. The Secrecy of this underhand Engagement to Hell is ſuch, that many who are in a League with the Devil, and at an Agreement with Death, do neither know nor believe it concerning themſelves. For,

1*ſt*, This private Covenant may be, where there are the greateſt ſeeming *Defilements* of Satan, and high *Profeſſions* of Service to God. The Phariſees (as have been ſaid) were the Devil's Servants, under all the fair Shew they made of Religion and Zeal for the Law, and yet when Chriſt plainly told them, that they were not *Abraham's* Seed, but the Devil's Seed, they with high Indignation and Scorn throw back the Accuſation to Chriſt, *Thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a Devil*, we are *Abraham's Children*; ſo little believed they the Truth when it was told them.

2*dly*, This may conſiſt with ſome *Deſignment* and Intention to give God Glory. The *Jews* tho' they ſubmitted not to the Righteouſneſs of God, yet (by the Teſtimony of *Paul*) they had a *Zeal to God*. The very Heathens that ſacrifice to Devils, had not *formal* Intentions ſo to do, as appears by their Inſcription on the Altar at *Athens*, Acts xvii. 23. *To the unknown God*. The true God, tho' unknown, they propounded as the Object of their Worſhip; yet falling into thoſe Ways of Devotion which the Devil had preſcribed, theſe *Intentions* could not hinder but that they became his *Servants*.

3*dly*, Men may be Servants to Satan under great *Aſſurances* and Confidences of their *Intereſt* in God; many go to Hell that have lived with *Lord, Lord* in their Mouths; thoſe mentioned in *Iſa* xlviii. 2. that had no Intereſt in Truth and Righteouſneſs when they ſolemnly ſware by the Name of the Lord, yet *they called themſelves of the Holy City, and ſtayed themſelves upon the God of Iſrael.*

Object. If it ſeem ſtrange to any that theſe Profeſſions, Intentions, and Confidences are not enough to ſecure Men from

this

this Charge, but that they may be ſecretly Slaves to Hell. I anſwer,

Anſw.] 1. That thoſe do not neceſſarily conclude that the Heart of ſuch Men is *right with God*. Formality, natural Conſcience, and the Power of Education may do much of this: For though we grant that ſuch are not *conſcious* to themſelves of any real Deſign of ſerving Satan, yet they may either ſo far miſs it in the *Way* of their Service, offering that as well pleaſing to God, which indeed he hates (and that through wilful and affected Ignorance;) as thoſe of whom Chriſt ſpeaks, *John* xvi. 2. that ſhould think the *killing* of God's Children a Piece of acceptable *Service*; or they may be ſo miſtaken as to the Sincerity of their Hearts, that they may think they have a Deſign to pleaſe God in doing of what he requires in order thereunto, when indeed it may not be ſingly *for God*, but *for themſelves* that they work, in a Self-gratification of their *natural Zeal* for their Way; or their *Eſteem*, Credit, and *Advantage* may privately influence them; rather than a *Spirit of Life and Power*.

Secondly, The *Work* which they do, and the *Ends* they ſerve, will be Evidence againſt Profeſſions and Intentions. 'Tis a ſure Rule, that *the Work ſhews to whom Men are related as Servants*, and it is laid down as a certain *Standard* to meaſure the Hearts of Men by, when Pretences and Perſwaſions ſeem to carry all before them, *Rom.* vi. 16. *His Servants ye are to whom you obey*. 1 John iii. 8, 10. *He that committeth Sin is of the Devil: In this the Children of God are manifeſt, and the Children of the Devil*; that is, when it becomes a Queſtion to whom a Man belongs, whoſe Child and Servant he is, it muſt be determined by the *Works* he doth: If he engage in the Ways of Sin, he is of the *Devil*, let him profeſs what he will to the contrary. This ſame Balance Chriſt uſeth to try the Truth of the *Jews* Pretences to God; *John* viii. 34. *Whoſoever committeth Sin, is the Servant of Sin*; they boaſted high, but he ſhews them that ſeeing their Deſigns and Works were Hatred, Envy, Murder, *&c.* which are apparently from Satan, it was evident they had learned theſe of him; and he concludes by this Proof, *ver.* 44. *That they were of their Father the Devil.* Thus may we ſay of thoſe that pretend they honour God, they defy the *Devil*, they intend well, if yet they give themſelves up to the pleaſing of the Fleſh, if worldly-minded, if they live in

Pride, Strife, Envy, Maliciouſneſs, &c. which are *Works* of the *Devil*, it is not all their Pretences that will intitle them to God: but they are (for all this) the *Devil*'s Servants, as doing his *Works*.

Applic.] This may put Men upon Enquiries, Who are ye for? Whoſe Servants are ye? There are but two that can lay claim to you, and theſe two divide the whole *World* betwixt them, there is no State of *Neutrality*, you are either God's Servants, or the Devil's, ye cannot ſerve them both; now if *the Lord be God, ſerve him*. Satan's Service is baſe, diſhonourable, ſlaviſh; the Service of God, Freedom, Honour, Life and Peace: There is indeed no Compariſon betwixt them. Happy then is that Man that can ſay the Lord is his Lot and Portion, that can come into God's Preſence, and there in his Integrity, avouch the Lord for his God; that can ſtand upon it, *My Soul hath ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my God*, and *I have none beſides thee; other Lords have had Dominion over us, but we will make mention of thy Name only.*

This Temptation though it were in itſelf horrid, and as a Brood of Vipers knotted together, which at once could ſend out ſeveral Stings, and make many Wounds (as hath been noted;) yet in the Way of propounding, Satan ſeems to inſinuate the *Largeneſs* of his Proffer, and the *Smalneſs* and Inconſiderableneſs of the Service required: As if he ſhould ſay, *See how free I am in my Kindneſs, I will not ſtick to give thee the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them, and all this for ſo ſmall a Matter, as bowing before me, or doing me a little Reverence.* This gives us to obſerve,

Obſ. 9.] *That when Satan doth deſign no leſs than to enſlave Men to his Service, yet he will propound Sin as a ſmall Thing, or but one Act of Sin, as a Thing not valuable, to engage them to him.* Not but that he deſires to run Men to Exceſs in Wickedneſs, and delights to ſee them with *both Hands earneſtly* work Iniquity with *Greedineſs*; yet where he ſees the Conſciences of Men ſqueemiſh, and that they cannot bear Temptations to open and *common* Prophaneneſs without Danger of *Revolt* from him, there he ſeems *modeſt*, and requires but ſome ſmall Thing at leaſt at firſt, till the Ways of Sin become more *familiar* to them, and then when they can better bear it, he doubles the *Tale of Bricks*, and with greater Confidence can urge them to Things of

greater

greater Shame and Enormity. That this is his Way, appears,

1ſt, From the common Argument which he uſeth at firſt to thoſe whom he would draw off from a more careful Converſation, which is this: Do ſuch a Thing, 'tis but for *once*, and but *little*, others do the *like*, and demur not; or the *Beſt* do as great Matters as this comes to; 'tis but a ſmall Thing, conſidering the *Strait* or the *Advantage* that may accrue. This is his uſual *Note* to *candidate* Iniquity, as Experience of all doth teſtify.

2dly, That this is ſo, is alſo evident from a Conſideration of the ſeveral *Ways* and Courſes of Sinners. Some are tempted and overcome by *one Kind* of Sin, and *not at all* urged to others. Some go to Hell in a way of Covetouſneſs; others are pretty unblameable in moſt of their Carriages, but are overcome by a proud Humour; others are given to Drink, and yet will not ſteal nor deal falſely: Others take a more cleanly Way to Hell, rely upon their own Righteouſneſs, or are engaged in Error, and their Life otherwiſe ſmooth and fair. The *Jews* in Chriſt's Time were only engaged againſt Chriſt, and for their Traditions, but not moleſted with Temptations to open Idolatry, as formerly. Thoſe who are ignorant are not troubled with Temprations to Deſpair, or inward Terrors. The Reaſons of his dealing thus are theſe:

1. He ſees, that one Sin *heartily* proſecuted, is enough to ſignify *Homage* to him, and to give him Poſſeſſion. As we take Poſſeſſion of Land by a Turf or a Twig; ſo by one Sin admitted with *full* Purpoſe of Mind, Satan is let into the Heart. As a Penny will be ſufficient Earneſt for a Bargain of a thouſand Pound; ſo may one Sin be a *Pledge* or Earneſt for the *whole Soul* in a *League* with Hell.

2. He knows that one Sin perſiſted in may be enough to *deſtroy* the Soul; as one *Wound* may kill, one *Leak* may ſink a Ship.

3. He knows that one Sin *breaks* the *Covenant* of God, and turns the Heart from him, if Men *give* up themſelves to it.

4. One Sin *wilfully* purſued makes a Man guilty of the Breach of the *whole Law*; it deſtroys Love and Reſpect to God, undervalues his Authority, contemns his Threatnings and Promiſes.

5. One Sin is enough to make *Way* for *more*, where Satan would have more, yet at firſt he is pleaſed with it as a *hopeful* Beginning; it makes Room enough for the Serpent's

Head, and then he will afterward eaſily wind in his whole Body.

Applic.] This may warn us not to be imboldned to any Sin by the Plea of *Diminution*; not to venture becauſe it may ſeem little, or be but for once. A true Chriſtian ſhould be a perfect *Univerſaliſt*, he ſhould be univerſally *againſt all Sin*, and univerſally *for all Duty*.

CHAP. XXI.

Of worldly Pleaſure. Proofs that this is Satan's great Engine. What there is in worldly Delights that make them ſo. Counſels and Cautions againſt that Snare.

I Come now to the Argument which Satan uſed for all this, *All theſe Things will I give thee*; he caſts a golden Apple before him, and ſeeks to entangle him by worldly Greatneſs and Delight. I ſhall not examine how true or falſe Satan ſpake, when he called all theſe Things his, and that he could give them to whom he would, 'tis enough for our Purpoſe to take Notice of his Pretence, ſo far as might make his Offer probable, and then obſerve,

Obſ. 10.] *That the great Engine which Satan uſeth to draw away the Heart from God to his Service, is worldly Pleaſures and Delights.*

I ſhall *firſt* ſhew, That this is Satan's great Engine, and then explain what is in it, that fits it ſo much for his Purpoſe. The firſt of theſe is evidenced by theſe Particulars.

Firſt, The Scripture doth particularly note to us a *Deceit* or Guile to be in worldly Pleaſures. Chriſt in *Matth.* xiii. 22. ſpeaks of the *Deceitfulneſs of Riches*; and that Deceit is expreſſed by ſuch a Word, as ſignifies *a drawing out of the Way* (*a*), a miſleading; ſo that he means not the *Uncertainty* of theſe Delights (in which Senſe 'tis ſaid, *That Riches take themſelves Wings and fly away*) which often diſappoint and deceive the Expectations of thoſe that do moſt hug them. Nor can this be underſtood of Riches in an *active Senſe*, as we attribute Deceit to Men, who as rational Agents can *contrive* and deviſe Snares; but it only means, that theſe are ſo *objective*, as Things that are *abuſed* by Satan, to *delude* and betray the Sons of Men. And theſe

(*a*) ἀπάτη, ab ἀ priv. & πάτος via.

theſe are ſo frequently made Uſe of by him for ſuch Purpoſes, and with ſuch Advantages of Power and Provocation, that Chriſt elſewhere (*Matth.* xix. 23.) ſpeaks of it as a Thing almoſt impoſſible, to have Riches and not to be enſnared by them: *A rich Man ſhall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, which *Mark* and *Luke* expreſs by an affectionate Amazement, *O how hardly can a rich Man be ſaved!*

Secondly, Theſe are Satan's *great Net*, which incloſeth Multitudes; a *general* Bait, by which moſt are hooked into the Service of Sin. Moſt Temptations come from this Ocean, as Springs from the Sea; *the Luſt of the Fleſh*, *the Luſt of the Eyes*, *the Pride of Life*, have their Original from the *World*, 1 John ii. 16. Chriſt ſpeaks of this *Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs*, as the only Thing that ſtands up in Competition for the Hearts of Men againſt God, *Matth.* vi. 24. and the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* iii. 4. reckoning up the various Ways of particular Luſts, as Covetouſneſs, Boaſting, Pride, Blaſpheming, *&c.* concludes them all under this, *that they are Lovers of Pleaſures more than Lovers of God*; ſhewing us thereby, that tho' the Luſts of Men might run out *diverſe* Ways, and be exerciſed upon diverſe particular Objects, yet they all borrow their *Original* from worldly *Pleaſures*, and their Deſign is nothing but that in the general. Hence is it that ſome make the World the great *Traitor* to God; for tho' they reckon up *three* great Enemies to God and Man, the *World*, the *Fleſh*, and the *Devil*, yet *theſe Three agree in one*, the *pleaſing of the Fleſh* is the great *End* and Deſire of natural Men, the World is the *Store houſe*, from which Men draw out ſeveral Pleaſures, according to the ſeveral Ways they take in gratifying their Luſts and Humours, and the Devil is only officious to help all this forward, by inticing and perſwading them to *make* theſe *Proviſions for the Fleſh*. And who can think other, but that this muſt be Satan's great *Engine*, when (as hath been ſaid) firſt, the World, and the Pleaſures of it, is the *Sum* of all Iniquity, containing in it *virtually* or *actually* the Tranſgreſſion of the whole Law, the *Root* it is *of all Evil*, 1 Tim. vi. 10. all Profaneneſs againſt God, all Neglect of Duty, all Outrage, Wrong, or Injuſtice to Man, may (and uſually doth) ſpring from hence, inſomuch that ſome have particularly traced it through *every* Command of the *Decalogue*, and found it guilty (either as

Principal or *Accessary*) of every Iniquity. (2.) Our Thoughts may be the more confirmed in this, when we see all Men *intangled* by it: For albeit that *some* Temptations seem *directly* to carry Men *from a Love* or Care of the World, as Despair, Terrors of Mind, voluntary Humility, neglecting of the Body, and others of the same Kind; yet if the Matter be considered, the Truth in Hand cannot be *prejudiced* by such an Objection. For 1. Those who seem in *Distress* of Conscience most to *loath* the World, were yet first entangled by it, and the Consideration of that *Guilt* (whether at present justly or unjustly charged upon them) is the usual *Occasion* of these Troubles. And 2. Those who seem to *undervalue* Money, Riches, Plenty, &c. are (it may be) no less Slaves to *other* worldly Lusts; for Pleasures of the World *comprehend* whatsoever may arise from any Thing that is in the World, to the Delight of Life. Honour, Pride, Ambition, Prodigality, are *worldly Lusts*, as well as Covetousness, and Desire of Power or Rule. And those that seem to deny themselves of *faring deliciously*, or *wearing soft Raiment*, may be as much distressed with an inward Desire of *Applause* and Honour, as those that would gratify their *Senses* are by sensual Lusts.

Thirdly, How much the World stands Satan in stead, may be observed from the *Force* of that Temptation, upon those that have very much *engaged* in their *Profession* of the Ways of God; it hath often fetch'd off those that seemed to have given up themselves to God. *Demas* was once commended by *Paul* as his Fellow-labourer, *Philem.* ver. 24. yet at last it so prevailed upon him, that he complained, 2 *Tim.* iv. 10. that *Demas had forsaken him*, and turned his Back upon his Profession; and so far (if *Dorotheus* do him right) that he became an *Idol-priest* in *Thessalonica*, the Cause of which horrid Apostasy was his *Love to the present World*. *Balaam* seemed resolute not to act any Thing against *Israel*, yet the *Ways of Unrighteousness* so far blinded him, that *he taught Balak to cast a Stumbling-block before the Children of Israel*. The *highest* of nominal Professors, noted by the *thorny Ground* in *Matth.* xiii. 22. who seemed to differ from the good Ground only in this, that their Fruit was *green* and not *ripe* (as *Luke* expresseth it) *they brought not Fruit to perfection*: They were *choaked* in these fair Beginnings and Offers for Holiness, by the *Cares* and *Pleasures of the World*. All Ages abound

abound with Instances of this Kind. *Æneas Sylvius* preached against the *Pope*, set up the Council above him, commended the *Germans* for opposing him: But Preferment made him alter his Note, and at last he became *Pope* himself. *Bonner* the Persecutor seemed at first a *good Man*, a Favourer of *Luther*'s Doctrine, but Advancement changed him to a bloody *Wolf*, a cruel *Tyger*. *Spalato* forsook *Popery*, but (missing those Dignities which he aimed at in *England*) was upon Hopes of greater Preferment, induced to lick up his Vomit, and to own *Popery* again. How many Examples have we of those who the *higher* they grew in the World, became more *careless* of Religion; as *Sixtus Quintus*, who went as fast *back* in Religion, as he went *forward* in Promotion: So that he that at first entring into Orders, had a *good Hope* of his Salvation, by that Time he came to be *Pope*, he became so wicked that he *despaired* of Happiness.

Fourthly, This Temptation is one of Satan's *last Refuges*, and often prevails where *Persecution* cannot. The Thorny-ground Hearers were above those of the Stony-ground in this, that they stood out the *Storm*, and bore the *scorching Heat* of Persecution, but then the *World choaked* them. Sad Experience tells us, that Churches that did thrive and grow as the *Palm-tree* under their *Pressures*, were spoiled by *Ease* and *Plenty*, which so cherished the Seeds of Pride, Vanity, and Contention, that they grew up a-main, and did more to their Desolation, than the Cruelty of all their fiercest Enemies. *Julian* who by the greatest Art and Policy, studied to overthrow the Christians Name(*a*) so observed this, that he made it his Rule, *rather to corrupt Men by Honours, than to compel them by Torments*: We have also found, that tho' the *Romans* Synagogue join *Force* to *Subtility* in the Advancement of their *Dagon*, yet they have still looked upon this Temptation of the *World* as most likely to *gain* the Hearts of their rational Opposers: *Cruelty* could over-aw the *senseless* Multitude, and could take out of the Way those of whose Opposition they were afraid, but it seldom with Success, wrought upon Persons (guided by Light and Conscience) to a *Compliance*, that would *hold* long: For tho' at first some good Men were *over-awed* to make Subscription, and to recant, as it did with *Bilney*, *Rain-*

(*a*) Honoribus magis homines provocare quam tormentis cogere studuit. *Nazian.*

Bainham, *Cranmer* (b), and ſeveral others; yet upon the working of *Conſcience* (after the Stound and Dazle of the Temptation was over) they *recoiled* ſo reſolutely upon them, that they loſt more than they gained that Way: But thoſe that were willing to *nibble* at Preferments, became theirs wholly. Thus they ſet upon *Luther*, *Galeacius Carraccio-lus*, Dr. *Taylor*, and a great many more, tho' to no Purpoſe, for they were ready to bid their *Money periſh with them*, and to bid Defiance to their Favour as well as to their Frowns. Notwithſtanding they have made many real *Con-queſts* by this Weapon, and accordingly this is reckoned among the Temptations of greateſt Force, *Heb.* xi. 37. *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were tempted*, that is, by the Pleaſures and Preferments of the World: It ſeems the Holy Ghoſt would point at this (how fair and plauſible ſoever it be) as one of the Devil's moſt powerful Engines.

Next I promiſed to diſcover what it is in the World which makes it ſo fit for Satan's Deſigns.

Firſt, The World brings or affords fit Matter to be made the *Fewel* of Luſt. For this Reaſon the Apoſtle in the Place aforecited, 1 *John* ii. 16. forbids us ſo earneſtly to love the World, or the Things of the World, becauſe there is nothing in it which is not *improvable*, as an Occaſion, or Provocation to Luſt, *Whatſoever is in the World is Luſt of Fleſh* or *Eyes* or *Heart*; and there is no Luſt but it may be furniſhed with a proper Object from hence, the Ap-petite, Senſes, or Affections fetch all their Delights from hence.

Secondly, Beſides the common *Materials* of Sin that are digged out of this *Mine*, the World hath ſomething of an *Aptitude* in it to tempt. Not that it hath *properly* and formally, *inſidiationis animum*, an *active* Subtilty to lay Snares for Men, but yet it is not ſo *purely paſſive*, as to make it altogether innocent. There is ſomething of a *Curſe* upon it, ever ſince by the Fall of Man, it was looſned from its proper primitive Ends; and as the Devil ſpake by the Serpent, ſo doth he urge, ſpeak, tempt, and inſinuate *by the World*, ſo that it is ſtill an Occaſion of Danger to us, and hath a ſpecial Advantage over our Affections upon ſeveral Accounts. As (1.) In that it is in itſelf lawful to be uſed. (2.) In that it is *ſuitable* to our Deſires and Tempers. (3.) In ſome Reſpects it might be *neceſſary* and advantagious for the *Comfort* of Life,

(b) *Fox's Acts and Mon.*

Life, for the Support of Families, and to enable us to be helpful to others. (4.) It is near to us, under our Eye, we have familiar Converse with it, it is still with us. (5.) We have a *natural Propensity* to be in Love with it; the Flesh would fain be pleased, and nothing is more answerable to it than the Pleasures of the World. We need not wonder then, when we see it so highly *captivating* the Affections of Men, and leading them bound in *Chains* and Fetters. Some make it their *God*, Psal. xvii. 14. *Gain* is all their *Godliness* and Religion; they seek their *Portion in this Life*; this is their *Treasure*, and here is their *Heart*, and it would be no less Wonder if Satan should be guilty of so much Oversight, as to neglect the Use of an Instrument which is every Way so fitted for his Purpose.

Thirdly, Besides this fair Prospect which it gives to Sin, it hath an *Enmity* to God and his Ways, which is no less advantagious to the Devil: This is positively affirmed, *James* iv. 4. the *Friendship of this World, is Enmity with God*; not only is this true in a lower Sense, as a *Hindrance*, being backward and averse to it, but it is a *direct* Opposition and Contrariety to God and his Service; its *drawing* back and hindring, is Charge enough against it: For it 1. *Withdraws those* Thoughts, Affections, Time, Care, and Endeavours, which should be laid out upon *better* Things, so that Holiness must needs be obstructed, dwindle and decay by it. 2. It *hinders* the *Influence* of Heaven, it shuts out the Light *casually*, quencheth and resisteth the Spirit, and *meritoriously* also it provokes God to withdraw, to remove his Glory, and to give over his striving with them: But the Contrariety that it hath to all the *Parts* of Holiness is yet more; Christ notes it, *Matth.* vi. 24. These *two Masters*, God and the World, are *contrary* in their *Designs*, in their *Commands*, in their *Natures*, so that it is impossible for any Man to serve them both: They *both* require the *Heart*, and they *both* require it to contrary and *incompatible* Services and Ends: These then are such Masters, as would be *Domini in solidum*, Masters of the whole (*a*). Now there cannot be *two Masters* of *one Thing* in that Sense, neither (if there were) could the Hearts of Men serve these different Commands, but their Work would necessarily engage their Affections to one only; they would *either love the one and hate the other*, *or hold to the one and despise the other*: This very Consideration

(*a*) *Grotius* in loc.

if there were no more) doth render the World a desirable Instrument for Satan.

Fourthly, In all this the World hath so many cunning Disguises, and plausible Shifts, that it becomes thereby wonderfully serviceable to Satan. 'Tis the Perfection of wicked Policy, to manage wicked Designs under plausible Pretences; these the World hath in Readiness, when 'tis accused of Rebellion and Treachery against God; the Pleas of Necessity, of Prosecution of a lawful Calling, of providing for a Family, of not neglecting the Benefits of God, of chearing the Heart, and taking the Comforts of the Labours of their Hands, and a great many more, are ready Excuses to ward off the Force of the convincing *Word*; these the Devil drives home, and fastens them into such *strong Persuasions*, that the deluded Sinner cannot see the *Danger* that is before him, nor the spiritual Adultery or Idolatry of his Soul, in his excessive Love to worldly Pleasures.

Fifthly, The World hath also a spiritual *Fascination* and *Witchcraft*, by which (where it hath once prevailed) Men are inchanted to an utter Forgetfulness of themselves and God, and being drunk with Pleasures, they are easily engaged to a Madness and Height of Folly. Some, like foolish Children, are made to keep a great Stir in the *World* for very Trifles, for a *vain Shew*; they think themselves great, honourable, excellent, and for this make a great Bustle, when the *World* hath not added *one Cubit to their Stature* of real *Worth*. Others are by this *Circe* transformed into savage Creatures, and act the Part of Lions and Tygers. Others, like Swine, wallow in the Lusts of Uncleanness. Others are unmanned, putting off all natural Affections, care not who they ride over, so they may rule, or be made *great*. Others are taken with ridiculous Frenzies, so that a Man that stands in the cool Shade of a *sedate* Composure would judge them *out of their Wits*. It would make a Man admire to read of the Frisks of *Caius Caligula*, *Xerxes*, *Alexander*, and many others, who because they were above many Men, thought themselves above *human Nature*; they forgat they were born, and must die, and did such Things as would have made them (but that their *Greatness* over-awed it) a *laughing Stock* and common Scorn to Children. Neither must we think that these were but some few or rare Instances of worldly *Intoxication*, when the *Scripture* notes it as a general Distemper of all that bow down

down to worship this Idol, they *live without God in the World*, saith the Apostle; that is, they so carry it as if there were no God to take Notice of them, to check them for their Madness. *God is not in all his Thoughts*, saith *David*, Psal. x. 4, 5. The *Judgments of God* are far above *out of their Sight*; he puffs at his Enemies, and saith in his Heart, *he shall never be moved*, &c. The whole Psalm describes the *Worldling*, as a Man that hath lost all Understanding, and were acting the Part of a *frantick Bedlam*; what then can be a more fit Engine for the Devil to work with, than the Pleasures of the *World*?

Applic.] I shall briefly apply this to two Sorts of Men, those that are straitned with *Want* and *Necessities*, and those whose *Cups run over*, having all *that their Hearts can wish*.

First, To those that think their Measure of *outward Comforts little*, I would from the Doctrine now explained, tell them that they have not so much Cause to vex and disquiet themselves for their *Poverty* or *Troubles*, as they apprehend. The *World* is not so desirable a Thing as many dream; did but Men consider how great a Snare it is, and what *Dangers attend* the Fulness of it, they would not so earnestly *covet* it, nor so *passionately lament*, when it flies from them. If thou hast so much Godliness as can *quiet* thy *Heart* in a *contented Enjoyment* of thy *little*, that *little* which thou hast, is *better than great Riches of the Wicked*; thou little knowest from *what Pride, Insolency, Contempt of God and Men*, and many other *Temptations* and Lusts God doth preserve thee, by denying thee earthly Things: Thou art now (it may be) often looking up to God, striving to believe his *Word*, often examining thy *Heart*, labouring to live upon God and his All-sufficiency, looking after the Bread that endures to eternal Life; when if thou hadst the *Temptations* of *Plenty*, (it may be feared) thou wouldst be *another Man*, and be carried away to forget God, to be careless of holy *Walking*, and so make way for Bitterness and Sorrow at last.

Secondly, I would also caution poor Men not to enlarge their Desires too much after the *World*, but to fear the *Temptations* of the *World*; it is not only a Snare to those that *enjoy* it, but to those that *want* it: For while they admire it, and engage their Affections for it, it ensnares them in *sinful Undertakings*, they are tempted to *lie, cheat, dissemble, to use unlawful Shifts, to rob, steal, over-reach in bar-*

Bargaining, and to *neglect* the Care of the Soul in all. Let such call to mind, 1. That often the Providence of God doth of Purpose thwart and cross the Designs of such, so that tho' they toil and sweat, running from Market to Market, *rising early, and sitting up late*, yet he blows upon their Getgings, and they wither to nothing, *while it is yet in their Hand*; or if they seem to keep them longer, yet all the End they make with them, is but to put them into a *Bag with Holes, they perish by evil Travel*, Eccl. v. 14. 2. They often are at a great deal of Labour in Pursuit, and then when the desired Object is *within their Reach*, they are overwhelmed with their *Disappointment*, as if Providence designed to mock them for their Folly. This is excellently set forth in the Emblem of a Man climbing up a Rock, with great Labour to reach a Crown that hung upon the Precipice, who, when he had stretched himself to *grasp* it, falls down and *breaks his Neck*. 3. And when they do by great Toil *rake* together an *Heap* of Riches, they are *starved* frequently in their *Plenty*, and so cursed that they have no more *than the beholding of their Goods with their Eyes*, Eccl. v. 11. in that God denies them a *Heart to use them*. 4. Their Gettings allay not their Thirst for more, *He that loveth Silver, shall not be satisfied with Silver*, Eccl. v. 10. 5. Often they are given as a Scourge and Plague; as the Quails given to the *Israelites came out of their Nostrils*. The wise Man notes it, *Eccles.* v. 13. *Riches are kept for the Owners thereof to their Hurt.*

Secondly, To those that have the Delights of the World, plentiful Estates, full Tables, beautiful Houses, rich Tradings, Honours and Dignities; I would desire to give the greatest Caution, that they take Heed to themselves, because they *walk in the midst of Snares*. These should consider, 1. That the great God hath laid most serious Charges upon them *not to love the World*, but to withdraw their Affections from it, nay to be *crucified* to it, as to any captivating Delight, and to use it with such an Indifferency of Mind, that they should be in their Deportments towards it, as *if they used it not*. 2. They should have their Danger in their Eye. How careful is he of his Steps, that knows he walks in the midst of Serpents, which are ready to sting him; the Thoughts of this should blunt the Edge of our Delights. If you were at a Feast where you knew there were poisoned Dishes, you would be afraid to eat any Thing.

Do

Do you think that Captain *Smith* when he was taken by the *Salvages* of *America*, and had Plenty of Meat set before him (which he knew was given to fatten him, that he might be better Meat, when he was killed) had any Stomach to eat or to drink? Was that Feast pleasing to him, that sat under a *sharp Sword* hung over his Head in a *Horse Hair*, when he expected every Moment it should fall upon him and kill him? Such are great Men, rich Men; with what Fear and Care should they use these Things, when they know there is Hazard of Mischief from them upon every Occasion? How much doth Christ speak in that one Sentence, it is *easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?* He means not that 'tis *absolutely impossible*, but *extreamly difficult*, and the Difficulty lies in the Hindrances which their Riches casts before them. (3.) They should carefully consider, for what *Ends* God gives these, and to what *Use* they are to be put. Rich Men are but God's *Fursers*, they do but *carry the Bag*, and what is put therein, for *publick Uses*; if accordingly, as faithful Stewards, they lay it out upon those that have Need, they shall *make Friends of the unrighteous Mammon*, and it will turn to a Spiritual Account: But if they think that all is for themselves, and so shut their Bowels and Purses from others, then they carry the *Bag* no otherwise, than as *Judas* did, and will be easily perswaded to *sell* Christ and Heaven for a *little more* of Earth.

CHAP. XXII.

Of Christ's Answer in the general. That these Temptations were upon Design for our Instruction. Of the Agreement betwixt Ephes. vi. *and* Matth iv. *The first Direction. Of courageous Resolves in resisting Temptations. Its Consistency with some Kind of Fear. The Necessity of this Courage. Wherein it consists; and that there is a Courage in mourning Spirits.*

THese Answers of Christ to the several Temptations (which are now to be explained) are different as to their *Matter*; yet the *general Purport* of them being the same, I shall

ſhall therefore handle them together. They may be conſidered two Ways.

1ſt, As they are fit and pertinent Anſwers to particular Temptations, of *Diſtruſt*, of *Preſumption*, of *Debauching* the Heart by *worldly Delights* to the Service of Satan; and thus may they be uſeful in their Conſideration, to thoſe who are directly moved by Satan to ſuch Sins. And when at any Time we are tempted in Straits; to *caſt away our Reliance* upon the careful Providence of God, we may look upon Chriſt's Anſwer, that *Man's Life* doth not ſo depend upon the *uſual Means*, but that any other Thing bleſſed by Divine Appointment may be uſeful to that End. When we are enticed to *preſume of extraordinary* Supports; then by Chriſt's Example the Temptation may be reſiſted by conſidering, that however God be to be truſted, yet he is at no Time to be *tempted by unneceſſary Expectations* in the *Neglect* of the ordinary Means. If our Hearts be wooed *by worldly Delights* to *caſt off our Care of God* and Religion; we may then call to Mind, that this is *abominable Idolatry*, and ſo may we turn off our Hearts from ſinful Compliance, by charging our Souls with the oppoſite Duties, upon a true Diſcovery of the Vileneſs and Inconvenience of the Tranſgreſſions urged upon us.

But, *2dly*, They may be conſidered as they give *Inſtruction* for the Management of our *ſpiritual Armour* againſt all Satan's Wiles in the *general*, and in this Senſe I ſhall endeavour to open them, laying down firſt theſe two Concluſions:

Firſt, That the *whole Buſineſs* of theſe Temptations, as permitted to Satan, and ſubmitted unto by Chriſt, was certainly upon *Deſign*. The ſame Wiſdom that contrived the wonderful Method of the Salvation of Men by a Redeemer, did alſo order theſe Temptations; for elſe Chriſt could have *prevented* them, or by a Divine Authority commanded Silence to the Tempter, and by his Power might have chaſed him away. As Chriſt told *Pilate*, *Thou couldſt have no Power at all againſt me except it were given thee from above*; thereby manifeſting that his Suffering was from an higher Deſign than he was aware of: So might he have ſaid to the Devil, *Except this had been deſigned by an eternal Council, thou couldſt not have made this Attempt.* So that we muſt look farther for the *Spring* and Riſe of this, than to any ſuppoſed *occaſional Outbreaking* of ſatanical Malice upon him.

Secondly,

Secondly, That this Design, however it touched upon the Person and Offices of Christ, as Mediator and second *Adam*, (for thus it became him to overcome the Enemy at the same Weapon by which he overcame our first Parents, and by this personal Experience to be fitted with feeling Compassions to be tempted) yet was it wholly *for our Sakes*, as may appear by *two* Things.

1. In that Christ (if his Answers had only concerned himself) might have given *other fit Replies* to the *first* Temptation *of turning Stones to Bread*; He could have retorted the Argument upon Satan (as *Hierom* and others (*a*) observe) *If I am not the Son of God, 'tis in vain to require a Miracle of me; if I am, 'tis in vain to tempt me.* Or he might have answered, *That as the Father hath Life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life in himself, and that by this divine Power he could sustain himself without Bread* (*b*). To the *second* it might have been a sufficient Answer, to have *excepted* against his *Unfaithfulness* in citing that Testimony out of *Psal.* xci. where, by discovering his *wilful Omission* of the Clause [*in all thy Ways*] *He shall keep thee in all thy Ways*, his Temptation might have fallen to the Ground, as no way encouraged from that Promise. To the *third* might have been returned such Answers as these, That *Satan's Offer was a Lie; that it was not in his Power to dispose of the Kingdoms of the World; That these were Christ's already; that these were vain Arguments to draw him from the Glory of an heavenly Kingdom.* And finally, *That of all Creatures, Satan* (being God's sworn Enemy) *had least Reason to expect divine Honour.*

2. In that all Christ's Answers were from *Scripture* (which is properly a *Light to the Steps of Men*) and all these Scriptures cited shew *Man's Duty.* He saith not, *The Son of God shall not live by Bread alone*, but *Man lives not by Bread alone.* He saith not, *Christ must not tempt, but thou* (*Man*) *shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*, &c. By all which we may discern, that Christ answered, not by Arguments *peculiarly agreeable* to his *Person* and *Nature*, but by such as suit the *general State of God's Children.* And this certainly was for our Advantage, he conquered

(*a*) Si ad imperium ejus lapides possunt fieri panes, ergo frustra tentas; si autem non frustra, filium Dei suspicaris. (*b*) *Musculus* in loc.

conquered with such Weapons (*a*); not for any *Necessity* that he had to take that Course, but for the *Need that we had of such Instruction*; for hereby we see that Satan is *conquerable*, and also *how* we must use our Weapons. In this also he left us *an Example, that we should follow his Steps*; as *Gideon* said to his Soldiers, *as you see me do, so do you likewise.* Thus as it were doth our Lord speak to us, *For your Sakes suffered I these Temptations, that I might teach your Hands to war, and your Fingers to fight; for your Sakes I used these Weapons of yours, rather than my own, that I might shew you the Use of your Sword and Shield, and how your Adversary may be overcome by them*; dealing herein with us as a *Master* at Arms ('tis *Musculus*'s Comparison (*b*)) who for the better instructing and animating of his *Tyro*, takes rather his *Disciple's Sword* than his *own*, to beat his Adversary withal; minding not only the *Conquest* of an Enemy, but also the *Encouragement* of a young Soldier.

If any carry a Suspicion in their Mind, that Christ had not our Instruction so much in his Eye, as hath been said, because he gives not such *particular Instructions* for our spiritual Welfare, as the Apostle in *Eph.* vi. expecting, that our Saviour should have been more *punctual* in making particular *Applications* from every Part of his Carriage to our Use, and drawing out from thence some *positive Conclusions*, or Draughts of the Way and *Manner* of Resistance; they may know, that there is no other Difference betwixt *Eph.* vi. and *Matth.* iv. than there is betwixt *Precept* and *Example.* What the Apostle there prescribed in the Theory, here Christ teacheth in the Practice; here we have in their *Use* the *Girdle of Truth*, the *Shield of Faith*, the *Sword of the Spirit*, the *Helmet of Salvation*, and all the other Parts of that Armour; and withal we may know, that this is a far more advantageous Way of teaching young Beginners, to let them see Things in a plain Example, than only to give general Precepts. But besides, we are to consider that Christ did many Things, the Meaning whereof the Disciples then present with him did not know as yet, neither was it expected from them that they should (like to what he said to *Peter*, John xiii. 17. *What I do,*

(*a*) Vide arma quibus tibi non sibi vicit. *Ambr.* (*b*) Hæc armatura non tam Christo filio Dei quam nobis illius tyrunculis convenit, uti tamen ille voluit, ut nos suo doceret exemplo, perinde atque si fortis quidam gigas hostem non suis, sed tyrunculi sui armis feriat & prosternat. *Musculus.*

I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter) but were intended to be laid up *in Store* to be more fully made use of, as *After directions* should come in to give them Information. He therefore that had purposed to give further Light in this Matter by his Apostle and Servant, was now doing that which his Design led him to in his personal Actings, with a *secret Respect* also to those Instructions which he intended *after* to *communicate*. We have then no Reason to be jealous that these Temptations were not intended for our Use, but the more to assure our selves that it was even so, because we find that those very *Weapons* which here Christ in his own person *weilded* against Satan, are afterwards *recommended* to us.

Having thus laid the Foundation, we must then (if we will imitate our Captain) carefully observe his *Deportment* from Point to Point, that we may draw out those Instructions which he intended for us.

And the *first* Thing that I shall take notice of, shall be the *Courage* and Magnanimity of our Leader; he had endured Temptations *forty Days and Nights before*, and yet he keeps the Field without any Appearance of *shrinking* or running away; Satan no sooner tempts, than he is repelled. From this Consideration we have this Instruction,

Direct. 1.] *That he that would successfully resist Temptations, must not fly, but with a Couragious Resolve set himself to oppose.*

Christians are apt to *fear*, when Satan comes up against them, and ready to *turn* their Backs: As the *Israelites* were dismayed at the Appearance of *Goliah*, and fled before him. But if we would conquer, we must (as *David*) go out against him in *the Name of the Lord*: To this we are called, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 13. *Stand fast in the Faith, quit yourselves like Men, be strong*: And *Eph.* vi. 14. *Stand, having your Loins girt with Truth*, &c. This Courage recommended is not a *Contempt* and negligent slighting of Danger, nor is it a *bold Adventurousness* upon Occasions of Sin; it is an *holy humble Courage*, and doth admit of a *threefold* Fear.

First, Of a *Fear of Sin*, that is, a *Hatred* of it. We must fear Sin as the greatest Evil. This is no *Cowardice*, but tends to the *strongest Resolution*, and highest Endeavours against it. From this Principle is it, that Men oppose Sin as their *mortal Enemy*, and excite their utmost Courage to fight against it. As the *Philistines* being afraid of

of *Israel*, and yet hating to serve the *Hebrews*, mutually encouraged one another, *Be strong, and quit yourselves like Men, O ye Philistines.* A Fear of Hatred begets Boldness.

Secondly, Courage admits of a *preventing* Fear, and a provident Avoidance. *Occasions* of Sin are to be fled, we are not with greater Earnestness called upon to stand, than we are warned in this Case, *to fly.* So the Apostle often, *Flee Fornication, flee Idolatry, flee youthful Lusts*, 1 Cor. vi. 18. and x. 14. *Occasions are best opposed by fleeing*, 2 Tim. ii. 22. where *Calling*, and *Duty* doth not *engage*. Prov. iv. 14. *Enter not into the Path of the Wicked, and go not in the Way of evil Men.* He fights best, that flees most, where Necessity doth not bid him stay.

Thirdly, It also admits of the Fear of an holy *Jealousy*; such a *Distrust* of ourselves, as puts us to seek to the *Rock which is higher than we*, for Shelter. God calls us to turn into our strong Hold, and to lay hold upon his Strength. 'Tis Rashness or Desperateness, and not true Courage, to adventure ourselves without our Guard or Shield. But however we must *fear* Sin, *suspect* our Strength, and flee *Occasions*; yet *Satan* we must not flee. Here we are bid to stand, for these Reasons.

1*st*, 'Tis impossible to flee *from him.* He can follow us where ere we go: If we go to *holy Assemblies*, he can come thither: If we shut up ourselves in our *Closets*, he can meet us there: If we betake ourselves to a *Wilderness*, or to a *Croud*, to be sure he will find us out.

2*dly*, We are expressly charged to *make Resistance*, James iv. 7. *Resist the Devil.* 1 Pet. v. 9.— *whom resist.* This plainly speaks positive Endeavours and Opposition on our Part.

3*dly*, A *fainting* Fear is an unbelieving *Distrust* of God's Power, as if he were not *able to save to the uttermost*, and of Christ's compassionate Tenderness, as if he would not *succour those that are tempted.*

4*thly*, Our fainting makes Satan *insult.* He triumphs when we turn our Backs, and besides hath the greater Advantage to wound us, or to tread us down at Pleasure. 'Tis observed, that God provides Armour for *Head* and *Breast*, and all the *Fore parts*, by a Shield in case of Resistance: But if we flee (so little Encouragement is there for Cowardice) there is no *Armour* for the *Back.*

5*thly*, 'Tis most suitable to Christian Courage to *die in the Place*, and to put it to the utmost Hazard rather than to yield.

yield. According to *Vespasian*'s Motto, *Oportet imperatorem stantem mori.* Every Christian should say, *Shall such an one as I flee?* One that hath given up my Name to God; one that hath professed Holiness before Men; one that hath so many Advantages for Resistance, and such sweet Encouragements from a victorious General.

Quest.] But the great Question is, What is this *Fear* that is *forbidden*, and the *Courage* which is *enjoined*?

Answ. The Fear forbidden is an unbelieving *Weakness* and *Pusillanimity*, through which, as hopeless of Success, Men *throw down their Weapons*, and yield themselves up to Satan, when the Hearts of Men fail them to the giving up of the Victory.

Spiritual Courage (on the contrary) is a *serious Resolve of fighting it out in the Strength of the Lord*, and it consists of these *two* Parts.

First, A sincere Resolution to be on *Christ's Side* against all Iniquity, a deliberate unfeigned Determination to stand for God and his holy Ways, against Satan and Sin. (1.) The Ground of this Determination, is a *Conviction* of the *Evil of Sin*, even to an *Hatred* of it. He that hath not throughly weighed the Misery of living in Sin, and fully purposed within himself to forsake it, can have no true Christian Courage when it comes to a Pinch. (2.) From this Ground, he lays himself under *solemn Engagements* to Christ his General (as Soldiers list themselves under their Captains) that he will *follow him* and observe his Commands; he gives up himself to God by Covenant: So that now he is no longer *his own*, but Christ's Servant, bound for his Work. (3.) And this with such or so much *Belief* of his Promises for Aid and Victory, that he hath some *Hopes* or Expectations at least, that God may at last so assist him, that he may attain to some *real Degree* of the Mortification of the *Flesh with the Affections and Lusts thereof.*

Secondly, The second Part of this Courage consists in a *suitable Management* of this Undertaking. Courage is not only seen in the *first Onset*, but in the *Prosecution* of the Warfare: And this lies in *two* Things. 1. When there are *real Endeavours* against Sin (answerable to this Undertaking) in all Ways of striving to oppose it: When Men do not engage against Sin with *big Words* only; or as the Children of *Ephraim* (who arming themselves and carrying Bows, seemed to have stout Resolves, but then *turned back*

back in the Day of Battle) but with real and *conscientious Wrestlings*; setting themselves with all their Might and Care against every Temptation, and studying to *pursue* the Victory (where in any Degree 'tis obtained) to a greater Height. (2.) When these Endeavours are sincerely *persisted* in, without being *quite wearied out* or utter fainting; so that it never comes to this (tho' they may be sometime under Satan's Feet) that they *relinquish* their *first solemn Engagements*, or repent of their Undertaking, and then turn their Backs upon God, *listing* themselves under Satan's Colours; such a Fainting as this would bereave Men of their Crown, *Ye shall reap in due Time if ye faint not*, Gal. vi. 9. Upon this Hazard are the Children of God cautioned, *Heb.* xii. 3. *Lest ye be wearied, and faint in your Mind.* (3.) There is also a particular Kind of Courage expressed in an *holy and humble Contempt* of Satan's Suggestions (*a*); when after all Means used, they *cease not* to be troublesome: This is not to slight *Sin*, but to slight *Satan*, who tho' he resisted, ceaseth not to molest.

Applic. I shall particularly apply this first Direction (1.) To those that propound *Ease* to themselves in their Race or Warfare (which is a Thing impossible to one that doth the Work of a *Soldier*) not considering that Work and courágious Endeavours do abide them. (2.) To those that pretend themselves Christ's *Soldiers*, Courage and Christian Magnanimity is your *Cognizance*; by this must you be known. How do ye *stand*? what are your *Resolutions* and Undertakings? Those Christians that have *Joy and Peace in believing*, can more easily satisfy themselves in this; but those that fight in *Tears and Grief*, in Disquiets and troubled Thoughts, are apt to conclude themselves *unbelieving*, because they are *fearful*; or to think, that they look not up to Jesus, the *Author and Finisher of their Faith*, because they *apprehend* themselves weary and *faint in their Minds*. For the Ease and Help of such, I shall shew in a few Things, that there is as *real* a Christian Courage in such *Mourners*, as in some that sing *Songs* of Triumph.

First, 'Tis a *real* Courage and undertaking against Sin, for any to resolve his *utmost*, out of *Detestation* of it, before he can *satisfy* himself that God will accept of it. To oppose Sin under such a Discouragement, or at such a Venture

(*a*) *Capel* Tempt. Part 2. c. 9. *Ames* Cas. Consc. *lib.* 2. *c.* 18. § 14.

Venture is a *couragious Hatred*, and yet so do those Mourners.

Secondly, To be under *continual Grievings* because of *Miscarriages*, so that other Things of *outward Enjoyment* cease to be *pleasing*, is a couragious Hatred; but this is their Case.

Thirdly, To *wrestle* against Sin under *high Discouragements*, when afflicted and tossed, when Satan runs upon them, and shakes them by the Neck, and yet they *continue* their wrestling and withstanding, as they are able. This is faithful Resistance, *a Resistance unto Blood, striving against Sin*, Heb. xii. 4. that is (if that Expression be proverbial, like that *ad sanguinem usque*) they resist Sin faithfully, under great *Hazards* and *Inconveniencies*, even to Wounds and Blood, till they have *broken* Heads and *broken* Faces; and can say to God, tho' we have been *broken in the Place of Dragons*, and have these Wounds to shew, yet *have we not departed from thee*, nor quitted our Desires after thee and Holiness, for all these Buffetings of Satan; but this is the Character of these dejected ones

Fourthly, 'Tis a couragious Hatred that cannot suffer a sinful *Motion* to fall upon the Soul, but it puts all into a *Combustion* within, and saith Disquiet, for it is an Argument, that there is a *Contrariety* betwixt the Heart and Sin; but this is their Case also.

Fifthly, 'Tis Courage and Constancy to *hold on* in gracious Endeavours and Strivings; so that when they fall, as soon as they can *recollect* their Strength, they *set on* where *they left*, and renew the Battle, never *changing* their *first Resolve* for Holiness against Sin. This is implied in the Apostle's Phrase of *standing*, Eph. vi. *That ye may withstand, and when ye have done all, to stand.* He is accounted to *stand*, that *runs* not out of the Field, but stands to his holy Resolve to the last, tho' the Battle go sore against him by Fits; but such are these Mourners.

There is true Courage under Mourning and Disquiet of Heart; so that we may say to such, *O thou afflicted and tossed*, fear not, *the Glory of the Lord shall shine upon thee.* They that are weak in this Sense shall be strong as *David*.

CHAP. XXIII.

The second Direction, that Temptations are not to be disputed. The several Ways of disputing a Temptation. In what Cases it is convenient and necessary to dispute with Satan. In what Cases inconvenient, and the Reasons of it.

THE next Thing observable in Christ's Carriage to Satan is this, That Christ (tho' he rejected every Temptation, by giving a Reason of his Refusal from the Command of God) did not suffer Satan to *dispute* his Temptations further than the *first Proposal*, and in his Answers he takes no *Notice* of the *Reasons*, or Motives by which he laboured to make his Temptations prevailing. In the two first Temptations, he gives no Reply, to what Satan insinuated by his Supposition, [*If thou be the Son of God*;] neither by affirming that he was so, nor discovering to him his *Knowledge* of the secret *Subtilty*, which he had wrapt up under these plausible *Pretences*. In the third he answers not a Word to the *Vanity* and Falshood of his deceitful Offer of the *Kingdoms of the World*, tho' (as hath been observed) he might have opposed strong Reasons against them all: And besides, when Satan became insolent and impudent in tempting Christ *to fall down and worship him*, he chaseth him away with a severe Abomination, *Get thee hence, Satan*. From which we have a second Direction, which is this.

Direct. 2.] *That Temptations to Sin, are to be opposed by peremptory Denials, rather than by Disputings.*

This is a Note, which most *Commentators* have on this Place; but it stands in Need of a distinct Application, because it is not a Rule so *general*, but that the Practice of God's Children have made *Exception* against it. For the clearer Explanation of it, I shall

First, Give you the *several Kinds* of Disputings, by which we may see that all are not alike: For,

1*st*, The serious *Working* of the Thoughts in a *quick Denial* of a Temptation, with a *Reason implied* or *expressed* (tho' it admit not Satan to any further Dispute or Argument)

may,

may, *in some Sense*, be called a Disputing; for the Scripture useth διαλογισμὸς for any inward serious Thought. *Such* a Kind of *Disputing* as this is *necessary*; it cannot be wanting to any that refuse a sinful Motion, this being (as we shall see afterward) one of those Directions which Christ intended us by his Example, and the very Thing which Christ practised in every Temptation: For he contented not himself to give a *naked* Denial, but still adds a *Reason* of such Refusal. Those who in *general Terms* urge that Temptations are not to be disputed, do not *reckon* this as any Disputing. And others that do (taking Disputing for the Refusal of a Thing, with a Reason assigned) think that his Procedure in the two first Temptations, is not *imitable* by us, but only that of the Third, wherein he chased away the Devil with an angry Denial: But the Mistake is obvious.

2*dly*, There is a Disputing of *unnecessary Curiosity* and Conference: This is when a sinful Motion injected into our Hearts, is not *directly consented to*; but then instead of a *full Denial*, Men begin to raise *Questions*, and make *Objections* of *lesser* Moment, or some *impertinent Queries* which strike not at the *Root*: As one observed of himself, that instead of *denying* a sinful Motion, he began to dispute, whether it came from *Satan* or his *own Inclination*, and so instead of *quenching* the Fire, he busied himself to *enquire* whence it came. Men deal with Temptations in this Case, as they, who being asked whether they will buy such a Commodity, *hastily answer no*, but yet call back the Party again, and ask whence it came? or what it must cost? and by such *Intanglements* of *Curiosity* engage themselves at last to buy it. *Eve* failed by such an *inconsiderate Conference* with Satan, for the *abrupt* Beginning of the Serpent's Speech [*Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat*, &c.] and the summing up of the Arguments which prevailed with her to eat [*when the Woman saw that the Tree was good for Food, and pleasant to the Eyes*, &c.] do clearly evidence that there was *more Discourse*, than is there expressed, and that also tending to ascertain the *Goodness*, *Pleasantness*, and *Profit* of the Fruit. This Kind of disputing is always unlawful and dangerous, for it is but a *wanton Dalliance* with a Temptation, a *playing upon the Hole of the Asp*, and commonly ends in a sinful Compliance.

3*dly*, There is a Disputing of a *deliberating* and *parlying Indifferency*; this is, when the Devil puts a Thought of Sin in to their Minds, and (while they seem not to be forward to embrace it) leaves it to *further Consideration*, and then they float, betwixt *resolved* and *unresolved*, betwixt *pro & con*, being at a great Dispute within themselves what is best to be done, whether the *Conveniencies* on the one Hand, will weigh down the *Inconveniencies* on the other; this in Cases of *apparent* Sin, is a wicked *halting betwixt two*, always unlawful.

4*thly*, There are also treacherous *partial Arguings*, wherein the Heart *takes Part with Satan*. These are those *Debates* that are to be found in natural Men, about the *doing* or *not doing* of sinful Things. This looks so like the *Combate betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit*, that it hath occasioned an Enquiry, how they may be *distinguished* each from other. 'Tis generally concluded, that in that *Strife* of the *natural* Man, the *Light* of the Understanding and Conscience, gives Opposition to the Bent of the *Affections*, and the *same Faculties* (tho' sanctified in Part) in the *Regenerate*, are the Parties that give Opposition each to other; but with this *principal Difference*, that in *this Strife of the Flesh and Spirit*, the Man *takes Part with God*, whereas in the *other*, the Affections *take the Devil's Part*, and in a malignant *Averseness* to the Light, strive to put it out, and to get over the Conviction of Conscience, so that the Man *strives to sin*, and to stop the *Mouth* of such Objections, as come into the contrary: This Kind of Disputing is always sinful.

5*thly*, There is yet a Disputing in a *strict* Sense, which is a full and *solemn debating* of a satanical *Injection*, by giving it the *full Hearing*, and admitting Satan to be a Respondent to our Objections. Of this it is *queried* how far it may be convenient, and how far inconvenient, because we see Christ in this Place did not thus dispute with Satan; and yet we find *Instances* in Scripture of some holy Men that have been unavoidably *engaged* to dispute a Temptation to the *utmost*.

To answer this Query, I shall *secondly* shew in what Cases it may be necessary or convenient to *enter the Lists* with Satan in an *holy Arguing*, and in what Cases it is *inconvenient* and dangerous. There are four Cases in which we may dispute a Temptation.

First,

First, When the Motion is of Things *doubtful* and *disputable*, whether they be lawful or not. Here it cannot be avoided; for albiet (as the Apostle adviseth, *Rom.* xiv. 1.) *doubtful Disputations* are not to be imposed upon others, so as to ty them up to our Perswasions, yet in these Things every Man (before he can act clearly) is to endeavour his *own Satisfaction* in the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of the Thing, that so he may *be fully perswaded in his own Mind*, *ver.* 5. And he gives two strong Reasons of this, *ver.* 22, 23. (1.) From the *Rack* and Trouble, which otherwise the Man may be put upon, while his Conscience unsatisfied, *condemneth him in that, which* by a contrary Practice *he alloweth*: (2.) In that this Condemnation of Conscience (while he doth that, the Lawfulness whereof he believeth not) is an *Evidence* of his *Sin*, as well as an *Occasion* of his *Trouble*.

Secondly, Disputings have Place, when a Temptation hath *taken hold* upon the Thoughts; and so far possessed itself, that our *Corruption* riseth up in the *Defence* of the Suggestion. Satan will not *quit* that Hold (though he be an Intruder without our Leave,) till he be *beat* out of his *Quarters*. The Apostle, *Eph.* vi. implies so much by that Expression, of *quenching the fiery Darts* of Satan. It is not proper to understand it of a Refusal of the *first* Motion of Sin, (though Interpreters do usually make it comprehensive both of the *keeping* out of the Dart, and the *plucking* it out) because this evidently supposeth, that the Dart hath *pierced* the Soul, and now *begins* to *burn* and enflame, which will require more Labour for the quenching of it, than a Refusal of the first Motion would put us to. As when Fire hath taken hold upon our Houses, we shall be forced to bring Water for the *extinguishing* of the Flame, which (before it had broke out upon the Building) an ordinary Care might have *prevented*. And this we are further taught by a Distinction which the same Apostle useth in the same Place of στῆναι and ἀντιστῆναι *standing* and *withstanding*. We must keep off the Temptation that it *enter not*, by *standing* against the Assault in a peremptory *Refusal*; but if it *do enter*, then we must be put to it, by a Force of holy arguing to *pull out* the Arrow, and to *withstand* it.

Thirdly, Much more need have we of disputing, when the present Temptation is a *Motion* of such a Sin which we are *habituated* unto, and have *long practised*, for these Kinds of

of ſinful Motions are not caſt out eaſily. In this Caſe, *David* adviſeth his Enemies, *Pſal.* iv. (who had for a long Time, *loved Vanity, and ſought after Leaſing*) that by *communing with their own Heart*, and by diſputing againſt their ſinful Practices, they ſhould bring themſelves under an *holy Awe*, and by that Means ſtop the Courſe of their Sinning, *ver.* 4. This indeed is the great Thing that Sinners are called to by God, to *ponder* their Eſtate, to *conſider* their Ways, to *ſtudy* the Evil and Danger of Sin, to *examine* themſelves, and to *reaſon* together with God about the Wickedneſs and Ingratitude of their Actions, and about the contrary Lovelineſs, Bleſſedneſs and Happineſs of the Ways of God, that ſo they may be brought to Repentance; all which are done only by a *ſerious arguing* of their Caſe and Hazard.

Fourthly, It is convenient, and in ſome Caſes neceſſary, to diſpute a Temptation, which Satan offers to us, *by the Mouths of Men*, who entice us to ſhare with them in their Wickedneſs: For here by *arguing*, we may not only *diſcourage* their further Solicitation, and ſo *free our ſelves* from the like Temptation for the future, but we alſo by the Exerciſe of an holy Charity, endeavour to *pull them out of the Fire*. When *Joſeph*'s Miſtreſs tempted him, he conſidered that he had to deal both with the *Devil* and *his Miſtreſs*, Gen. xxxix. 7, 8. and therefore that he might *reſiſt the Devil*, he peremptorily *refuſed* the Temptation; but that he might *take off his Miſtreſs* from her unlawful Proſecution, he *argues* with her about the Ingratitude, Danger and Unlawfulneſs of ſuch an Act, *My Maſter woteth not what is with me in the Houſe, and he hath committed all that he hath to my Hand: There is none greater in this Houſe than I, neither hath he kept any Thing back from me but thee, becauſe thou art his Wife: How then can I do this great Wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* When Sinners do *entice* us to caſt in our *Lot amongſt them*, *Pity* to them, and *Care* of ourſelves will engage us to *argue* the Folly and Danger of their Ways with them, except they behave themſelves as *Dogs and Swine*; their Carriage giving us juſt Ground to conclude, that they are ſo *ſet on Wickedneſs*, that it may *endanger* us, rather than *profit* them, to debate with them. And ſo was it likely, (and the Text ſeems to hint ſo much,) that when *Joſeph* perceived his Miſtreſs, was *reſolved* upon the Purſuit, and that his

Rea-

Reasonings were not minded, he *persisted* in his *Denial*, but *forbore* his *Arguings*.

But however it may be convenient to dispute (in the *last mentioned* Sense) in these *four* Cases, (and others may probably be added) yet there are Cases in which it will be *inconvenient* and hazardous to dispute or argue, and of this Order I shall reckon four.

1*st*, It is not safe to dispute the Matter, in *vile infectious Temptations*, such as are either *suitable* to our *Inclinations*, or may receive a favourable *Aspect* and Countenance from the *Posture* of our *Affairs* and Condition. These Temptations (even in our debating against them) are like the opening of a *Sepulchre*, which sends forth a *poisonous Stream*, which may *infect* those that *loath* and resist it. 'Tis dangerous to admit Fire into the same *Room* where there is *Gunpowder*, though there be *no Intention* to kindle it. It hath been an old Observation, that the very *Confession of infectious Sins*, (though designed to beget Shame, and Resolution against them for the Future;) have *kindled a new Flame*, by the unnecessary Declaration of the *Manner* and *Circumstances*, so that they have returned from the *Confessor more infected* than when they went; and those very Persons, whose Care it should have been to have put the *highest Disgrace* upon Sins, so *confessed*, to the begetting of *Loathing*, and Abhorrency in the Parties and themselves, have by too *curious* an Enquiry received such *Poison* at the *Ear*, that the *Heart* hath been forthwith *infected*. The like Hazard remains to those that are willing to debate such Sins with Satan; for though they *begin* upon the Score of *Resistance*, yet the very *dwelling* on such a Subject (when admitted to lay itself open) doth convey such *amorous Looks* unto the *treacherous Affections*, that the *Heart* is in Danger of a *secret Poison*. There is no better Way in such Cases than to *command* all such Thoughts and Considerations *out of our Coasts*, and (as we do, when the City or Town we live in is infected) to withdraw ourselves from the Air of such a Temptation. We may observe the like Care in *Joseph*, though he thought himself concerned at first (as hath been said) to oppose the unlawful Suit of his Mistress, yet seeing her desperately set upon her Folly, he *declined* all *Communication* with her, and *would not be with her*, Gen. xxxix. 10. and at last when she caught him by his Garment, *he left it in her Hand and fled*, ver. 12. He might easily have

have *rescued* his Garment from her, had he not been aware that his *contesting* against her, might have been an *Occasion of Ensnarement* to himself. Christ himself, when he was tempted by *Peter* to *spare himself*, (which was a Temptation very taking to human Nature, especially when Suffering, and Death is in View,) is more short and sparing in his Reasoning against it, than he was when the Devil tempted him. He gives no positive Reasons against it, as he *did*, when he was tempted to *fall down and worship the Devil*, but discharged himself from any further Consideration of the Matter by a declared Abhorrency of the Thing, *Get thee behind me Satan, for thou savourest not the Things that be of God, but the Things which be of Men.* Which is as if he had plainly said, *This is so apparently from the Devil, and so much abhorred by me (because so suitable to my Condition) that I will not so much as discourse of it, or consider it.*

2*dly*, Generally in all Temptations, (though they have not the Advantage of our *present, special Estate* or *Inclination*, as hath been noted) of an *apparent Withdrawment from Obedience*, or of Things *unquestionably* sinful, it is not convenient to dispute them, but to dismiss them by a *Denial*, except some of the *forementioned* Considerations do alter the Case. In *known* Cases we need not *parly* but stoutly *deny*. Our Resolutions *for Duty*, and *against Sin*, should not be *to seek*: We are certain that Sin is to be avoided, and Duty to be practised, here we should be *peremptory*. *Abraham* being *certain* of Duty, when God called him *to a Place which he should afterwards receive for an Inheritance*, he disputed not the Uncertainty, the Danger or Inconvenience that possibly might attend his Removal, but went out, *not knowing whither he went*, Heb. xi. 8. *Paul* being called by God to preach among the Heathen, though *Flesh and Blood* were ready with Arguments against it, yet he would not so much as *confer* with them, but immediately obeyed, *Gal.* i. 16. Like Instances I might fetch from other holy Men. *Cyprian*, when the President gave it to his own Choice, whether he would *obey* or *be put to Death*, commanding him to take it into Consideration, he readily replied, *In re tam sancta non est deliberandum*, that it was not fit to deliberate in so plain a Case. Mrs. *Anne Askew*, when at the Stake ready to be burnt, a *Pardon* was offered by the *Lord Chancellor*, she would not so much as *look* on it, but returned

returned this Anſwer, That ſhe came not thither *to deny her Lord and Maſter.* Biſhop *Hooker* in the ſame Condition had a Box laid before him with a Pardon in it, which when he underſtood, (he was ſo afraid of tampering with a Temptation) he cryed out, *If ye love my Soul, away with it; if ye love my Soul, away with it.* And many others there were in all Ages, ſo far from accepting ſuch unlawful Deliverances, that they would not take into Conſideration the unrighteous Terms upon which they might have eſcaped*.

3*dly*, When a Temptation, after all Means uſed, continues to be troubleſome, and is rather an Annoyance than an Infection, then muſt we not diſpute it, but by an holy *Contempt* deſpiſe it. Temptations to Blaſphemy are oft of this Nature, (as hath been noted in its Place) and there are other Things by which Satan creates to God's Children great Diſquiet, while they in the mean Time abhor the Sin, and cry out of the Trial. Here when the *Meſſenger of Satan* will not *depart*, 'tis an Advice that hath the general Approbation of holy experienced Men, that we ſhould deſpiſe the Temptation, as an approved Way to our Quiet and Eaſe; for while we think to repel ſuch Aſſaults, by ſtruggling with Arguments, we do but increaſe the Force of them: As he that thinks to ſhelter himſelf againſt the Wind, by holding up his *Cloak before him*, doth but derive upon himſelf a *ſtronger Blaſt.*

4*thly*, In Temptations of inward Trouble and Terror, it is not convenient to diſpute the Matter with Satan. *David* in *Pſalm* xlii. 11. ſeems to correct himſelf for his Miſtake, his Soul was *caſt down within him*, and for the Cure of that Temptation, he had prepared himſelf by Arguments for a Diſpute; but perceiving himſelf in a wrong Courſe, he calls off his Soul from Diſquiet, to an immediate Application to God and the Promiſes, *Truſt ſtill in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him*; but in *Pſal.* xi. 1. he is more aforehand with his Work, for while his Enemies were acted by Satan to diſcourage him, he rejects the Temptation at firſt, before it ſettled upon his Thoughts, and chaſeth it away as a Thing that he would not give Ear to: *In thee Lord do I put my Truſt; how ſay ye then to my*

* Tentatus a Satana cum nullum evadendi modum ſentis, ſimpliciter, claude oculos, & nihil reſponde, & commenda cauſam Deo. *Luther, tom.* 3. *f.* 396. Sicut tutiſſimum eſt Canem latrantem contemnere & præterire, ita una vincendi ratio eſt contemnere rationes Satanæ, neque cum iis diſputare: : : : Satan nihil minus ferre poteſt quam ſui contemptum. *Id. tom.* 3. *f.* 376. *Agnes* Cat. Conſc. *lib.* 1. *c.* 6.

my Soul, flee as a Bird to your Mountain? And there are weighty Reasons that should dissuade us from entring the Lists with Satan in Temptations of inward Trouble; as, 1*st*, The *Determination* of the Sincerity of the Soul, and its converted State is a Question of no small Difficulty, a knotty Controversy, more intricate and abstruse than those Controversies that in the Schools are of greatest Name for *Difficulty*: For this is liable to more *weighty Objections*, and stands in Need of *nicer Distinction*. As Dr. *Goodwin* observes (*a*), *They that converse with dejected Spirits, find so much Quickness and Nimbleness of Reasoning, turning every Way to ward off the Force of an Argument brought for their Consolation, that even wise and able Heads are oft put to a Stand, and know not what to answer.* Would it then be fit to give Satan this Advantage, or to admit him so far into our Reasoning? He that will *invite* Satan to such a Contest, shall be sure to have his *Hands full.*

2*dly*, This Kind of Temptation doth usually disable Men for arguing; it oftentimes confounds the Brain, stupifies the Understanding, and weakens the Memory. *Heman* complains of himself as *distracted by Terrors*. *Job* calls himself *desperate*. Such Persons are not surely in a fit Case to manage a Temptation with so cunning a Sophister as Satan.

3*dly*, If they descend into the Battle, he is not only *too strong* for them, but commonly after a while they *take Satan's Part* against themselves, and comply with him, concluding against their own Peace.

4*thly*, There is also a *better* Way at Hand than to enter into a *Dispute*, and that is, *By going to God by a present Faith, Love or Repentance, when the Truth of any of these is questioned.* It is a difficult Task to prove some Time that former Acts of Faith, Love, or other Graces, were sincere; this may admit of such Objections from a wounded Spirit, that it will be hard to answer them; but in this Case 'tis a nearer Way to see if there be not *in all these Complainings*, some present Acts of these Graces: Whether such Complainants are not *willing to embrace Christ upon any Terms, whether they do not hate Sin, whether they would not unfeignedly be reconciled to God*, &c. It oft falls out that this doth stay the Trouble, when

(*a*) Child of Light, *cap.* 7. *p.* 41.

when Examinations of former Acts do nothing for them. Some Men are at more Pains (as one saith) to repair and fit an old Building, than would serve to rear up a new one. Yet must it be remembred, that tho' it were the *best Course* to resist Temptations of this Nature at first, by avoiding unnecessary *Disputings*, notwithstanding when this (as I noted before of other Temptations) hath seized upon the Heart and taken Possession, then shall we be forced to fill *our Mouths with Arguments*, and whether we will or no, must we undergo a Contest: As we see in *David* who when his Troubles had prevailed upon him, was forced to *plead with God, with himself, with the Temptation*, and to have Recourse to *former Experience; the Days of old, and the Years of the right Hand of the Most High*, and all little enough.

Thirdly, All that I shall further say concerning the Inconveniencies of disputing with Satan, shall be to give you the Reasons manifesting these *unnecessary Communings* with him to be every Way hazardous and unsuitable. As,

1*st*, 'Tis an *Honour* to Satan, and a *Disgrace* to ourselves: Men are loath to be seen contesting with Persons of a far *inferior Rank*; especially in such Things which have procured to such a *noted Infamy*. 'Tis an usual Piece of Generosity in Men of Spirit, that they scorn *to strive with a Scold, or contend with a Beggar, or be found in Company of those that are under an evil Name deservedly*: And in Matters that are vile and base, 'tis highly disgraceful to admit them to a *Debate*. Such Things will either get more Credit than they deserve, while they seem to be countenanced by a *Dispute*, or else shall communicate their *Discredit* to those that shall shew such Familiarity with them.

2*dly*, By refusing to dispute Temptations, we raise up in our Hearts an active Abhorrency of them, and by that Abhorrency we are cautioned and strengthned against them: It must needs awaken our Hatred into a present Activity against that Sin, which our Consideration at first View presents to us so abominable, that it deserves no other Answer, but to be *whipt out of our Sight*. And when our Heart is thus alarmed, it cannot but stand upon its Guard. 'Tis a Course that holy Men have taken, to keep Men at a greater Distance from Sin, to present it as a Thing of greatest Abhorrency, and that is the Intendment of that Expression,

preſſion, *Rom* vi. 1. *Shall we ſin, that Grace may abound? God forbid.* The *Vileneſs* of that Abuſe of Goſpel-grace he ſhews, by ſetting it below the *Merit* of any *ſerious* Thought; he ſharpens their Apprehenſions againſt it by an Outcry of Deteſtation. The like he doth *Eph.* v. 3. where he endeavours to ſet their Hearts againſt Uncleanneſs and Covetouſneſs, by telling them that it was unbecoming Saint-ſhip, that ſuch Things ſhould be *ſo much as once named by them.*

3*dly*, Diſputing is a *ſecret Invitation* to the Devil to *urge* the Temptation further: We do but *toy* with him, and give him Occaſion to follow us. *Eve* found the Truth of this by ſad Experience, ſhe ſo managed herſelf, that ſhe plainly intimated ſhe had *a Mind to hear what the Devil could ſay*, for the eating of the forbidden Fruit; and *ſo* urged the Prohibition of God, and the Threatning, that ſhe ſought from Satan a *Confirmation* of her ſecret *Unbelief*, rather than faithfully endeavoured a *Repulſe* of the Temptation; and mentioned the Threatning under ſuch Terms of *Uncertainty* and *Peradventure*, as an *Objection* which ſhe deſired might be *removed*, rather than from a firm Belief of that Death ſpoken of, fortifying herſelf in her Duty; by all which Satan was ſo encouraged to proceed, that he preſently confirmed her in her Diſtruſt.

4*thly*, Theſe Diſputings uſually return *nothing of Advantage* to our Account, but to Satan's. We unneceſſarily enter the Liſts with him, and that upon very *unequal* Terms, he being (as *Saul* ſaid of *Goliah* and *David*) a *Man of War from his Youth*, and we but weak unſkilful *Striplings*; we go out of our Trenches, and leave our Weapons behind us; we expoſe our naked Breaſts to all his Darts, and by *diſcourſing* with him he *gains* Time, wherein the *Poiſon* may more powerfully *work* upon our Affections. If he was *too hard* for our *firſt* Parents at this Weapon, we whoſe Hearts are not ſo faithful to God, as theirs in *Innocency*, but *corrupted* by Satan (who hath alſo a Party in us) are not likely to come off with Triumph.

5*thly*, Theſe *preſage* (conſequently) *an Overthrow.* A parlying City holds not long out, it implies in itſelf an Inclination to yield, when Armies are willing to treat. Daily Examples and Experience of thoſe that give up themſelves to Sin after Communication with Satan, ſadly witneſs this Truth.

The

The Sum of this Direction is this, that when a Motion of Sin is put into our Heart, instead of *disputing* (where it may be avoided) we should peremptorily *deny* it, and send it away with an *angry Rebuke*, or severe Abomination, *I may not do it: How can I do this Wickedness? Get thee hence*: Or, *The Lord Rebuke thee Satan.*

CHAP. XXIV.

The third Direction of repelling a Temptation without Delay; the Necessity of so doing. What a speedy Denial doth contain.

THE Magnanimity of Christ, and the Peremptoriness of his Denial we have noted. We must further observe the *Immediateness* of his Answer, he suffered not any of these Motions to stay long with him; here was not a *Cras tibi respondebo, Come again To morrow, and I will answer*; he would not take Time with the Devil, but had his Answer ready. No sooner was he tempted, but the Temptation was repelled; for these Expressions [*but he answered and said. Jesus said unto him. Then saith Jesus unto him*] shew the *Quickness* and Speediness of these Returns, that he answered presently, forthwith. Hence we have a *third* Direction in our resisting of Satan, which is this:

3. Direct.] *Temptations are best answered, when they are presently denied and forthwith repelled.* The Direction is of great Importance; 'tis not for us to pass by a Temptation with *Silence*, or to defer an Answer; for these Reasons:

1st, The Nature of Temptations, as *dangerous* or infectious, doth sufficiently inforce a Necessity of their *speedy Removal.* Things of Danger require a *sudden* Stop. If *Poison* be taken into the Body, we *speedily* labour to cast it up, or to overcome it by *Antidotes.* We labour to stay the spreading of a *Gangreen* presently. Who thinks it fit to delay, when Fire hath taken hold upon an House. The very *Opportunity* of Help is in the *Speediness* of the Endeavour. 'Tis too late to bring Water when the House is consumed (*a*), too late to apply a Remedy, when the Dis-

(*a*) ... Sero medicina paratur, cum mala per longas convenere moras

caſe hath conquered. They that conſider what a Temptation is, will ſee no Reaſon to move ſlowly in oppoſing.

2*dly*, *Silence incourageth* Satan. 'Tis not with him as 'tis with Men; 'tis the Policy of ſome to *overlook* their Petitioners, and by Silence to *ſcar* them from any further Addreſs; but Satan hath more *Impudence*, than to be put *out of Countenance* by Delay, and more *active* Malice, than to be *diſcouraged* by Silence; nay, it doth on the contrary *imbolden* him. *Modeſt* Requeſts are diſheartned by Silence; but ſuch Motions, which by their *Nature imply a Diſgrace*, and carry no *Reaſon* for their Acceptance, but what they expect to find in the *Conſent* of thoſe to whom they are made; if they be not preſently refuſed, they give *Encouragement* to hope for *Entertainment*. An immodeſt Requeſt to a chaſte Matron, if not forthwith expreſly abominated, encourageth to further Attempts. Sin being ſo great an Affront to an holy Heart, the Motion of it cannot be entertained with Silence, but Satan is imboldned to expect Conſent in Time, and follows his Advantage accordingly. He uſually *flies* at a *valiant* peremptory Reſiſtance; but if the Pulſe of the Soul beat *ſlowly* upon the Motion, he grounds his *Hope* upon that, and is animated to a further Procedure.

3*dly*, Our *Wills* are apt to be *inclined* by Delay. Tho' Grace hath made ſtraight our crooked Natures, yet we ſtill carry ſuch a *Sway* to our former Diſpoſitions, that a ſmall Thing (having the Advantage of our *natural Biaſs* and Inclination) makes us (like a *deceitful Bow*) turn *to our old Stand*. For the *Underſtanding* and *Will* of the Regenerate are but *imperfectly* good, the Faculties that ſhould obey are *unruly*; in ſuch a Caſe how dangerous may Delays prove? Who will ſuffer a ſeditious Incendiary in an Army, formerly inclined to Mutiny? Who will permit Leaven to remain in that Maſs, which he deſires may not be leavened, and not quickly remove it? Who will neglect a Spark upon dry Tinder (that would not have if conſumed) and not inſtantly put it out? If it was ſo great a Miſchief to *Eve* in Innocency (as hath been ſaid) to delay her peremptory Denial, of how much greater Hazard is it to us? *Delays are dangerous* to a very Proverb, and *Silence* may end in *Conſent*.

4*thly*, Silence is alſo *ſome Degree* of *Conſent*. 'Tis ſtrange to find a Man delaying an Anſwer to Temptation,

and

and yet no way guilty of consenting. In Things that are to be opposed with Care and Hatred, no Man can withhold his Hand without Blame; he that is not *against Satan* (who is to be perpetually resisted) is so far *for him*, as he is *not against* him. He that *delays* Justice which is due, *denies* it (*a*). The Judge in the Parable was called unjust, not because he had devoured the Widow's House, but because he deferred to do her Right. He that *hinders not* Evil when, and as soon as he can, doth *command* and approve it (*b*). These are received *Axioms* amongst Men, and have the same Truth in them, if applied to Resistance of Temptations. And this may further appear, by considering, 1. The *Weakness* of the Will in the *Regenerate*. When our Wills are *really* set upon Good, and against Evil, yet we cannot say, they are *perfectly* for the one, and against the other, but that there is still *some Degree* of Averseness to Good, and of Inclination to Evil in our Wills, or else we should not meet with Complainings of *Imperfections* under *sincere* Resistances; as in the Apostle, *The Evil that I would not, that do I.* 2. The *Acts* of the Will in consenting may be so *sudden*, short and quick, that they may be almost *insensible*, and as forward and ready as the Motion. 3. The Will may be *interpretatively* voluntary and consenting, when yet it forms not in itself any *positive Approbation*; it may be *guilty*, in that it doth not *more strongly* and speedily *dissent*; for the *Suspension* or Negation of the *Will's Act* (where it ought to act) cannot avoid the Charge of *coming short* of Duty.

5*thly*, Not to answer presently, is to *lose the best Opportunity* of answering; 'tis *less dangerous*, more *easy*, more *comfortable* to be *speedy* in Denial. The sooner Fire is put out, or the Disease is staid, the less Hurt is done; and 'tis far less Labour to quench a Spark than a Flame, to pluck up a young Plant than an old Standard; to kill the *Cockatrice* in the *Egg*. A Temptation opposed *speedily*, is with greater *Ease* overcome, than after it hath *settled*, tho' but a little; for it presently makes *a Party* within us, our Affections are soon engaged, our Understanding soon bribed, and then we have not only *Satan*, but *ourselves* to oppose; and this *Self* so divided, that when we come to fight, our *Wills* are against our *Wills*, our *Affections* against our *Affections*,

(*a*) Differe justitiam est negare justitiam. (*b*) Qui non prohibet cum potest, jubet.

fections, our *Wiſhes* and *Prayers* claſh and contradict each other. As *Auſtin* (*a*) confeſſeth of himſelf, *I prayed* (ſaid he) *and then feared leſt thou ſhouldſt hear me too ſoon; I deſired to ſatisfy, rather than to extinguiſh Luſt.* At the firſt Aſſault, the Soul is oft in a *better Poſture*, more unanimous and *conſiſtent* with itſelf; then is the *golden Opportunity* of Reſiſtance. For (as (*b*) one ſaith) 'tis better to do it while *Reaſon is on our Side*, than when both *Reaſon and Affection* conſpire againſt us. And *Laſtly*, It would be more Honour and Satisfaction to us, rather *not to have admitted* ſuch a Gueſt, than after ſuch Admittance into our Thoughts, to be forced to *caſt him* out (*c*). In the Review of our Actions, we ſhall have more Comfort to have been reſolute againſt any Sin, than to hold our Peace.

The Neceſſity of a quick and ſpeedy Rejection of a ſinful Motion is then beyond Diſpute, and there needs no more to be ſaid for the Explanation of this Direction, but an Account of what is *implied* in a *ſpeedy* Denial; it contains theſe four Things.

First, That it muſt *iſſue from a fixed Determination* againſt Sin. Some refuſe a Temptation with the ſame Mind that carried *Lot*'s Wife out of *Sodom*, and are *forced beyond* their own Inclination; but theſe go not far till they *look back*; and no Wonder; for if he that is *ſincerely peremptory* againſt Sin at the *firſt Motion*, may by the Solliciation of the Fleſh be inclined *afterward*, there is little Expectation that he whom the *firſt Motion finds indifferent*, and but coldly denying, ſhould hold out long. But that *Refuſal* that muſt give any *Encouragement* to Hopes of Succeſs, muſt be an Anſwer of *holy Indignation* againſt the Offer of Temptation, and that *confirmed* into a ſerious Reſolve of Heart not to yield.

Secondly, This poſitive Denial muſt be alſo *wiſely jealous* of Satan, in Motions that are *unlikely*, or that may ſeem *light*, little, and not *directly* intended. Tho' it may be but a *tranſient* Glance, or a Thing that is out of *our Road*, yet muſt nothing be *contemned* or undervalued. *Jealouſy* will take Notice of *ſmall* Actions or *Circumſtances*, and no leſs ſuſpicious muſt we be of every Profer made to us, leſt Satan *by any Means* get an Advantage againſt us.

Thirdly,

(*a*) Ego adoleſcens petieram a te caſtitatem, & dixeram; da mihi caſtitatem, ſed noli modo; timebam enim ne me cito exaudires & cito ſanares, malebam explere quam extingui. *Confeſ. l. 8. c. 7.* (*b*) Greenham *on* Pſal. 119. 101. (*c*) Turpius ejicitur quam non admittitur hoſpes.

Thirdly, The Refusal must be so *quick*, that it may be ready to take the Temptation by the Throat. At the *first Motion* or rising of it in our Mind, we must endeavour to stifle it in the Birth, that it may be as the *untimely Fruit of a Woman, that never sees the Sun*; we must not give it Time to grow up to a *Rod of Wickedness*, but must nip it in the earliest Buddings of it. 'Tis the Nature of Grace (if we do but faithfully pursue the Inclinations of it) to be quick in its Opposition; so doth the Apostle's Phrase teach us, *Gal.* v. 17. *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.* The Spirit is as *ready* to *repel*, as the Flesh to *suggest*; no sooner doth the one stir, but the other is ready with an Opposition, and the Reason of it is from the *active Contrariety* that is betwixt them; for so the Word ἀντίκειται there used would express it; they are sworn Enemies, animated by Principles of constant Opposition, as *Water* and *Fire* are, which cannot meet in Peace together, but a present *Noise* and Combate is raised from this *Conjunction.*

Fourthly, When this is done, we must endeavour to *maintain, and stick to our first Disallowance.* A Child of God (I know) in sinful Yieldings of Infirmity, may say as the Apostle, *What I do, I allow not*; that is (1.) What he then consents to, he did not *allow* at the *first*, till Importunity prevailed. (2.) Tho' his *Affections incline* to Sin, yet his constant settled Judgment is against it; and tho' he do it, he cannot say he *approves* it. Neither of these are the Things I aim at, but this, That as the *first Motions* of Sins are disallowed, we should endeavour to *keep* at that, *to stand our Ground*, to withhold the least *After-delight* or Approbation; not but that we must be forced sadly to acknowledge the real Truth of what the Apostle speaks in the Place last cited, that these *different Principles* (which of them soever carry the Victory) do so *impede* one another, that when Grace carries it, *yet it cannot do the utmost it would*, or aims at; so that in the *stoutest* Oppositions, there may be some *secret* Degrees of Allowance unavoidably; notwithstanding we must so manage our Denial, that if it were possible, we should not afford the *smallest* Inclination toward it; the least, the better, and nobler Conquest.

CHAP. XXV.

The fourth Direction. Of repelling a Temptation by Scripture-Arguments. Of several Things implied in the Direction. The Necessity of answering by Scripture-Arguments. The Excellency of the Remedy. How Scripture-Arguments are to be managed.

THE next Particular in Christ's Answers, to be observed by us, is his *Citations* of Scripture, as an invincible Reason against all the Devil's Temptations, he beats them all back with this Weapon, *It is written* (a). That this was written for our Learning, and that, otherwise than for our Instruction, he lay not under any *Necessity* of using this *Method*, hath been evidenced before, and 'tis a Thing which all *Commentators* do take notice of. From this we have another Direction, for the right Way and Order of resisting Temptations, which is,

Direct. 4.] *That Temptations are best repelled by Arguments drawn from the Word of God.*

For the Explanation of this, it may be considered what is (1.) *presupposed* in this Direction: For when it is affirmed that we must answer by Reasons from Scripture, this implies,

First, That Temptations are not to be opposed by *groundless* Refusals; 'tis no Way safe to say *we will not, because we will not*, nor to insist upon our own bare Resolve: For this would be *Wilfulness*, rather than an *obediential Refusal*; and unwarrantable *Self-confidence*, rather than an humble *Wrestling*. There are some, of whom it may be said, as the Prophet once charged the *Jews*, Isa. xxii. 11. that when Satan comes up against them, they look in that Day *to the Armour of the House of the Forrest*, they *repair* the Wall, and *cast Ditches* for Fortification; they prepare themselves to the Battle *in their own Strength, but they look not unto the Maker thereof*, to *him who* by his mighty Power *must fashion* our Hearts to Resistance. The Vanity of such Undertakings is enough manifested in the Event, for commonly such Men go on in a *Bravado* of Resolution, but are so *altered* at the *first* Appearance of the Enemy, that they *yield without a Stroke*. Who could be more

(a) Ideo Jesus omnes illas tentationes solis sacris Scripturis vicit, ut doceret nos sic pugnare & vincere. *Cajet.* in loc. *Jansen.* &c.

more confident than *Peter*, that he would not *deny* his Master, whatever others did, and yet how ſoon did his Heart fail him? We may warrantably deny a ſinful Motion, without being *explicite* in our Reaſon againſt it, eſpecially in *uſual* Temptations, and when they *thruſt* themſelves into our Minds, at ſuch Times when our Thoughts are charged with an *Attendance* upon other Duties; in which nevertheleſs the Heart hath a ſecret and implicite Regard to the Command of God: But in no Caſe muſt we go down to the Battle, in the Strength of a *Wilfulneſs*, leſt it go againſt us. And thus do they, who when they are reproved for ſome Miſcarriage, as of Drinking, will preſently with great Confidence make *Engagements*, not to drink Wine or ſtrong Drink, not to go into a Tavern or Ale houſe, without any *humble Reſpect* to Duty, or the *Power* of God for the Conqueſt of the Sin: And accordingly we ſee, that uſually ſuch Promiſes and Obligations do not hold; either they *wilfully* break them, or they become ſinfully *witty* to make Evaſions for the Practice of Sin, without the Breach of the Oath or Promiſe.

Secondly, The Direction ſuppoſeth that we muſt deny the Sin with the Arguments of *greateſt Strength* and *Authority*. There were Occaſions and Hints of other Anſwers to theſe Temptations that offered themſelves in Chriſt's Way, and yet he waves them all, fixing only upon Scripture reaſons as the beſt and ſtrongeſt. 'Tis no Chriſtian *Wiſdom* to urge thoſe inferior Conſiderations, of *Shame*, *Loſs*, *Inconvenience*, &c. Some have no other *Reaſon* betwixt them and Sin; but, *What will Men ſay?* Or, *what will become of me?* But beſides, that theſe would only be a *Train* to bring on Diſputings, and that it is no Way ſafe to venture our Souls upon ſuch Defences, when better may be had, (for who will venture his Life upon a *Staff* when he may have a *Sword?*) 'tis eaſy for Satan to *break* theſe Bows, and to *cut* theſe Spears in ſunder; he can *ballance* ſuch Reaſons with *equal* Reaſons, and preſently make us believe, that we have *as good Reaſon* to *commit* the Sin, as thoſe urged by us, for the *not committing* of it.

Thirdly, This Direction of uſing Scripture reaſon doth clearly imply, that the *Force* and Power of Scripture is not in the *Words*, or Characters, but in the *Mind* and Reaſon of it; that not Scripture uſed as a *Charm* or *Spell* (as if the Devil were afraid of the Sound, and Words of it) can *beat*

back the Devil, but 'tis the *Authority* of its *Command*, which works upon the Mind the higheſt *Impreſſions* of *Fear* and *Care*, and as a ſtrong Argument prevails with us to forbear. Notwithſtanding the plainneſs and undeniableneſs of this Inference, not only do *ignorant Men* bleſs themſelves againſt the Devil, by repeating ſome Phraſes or Sentences of Scripture impertinently, and ſuch as have no direct Signification of the Matter in Hand betwixt Satan and them, (as if the Devil could not endure to hear the *Pater noſter*, or durſt not come within the Sound of the Name *Jehovah*) but alſo *Papiſts*, (and of them, ſuch as might be ſuppoſed more conſiderate than to be carried by ſuch Conceits) have placed a *Vertue* in the *Words* and Sounds of Scripture, and therefore do they command (tho' under ſome *Limitations* and Reſtrictions (*a*)) the *hanging* of Sentences of Scripture about the *Neck* in *Scrolls*, for the driving away of evil Spirits, tho' in a clear *Contradiction* to the Reaſon which they give in the general againſt this Courſe, which is this, that the *Power of Scripture is not in the Figures and Characters, but in the Mind and Underſtanding of it*; and therefore profits as *pondered in the Heart*, not as *hung about the Neck* (*b*): And upon as ſlender Grounds do they place a more than ordinary Vertue, in the *angelical Salutation*, in the ſeven Words upon the Croſs, in the triumphal Title, *Jeſus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*, &c. Such Kind of Oppoſitions are but a Mock to Satan, we cannot think to *bore the Jaw of this Leviathan with a Thorn*, or to come to him with *this Bridle*, or to *play* with him as *with a Bird*: He durſt alledge Scripture himſelf to Chriſt, and therefore 'tis not the Phraſe or Sound that affrights him.

Fourthly, The Direction doth imply an *argumentative*, *proper* and *fit* Uſe of Scripture-*Commands*, or *Promiſes*. We ſee Chriſt urged not any Scripture *indifferently*, but he uſed fit Words, and choſe to himſelf *ſelect ſmooth Stones* out of this Brook to *ſling* againſt this ſpiritual *Goliah*. Every Temptation had an Anſwer that doth moſt fully and properly confront it; he regarded the *Main* of the Temptation, and ſuffered not himſelf to be *diverted* from that Proſecution, by engaging himſelf in that which might have been *perplexed* and controverſial, tho' he had a fit Opportunity

(*a*) *Malleus Maliſic.* Part 2. Queſt. 11. *cap.* 6. (*b*) Virtus Evangelii eſt in intellectu & non in figuris, ergo melius in corde poſita pro ſunt, quam circa collum ſuſpenſa. *Bartol.* Sibilla Peregr. quæſt. *dec.* 3. *c.* 9. *Q.* 9.

tunity to reprove Satan for a diſhoneſt Craft of repreſenting Scripture in a Senſe of *his own making*, and ſo might have rejected the Temptation of caſting himſelf down, as leaning upon a *falſe Foundation*, in that God did not promiſe in *Pſal.* xci. to preſerve any that ſhould preſumptuouſly expect a Protection while they run out of God's Ways: Yet he waved this Anſwer, and oppoſed the Aſſault by a plain Scripture which chargeth the contrary Duty.

2*dly*, Having ſeen what this Direction doth *imply*, in theſe Things that are to be *removed* from the *Senſe* and Intendment of it, I ſhall next for aſcertaining of the Reality and Importance of it, ſhew that Temptations are to be reſiſted by *Scripture-Arguments*, by theſe two Evidences.

1*ſt*, God's recommending of the Commands of Scripture for *ſuch a Purpoſe*; Deut. vi. 6. *Theſe Words which I command thee this Day, ſhall be in thine Heart——and thou ſhalt bind them for a Sign upon thine Hand, and they ſhall be as Frontlets between thine Eyes*, &c. Whether the latter Part of the Command is to be underſtood literally, as the *Jews* apprehended and practiſed, (tho' ſome think otherwiſe) is not neceſſary to be aſſerted, ſeeing 'tis granted by all, that they were to have the Commands of the Law ſo ready in their Minds and Memories, as if they had been written on their Hands, and upon their Foreheads. That God deſigned this Precept for the Reſiſtance of Sin and Temptation, cannot be doubted, and that the Advantage which might hence ariſe to them, was not only the *Information* of their Minds, in Point of *Sin*, and *Duty*, is as unavoidable; for that, and more is intended by that Part of the Injunction; *Theſe Words which I command thee, ſhall be in thine Heart*; But when? Beſides this Information (which the Knowledge of the Law would afford them) and their humble *Compliance* with it, as *juſt and good* (which would enable them to ſay, *Thy Law, O Lord, is within my Heart*) he further enjoins them, the quick and ready *Remembrances* of theſe Laws (as if they were *Frontlets between their Eyes, and Signs on their Hands*;) it can ſignify no leſs than this, that in ſo doing, they would be able to *reſiſt* thoſe Motions, by which Satan would ſeek to engage them to the Violation of theſe Commands. Neither need we to doubt hereof, when Chriſt himſelf hath ſo fully taught us, by his own Example, in reſiſting Temptations, the *particular Uſe of the Remembrance of the Law*: In

the

the *New Teſtament* the Apoſtle is moſt expreſs in this Matter, *Eph.* vi 17. *Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*, where not only the *Uſe* of Scripture-Commands and Promiſes againſt Satan's Suggeſtions is taught, but alſo the *high Avail* and Potency of this Weapon in Reference to its End: 'Tis called a *Sword*, and in that Compariſon, it ſhews the *active* Reſiſtance which may be made by it; and 'tis called, not a Sword of *Fleſh*, (for *the Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal*) but *of the Spirit*, to ſhew how mighty it is in repelling Satan.

2*dly*, Another Evidence of its Uſefulneſs, is from the *Succeſs* which the Children of God have had in the right Management of this Weapon. 'Tis obſervable, that while Chriſt anſwered by Scripture, Satan was *ſilenced*, and had not what to reply to the Anſwer, but was forced to betake himſelf to a *new Temptation*. *David* in many Places highly magnifies the Power of the Command, in the Succeſs he had by it, *Pſal.* xvii. 4. He ſhews how available it was to preſerve him in his common Converſe, from the ſinful Snares laid before him, *Concerning the Works of Men, by the Word of thy Lips I have kept me from the Paths of the Deſtroyer.* In *Pſal.* xviii. 22, 23. he tells us that he was ſhielded from the Sins of his Inclination and Love (which are hardeſt to prevent) by the Oppoſition that he gave to the Motions of them, in ſetting up the Statutes of God againſt them, *All his Judgments were before me, and I did not put away his Statutes from me; I was alſo upright before him, and I kept myſelf from mine Iniquity.* In *Pſal.* cxix. 11. He puts his *probatum eſt* upon the Head of this Receipt, and ſpeaks of it as his conſtant Refuge, *Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* In *Pſal.* xxxvii. 31. He ſpeaks of it as a *tried* Caſe of *common Experience* to all the Children of God, *The Law of God is in his Heart, none of his Steps ſhall ſlide.* I ſhall add to this the Experience of *Luther* (a), *When* (ſaith he) *the Motions of the Fleſh do rage, the only Remedy is, to take the Sword of the Spirit, that is the Word of Salvation, and to fight againſt them,—of this, I myſelf have good Experience, I have ſuffered many great Paſſions, and vehement, but ſo ſoon as I laid hold of any Place of Scripture, and ſtaid myſelf upon it, as upon an Anchor,*

(a) In Epiſt. ad Gal.

Anchor, ſtraightway my Temptations did vaniſh away, which without the Word, had been impoſſible for me to endure, though but a little Space, much leſs to overcome.

Thirdly, The *Excellency* of this Remedy will further appear from theſe following Reaſons.

1. In that it is an *univerſal* Remedy; there can be no Temptation either of *Seducement* or of *Affrightment*, but the Scripture will afford a ſuitable Promiſe or Command to repel it: So that it (like the *flaming Sword* in the *Cherubim*'s Hand at *Paradiſe*) turns every Way to guard the Soul. I need not give Inſtances of its Power againſt ſinful Motions, having done that already; and of ſuch Temptations which war againſt the Peace of the Soul: I need but ſay this in the general, that as the *Nature* of *ſuch* Temptations is to *diſguiſe God*, and to render him dreadful to us, in the Appearances of Wrath, and incompaſſionate Implacableneſs; (and this *Luther* ſets down as a certain Rule *(a)*) So have we in Scripture ſuch *Declarations* of the Mind and tender Inclinations of God, and ſuch full and *clear* Promiſes to aſſure us of this, and thoſe ſo *adapted* to every Caſe, to every Kind of hard Thought which we might take up againſt him, that we may find enough in them to break all thoſe malicious Miſrepreſentations of Satan, and to keep up in our Mind *right Thoughts of God*; which if we will adhere to, (not ſuffering ſuch Promiſes to be wreſted out of our Hands, nor our Hearts to give Way to malignant Impreſſions of Cruelty, Revenge, or Unmercifulneſs in God) though we be caſt into *Darkneſs*, into the *Deeps*, we may find ſome *Bottom* on which to fix ſuch *Beginnings* of Hope, as may at laſt grow up to a *Spirit of Rejoicing* in God our Saviour; And in this Caſe, when our Heart and Satan dictate to us that *God is our Enemy*, we ought (as it were) to *ſhut our* Eyes; to refuſe to hearken to our own *Senſe* and Feeling, and to *follow the Word*; but if we once give up the Word of Promiſe, 'tis impoſſible the Wound of Conſcience ſhould be healed with any other Conſideration.

2. This

(*a*) Canon eſt, quod in omnibus tentationibus aliam fingimus Deum eſſe quam ſit, putamus enim Deum tunc non eſſe Deum ſed horribile ſpectrum, *tom. 4. f.* 147. Reclamat (Sathan) in corde tuo, te non eſſe dignum illa promiſſione. eſt autem opus ardenti oratione, ne extorqueatur nobis promiſſio *Luther in Gen. c.* 22. *f.* 188. Cor dictat Deum adverſum verbum Dei, ſequi debeo non ſenſum meum. *Idem tom* 4. *f.* 156. Nulla alia re poteſt ſanari hoc vulnus conſcientiæ, quam verbo divinæ promiſſionis. Id. *tom.* 4. *f.* 400.

2. This Remedy is *comprehenſive* of moſt other *Remedies* againſt Satan's Temptations. In *Eph.* vi. there are ſeveral other Pieces of ſpiritual Armour recommended, and yet there is ſuch a manifeſt mutual Reſpect betwixt this and thoſe, that any may conclude that however they be *diſtinguiſhed* in their *Names*, yet they are *conjoyned* in their *Operation*; the *Girdle* (ſo far as it relates to Truth of Judgment and Opinion) depends on the *Word of Scripture* for Information; the *Shoes* (which are *defenſive reſolves* to walk with a *ſteedy Foot* in the Ways of Religion, notwithſtanding the Hardſhips that attend Holineſs) are prepared to us, by the comfortable and Peace-bringing *Promiſes of the Goſpel*; the *Righteouſneſs* which is our *Breaſt plate*, is only *ſet forth*, and *wrought out* to us by the Scripture, and its Ordinances; *Faith*, which is our *Shield*, and *Hope*, which is our *Helmet*, they neither of them act *without the Warrant* and Encouragement of it: And whereas other Parts of the Armour are *defenſive*, this of the Scripture is compared to the *Sword*, which not only *defends*, but alſo *offends*, and beats back the Enemy. If the Matter be ſeriouſly conſidered, *all theſe Parts* of Armour are but theſe *two*, the *Graces* of the Spirit, Faith, Hope, Patience in their *ſincere Exerciſe*, and the *Word of Scripture* as the Inſtrument by, and in which they ſhew their *Operations*; ſo that all this Armour being put to *Uſe*, in every particular Temptation, it amounts to no more than this we are ſpeaking of, *viz. That ſinful Motions are to be rejected, by a believing, ſincerely reſolute oppoſing of them, with Arguments from the Word of God.*

3. Scripture (as it is the Word and Command of the great King of Heaven) hath a *dawning* and commanding Authority over the *Conſciences* of Men. *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power*, Eccleſ. viii. 4. and ſuch is the *Majeſty* of a Divine Law, that it hath Power over the *Conſciences* of thoſe that are yet in their *Sins*, and can *wound*, *affright*, *conſtrain*, and *bind* even the *Rebellious*: So that ſo long as they retain any of their natural Impreſſions of a Divine Power, they have ſome Awe for his Commands, which may be ſeen and argued (where it would be leaſt expected) from the *Enragement* of the Hearts of Sinners, when *Sin by the Commandment* (accidentally) *becomes exceeding ſinful*, Rom. vii. 13, 14. For as that *outragious* Fiercenels doth ariſe from the *Contrariety* that is betwixt a *carnal Heart*, and a

ſpiritual

spiritual Law; so that *Contrariety* would never work, if the *Authority* of that Law (having a Power to restrain, and give Check to the Corruption of the Heart) were not some Way *owned* by the Conscience; For where no *countermanding Law* is *owned*, there can be no *irritating, provoking Restraint.* This it can do to the vilest of Men: But of how much more Power may we imagine the Word to be good with Men, whose Hearts *tremble* at the Word, when they *bind the Law upon their Heart* and charge their Consciences with it? 'Tis surely *quick and powerful (a), sharper than a two-edged Sword!* Nor doth it only by *unlovely* Affrightment terrify them from Sin, but by commanding Duty make the Heart *in Love* with it, so that it becomes a delightful Satisfaction to be preserved from the Snare.

4. There is no Argument that can be used against Temptations, that can be more *afflictively discouraging* to Satan: Satan, as bad as he is, cannot but *believe* those Truths which he knows, and he knows that there are many Truths in Scripture which respect him, as Threatnings of Punishment and Divine Vengeance; he *believes* these Things and *trembles*, Jam. ii. 19. His unavoidable *Knowledge*, or Remembrance of these Things begets *Horrour* in him, he cannot but be under a Dread of these Truths; What can be supposed so to wound him as the bringing these Things to Memory, by urging the Command of God against him? Dr. *Arrowsmith* gives two Instances of this Kind (*b*), the one of *Christopher Haas* in *Swedland* (from the Epistle Dedicatory to the 5 *Tomes* of *Brentius*'s Works:) The other of *Daniel Cramer* Rector of a School at *Stetin* in *Germany*: On both which the Devil made a bold Attempt in a *personal Appearance*: From the first demanding a *Catalogue* of his Sins in Writing; from the other demanding a *Paper* in which one of the Students had obliged himself to Satan's Service, they both referred him to that Text of *Gen.* iii. 15. *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Head of the Serpent.* And this was retorted upon him with such a *strong Exercise* of Faith, that he presently *desisted* the Suit and vanished.

5. This Weapon cannot easily be *wrested* out of our Hands. When we urge a *Divine Prohibition* against a Temptation, what

(*a*) Quam suave mihi subito factum est carere suavitatibus nugarum, & quas amittere metus fuerat, jam demittere gaudium erat. *Aug. Confes. l.* 9, *c.* 1. (*b*) Tract. Sacr. *l.* 1, *c.* 3. § 6.

what can he say in Answer? He cannot *deny* it to be the *Word* of God, or to be *true*, or that we are not *obliged* to it; he made none of these Returns to Christ, but by his *Silence*, *owned* that it was God's holy Command *obliging* us to Duty. Neither dares he stand upon these *Exceptions* to us, except he find our Faith *inclined* to waver, or our Minds *weak* and wounded by inward Troubles of Spirit; and when he puts on a Boldness to deny Scripture to be the Word of God, or that it signifies God's real Intendments in his Threatning (for by begetting *Unbelief* of the Truth of Scripture, and by suggesting *Hopes of Escape* and Pardon, notwithstanding the Violation of the Commands of it, he wrests (when he doth prevail) this Weapon out of our Hands) yet he is forced to *fetch a Compass*, and by many *previous* Insinuations to make his Way to these *atheistical Assertions*. Thus he did with *Eve*, first (finding her a *little* inclinable) he *dropt* in privily something that might argue, the *Improbability* of the threatned Penalty, and then at last *positively* denied it. But now if we hold to this, *That the Command is true and holy, and just and good*, he cannot wrest our Plea from us.

6. Nothing doth more *undermine* Temptations, by rendring the *Reasons* and Motives thereof *vain* and empty, than doth the contrary Commands of Scripture. Temptation hath always some *Inticement* of Pleasure or Profit, and these only seem to be *taking* or reasonable, while we *consider not* the Word of God, as *rotten Wood* or *Fish shine* only in the *Dark*, but when we are urged with *sinful Pleasures*, how *mean*, base, dangerous, and unlovely be they, when the Command to the contrary gives Information, that they are *Snares* and lead to Death, or the Provocation of the Almighty.

7. While we resist with Scripture-arguments, we *engage God* (whose Command we would stand by) to go down to the Battle with us; we *lay hold upon his Strength*, and put Obligations upon him, to take us out of the Snare, and to deliver us from him who is *too strong* for us.

Fourthly, It remains that in a Word, I shew *how* the Commands or Arguments of Scripture are to be *used* in resisting Satan, which is thus; *When you have any sinful Thought cast into your Mind, presently reject the Offer, by charging your Heart with Duty, from some opposite Command.* As if you be urged to Acts of Uncleanness, presently

ſently refuſe, thus; No, I muſt not, God hath commanded the contrary, he hath ſaid *thou ſhalt not commit Adultery.* If a covetous Thought ariſe, reject it with this, God hath ſaid, *thou ſhalt not covet.* If you be tempted to pleaſe the Fleſh, and follow vain Delights, anſwer it with this, *If ye live after the Fleſh, ye ſhall die*; and the like muſt be done in other Temptations.

Object.] Some may perhaps think, that this is *eaſy Work* and quickly done, and that it ſeems to attribute a *Virtue* and Power to the *Words* of Scripture, as if Satan were charmed by the Language or Phraſe.

Anſ.] However, at the firſt View this may ſeem eaſy, yet he that ſhall conſider how much *Exerciſe* of Grace goes neceſſarily to the right Uſe of Scripture *Oppoſition*, ſhall not ſee Cauſe to ſlight it as common, nor yet to think that any Vertue is attributed to the Words. For,

Firſt, The Scripture here is only recommended as a *fit Inſtrument*, and no further or higher Praiſe is given; though therefore we may not attribute the whole of the Conqueſt to the Inſtrument alone, yet this hinders not, but that as an Inſtrument *peculiarly fitted* for theſe Ends, we may commend it above all *other Inſtruments*: As we may juſtly commend *Bread* for nouriſhing above a *Stone*, and expect more from it, than from a Chip; ſo have we Reaſon to expect more by the Uſe of Scripture againſt Satan, than from other Means of Defence which God hath not ſet up for that Service.

Secondly, It is a *Concomitancy* of *Divine Power* and Aid that *conquers* for us; the Inſtrument is Scripture, but the Power by which it works is from God.

Thirdly, Neither is it any *careleſs formal Uſe* of Scripture-expreſſions, that will give Encouragement for Expectation of a Divine Concurrence, but the Uſe of Scripture in this Buſineſs implies *an Exerciſe of all Graces*, for it is an urging of Scripture under a *fourfold* Conſideration.

1*ſt*, As being *certainly* perſuaded of their *Truth*, and fully keeping to that Belief.

2*dly*, As being *thankfully apprehenſive* of the *Holineſs*, *Goodneſs*, and *Profitableneſs* of the Commands, and *chearfully adhering to them*, as the only Way and Means to bring us to Union with Chriſt, and to preſerve us in it.

3*dly*,

3*dly*, As being highly and *indiſpenſibly obliged* by them to perform the *Duty* commanded therein, and to avoid the Sins forbidden.

4*thly*, All this in an *humble Expectation of a divine Help* according to the Promiſe of God. Now he that can plead the Command or Promiſe againſt a Temptation in this Manner, doth not do an ordinary Work, neither will he aſcribe the Succeſs to the Words and Phraſe of Scripture.

Some may (peradventure) wonder why Chriſt by his Example had not recommended *Prayer*, ſeeing it is of ſuch unqueſtionable Uſe in our Undertakings againſt Satan. But that Enquiry may be fully ſatisfied, if it be conſidered, that Chriſt did peculiarly prepare himſelf to this Encounter by *ſolemn Faſting*, ver. 2. which doth *include Praying*: For ſuch *complicated* Duties are often *denominated* by that Part which is *extraordinary*, and uſually in Scripture a *Faſt* is only mentioned where *Prayer* is chiefly intended. That this Faſt of Chriſt related to the Temptation, and that alſo as a Means of Preſervation, hath been ſpoken of in its Place; it remains only that from hence I add a fifth *Direction*.

CHAP. XXVI.

The fifth Direction of Prayer, and of the Seriouſneſs required of thoſe that expect the Advantage of Prayer. Of God's hearing Prayer while the Temptation is continued. Of ſome that are troubled more, while they pray more.

Direct. 5. *THAT in all our Endeavours of Reſiſtance, frequent and earneſt Prayers are not to be neglected.*

This is ſo frequently recommended, and ſo fully handled by moſt Authors, that I ſhall refer you to ſuch Authors as particularly treat of it; noting only, That the Apoſtle, in *Eph.* vi. 18. when he recommends it to us in theſe Words, (*Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perſeverance, and Supplication for all Saints*) he doth mind us that he that expects the Advantage of that *Duty*, muſt be *peculiarly fitted*, and ſeriouſly *diligent* in that Work. For,

Firſt,

First, He must have a praying Frame of Heart, he must *pray always*, or (as the Apostle elsewhere) he must *pray continually*. Not as if this Duty must swallow up all the rest, and that a Christian had no other Services to attend than Prayer; but that he must be on a *Design* to wrestle with God by Prayer; and this must be constantly carried on; tho' the Acts of Prayer be intermitted; and besides, that (in such Cases) he may keep his usual stated Times for that Duty, he must have his Heart so much upon his *Design*, that every Occasion or Offer of Temptation will presently put him upon the Duty; nay, he must (in Respect of the frequent Intercourse of his Heart with God, in frequent Ejaculations and Breathings of Soul) be as a Man wholly resolved into that Duty, as *Paul* was at his first Conversion, who (as that Expression (*behold he prays*) doth intimate) seems to have been *all Prayer*, and wholly taken up with that Duty.

Secondly, He must pray *in the Spirit*, his Soul must be truly in the Duty. A more than ordinary Earnestness is necessary at solemn Times, he must put out all his Strength, he must *cry mightily*, and with his *whole Heart*.

Thirdly, When his Spirit grows dull, he must reinforce it, watch his Heart he must; and if it be needful to quicken it up, he must add Fasting or Meditation, or whatever other Means may be helpful.

Fourthly, In this Course he must continue without giving off the Duty, tho' God behave himself as if he minded not his Cry, or took no Notice of his Hazard, yet without Weariness must our Supplications follow him. It must be continued with *all Perseverance*.

Fifthly, The Heart that undertakes this must not be so narrow, as to be centred upon his own *Concern only*, when he is melted into a *Spirit of Meekness* and Compassion for others, and is not so solicitous for Peace or Ease, that he could hug himself in his private Enjoyment, without concerning himself to tender and help those that are in the same Dangers; when his Supplications are for *all Saints* as well as for *himself*, then may he expect to receive an *Olive Branch of Peace* from Heaven in the Return of his Prayer.

Object.] 'Tis often objected by such, that they pray, but are not heard; and that Temptations continue, notwithstanding many Cries and Wrestlings.

Answ.] 1*st*, It is a great Mistake to think that Prayers are not heard, or do not prevail, because the Temptation is not quite removed; Prayers may be acceptable to God, and recorded among his Remembrances, where the Temptation, for Exercise and other holy Ends, may be continued.

2*dly*, What God hath promised to such Prayer he fails not to make good, he hath not promised to exempt us from Temptation, but from the Power and Prevalency of it; *If his Grace be sufficient for us* in the mean Time, 'tis an Answer as good as *Paul* got when he was importunate; *If together with the Temptation he gives an Issue, that we may be able to bear it,* there is his Faithfulness in keeping Promise; he no where promised, that Satan should not tempt, but that he should not prevail; while we can hold up our Hands in the Mount to God, (and our praying Frame will ascertain us of this; *For a Man is never overcome by a Temptation, so long as he can pray against it*; for so long he *delights not* in it, so long *he consents not*, and till he *do consent*, Satan *cannot prevail.*) Prayer will either make the *Temptation give Way*, or the *Temptation* will make *Prayer give Way*; but so long as we hold out with Earnestness, the Temptation cannot prevail.

Object.] Some further object, That the more they pray, they are the worse, and more infested by Satan than they were before they undertook that Course.

Answ. 1.] It may be they may have more Trouble from Satan. *David thought on God, and his Trouble was encreased*, and no Wonder; Satan's Spite and Fury puts him upon giving greatest Molestations to those of whom he despairs to subdue.

Secondly, But tho' they may be more troubled, yet they may be *furthest from Conquest.* These Disquiets are like the Trouble of the *working of Physick*, which at first taking may make a Man *more sick*, and yet bring him nearer to a State of Heath and Strength: Fear not then, faint not, resist faithfully, and to the utmost, and *God shall bruise Satan under thy Feet shortly.*

FINIS.