AN EXPOSITION WITH PRACTICALL OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED UPON
The Thirty Second, the Thirty Third, and the Thirty Fourth Chapters of the Booke of
JOB: BEING
The Substance of Forty-nine Lectures, delivered at Magna neare the Bridge, LONDON.

By JOSEPH CARYL, Preacher of the Gospel, and Pastor of the Congregation there.

Pro: 18. 17.
He that is first in his owne cause, seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

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TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

TO
Those especially of this C i t i e,
who yet continue helpfull
towards this W O R K E.

S I R S ;

I have had (according to my
poore measure) the whole dis-
putation between Job and his
three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad
and Zophar, explicated in nine
parts already published; I now
(with the Tenth, which indeed,
without any designe or pre-intent of mine, proves
like the Tenth wave from the vast ocean of this
holy Booke, somewhat bigger, and fuller, I cannot
say (and 'tis my reproofe having been so long con-
versant in this booke that I cannot say) stronger
and better, i.e. more spirituall (which alone is the
strength of Scripture writings) then the former;
but such as it is (and that it is such as it is, I own:
A 2. and
and humbly acknowledge the goodness of God in using me to doe it, such as it is (Isay) I freely tender it to your favourable acceptance, & dedicate it to the glory of God & the common good: knowing that it is both my duty and Interest to shew the small improvement though but of one single talent, rather then, either through sloth or slavish modesty to hide it in a Napkin.

In the prefatory Epiftle to the second part of this book, there was an endeavour of a discovery concerning the distinct opinion of Job's three friends, as also of what himselfe insisted upon all along in distinct.

And now that I have done with open the discourse of Elihu, Moderator to give a determination of Great Question, so long ventitated among them; it may seeme somewhat necessary, if I am much perswaded (if in any competency attained) it will not be unprofitable, to give The Reader a briefe prospect of what Elihu aymeth at and doth in this his large and accurate discourse, continued in sixe Chapters throughout and divided into (besides his Generall preface which takes up the whole thirty second Chapter) fourre remarkeable sections.

Elihu
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Elihu is introduced by the pen-man of this booke in a great passion, both with Job and his three friends, and he gives us an account why he was in such a heat of passion with both (chap: 32. 2, 3.) Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu; against Job was his wrath kindled, because he had justified himselfe rather then God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

It remains therefore, that Elihu was the man, who found an answer in this great difficulty and yet condemned not Job. And indeed he condemned him not (as his friends had done) as a man imperfect & crooked in his wayes, as a man that feared not God & eschewed not evil, In or for these things Elihu did not condemn Job, though his wrath was kindled against him: he condemned him only for this, because he complained so much of the severity of Gods dealings with him, and so, by consequence justified himselfe rather then God. And in that point or for that fault he spared him not, but reproved him as sharply and condemned him as deeply as his friends had done upon other and those (most of them) undue and insufficient grounds. Thus we read his censure of him (chap: 34. 35. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdome. And againe (chap: 35. 16.) There-
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Therefore Job openeth his mouth in vain, he multiplyeth words without knowledge; that is, without a clear knowledge of himself both as a creature and as a sinner, as also of the designe and purpose of God in afflicting him.

Now, besides those passages in the discourse of Elihu wherein he chargeth Jobs three friends with folly for condemning Job when they could not answer him, & those wherein he reproves Jobs ignorance or want of knowledge, for wondering how such great evils should fall upon him, notwithstanding his integrity, likewise his boldness or peremptoriness in his own cause, justifying himself rather then God, yea and desiring to plead his cause before him; I say besides these passages, we at first reading might conclude that Elihu did nothing else throughout these six chapters, but enlarge or paraphrase upon those things, which had long before been spoken to by Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, and by Job himself as much as by any of, if not beyond all them three.

But upon further consideration of the matter in the whole series and contexture of his discourse, we may collect two things, instanced in and insisted on by Elihu alone, upon which his particular opinion and sentence is grounded in distinction from all the rest. The clear understanding of which, will lead
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us to a faire solution or removall of those doubts which arise about the question or matter in debate.

The two distinct points produced by Elihu, are, First, about Revelation, or how God is pleased to manifest his mind and will to man. Secondly, about Mediation, or the means which God hath graciously afforded man to bealle those breaches, which sin hath made between God and him, and so either firstly, or afresh to reconcile man againe to himselfe.

The Former of these is handled (chap: 33. v. 14, 15, 16, 17.) For God speaketh once, yea twice, though man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vi-

sion of the night, when deepe sleepe falleth upon men: Then he openeth the eares of men, and seal-

eth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. And thus, as it is said in the verse following, He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword; that is, these speakings of God are by the saving power and Spirit of God made effectuall for his salvation both temporall and eternal.

The latter is handled in the same chapter, begin-

ning at the 23d verse to the end of the 30th. If there be a messenger (or Angel) with him, an inter-

preter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: then he is gracious unto him, and faith,
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faith, Deliver him from going downe to the pit, I have found a ransome. His flesh shall be fresher then a child's; he shall returne to the dayes of his youth. He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy, &c.

Hence the opinion or determination of Elihu may be thus conceived.

That notwithstanding all the confusions and disorders which seeme to be in the affaires of this world, the providence of God over mankinde in Generall, and his great mercy towards the righteous in speciall, is seene most eminently in these two things.

First, In that he inspires them with the knowledge of heavenly things, or acquaints them some way or other with his mind, both as to the meaning of what he doth to them, and of what he would have them doe.

Secondly, In that he provideth and sends them a messenger or mediatour both to instruct them in their duty, & to pray for mercy, and so consequent-ly to deliver them, when their soule draweth neere to the Grave, and their life to the destroyers.

Both these gracious dispensations of God are proper to righteous men, or at least appropriate to them in a peculiar manner; the righteous are the men
men for whom God provides a messenger or mediator, and the righteous are the men whom God savingly and effectually inspires with the knowledge of his will, in the things which concern both their present works and future reward. Neither hath Satan any power so to darken their understandings about those great things as to make them miscarry; and as for all his other mischievous plots and practices against them, they serve to a cleane contrary purpose then he intendeth, according to that most comfortable assertion of the Apostle (Rom: 8. 28.) We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Satan provoked God for a licence to heape outward calamities upon Job in stripping him naked of his worldly substance, and in tormenting his body with grievous paines and sickness; which latter Elihu prosecutes at large (chap: 33.19,20,21,22.) He is chastned also with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine; so that his life abhorreth bread, &c. And what he speakes of sickness is applicable to any or all sorts of affliction; in all which (as it is sayd, v. 27,28,29,30.) God looketh upon men, and if any say I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not; he will deliver his soule
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soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

From these premises we may collect both what is proper to the righteous; and that, in whatsoever is common to them with the wicked, there is neither disorder nor confusion. For though the best of the righteous are lyable to the same outward evills which the worst of the wicked are, yet their condition is not the same; seeing to the wicked those evills are purely punishments, but the beginning of those sorrows which shall never end; whereas to the righteous they are either but chastisements for some sin already committed, or medicines to prevent the committing either of the same, or of some other sin. And as for those who by such chastnings are brought to a sight of their sins and forsake them, their soules are (by this meanes, v. 30.) brought back from the pit to be enlightened with the light of the living.

This point is yet more fully and plainly prosecuted by Elihu in the 36th chapter; where he informeth us, how sufferings are differently to be conceived of according to a threefold difference of the persons suffering. The first, and chiefest, is of those, who are
are truly righteous and keep close to God in righteous ways. The second is of those who being righteous in their state, have fallen foully in their way, with whom we may also reckon such as are yet in an unrighteous state, yet shall be and at last are converted and brought home to God. The third is of those who persevere and obstinately continue in their wicked state and ways, stopping their ears, and hardening their hearts, both against instruction and correction.

Elihu seemeth to put all these together (v. 5, 6.) Behold God is mighty and despiseth not any, he is mighty in strength and wisdom, he preserveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth right to the poore. More distinctly,

He speaks of the first (v. 7.) He (that is, God) with-draweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne, yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

He speaks of the second sort v. 8, 9, 10, 11. And if they be bound in fetters and holden in the cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their worke and their iniquity, that they have exceed-ed. He openeth also their eare to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity,
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He speaks of the third sort (v. 13, 14.) But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them; they dye in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

These three sorts of men are dealt with by God according to their kind. The last of them being altogether wicked and incorrigible, abide under wrath for ever.

The second being in an evill state or having done that which is evill, yet humbling themselves (through grace) and being bettered by their afflictions, are usually restored to a prosperous estate in this life, & in case they dy under affliction, are always crowned with the blessedness of eternal life.

The First sort, walking constantly (humane frailties excepted) in their uprightness, are not only preserved in peace, but receive high favours and speciall markes of honour from the bountifull hand of God; which is true, especially according to the condition of those times, wherein God did more engage himselfe to his faithfull servants in promises of temporall happiness, then now he doth in Gospel times.

And yet even these, as now they are not, so then they were not alwayes exempted from sufferings; For as the second sort of righteous men are often afflicted in a way of chastisement for their sins;
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so the Lord reserves to himselfe a liberty (his Sovereignty allowing it) to afflict the best and holiest of his servants for the tryall of their graces, or the magnifying of his owne grace to them and in them; as a Master of Heroick Arts and Games imposeth a very laborious task upon his Schollar-Champion, not as a punishment of any default, but to confirm his strength and exercise his valour.

The due consideration of all these things laid together by Elihu, might well satisfy Job, and sustaine his faith in a patient bearing the burden of all those calamities, which the Great and most wise God was pleased to impose upon him, and likewise convince him that he had fayled much in giving out so many impatient complaints about them. And no doubt they prevailed much with him, both towards his conviction, and the quieting of his heart under those dispensations; For we heare no more of him in that language.

Yet Elihu thought he had not done enough, but continueth his discourse, and draweth a further demonstration for his purpose, from the wonderfull workes of God in nature, from the raine, thunder, snow, windes, &c. which he doth from the 27th verse of the 36th Chapter, to the end of the 37th, and with that concludes his answer.
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The scope of Elihu in that long and learned Philosophical Lecture was to teach and assure Job, that, God who causeth and disposeth those various alterations and terrible impressions in the ayre, both for the humbling and benefiting of man, doth much more both send and over-rule all those changes & afflictions which befall the sons of men, here on earth, to humble them & do them good. And further to assure him, that if man be not able to give a satisfying reason of those works of God in nature, but is often gravel'd and forced to sit downe in a silent admiration; then surely man is much lesse able to fathome the depth of Gods purposes in all the works of his providence, but must in many of them only sit downe quietly and submit; For (as Elihu concludeth from these premises (Chap: 37. 23,24.) Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is Excellent in power and in Judgement, and in plenty of Justice he will not afflict, (either causelessly or more then needs, though we seldom see the causes or acknowledge the need of his afflictions ) men doe (that is, they ought ) therefore feare him; and if any are so proud and high in their owne thoughts that they doe not, at their perill be it, for ) he respecteth not any that are wise in heart; that is, as the carnal wisdome of worldly men cannot be a barre, so
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so the true wisdom of godly men is no privileged against the Soveraigne power of God in afflicting them. And therefore Job, though truly wise in heart, must not look for any such respect from God as to be untouched by or privileged from affliction.

For the close of all, we may summe up the whole scope of Elihu's undertaking with Job, yea of the whole Booke of Job in these six points or propositions.

First, No man can stand before God in his owne personall righteousness.

Secondly, How righteous soever any person is, yet the Lord may afflict and break him in what way and in what degree himselfe thinkes fit.

Thirdly, God hath most wise and gracious aymes in afflicting his righteous servants.

Fourthly, His most righteous servants may not take the liberty to complain as if they were wrong'd, or as if God were either rigorous or unrighteous in the least, how much or how long forever they are afflicted.

Fifthly, There is nothing gotten by complaining or striving under the afflicting hand of God; and therefore

Sixthly, 'Tis best for us or our wisest way when
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When things are at worst with us to give glory to God both as just and good, and (possessing our souls with patience) by faith to wait in hope, till he giveth us a fresh experience of his goodness, either by sweetening our troubles to us, and supporting us under them, or by bringing us out of them (as he did Job) in the fittest season.

If in perusing this discourse of Elihu we carry these general results in our eye, we shall read both the Text and Comment with more clearness in our understandings at all times, and with more profit (when at any time under them) in our chastenings, which, that we all may is the prayer of

Your affectionate Servant

The 24th of the 3d Moneth

1661.

Joseph Caryl.
AN EXPOSITION WITH Practicall Observations UPON The Thirty-second, Thirty-third, and Thirty-fourth Chapters of the Book of JOB.

JOB, Chap. 32. Ver. 1, 2, 3. So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Eliphaz the son of Earah, the Buzite of the kindred of Haran; against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled: because they had found no answer, and yet had con-

The last Chapter ended with these words, The words of Job are ended; the beginning of this tells us his three friends had ended theirs. So these three men ceased to answer Job; Thus we have had the whole dispute between Job and his three friends; Now followeth the determination of it. The disputants having done, begin; First Eliphaz, and after him God himselfe. 

Eliphaz
Elihu spends six whole Chapters in delivering his mind upon this Controversie: yet he makes some pauses and overtures, moving or inviting Job to a reply. But Job interposed not a word.

We may consider this whole discourse of Elihu in four distinct parts; the first contained in the 32d and 33d Chapters; the second in the 34th, the third in the 35th, and the fourth in the 36th and 37th Chapters of this Book.

In the first part, he directeth his speech; first to Jobs three friends, in this 32d Chapter; Secondly, to Job himselfe in the 33d.

In this Chapter we may consider, first a rational transition from the dispute between Job and his friends, to this discourse of Elihu, in the five first verses; Secondly, we have a very Rhetorical or patheticall Preface, wherein Elihu endeavoureth to gaine attention by giving an account, or the reasons of his undertaking, in which he interweaves many Apologies for himselfe, in venturing upon so hard a taske, respecting both his youth, and the weight of the argument. He amplifies and continueth upon this subject to the end of the 32d Chapter; wherein he engageth himselfe by solemn promise to carry on the businesse without respect of persons, without fear or flattery.

Yet more distinctly in this first part, the transition; first, a reason is assign'd why Jobs friends left off speaking. As it is not good to begin to speak, so neither to give over speaking, till we see and can give a reason for it; The reason here given, is, because Job was righteous in his own eyes (v. 1.) Secondly, a reason is given not only why Elihu did begin to speak, but why he began to speak as he did, in anger; first, against Job, which is laid downe in the second verse, Because he justified himselfe rather then God; Secondly, against his friends (ver. 3.) Because they had no answer, yet had condemned Job, or, because though they could not confute him. In the 4th have a discovery of the cause of Elihu's model long to speak, which he further inlargeth in of the Chapter.

Verf. 1. So these three men ceased to answer.

They who had maintaine the dispute all rested, or sat downe. When men speak they
or stand forth. The word in the Hebrew may be rendered thus; They sabbatized, implying they had found it a week of hard work, and strong labour in dealing and tugging with Job; And now as if their seventh day or Saboth were come, they fate downe and took their rest. Speaking, especially arguing and disputing with a knowing and resolved adversary, is rough work; And they who have been at it to purpose, may for very wearinesse have cauiced enough to rest or take their Saboth; so did these three men, they ceased or sabbatiz’d from answering Job.

We may yet further enquire, why did they cease? First, some men cease to answer, because they have no more to answer. Secondly, others cease to answer, because they suppose they have answered enough already, and will answer no more. Some say the former was the reason why Job’s three friends ceased to answer, they had no more to answer; Others take the latter, that they had no mind, no will to give any further answer, but the reason expressed in the text (which should satisfy us and superseed further queries) is,

Because he was righteous in his owne eyes.

As if it had been said, Because they saw they had done no good upon him, Job kept his ground and maintained his standing, he disputed every inch with them, and yeilded not an inch; as they found him at first, so he was at last; they saw him a man immoveably set downe in his owne purpose and opinion, and therefore, because they could get nothing by speaking, they would speak no more. ’Tis but lost labour, (as we say) to wash the Blackmore. The constancy and warmth of Job in defending himselfe they judged obstinacy and a humour to oppose, or but the swelling of a proud spirit; whereas indeed it was the love of truth, not of contention, a zeale to doe himselfe right, not to doe them wrong, which caused him till to hold up the Bucklers, and adhere so sturdily to his owne opinion. Thus despayring to convince or bring him to an acknowledgmenet, that he was unrighteous, they ceased.

Because he was righteous in his owne eyes.

That’s such another forme of speaking (Pro. 3. 7.) Be not wise in thine owne eyes; As also that (Pro. 26. 12.) Seek thou a man wise in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a fool then of him.
You may easier reduce a man that is indeed ignorant, then him that thinks himself very wise, or knowing, but is not. This was the apprehension of Job's friends concerning him, He was a man (thought they and so they said) righteous in his own eyes.

There are three sorts of righteous persons. First, such as are righteous in the eyes of God, and so the Godly are under a two-fold notion; First, as being pardoned for or justified from their unrighteousness, through faith in Christ; Blessed are they who are thus accounted righteous in the eyes of God. Secondly, they are righteous, as avoiding unrighteous, and doing righteous things. There is a seed a principle of righteousness in persons justified and regenerated, which daily puts it selfe forth in righteous actions; He that doth righteousness is righteous (1 John 3. 7.) He is so, both as to his state, and as to his actions, in the eyes of God and good men.

Secondly, Many are righteous in the eyes of men, they have faire appearances and out-sides; you can read nothing amisse in their conversation, yet they are unrighteous, yea altogether unrighteous in the eyes of God, yea and possibly in their owne too; They cannot but see their own wickedness, though they can conceal it from the sight of others. Hypocrites are like painted Sepulchers, faire without (as Christ spake of the Pharisees) but within full of rottenness. They seeme that to men which God seeth they are not; They can shew their best side to and hide their worst from men, but they cannot play this game with God; he seeth their best is bad, because it is but the covering, not the mortifying of that which is bad.

Thirdly, There is another sort who are righteous in their own eyes, such Solomon describes (Prov. 30. 12.) There is a generation that are pure in their owne eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthinesse. These have a great opinion of themselves; They think all is right and well with them, when indeed they are filthy and unclean, their hearts being yet unchanged, though their wayes are smoothed; and though they may have left off to doe many filthy things, yet they are not washed from their filthinesse. The text in hand puts Job into this third sort of righteous men. But was it thus with him? I answer; First, Job was a man righteous in the eyes of God, in both the notions mentioned; he was righteous as justified and righteous as sanctified. Secondly,
Job was a man righteous in the eyes of many men; for he saith (Chap. 29. 11.) The ear which heard me blessed me, and the eye which saw me gave witness to me; yet Job had not an universal testimony given by men; There were some, I cannot say, many, in whole eyes he was unrighteous; He was so in the eyes and opinion of his friends especially. Though none could, as to the eye, tax Job with any unrighteousness, no not they who doubtless had lifted his life to the brazen, yet his friends thought him unrighteous, and he stood judged as unrighteous in their eye.

As for the third sort of righteousness, that of being righteous in our own eyes we must distinguish; Job was indeed righteous in his own eyes in a good sense, and that under a twofold consideration; First, as not having committed any gross or scandalous act of wickedness, as he professed at large and with much confidence in that apologie and vindication which he made for himselfe in the Chapter foregoing, where he calls downe the severest judgements of God upon himselfe, if he had done such things as he was suspected of; especially if he had defiled himselfe with those common pollutions of the world, wantonness, injustice and oppression. Job stood upon it that he was thus righteous. Secondly, Job was righteous in his own eyes, as to the allowing of himselfe in any the least sin or unevenness, either of heart or life; Thus much his protestation or imprecation amounts to in the 33d verse of that Chapter; If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom; As if he had said, I have not lived in the love of any sin whatsoever. Thus Job was righteous in his owne eyes, professing to God, and before men, that as he was not scandalously wicked in any kinde, so he was not closely nor hypocritically wicked; every sin was his burden, and the abhorrence of his soule, in any other sense Job was far from being righteous in his owne eyes; He never either said or thought he had done no evill, or was altogether sin-leffe, like white paper without blot or blur; yea we very often find him confessing his sins and failings (Chap. 7. 20.) I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, thou preserver of men? He, maketh a like acknowledgement (Chap. 9. 2.) I know it is so of a truth, but how shall man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand. Againe (ver. 20.) If I justify myselfe, my mouth shall condemn me. If I say I am perfect,
it shall also prove me perverse. And while he affirms the general vicious nature of man, he must needs imply his own (Chap. i5. 14.) What is man that he should be clean? and how which is borne of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight; how much more abominable and filthy is man? In this universal conclusion, he includeth himself, therefore Job was far from being righteous in his own eyes in any proud opinion of his own righteousness or freedome from any taint of sin. So much for the opening of these words, containing the reason why his friends ceased to answer; Because he was righteous in his own eyes.

It was the designe of these three men not only to convince Job that he was a sinner, but to bring him upon his knees as a notorious sinner; And yet all their allegations and arguments could not bring him to it; My righteousness (said he; Chapt. 27. 6.) In bold face, I will not let it goe. Now, when they saw him thus resolved and stiffe in maintaining the goodnesse of his cause, and the integrity of his spirit, they quitted the businesse, or as the text faith, ceased to answer.

Hence note;

We cease to doe when we cannot attain our end in doing.

When we see it is in vaine to perswade, we give over perswading; Despayre of working our end, puts an end to our working. Industry is at a stand, yea withdraweth when impossibilities appeare. And though nothing be impossible unto God, yet we find God himselfe giving over both speaking and finiting when he seeth he is like to doe no good by eyther. Thus he expresseth his purpose (Isa. 1. 5.) when he had spent many rods of sore Judgements & afflictions upon that people, when he had stricken them till, from the crowne of the head, to the sole of the feete, they were nothing but a continued wound, and yet they received not correction; he presentely reasons thus, Why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more. As if he had said, The end why I smote you was to amend you, to bring you home to my selfe, to cause you to turne back, or returne from your evil ways, but I see I have lost my labour, and spent not only my rods but my scorpions in vaine upon you, therefore I will cease from this kind of work, Why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more.

And
And when God hath spoken long to a people who regard it not, he cealeth to speak any more, but faith, Why should ye be taught any more? Let the Prophets tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth, let him be dumb and silent, as the word is (Ezek. 3.26.) Thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be a reprover (why) for they are a rebellious house. After all thy speaking, they continue rebelling, therefore speak no more. We read the like dreadful prohibition (Hos. 4.4.) Let no man strive nor reprove another (let all ways of reclaiming this people be laid aside) For thy people are as they that strive with the Priest; That is, they are obdurate and desperately engaged in wickedness (Hos. 4.17.) Ephraim is joined to Idols (he cleaveth and sticketh fast to them, he will not be pulled from his own inventions) Let him alone. Thus God faith to his Prophets and Ministers, cease, he faith to his Ordinances, cease, when sinners will not cease to sin and doe wickedly against the Lord. The same unprofitable and incorrigible people are threatened in the same manner by another Prophet (Amos 8.9.) It shall come to passe in that day, faith the Lord God, that I will cause the Sun to goe downe at noone. And (ver. 11.) I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, but of hearing the words of the Lord. God would stop the raining down of heavenly Manna, and the people should not hear, because they would not. Such was the sentence of Christ against the Jews (Math. 23.37.) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not? What follows this refusal? read and tremble (ver. 38.) Behold your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, &c. As he had said, because ye have been so unreachable, therefore ye shall be taught no more. It is sad, when we give God occasion to give over either speaking to us or afflicting us. God will not alwayes strive with the unwillingness, much lesse with the wilfulness of man; nor will men be alwayes doing that to men, which they see doth them no good. So these three men ceased, &c.

Secondly, Note hence; When men are obstinate and will not be reclaimed, it is good to give over. Why should they who in any kind are absolutely resolved, be further.
Chap. 32. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 1.

Further moved? (Acts 21. 14.) When Paul’s friends saw he would not be persuaded, they ceased: they had used much persuasion to keep him from going up to Jerusalem, because of the sufferings that were prophesied should befall him there, yet when he stood out, in an holy obstinacy against them, cleared with a gracious spirit of courage to suffer for Christ; when he would not be persuaded they ceased, saying, the will of the Lord be done. As it was the height of Paul’s holiness that he would not be persuaded, he was obstinate for God’s cause, or for the doing of a duty; so it is the height of many men’s wickedness that they will not be persuaded, they are obstinate against God, or against the doing of their duty; such as are infected with the lust of contending, will maintain that opinion pertinaciously, which they cannot maintain truly. As some strive for the love of victory, rather then of truth; so others strive because they love strife even more then victory, and had rather contend then conquer, because that puts an end to strife. In such cases they doe best who doe no more; And if Job’s case had been such, if he had held up the discourse, not for truth but for victory, or because he would have the last word, like a clamorous Sophister, who hath always somewhat to say, though nothing to the purpose; In that case, I say, Job’s friends had done wisely in ceasing to answer; They indeed did well upon their owne supposition, though as to the truth of Job’s condition they failed greatly. Job was not a man of that spirit, he that persists in holding and defending truth, is not obstinate but constant.

Further, as to the ground why they ceased, according to their supposition,

Observe;

* To be righteous in our owne eyes is hatefull both to God and good men.*

A man is never so vile in the eyes of those who can discern him, as when he is righteous in his owne; how righteous soever any man is, he should be little in owning it. To insist much upon our owne righteousness, favours rankly of a Pharisee (Luke 18. 9.) Christ spake a parable to this purpose (that’s the title of the Parable) (ver. 9.) And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.

Then
Then follows the Pharisees boast of his falling twice in the weeke, &c. And when the text faith (ver. 14.) the Publican went downe to his house justified rather then the other. It doth not imply that the Pharisee was at all justified, but rather that being righteous in his owne eyes, he was under a sad sentence of condemnation in the eyes of God. The meaning is not that the Pharisee was somewhat justified, and the Publican more; But that the Pharisee was not justified at all. It is our duty to follow after righteousness, but our sin to boast of it (Math. 5. 3.) Blessed are the poor in spirit. The more poor we are in spirit, the more rich we are in spirituals. Poverty of spirit is directly opposite to our being righteous in our owne eyes. Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. (Math. 9. 13.) By the righteous there we are to understand those that are righteous in their owne eyes, those that have high thoughts of themselves; The sinners whom Christ calls to repentance are the poor in spirit, though indeed the righteous in their owne eyes, are the greatest sinners. As we never doe worse, or more against right, then when we doe that (as it was said of that ungovern'd age, Judg. 17. 6.) which is right in our own eyes, so we are never worse; then when we are righteous in our owne eyes.

From the whole matter of these words, we see, that as Job's friends had been mistaken all along in that which they spake, so now in the reason of their ceasing to speake; which was a supposal that Job was righteous in his owne eyes.

Hence observe;

There is nothing more common then for men to mistake and misjudge one another.

Job's friends concluded him setled in a proud conceit of his owne righteousness, because he constantly denied their charge of unrighteousness. Some impose an opinion upon their brethren which is not theirs, and make them say that which they doe not affirm; how injurious is this! yea some misjudge the word of God, as well as the words of men. They wrest the Scriptures, (2 Pet. 3. 16.) They make the Scripture speake that, which the holy Ghost never intended. It is dangerous to straine the word of a man, much more the word of God. The former proceeds from a want of charity, but the latter is a great impiety. There

C    could
could not be a more unrighteous thought conceived of Job in any man's heart, then that he was (as his friends thought him) righteous in his own eyes; yet thus they thought him, nor would they think otherwise of him, let him say what he would to the contrary. So much of the first verse which giveth us a reason why Job's friends sat downe and ceased to answer; His being (as they judged him) righteous in his own eyes. In the next verse Elihu gives out a newer Judgment against him then this; To be at all righteous in our own eyes (according to the fence intended) argues a man to be both very blind and very proud, but for a man to be so righteous in his own eyes, as that he dares justify himselfe rather then the most righteous God, argues not only blindness and pride, but pride and blasphemy; yet thus faith Elihu of Job, as it followeth.

Vers. 2. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe rather then God.

Here comes in the fourth speaker, as a moderator or determiner of this great dispute; And he begins, much unlike a moderator, in a heat.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Novus hic est disputati ait, nova etiam argumentatid for- ma, tanto subtillior quo modo magis in feipsum reflexa. Nam videtur argumenta- menari (ut logicorum quoque ad hominem, ex ipsis Jobi verbis Cuiusdiem) Pined: It is very common for men to grow hot in dispute, but for a man to begin his dispute with an heat, that's very strange; many have been all in a flame upon a little discourse, but to be in a flame upon the entrance of a discourse, is a thing almost unheard of. Yet thus it was with this man;

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

The Hebrew is, his nose or nostrills were angry. The Metaphor is taken from Horses, Bears, Lyons, Bulls, or any furious creatures, who send forth fumes of wrath or anger at their nostrills. The blood at the heart of an angered angry man is enflamed, and he, as it were, breathes out fire and smoke at his mouth and nostrills. Elihu came in a flame to this business.

How unceasling were the oppositions of Job! no sooner had those three men ceased speaking, but a fourth rifieth up to speake. The Good
Chap. 32. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 2.

Good man found no rest; his three friends had their Saboth, they ceased or rested from the dispute, but Job was at week-day labour still, attending the words of this angry moderator. Mr. Broughton renders, The anger of Elihu was in choler. Anger is hot, but his anger was heate, or at least his anger was heated, yea it was not only heated as at the fire, but kindled like a fire.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Anger is a fire; and (as Solomon faith) can a man take fire in his bosome, and not be burned? So I may say, can a man carry anger in his bosom, and not burne himselfe, if not others with it? And as fire is blowne up by belloies, so is anger by provocation. The anger of God is expressed in a heat (Deut. 29. 24.) What meaneth the heat of this great anger (ver. 20.) The anger of the Lord and his jealoufie shall smoke against that man. And (Psal. 2. 12.) If his wrath be kindled but a little, &c. The least sparkings of it are terrible. The anger of God is a most dreadfull fire; and the anger of man hath much dread in it. We have need to look to our passions. Fire is good, but it must be kept in its due place; fire on the hearth, fire in the chimney is good, but fire in the roof, or among the household stuff consumeth all. There is (as I may say) an hearth for anger where it will doe no hurt.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel.

There are many questions about this person among the learned; it would be too great a diversion, and possibly an unprofitable one to stay upon them. We have him here described, First, by his name. The Hebrew Etymologists say, This proper name Elihu signifieth, He is my God, or my God is he. And as he is described by his name, so by his nativity or parentage;

Elihu the son of Barachel the Bezite of the kindred of Ram.

His Fathers name Barachel, signifies in the Hebrew, one whom God hath blessed, or, the blessing of God. The sons name was, my God is the Lord. And the fathers name was, the blessing of God, or, one whom God hath blessed. We may note a piece of holy devotion in the old fathers in giving significant names to their children. And surely it may be of much use to give our children good
good and significant names, such names as carry a remembrance of duty, or of mercy. When Alexander the Great, met with a common Souldier whose name was Alexander, He said to him, Be sure thou doe nothing unworthy the name of Alexander. His name had a great encouragement in it to gallantry in warre. And it is noted of Diadumenus, that having obtained both the Empire and the name of Antoninus, he said, I will labour all I can, that I may not be injurious to the name of the Antonines. This should be much more our care and study, where holiness makes the name honourable; John signifies the grace of God; and, as I remember it is the saying of one of the ancients, concerning a bad man so called, Thy name is John, but thou art not John; thy name signifies grace, but thou art not gracious. Ambrose said to the virgin Agnes, or Anne, There is chastity in thy name, do not contradict thy name. So Jerome writing to Pammachius, which name signifies a fighter against all; Do thou (faith he) fight against all sin, against the Devil, the world, and thy owne corruption. The same Author writing to Melecon, which signifies, Honey sweetness, Have thou (faith he) the sweetness of honey in thy manners. And to Probus he writes, Thy name signifies honesty, then be thou an honest man. The Apostle exhorts (2 Tim. 2, 19.) Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. It is a great argument, seeing all who profess the Gospel are called Christians, from Christ, that therefore they should adorn that most worthy name by worthy walking. And let me say to all those whose names signify any thing of God, of Grace, or goodnesse, ye have a good and gracious name, let not your actions be a reproach to God, nor a shame to the profession of his grace. A good heart will make a good use of every thing, and is provoked to have more then a name for that grace or goodnesse which is in his name; even to be really that which his name is. How should an Elihu, whose name signifies He is my God, labour after this holy assurance that God is his? How should a Barachel, whose name signifies the Blessing of God, be always praying and waiting for the blessing of God, or returning praise to God (both in heart and life) for all his blessings?

Elihu the son of Barachel
The Buzite.

Here Elihu is described by his family, as before by his father.
The Buzite, that is, coming from Buz. Yet there is a difference about that, some say he had that name from the place where he dwelt; we read (Jer. 25. 23.) of a place called Buz. Others say, he was called the Buzite from the name of his family; As he descended from Buz the son of Nahor Abraham's brother (Gen. 22, 21.) Milcah had borne children unto thy brother Nahor, Buz his first born and Buz his brother. Master Broughton is clear in it, who gives this gloss upon the text; Elihu the Buzite, of Buz Abraham's brothers son of the family of Ram, famous then for knowledge. Rebecca and Jacob seem to have left religion in Nahor's house. Thus farre he. Jerome saith, Elihu was descended from the Hieron; in second son of Milcah, whom the Septuagint call Buz, from him was made Heb. Jeba-Balaam the sorcerer, who according to the Tradition of the Jewes per Genesis, was this Elihu spoken of in the book of Job, at first, an holy man and a Prophet, but afterwards an apostate. But I leave that as a Rabbinical Tradition.

We have yet a further description of Elihu in the Text.

Of the kindred of Ram, of the family or posterity of Ram.

Who this Ram was is much controverted by Interpreters; nor is the controversy yet ended who this Ram was. Some say he was that Ram spoken of (Ruth 4. 19.) But it is not likely, that he was so ancient as Job, or if he were, he would not leave the Israelites (from whom Pharez was descended) to dwell among the Edomites. Others say he was that Aram mentioned (Gen. 22. 21.) But neither doth this appeare true; for then Elihu could not be a Buzite, but must draw his line from Kemuel the brother of Buz. The Chaldee Paraphrase tells us, he was Abraham. And to cleare this 'tis said (as our owne learned Annotators have given it) that he had a threefold gradation in his name; First, he was called only Ram, which signifies high; Secondly, Abram, which signifies A high father; Thirdly, Abraham, which signifies the high father of a multitude. But, upon which to determine I conceive it impossible, nor is there any great matter in it. Only this seems clear, that the family of Ram was some great and illustrious family in those times; and we may take notice how distinct and punctual the penman of this book was in describing the pedigree of Elihu. And there may be two reasons why the Spirit of God directed him to be so; First, because he was but a young reader, and why should he write truths to a young reader, there may be two reasons why the Spirit of God directed him to be so; First, because he was but a young reader,
young man; And therefore as Saul (1 Sam. 17. 56.) when he 

saw David a young man, he asked after his parentage; Enquire 

whose Son this speaking is; I would faine know his kindred. So the 

kindred of Elihu is thus distinctly set downe, that he who by rea-

son of his youth was little knowne as to his person, might be the 

better knowne by his Ancelors, or parentage. 

Secondly, His parentage is thus distinctly set downe, to assure 

us, that this is a true history; For some have made the whole 

booke of Job to be but a parable, asserting there was no such real 

thing. But this one passage gives an undeniable proofe, that this 

was a reall history, and the matter really acted. This person be-

ing described by his owne name and his fathers name, and the 

next of his kindred. 

From the consideration of the person who carried on so great 
a part in this businesse, Elihu, the Son of Barachel the Buzite of the 

kindred of Ram, who was of a strange Country, and it allied to 

Abraham, yet at a great distance; we may observe; 

God did preserve a seed of religion, and of holy men to maintain 
his truth among those who lived in darke places, and were 

wrapt up in many errors and superstitions. 

This was also noted from the first words of this booke, There 

was a man in the Land of Uz; A man of gracious accomplishments 

and of a heavenly light. Here also was Elihu the Buzite, A man 

that had great knowledge about holy things (as we shall see af-

terwards) in those parts and times when and where abundance of 
darknesse, blindnesse and ignorance reigned. 

Having thus described Elihu; The history proceeds. 

Against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe 
rather then God. 

In the former part of the verse it is said; Then was kindled the 

wrath of Elihu; Not specifying against whom, nor the cause why; 

here he doubles the same words, with an addition, first, of the 

person with whom he was angry; Against Job was his wrath kind-

led. And as he tells us the marke or object of his wrath; so he 
gives, secondly, the reason of it; Because he justified himselfe rather 
then God. Before I come to the explication of this latter branch, 
take these two brief notes. 

First,
First, A godly man in maintaining a good cause, may give just reason of another's passion or anger.

Job was a good man, and his cause was good, yet you see a wife and a good man's wrath is kindled. 

Paul and Barnabas were two good men, yet a difference arose between them (Acts 15. 39.) and the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder.

Secondly, Considering the cause of this anger in general, Because he justified himself rather than God; we see it was an anger for God's cause.

Hence note;

Anger for God or in the cause of God is holy anger.

Though for the most part the flesh or our carnal corruption is the cause of anger, and it begins at self; yet sometimes it is stir'd in the cause of God. It is said of Moses, the meekest man on earth (Num. 12. 3.) that when he saw the idolatry of the people (Exod. 32. 19.) His anger wax'd hot; He was so angry that he cast the Tables of the Law which God had written with his own hand, out of his hand and broke them. It is said (Mar. 3. 5.) Jesus Christ looked about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts; He also express a great deal of zealous anger (Joh. 2. 15.) When he made a whip of small cords, and drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. Some of the Hebrews tell us, that the word here used for anger, signifies anger carried out to the destruction of sin, and that is a very gracious anger. There are two things which exceedingly declare the holiness of a man's spirit. First, when he can patiently bear loads of evills and wrongs in his own cause, or which have but a private respect. Secondly, When he is ready to take fire in the cause of God; many dull and sluggisli souls can heare God abused, and their spirits stirre no more then a stone; Eliph was angry, but it was in the cause of God; or, Because Job justified himself rather then God. When we are angry with sin, we are angry (as the Apostle adviseth us to be) and sin not. That's anger without sin, when we are angry with sin; and are stirred up to oppose and suppress the pride and insolency of man's spirit or speeches against God; To be angry for our owne honour, and interest, or
Gourd, is an argument of undue love to selfe. When God spared
Nineveh the Prophet was exceeding angry (Jon. 4. 1.) But his
was finfull anger; because he was angry for his owne fake, fearing
to be called a faffe Prophet; He set himselfe downe to see what
would become of the City, that he might have a personall glory,
and be cryed up for a Prophet indeed. And when God had smit-
ten his Gourd, he was angry and angry unto the death (ver. 8.)
and all because he mistis that which pleased himselfe. Many can
be angry when they themselves are disgraced, but when dishon-
nour is cast upon God, or his interest sighted, how quiet and
tame, how cold and dull are their spirits! The anger of this man
was a noble anger, as to the occasion and rise of it, Job's selfe-ju-
ification, or

Because he justified himselfe rather then God.

This is a high point, and may justly provoke our anger, Elihu
was not angry with Job because he justified himselfe against his
friends, but because he justified himselfe rather then God.

Here a question will arise, and it will ask some paines to de-
termine it; Was this true? did Job justify himselfe rather then
God? Was it possible Job should do so? I shall give only a gene-
rall answer to this question; Job did not justify himselfe rather then
God, either explicitly, or intentionally, but by consequents he
did. And though it be granted that Job gave just occasion of this
sharp reproofe by his rash and passionate speeches, uttered in the
heate of dispute, and in the grief of his heart, yet it cannot be de-
nied that Elihu did somewhat strain Job's words, though not be-
yond their fence, yet beyond his fence, and gave them the hardest
interpretation (somewhat beside the rule of charity) which they
could beare, nor did he observe that meekness and moderation
which might well have become him, to a man in that case. O how
hard is it not to offend or doe ill, while we are doing well!

To cleare this a little further consider, There is a twofold
straining of words; First, beyond the fence of the words spoken;
Secondly, beyond the fence of the speaker. I doe not say Elihu
in affirming this of Job, straine his words beyond their fence,
but he straine them beyond Job's fence. Job spake words which
might lay him under this censure, that he justified himselfe rather
then God; But this was far from his intention; For doubtlesse he
had
had rather a thousand times his tongue should have been cut out of his mouth, then to justifie himselfe with it rather then God, or to speak a word to the disparagement of Gods Justice. So then it was hard for Elihu to charge Job thus, though Job had let fall some inconsiderate speeches, which administered occasion for such a charge. And as one of the Ancients speakes of difficulties and seeming contradictions in Scripture; Distinguish the times, and the Scriptures will accord; So distinguish the time of this dispute, take Job at the beginning of it, before he was teazed and heated by his friends, and then he spake at a very low rate of himselfe; If I were righteous I would not know my owne soule. But in the heat and towards the later end of this long dispute, Job gave too much advantage for such a construction to be put upon his words, that he justifie himselfe rather then God; then which nothing can be said more unjustifiable, nor more reproveable.

Hence obserue;

To justifie our selves doth usually and justly lay us open to the reproofe of others; or, To justifie our selves, drawes blame upon our selves.

To justifie, is foure wayes used in Scripture.

First, (which is the most remarkable and excellent act of it) God justifieth man (Rom. 8. 33.) It is God that justifieth. This act of divine Grace consists in two things; First, in the imputation of Christs righteousnesse to us; Secondly, in the free remission of our sins.

Secondly, Man justifieth God (Luk. 7. 29, 30.) And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with the Baptisme of John. Where to justifie imports as much as to Glorifie doth, (Acts 13. 48.) And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord; That is, they readily approved and received the word of the Lord; when we approve the Doctrine, and doings of God, his word and works, then we justifie him. And how ready should we be on all occasions to justifie God, who only is and is altogether good, when he is so graciously ready to justifie us who are evill, altogether evil and ungodly.

Thirdly, We read in Scripture of man justifying man, which is done any of these three wayes.
First, He that consents to what another hath done (though the deed be evil) justifieth him in doing it. A secret liking of any man's action is (as much as that amounts to) the justification of his person.

Secondly, He that openly approveth or applaudeth what another hath done, justifieth him more. To consent with sinners is sinfull, to flatter them in their sin is abominable.

Thirdly, He that stands up to maintaine and defend what another hath done, justifies him most of all. All these acts of justification Job denied his friends, while he said (Chap. 27. 5.) God forbid I should justifie you; That is, that I should secretly consent to or openly approve and maintaine what you have said concerning me, or you in saying it.

Fourthly, The same man is said to justifie himselfe; this selfe-justification is that which kindled the wrath of Elihu against Job; The text is express; Because he justified himselfe, &c. This justification of our selves is of two sorts.

First, Internall and mentall; when in our hearts we give sentence for, or approve of our selves; when we inwardly boast and glory of our selves, whether in what we are, or in what we doe and affirme. The Pharisee (Luk. 18. 11.) stood and prayed thus with himselfe (or to himselfe, that is, silently) God I thanke thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust adulterers, or even as this Publicane; I fast twice in the weeke, &c. Thus he justified himself.

Secondly, There is an externall and vocal selfe-justification, when we openly commend, and cry up our selves; Thus Jeblu justifie himselfe (2 Kings 10. 16.) Come see my zeale for the Lord; He would needs blow a trumpet, and proclaime before all men how good a man he was, and what good he had done.

Yet further, the justification of our selves is two-fold.

First, Lawfull, yea and commendable; Take that in two particulars.

First, That man who is really and indeed in a justified state, through the free grace of God in Christ, he, when a just occasion is offered, may justifie himselfe declaratively before men; For as we ought always to justifie our selves declaratively by our works, that is, give evidence by our works that we are justified by faith; so we may justifie our selves by our words, to magnifie the
the rich grace of God in justifying us freely through Christ. 
David called others to take notice of what God had done for his 
soul, (Ps. 66. 16.) Thus a believer may lawfully at any 
time, and at all times, it is his duty to justify himselfe before 
men, by giving as the Apostle directs (1 Pet. 3. 15.) an answer
of his justified state) with meekness and fear.

Secondly, A man that is found at heart, honest and upright
with God, may lawfully justify himselfe, as to the integrity of
his intentions, purposes, and designs, when he falls under other
mens jealousies and suspicions. David being often unjustly con-
demned by Saul, was as often in this work of justifying himselfe
against him, (Ps. 7. 8.) Judge me, O Lord, according to my
righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me; As if
he had said, I am judged unrighteously, but I appeale to thy righ-
teous judgement, who fully knowest (which I also know, my con-
science bearing wittnes) mine integrity. I appeale to thy mercy
for the many sins which I have committed against thy selfe, but I
appeale to thy Justice whether (as I am accused) I have at all
sinned against Saul. We may reade Paul doing the same at large
while he professed (1 Thes. 2. 3, 4.) that he did not act upon
covetous designs for himselfe, nor was a flatterer of others, but
as he was allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so
be spake, not as pleasing men but God, which tryth the heart. As it
was the continuall practise of falle Apostles and others to discred-
it Pauls Ministry, by bringing his person out of credit, so it
was his continuall care to counter-worke them, by a professed
vindication of himselfe. We may lawfully justify our selves and
our actings, when we are not only suspected, but falsely accused,
and wrongfully charged about them, and that either of these two
ways.

First, When we are charged to have done that evill, which
we never did, then we may justify our selves by a flat deniall;
David did so in that case (Ps. 7. 3, 4.) O Lord my God, if I
have done this, if there be iniquity in my hand, &c. As if he had
said, O God, thou knowest I have not done this which many bur-
den me with. Again (Ps. 35. 11.) False witness did rise up,
they laid to my charge things that I knew not; I have not had so
much as a thought to do that which they say I have actually done.

Thus
Thus he discharged himself of those crimes, which indeed he never committed nor was guilty of.

Secondly, We may justify our selves lawfully, when the good we have done is charged upon us as an evil deed, or we looked upon as evil doers, when we have done, nothing for the matter, but our duty, and that in the manner according to rule. Thus when Paul had justified himself, by denying the evil which Tertullus accused him of, (Acts 24. 12, 13.) he presently justified himself also in what he had done well, though his enemies judged it evil; (ver. 14.) But this I confesse, that after the way which they call heresie, so worship I the God of my fathers, beleeving all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets. This selfe-justification is often very needfull; For as there are some who call evil good, so there are others, who call good evil, and make that a mans fault, which is his commendation. It was accounted a crime by some of old to be lefle virtuous then others, and it is accounted a crime by some at this day to be more vertuous then others; to be more holy, more exact, more wisely precise and circumspect in our wayes then others, many interpret folly, and ramp with madness. (2 Corinb. 5. 13.) Paul was thought beside himselfe, a meere Fanatick in his high actsings for Jesus Christ; when our actions are thus mis-represented, and put under such disguises, every good man is obliged to doe himselfe right. For as we may honestly accuse others, and declare the evil that we know they have done, when called to it; so we may speak out and declare the good we have done, & maintaine that to be good (if it be good) which we have done, (though many call it evil) when called to it. Thus a man may stand upon his termes with all men, and yet be humble, and deeply sensible of his owne sinfullnesse and vilenesse before God. Paul saw nothing, upon the matter, but sin in himselfe (Rom. 7. 14, 24.) When I would doe good, evil is present with me; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death; That is, of sin; as tis called (Rom. 6. 6.) Thus he spake when he had to doe with God; But when he had to doe with men, when he saw himselfe called to answer the accusations, and wipe off the aspersions which the enemies of the Gospel cast upon him. (1 Corinb. 4. 4.) then he faith, I know nothing (that is, no evil) by my selfe. Paul was very conscious of his naturall infirmity, yet very confident of his
spirituall integrity. And therefore when he saw the Glory of God was like to be obscured through his abasement, and to be eclipsed by the shadowes and darkness which men cast upon his Ministry, then he tooke due honour to himselfe, and made the most of himselfe, according to truth, in the eyes of all the world. Thus I have shewed what justifying of our selves is lawfull, and I have done it that we may more clearly discerne, what I am to say next, or

Secondly, Namely, what that justifying of our selves is, which indeed is unlawfull, reprovable and blame-worthy; I shall instance it in a few particulars.

First, They justifie themselves sinfully, who doe good with a desire to be seen and applauded of men for it; thus Christ charged the Pharisees (Math. 6. 5.) They pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men: and (ver. 16.) They disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. It is not a sin to be seen of men in doing good, but to doe good to be seen of men is sinfull, and the patching up of a selfe-justification.

Secondly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who would pretend, or seeme to have done that good, which indeed they have not. There is as much of this hypocritie lodging and working now in the hearts of the children of men, as was of old in the heart of Saul (1 Sam. 15. 13, 14. to the 22d verse) who professed highly to have fulfilled the will of God to a hair's breadth; Blessed be thou of the Lord (said he to Samuel) I have performed the commandment of the Lord; Thus he insisted upon his integrity, and justified himselfe to the face of Samuel, who quickly convinced him that he had done the Lords worke to halves.

Thirdly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who either totally deny, or extenuate and lessen the evill that they have done; this kinde of sinfull selfe-justification was opened largely at the 33d verse of the former Chapter, upon that imprecation made by Job, If I covered my transgression as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosome. I referre the Reader thither for a fuller discovery of it.

Fourthly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who mingle their owne workes with the workes or righteousness of Jesus Christ for justification; for though such pretend to Christ, and say they take
take up Christ and his righteousness for justification, yet it will be found a selfe-justification only; seeing unlesse Christ justifie us wholly, he justifieth us not at all; As the Apostle concludes (Galat. 5. 4.) Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace; That is, yee who mingle your workes with Grace, are not justified by Grace, but (which will be ( unlesse repented of ) your condemnation) by your workes.

Lastly, They justifie themselves sinfull, who say they are justified by Christ from their sins, while they continue in their sins, and hold fast their iniquities; For as they that mingle their owne good workes with the righteousness of Christ, are selfe-justifiers, so also are they that take hold of the righteousness of Christ, while they will not let goe, nor part with their evill workes. To looke for justification while we continue in the love and practise of any knowne sin and unrighteousnesse, is as sinfull as to expect justification by our owne righteousness.

Object. But doth not the Scripture say, that God justifieth the ungodly (Rom. 4. 5.)

I answer, Though God justifieth the ungodly, yet the justified are not ungodly; God justifieth the ungodly and makes them holy by the grace of sanctification, as well as righteous by the grace of justification: righteousness of life is always the fruit of righteousness by faith. Therefore if any man continuing in any knowne sin, faith he is justified, he hath justified himselfe, for none doe so who are justified of God. O how deeply are they condemned by God who thus justifie themselves! Nothing is more desirable then to be justified by God, and nothing is more dangerous then to justifie our selves, either by our owne righteousness, or in our unrighteousnesse. Now as to justifie our selves any of these ways, is exceeding sinfull before God, so to justifie our selves any way, layeth us open or obnoxious to the censures of men. And that's the reason why this holy man Job was so deeply censured; For though he justified not himselfe in any of those fences which are are sinfull, yet he did some way justifie himselfe, and while he justified himselfe only as he might, he was condemned as having justified himselfe in a way which he might not. We had need be very cautious, how we any way or in any kinde justifie our selves, few having done it without incurring censure, if not condemnation from others.
But what was Job’s self-justification, or of what kind, that it raised such a dust, yea kindled such a flame of Anger in the breast of Elihu? I answer;

Job did not justify himself by lies or falsehoods; that was not the matter for which Elihu was angry with Job, but because he supposed he was more tender of his own name then of Gods. Thus the Text speaks expressly; Against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather then God.

Hence note;

To justify our selves rather then God, is not only sinfull but flagitious, not only sinfull but blasphemos.

Let God be true and every man a lyar (Rom. 3. 4.) woe to those who goe about to save their owne honour, by speaking that which reflects dishonour upon God, or who keepe their owne credit untouched, by exposing his to any hazzard; let God be just and every man unrighteous. As whosoever exalts himselfe, humbles God (when we exalt our selves vainely, we humble God as much as we can, and so it will be interpreted) so he that justifies himselfe in any degree unduely accuseth God, how much more he that justifieth himselfe rather then God. To commend or praise our selves, in the hearing of men, is unfavorly, to commend or praise our selves rather then men (who are our fellows, yea though our inferiors) is odious, how much more to justify our selves rather then God, who is infinitely above us. It becomes the best of men, to accuse, judge and condemn themselves, to draw up their owne enditement, and say, we have deserved worse then we suffer from the hand of God; and have done less then duty requires at our hand.

But, because to justify our selves rather then God, is a thing so horrid, few will be brought under this conviction, that they are guilty of it, or chargeable with it. And therefore I shall endeavour to make it appeare, that there are many who though they doe not justify themselves rather then God directly and barefaced, yet they doe it secretely or constructively. I shall make out this in generall as it may concern any man, while I more distinctly shew, how Job incurred this suspicion, and gave Elihu more then a probable ground to say, that he justified himselfe rather then God. Job never said, he was more just then God, but he said;
said many things which gave Elihu occasion to say, That surely he justified himself rather then God.

First, When he spake so largely of his own innocency, spending five whole Chapters in the vindication of it, and spake so little, comparatively, of the righteousness and justice of God, this might bring him under a suspicion of justifying himself rather then God. For what could this intimate to his hearers, but that he had better performed the part of a gracious and righteous man, then God had of a gracious Father or righteous Judge. Though all that be true (how much soever it is) which we speak of our selves, yet it is not good to speak much, much leffe all of our selves; especially when upon that account, we may seeme to dispute either the justice or goodness of God in dealing out the troubles and afflictions, under which we suffer.

Secondly, While Job did so often and so boldly offer to plead his cause before Gods tribunall, and was so importunate for a Hearing, this carried a secret implication, that God had not dealt well with him, or at least had not considered his cause throughly, for if he had, surely he should have found more favorable dealing from God then he dayly experienced.

Thirdly, While Job complained so often and greatly of the greatnesse of his afflictions, of the weight and heavinesse of the hand of God upon him, and, that he being but a poore worme, the great and mighty God should stretch out his strong hand against him; This also might be construed, as if he thought God did not take a due measure of his infirmities, but let temptations take hold of him which were not common to man, and burdened him beyond what he was able to beare. Now, what was this, but to justify himselfe rather then God?

Fourthly, While he complained that the hand of God had not only touched him, but even abode and dwelt upon him, that he was consumed from morning to morning, that he had not only wearisome nights, but moneths of vanity appointed to him, that his afflictions were not only exceeding sharp, but exceeding long, yea that though they were extreamly violent, yet perpetuall, this bare hard upon the goodness and wisdome of God. For, to say that God over-acts in the measure, and exceeds in the continuance of our afflictions, reflect alike upon the honour of God, and are rather a justification of our selves in bearing the cross, then of God in laying it on.
Fifthly, Job in several passages of this book desired God to make an end of him, and take him out of this world; he was troubled that God did not kill him out of hand, or out-right; this was a justification of himself rather then God, as if he knew better, whether it were more fit for him to live in a sickly, weakly, painfull condition, or to be delivered out of it by death. As we should be willing to die, when God calls, so to live till God calls, and not to hasten death; He that believes (as he ought) will not make haste out of the troubles of this world, much less out the world, because he finds it troublesome.

Sixthly, He seemed to justify himself rather then God, while he was so much troubled, because God did not presently reveal to him the reason of his troubles; Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in? was his complaint (Chap. 3. 23.) that is, wherefore is the light of this natural life given to me, whose way is in the dark, and who know not the reason why I am thus afflicted? We ought to sit down in this assurance, be our condition never so refriffle, that the most wise God hath a reason for every stroake of trouble he layeth upon our loynes, though we see it not. They who cannot fully resigne themselves and their ways to God, yea resolve their wills into the will of God, are much disquieted and refliffle in their minds, when they see not the reason of Gods dealing with them, or why it is so with them? Let all such know, this also is to make our selves wiser then God, and to justify our selves rather then him. And therefore from all these considerations take these two Inferences, which may keepe us ever at a distance from this high presumptuous, yea (which we should carefully a-void) from the shadow and appearance of it; The justifying of our selves rather then God.

First, It is enough to condemn us under the guilt of this sin, if we allow not that God doth to be good, yea and best for us, how much or how long, or in what kinde forever he is pleased to affict us with evil. It is our duty to accept, that is, to take well at Gods hand, the punishment of our iniquity (Lev. 26. 41.) how much more to welcome the scife and heaviest stroke which he is pleased to lay upon us, either for the chastisement of our saylings and falls, or for the tryall and exercise of our graces. It is laid (2 Sam. 3. 36.) Whatevsnr the king (meaning Da-
vid) did please all the people; There was a wonderful consent and harmony between the peoples' spirit and David's actions; Surely whatsoever God doth, should please all his people, what ever he dispenseth, be it sweet or savour, hard or soft, light or darkness, it should please all his people, and please them highly; and so farre as we come short of this frame of heart, so farre doe we justify our selves rather then God.

Secondly, It is a fault not only if we are not satisfied and pleased with what God doth, but if we doe not praise and glorifie God in and for what he doth; and that not only in his justice that he hath done is no wrong, but in his goodness, that he hath done all for our profit. That which turns to mans profit, should also turn to the praise of God; But (as the holy Apostle assureth us, Heb: 12. 10.) God chastenth his children for their profit (and that the best and noblest profit) that they might be partakers of his holiness; therefore we ought to praise and glorifie him, or to glorifie him with our praises while he is chasteneing us. Truly God is good to Israel (Psal. 73. 1.) He is so, not only when he gives Israel outward good things, or things good to sense, but when he afflicteth, when he writes bitter things against his Israel, and shewes them only visions of sorrow and matter of amazement. Till our soules are wrought up to this Justification of God in his goodness, when things are worst with us, we in some degree justify our selves rather then God.

Again, for as much as Job, who cannot in all things be acquitted from this charge of justifying himselfe rather then God, was yet of another spirit and principle, then indeed or professedly to justify himselfe rather then God.

Observe;

We may speake amisse and wrong God when we doe not intend it, nor have the least thought to doe so.

David prayeth for the pardon of unknowne sins (Psal. 19. 12, 13.) Cleanse thou me from secret faults, keepe backe thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me. To justify our selves rather then God knowingly, is a presumptuous sin, to lay any blame upon God directly is blasphemy; David prayed not only to be kept from such grosse sins, but to be cleansed from secret sins, that is, from those sins which he did not know.
know that he had committed them, and which he never had any
intent to commit. We may so mis-place words and mis-guide
actions, when we think not of it, that we may quickly sin against
God, yea and justify our selves rather then God; That which we
doe or speake is to be judged by a rule, whether it be good or-
evill, not meerely by our intentions though good, nor by our not
intending of evil. We may be judged to have done or laid evil,
though we meant no evil in doing or in saying so. Words and acti-
ons well meant may sometimes justly undergoe an ill construc-
tion. They that heare should interpret every word in the most fa-
vorable sense; but if we speake unwarily and unsafely, or (as
Moses once) unadvisedly with our lips, we may thank our selves
if we fall under reproffe for what we have spoken. Therefore
begge of God to set a watch over your mouth, and to keepe the
doore of your lips, let nothing passe unexamined. It is our wis-
dome to read every word over and over before we speake it;
Many heare ill, who have spoken well, how much more may they
who speake doubtfully or dangerously. We have seene the caufe
why Elihu was so angry with Job, the next verse will tell us why
he was so angry with Job's three friends.

Verel. 3. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled,
because they had found no answer, and yet had con-
demned Job.

We find Elihu angry on all hands, angry with Job, and angry
with his three friends; some queirie upon this renewing of his
anger (as God did Jonah) whether he did well to be thus angry
or thus to appear in passion, and break out afresh in wrath? and
whether the reasons of his anger will beare him out to have
been angry with Reaton; anger prevails most in those in whom
reason prevails least, and they have usually the strongest passions,
who have the weakest judgements; children and aged persons,
the sick and pained are apt to be angry with others, and hard to
be pleased themselves. And tis a generall axiom; The weake and
impotent are naturally angry and passionate. Therefore we had
need looke to our passions, that they grow not strong, for they
will soone proclaime us weake: he is a wise man indeed, that can
be at once wise and angry. (Proverbs 19. 11.) The discretion
of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to passe over a tran-
E 2 gression;
... and as there Solomon teacheth us, that discretion mattereth anger, so he assureth us, that angry persons are more then indiscreet, foolish. (Eccles. 7. 9.) Anger reseth in the bosome of fools. Anger often assaulthes the prudent, but if it abides and takes up its lodging in any bosome, 'tis in the bosome of a fool, at leaft; in that poynt he doth foolishly who lendeth his bosome (though but one night) for anger to lodge in. And as at all times, so then especially we should narrowly watch and severely bridle our passions, when (as Eliphz here did) we undertake to advice those who are mistaken, or to reduce those that are out of the way; when we give counsel to others, we should be sedate and quiet our selves. A Physician must not be angry with his patient, nor is it proper to apply medicinall healing counsel to the mind of another with an exulcerated minde. Much might be said concerning this anger of Eliphz, but I have spoken to that before in opening the former verse, therefore I shall not stay here upon it; but proceed to consider the reason why he was so.

Because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

Not to find an answer may proceed;
First, From a defect of paines and industry in seeking it; An answer must be fought and digg'd for, it must be studied and prayed for, else it will not be found.
Secondly, The not finding of an answer, may arise from the defect of ability, not of industry; many labour hard, but can make nothing of it; 'Tis probable Jobs three friends laboured much, yet found no answer; And then it was no defect of industry but of ability, they found no answer, because they could not. They (as we commonly speake) did even beate their braines, and bite their nayles for an answer, but could not attaine it, they pumpt hard, but the water would not come, God hid the thing from their eyes; so then, they had not found any answer, because after all their search they could not; nor should it seeme strange to us that they could not. At best we know but in part here, and till God by his Spirit teach us, we know nothing at all; So that I say, it should not seeme strange to us, that these wise and good men could find no answer for Job, but that which follows seemes strange, even to amazement, that though they could not, yet... (which,
Then did we but because it is yea. Zophar we any mans condemnation condemns damned to the time, Naamathite found answer condemned to the argument, this reason of which, the der a-wickedman. What, condemns a man, and not answer him? 'tis worse then to condemn a man, and not hear him. Possibly he that is condemned unheard, may yet deserve a condemnation; But if we condemn a man unanswered, he certainly, as to us, is condemned undeservedly. And therefore this course of proceeding (if any) is liable not only to suspicion whether it be right, but to condemnation as utterly unrighteous. Though it may be a good mans case not to find an answer, yet surely a good man will not condemn when he cannot answer.

But it may be demanded; Did Jobs friends indeed find no answer before they condemned him? we have heard of their answers all along. No sooner had Job ended his former speeches, but they presently answered (Chap. 4. 1.) Then Eliaphaz the Temanite answered and said (Chap. 8. 1.) Then answered Bildad the Shuhite and said (Chap. 11. 1.) Then answered Zophar the Naamathite and said; yea they all three answered Job a second time, and two of them a Third, how then could Eliphaz justly say, they found no answer, and yet had condemned Job?

For answer to this objection; I say, They answered Job, but they did not answer sufficiently. The vulgar latine translation puts this glosse (which is more then the rules of translation allow) into the text, rendering the original thus; Because they had found no rationall answer, and yet had condemned Job. They did not find out nor hit upon the right answer. Improper and insufficient answers, how many soever of them we heape up against any mans argument, are no answers, they are not worthy to be called answers. That only is an answer which carrieth a conviction in it, which reacheth the rate and strength of the question, or remove the objection. In this fence Jobs three friends had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

The Hebrew is they made him wicked, or condemned him as a wicked man: So the Septuagint, they had no answer for him, and yet concluded him wicked; we say, they had condemned Job; and the reason of it is, because to condemn a man is to leave him under a supposal of wickednesse, and to stigmatize or brand him for a wicked man. All the wicked shall at last be condemned, and none.
none ought to be condemned, nor are any condemned justly now but the wicked; He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord, (Pro. 17.15.) There is a very elegant transposition of the words in the Hebrew; we may render the text thus; He that justifieth the wicked, and wickedeth the just, &c. The law of Moses gave an express rule against this perversion of Judgement, in terms quite crotte to those in Solomon (Deut. 25.1.) If there be any controversy between men, and they come unto Judgement, that the Judges may Judge them, then they shall justifie the righteous, and condemn the wicked. Which you may render thus; They shall justifie the just, and wickedeth the wicked; that is, they shall declare the just man just, and the wicked man to be wicked. That man either really is, or is accounted wicked, who is cast in his cause and condemned. That was a dreadful sentence (the Scripture (Acts 1.20.) shewes it fulfilled upon the traitor Judas) when he is judged, let him be condemned (Psal. 109.7.) we put in the margin, let him go out guilty or wicked. In this sense Jobs three friends when they condemned him, cast him as a wicked man, though they had nothing to answer the plea which he made for his owne integrity. We must not conceive any such wickednesse in them, that they were resolved to condemn him right or wrong, yet they held their conclusion against the light and reason of all his premifles, and though they could prove no ill against him, yet vehemently suspecting him, they concluded he was an ill man, and so condemned him.

Hence note first.
Some will proceed to condemn both persons and opinions, though they can give no reasonable account why they condemn either.

We read (Isa. 56.10.) of dume doggs, that cannot barke, that is, who know not what to speake or say to purpose. There are many who (in this sense) cannot barke; yet they will bite; and when they have no answer, they will condemn; and usually dume doggs that cannot barke have the sharpest teeth, and are best at biting; or they are better at condemning then at answering. As some finde an answer where there is none; that is, when such reasons are laid before them as are unanswerable, yet they will not give over answering, but still seek a knott in a rutt, and draw.
draw the law of contention as well without end as without cause; so others cannot find an answer where it is; yet when they cannot answer, they can cen[t]ure and condemn him for wicked or perverse, whom they cannot prove so. 'Tis much easier to say a man is faulty, then to find his fault; yet they who have a mind to find faults, are seldom to seeke for somewhat or other which they call so.

Note secondly.

To condemn opinions or persons when we cannot answer them, is a practice justly condemnable.

'Tis unjust (as was intimated before) to condemn a man before he is heard. For though possibly a man unheard may have justice when he is condemned, yet all agree 'tis injustice to condemn him when he is not heard; Now if it be injustice to condemn a wicked man before he is heard, how unjust is it to condemn a man in whom we can find no wickedness after we have heard him.

Thirdly, From the manner of the phrase here used,

Note.

To condemn a man is to render him wicked.

Condemnation (as was shewed) is due only to the wicked, and if an innocent be condemned, he is reputed wicked, and receives punishment as guilty. As that sentence of condemnation which proceeds out of the mouth of God against impudent sinners and evil doers, bindeth the guilt of their evil deeds upon them, and delivers them up to punishment; So he that condemneth his brother, fasteneth guilt upon him, and speakes him deserving punishment; for as where guilt is, punishment followeth, so a fault is conceived to go before. There are these three things in sin, the fault, the guilt, and the blot, or pollution of it; he that fasteneth guilt by condemnation, fasteneth the fault and blot much more; how sad is it then to be deservedly under condemnation? And how great is the privilege of believers, to whom (though in themselves they deserve it) there is no condemnation! (Rom. 8. 1.) They who in this life are past condemnation, are also pasted from death to life. Many are condemned who are good in the sight of God; but all condemnation makes a man evil, yea wicked!
ed in the sight of the world. And because every sentence of condemnation renders a man wicked in the eyes of worldly men, therefore righteous Magistrates will not condemn hastily; They will not judge (as Christ did not, Isa. 11. 3.) after the sight of their eyes, nor reproue after the hearing of their ears; To judge by the sight of the eye, is to Judge according to the first appearance of things, before inquisition hath been made, and to reprove by the hearing of the ear, is to reprove according to the first report which is made, without examination. We must not judge thus, because we must judge in righteousness, which cannot be, if we judge thus. How deliberate, how tender should we be in condemning any man, seeing condemnation doth not only impose a punishment upon, but suppose a crime, a wickednesse, a fault in him. It is grievous enough to beare punishment, but to beare the burden of a crime or fault, is in reality much more grievous.

But seeing Elihu declares his anger against Job, three friends, because they condemned Job, and had found no answer. Some will say, did not Elihu condemn Job so too? No, he condemned him indeed, but he first found an answer. Againe, Elihu condemned Job, but not as his friends condemned him, his friends condemned him as to his state, judging him unfound at heart; But Elihu condemned him only as to this or that particular act or speech; He condemned him, First, because he spake so largely in the justification of himselfe (Chap. 33. 8, 9, 10, 11.) Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression; I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me. (And Chap. 34. 5, 6.) For Job hath said, I am righteous, and God hath taken away my judgement; should I lye against my right, my wound is incurable without transgression. Secondly, he condemned him for complying with the wicked, not that he thought Job acted like them, but because being a godly man, he in his sufferings spake sometimes and behaved himselfe like them (Chap. 34. 8.) Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men. Further, he charged him with stubbornnesse against God (Chap. 34. 37.) For he addeth rebellion unto his sin; and (which sounds strangely,) with an easiness toward evill men (Chap. 36. 17.) Thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, judgement and justice take hold on thee.

Thus
Thus *Elihu* condemned *Job* many ways, but he condemned him not, without finding an answer.

Yea, I may say, *Elihu* is he, who in this great controversy and difficulty, hath found an answer, and yet hath not condemned *Job*, that is, he hath not condemned him as his three friends had condemned him: He condemned not *Job* as one perverse and crooked in his ways, he condemned him not as one that feared not God and eschewed not evil, He condemned him not as an hypocrite, rotten at heart and unfound in his estate; Thus *Elihu* found an answer for *Job*, but condemned him not, no not while his wrath was kindled against him, because he justified himself rather than God.

And the proceffe of this booke will shew, that though *Elihu* (in the sense spoken of) condemned not *Job*, yet he found an unanswerable answer, such an answer, as to which *Job* neither could nor would make any reply; and that is the speciall business we have to looke at in prosecuting his discourse, even to finde out the answer which he found; for that will be as the key of the worke, to open the whole matter to us, and to shew us wherein *Job* had either fayled or exceeded, either in bearing the crosles layd upon him by God, or in managing this controversy with his friends.

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F  J O B,
Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken: because they were elder then he.

When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.

I said Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

His context affignes the reason, First, why Elihu forbare so long to speake, namely, because he was young, that reason you have in the 4th verse, as also in the 6th and 7th. Secondly, why he began at last to speake, namely, because his elders, those grave ancient men would or could speake no more. This he layes downe in the 5th verse, When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then &c.

Verf. 4. Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken.

The Hebrew is, He expected Job in words; Job was long in words, or he spake long in many words; and all that while Elihu waited, he kept silent; but when Job had spoken out, and Elihu had stayd some time after, to see whether either himselfe or his friends would speake againe, then he began: Mr. Broughton tranflates, yet Elihu waited to speake with Job. The word notes the most patient expectation, a waiting with much long-sufferance, a waiting also in much confidence, as reserving our selves till better times, or for a more favourable dispensation. So the word is used (Dan. 12. 12.) Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred, and five and thirty dayes; that is, Blessed is he that waiteth out those dayes of the Prophecy there specified; he hath stretched out patience, that waiteth to the very last
last day, and to the last of that day. The word is used again (Habak. 2. 3.) If the vision (that is, the mercy or deliverance revealed and promised) tarry, wait for it; that is, if it tarry beyond the time supposed by man (it never tarry beyond the time appointed by God) wait patiently for it, that is, for the accomplishment of it; yea the word implyeth a waiting, as it were, with open mouth, or gaping to receive that good which is aslured by prophecy or in the promise. Such an expectation is here ascribed to Elihu, he waited for the issue of that great and long debate between Job and his three friends, or he gaped for such a solid answer as might satisfy him, and determine the Question under debate; Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken.

Hence note.
First, As it is always our duty to wait on God, so sometimes on men.

We should wait, First, to see what men will do for us; we should wait, Secondly, to hear what men have to say to us; we should wait for counsel, for comfort, for instruction, for conviction. We should wait, Thirdly, to performe duty, and to doe good to men. Thus God is pleased to wait upon (his creature) man, (Isa. 30. 18.) Therefore will I wait to be gracious; As God waiteth to bestow acts of grace on man, so man should wait to performe offices of love and respect to man, or to give him advice, help and assistance, as his case and needs require.

Secondly, Consider Elihu who had waited long as a hearer, was afterwards a great speaker.

Hence note.
They that will speak to any mans case rightly, must first hear him patiently.

They must be hearers, who would be learners; Paul sate at the feete of Gamaliel, there he waited as a learner; And if they must wait as hearers, who would be learners, how much more ought they, who would be teachers, reprovers, or reformers?

Thirdly, Elihu waited that he might speake opportunely, or in time,

Hence note.
Due times and seasons of speaking must be observed and taken.

(Ecclesiastes 3. 7.) There is a time to speak, and a time to keep silence. The providences of God point wise men to both. And usually times of silence set us for times of speaking; Every thing is beautifull in its season; words spoken in their season, are not only more effectual, but more beautifull, they are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. And therefore as the wise man gives us caution, (Eccles. 5. 2.) Not to be rash with our mouths to utter any thing before God; So we should not be rash with our mouths to utter any thing before men, but well to consider what we have to say, and waite our time to say it. The Apostle James (chap. 1. 19.) would have us swift to heare, slow to speak; and probably, the flower we are to speak, the sooner we speake; Hastly speaking hath given men more dangerous stumbles and falls, then ever hastly going did. The Prophet represents our Lord Jesus Christ thus be speaking his Father as to his preparation and furniture for the exercise of his Prophetical, yea of his whole Mediatoriall office (Isa. 50. 4.) Thou hast given me the tongue of the learned that I might know how to speake a word in season. As there is much wisdome in hitting the matter what to speake, and the manner of speaking, how to cloath and dresse the matter of our speech; so there is much wisdome in hitting the time and season when to speake. And as to time a thing well in acting, so to time it well in speaking, is the better halfe of it. Elihu waited till Job had spoken. What I have now touched, may be one reason of his waiting; But the speciall reason of it follows in the text.

Because they were elder then he; and good reason that he should waite upon his elders.

The Hebrew is, They were elder for dayes; they were not only old men for dayes, but elder for dayes then he; The word, strictly taken, imports a man more then old, even one that is worn with age. Further, it denotes a two-fold eldership; First, an eldership in time, dayes or yeares. Secondly, an eldership in wisdome, and understanding. They are our elders indeed, who are wiser then we; eldership in time deserves respect, but eldership in wisdome commands it. And as such are express by this word in the Hebrew, so both the Grecians and Romans expresse their wise men by

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a word of the same force; Senators were elders, not always in time (there was no Law much less necessity that every Senator should be an old man) but in understanding: every Senator ought to be a wise man, though not an old man. They who are to govern others wisely, had need be furnished with wisdom themselves. Gray haires alone cannot make a good Magistrate. We read the word applied both to Church-Elders called ( Isa. 37. 2. ) The Elders of the Priests, and to State-Elders, called Elders of the people ( Exod. 17. 5. ) or of the Land ( Gen. 50. 7. ) The Elders of the Land of Egypt went with them. 'Tis said ( Psal. 105. 21, 22. ) Pharaoh made Joseph Lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance, to binde his Princes at his pleasure, and teach his Senators wisdom. Young Joseph made Pharaohs wise men wiser, and gave counsel to his counsellors. Here Elihu calls Jobs friends Elders, and we may take him either speaking strictly, that they were his Elders in time, or speaking modestly, that they were his Elders in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and therefore he was not hasty to speake, but gave them their scope, waiting till Job had spoken, Because they were elder then he.

Hence note, First in General.

Young men should shew respect and waite upon their Elders.

The Apostle would not have Timothy slighted, though young, ( 1 Tim. 4. 12. ) Let no man despise thy youth; He chargeth the people not to despise Timothy because young; and he chargeth Timothy to carry it so, that none might have the shew of a cause to despise him though young; Let no man despise thy youth; let not those that seeke occasion finde it. Now, as young men, especially young Ministers should be so holy and grave in their conversation, as not to draw disrespect or contempt upon themselves, and as no man ought to despise the young mearely because they are young; so all men ought to honour old age. The old Law was expressfull for it ( Levit. 19. 32. ) Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man; and feare thy God, I am the Lord. See, how these two are joyned together, Thou shalt honour the face of the old man; and feare thy God; As if he had said, honour old men in the feare of God, or shew feare to God in the reverence and honour which thou givest to old men, who having lived a long time or many dayes in the world,
world, bear at least a shadow of the eternity of God who is the ancient of days, who lives and abides for ever. There is a two-fold stamp of God upon old men, more then upon other men. First their very age hath a stamp of God upon it, for though all ages put together, are not a moment to eternity, yet, as to our computation and reckoning, old age beares the fairest image of eternity: Secondly, old men bear a resemblance of God in their wisdom, (tis to be surprized that the oldst are wittest, as Elihu speaks v. 7.) So then old men are to be reverenced not only for their precedence in time, but for their experience, wisdom, knowledge and prudence, all which represent them more like to God then younger men.

Secondly, Look to the speciall way wherein Elihu shewed reverence to his Elders, even by his long silence; he did not rudely nor rashly breake into discourse, but waited till they had done. This modesty of Elihu is both commendable and imitable; who would say nothing as longe as Job or any of his friends had any thing to say, because they were elder then he. As the light of nature teacheth reverence to the aged in all cases, so more particularly, in this. There shines (as to this poyne an admirable comline in the disputes of the Ancients, and a most eminent example of order inviolably kept both in proposing and answering. Their rule or maxime was, Let the Seniors speake, let the Juniors hear. Let Old men teach, let young men learne. It is the more a learned Commentator upon this place from what himselfe had observed. Living (saith he) once at Paris in France, where, in a Monastery, three Indians were brought up and instructed in the Christian Religion, I could not but admire to behold how studiously, and strictly they kept to the Lawes of speaking, the younger not offering a word till the Elder had done; The practice of these Indians brought with them out of Heathenisme may reprove the imprudence of many, yea the impudence of some young men among us, who will be first in talk, when their betters and elders are in place; The Prophet threatened this as a great judgment (Isa. 3. 5.) The Child shal behave himselfe proudly against the Ancient. The child is not to be taken here strictly, but for any inferior in age, though possibly himselfe be arrived to the state of manhood. As if the Prophet had said, there shall be a general confusion among all degrees of men, without respect had to age or place.
place, every tripling will take the boldness to talk and act unseemly before his betters. Obedience and silence, bowing the body, and holding the peace, are respects which ought to be paid to our Superiors whether in time or authority.

But as young men should not be forward to speak in the presence of their elders, so they should not be afraid to speak when there is cause for it, especially when their elders forbear or refuse to speak any more. Thus Elihu who had long kept his mouth (as David in another case did Psal. 39. 1.) with a bridle, and was dumb with silence, yet at last his heart was hot within him, and while he was misting, the fire burned, and (as it followed) he spake with his tongue.

Ver. 5. When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

When Elihu saw it, that is, when he was as much assured of it (by their gesture and carriage) as if it had been visible, that those three men had no more to say, or would say no more (for the words may be referred indifferently to their will or power, when I say, he saw they had no more to say) Either, first, to convince Job of error, or secondly, to defend the truth of God, which they had undertaken (when he saw this) his wrath was kindled, at that instant time, and for that very reason, his wrath was kindled. Some conceive (as was shewed before) that this anger proceeded from the passionateness of his spirit, and so tax him with it as his fault; but I rather consent with those who say it proceeded from his zeal for God, and so it was his virtue and his praise.

I have met with these words two or three times already since I enquired upon this Chapter, and therefore I shall not stay upon them here; And as this anger of Elihu was spoken of before, so the same reason which was given before of his anger is repeated and reported here again; Then his wrath was kindled because they had no answer in their mouths, that is, because they had no more to say against Job whom they had condemned; and because they had no more to say for God whose cause in afflicting Job they had defended; I shall only add a few brief Notes upon this Verse, and so passe on.
First, some men answer till they have no more to answer.

'Tis very possible for a good and a wise man to be at the bottom of his reason, in some points, or to be brought to such a wall, that he can go no further; David faith, I have seen an end of all perfection, which as it is true of all outward commodities and conveniences, which men enjoy, so both of their corporal and intellectual abilities, or of what they can either do or say. The best of men may see the end of their best perfections in all things, but Grace, and the hope of Glory. Their stock and treasure may be quite spent, their spring exhausted, and they gone to their utmost line and length. There's no more answer in their mouth, nor work in their hand.

Secondly note;

It may put a wise man into passion to see how ill some wise men use their reason, or that they can make no further use of it.

Then was the anger of Elihu kindled when he saw, they could answer no more, or that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men.

Thirdly, As the anger of Elihu is often spoken of, so still we find some what or other is assigned as a ground of it;

Wherefore note;

We should see good reason for our anger before we are angry, whether in our own cause, or in the cause of God.

There is nothing can excuse anger but the cause of it. Reason is a good plea for passion; And he that hath a true reason for his anger, will probably manage his anger with reason, yes, and mingle it with grace; And so his proves not only a rational, but a gracious anger.

Fourthly note;

Provoked patience breaks out into greater passion.

In the former Verse, we find Job waiting, he waited long and patiently; but being disappointed of what he waited for, his wrath broke out; His anger was kindled; As when God waits long and is disappointed, his anger is increased in the manifestation of it (Rom. 2. 4, 5. ver.) Despisest thou the riches of his goodness...
neffe and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up wrath, &c. As if he had said, the more patience God spends upon thee, the more wrath is treasured up for thee, and that wrath will break out the more fiercely and violently to consume thee, the longer it hath been treasured up. Now I lay, as the wrath of God is the more declared against man, by how much his patience is the more abused; So the abused patience of man will turn to greater anger, and he groweth the more passionate by how much he hath been the more and the oftener deceived. Thus Elihu is still described acting angrily, yet in the very next verse we shall find him speaking soberly, plainly and to purpose.

Ver. 6. And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said.

When Elihu saw these three men gravel'd, and that after all the outcry they made against Job, they were forced to leave him as they found him, unconvinced of those crimes, of that hypocrisy, which they had laid to his charge, he hereupon saw himself engaged to undertake the matter and offer his opinion.

Concerning Elihu, his name, his father's name, Barachel, his tribe or stock, a Buz'ite, I have spoken at the 2d verse, and shall not add any thing of it here; only take notice, That here Elihu begins his own preface; The former part of the Chapter contained the report of the divine historian concerning Elihu; but these are the words of Elihu himself; here he begins like an Orator to gain favour with and attention of his hearers, or to prepare the minds of his hearers to receive what he had to say; And upon this subject or piece of Rhetoricke (making Prefaces) he spends the whole that remains of this Chapter. And Elihu, &c. answered and said,

I am young, and ye are very old (that is it which he said) therefore I was afraid and durst not show mine opinion.

As if he had said, I am conscious to my selfe of the weaknesse which accompanies youth; I very well know my own incompetency for such a worke; I am young.
Parvus senes- 
den dies.Heb: The Hebrew is, I am few of dayes, or, little according to dayes; if you should reckon or measure me by dayes, I am very little; And is not every man so? If you measure any man by dayes, is he not very little? Thou hast made my age a span long (said David, Pial. 39. 7.) that's quickly measured. Job speaketh thus (Chap. 14. 1.) Man that is born of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble; He faith nor, this or that man, but man, take old men, the Elders, take all men, the oldest men are but few of dayes in themselves considered, and comparatively to the age, or rather the eternity of God, their utmost age is but as a drop to the ocean. Thus all men, even ancient men are few of dayes, which is here the description of a young man, I am young (saith Elihu) or few of dayes; but compare one man with another, to some have few dayes, and others many dayes; young men have few dayes, and old men have many dayes, compared with one another.

I am young, and ye are very old.

The word notes decrepid old age, the very dregs of age, the utmost line of life; old age like a heavy burden bowes the back, and criptes the limbs of the strongest and stoutest sons of Adam. See more of this word (Chap. 15. 10.) There are severall divisions of the life of man, some cast it into foure parts, surable to the foure seasons of the yeare; some into five, alluding to the Acts of an Interlude or play; others into seven, in allusion to the Planets; now what ever division you make of the life of man, this decrepid old age is the last.

I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew mine opinion.

What effect that fence which Elihu had of his youth or fewness of dayes produced in him, is set forth in these words; I was feare, I (faith he) was afraid, &c. There is, (as to this poynt) a twofold feare: Firstly, a cowardly feare; Secondly, a modest feare; when Elihu saith, he was afraid, he doth not meane the feare of a coward; but of a modest man: it is not cowardize to be afraid of doing many things, to feare to doe those things which are unlawfull, or which are uncomely, is no part of cowardize. This latter feare surprized or rather composed Elihu; he.
he was a man bold spirited enough, but modestly made him afraid
to shew his opinion. There is a great elegancy in those words;
I durft not shew mine opinion; They imply, he hid his speech, as Ser-
pents hide themselves when men approach. (Micah 7. 17.)
Serpents which are a terror to men, and make them afraid, are
also afraid of men, their appearance causeth them to run and hide
their heads. The Rabbins take much pains in their Criticisms
about this word to expreffe a vertuous modesty. As it is a duty to
be (as Christ exhorts his Disciples to be) especially in times of
persecution (Math: 10. 10.) wise as Serpents, so it is a vertue
to be fearfull as Serpents, even to fear as much to be heard by
some men, as Serpents feare to be scene by any man. Thus Elihu
held downe his head, he was afraid and durft not shew his opinion
suddenly; nor declare his judgement in the case, for the rever-
ence he bare to those graver and elder heads.

Note hence.
First, Young men are apt to run into mistakes, their heat usually
exceeds their light.

Youth drives furiously, and commonly carrieth presumption
with it, or is it selfe hurried by presumption. Though God hath
given a young man a good understanding, quick parts, and a ready
tongue, yet he wants much, because he hath not seen much, and
so is very liable to miscarriage. He cannot look through, nor see
to the end of things; for as it is the great and sole privilege of
God to cast an eye quite through all intermediate, both actions and revolutions, and to see the end from the beginning: so it is more peculiar to those that are aged and long experienced, to see much of the end of things in their beginnings, or to see what is like to be as well as what is. 'Tis the part of a wise man
to consider what may come, and whether things tend; there is
much weakness and deficiency in young men as to this. As most
young men want fences exercised (as the Apostle speakes of all
un-improved Christians of what age soever (Heb: 5. 19.) as I
say, most young men want fences exercised) to discern what
is good or evil; so they want fences exercised to discern what
good or evil is like to be, they rarely see effects in their causes,
or events in their prognosticks. Therefore Elihu might well say,
I am young, therefore I durft not venture to shew mine opinion.

G 2

Paul
Chap. 32. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 6.

Paul giveth Timothy somewhat a strange warning (2 Tim. 2. 22.) Flee youthfull lufts. Timothy was young, but was he noted for indulgence to any youthfull lufts? what lufts doth he mean? surely not drunkenesse, nor uncleanesse, nor any loose behaviour; for though the most sober and temperate young men, have in them the seed of all these, yet Timothy at that time was a pattern, a mirrour, not only of modesty, but of holinesse; and Paul was even forced to bid him take more liberty in the use of the creature, then he used to allow himselfe; Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach sake, and for thy often infirmities. Surely Timothy was a man that fled such youthfull lufts fast and far enough when he drank nothing but water, and must be bid to drink a little wine (1 Tim. 5. 23.) What lufts then were they which Timothy was exhorted to flee? the words following (ver. 23,24,25.) seeme to cleare it; that because he was young, he should take heed of running into unnecessary Questions and disputers, which young men are apt to doe in the heat of their spirits; nor are there any lufts of the lower or sensuall appetite, to which the heart of man is more incommeterately and vainly carried out, then to those of the understanding; and therefore the Apostle counsels Timothy, to avoid unprofitable Questions, knowing that these gender strife; (Those Questions cannot promote faith in or holinesse towards God, which only stirre up and soment strife among men) and the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all, and patient. These virtues, and graces, are opposed chiefly to the youthfull lufts which Paul exhorts Timothy to take heed of; As if he had said, Be not too hot-headed and hasty (as young men are very apt to be) in pursuing of controversyes and entangling thy selfe in the thicke of Opinion's. Elihu was of an excellent temper, who, because young, was afraid and durst not shew his opinion.

Secondly, Note.

It is good to feare, and suspect our own judgements; or, to feare that we may err; they seldom doe or speak amiss which feare they may.

An over-confidence of being in the right, hath settled many in a wrong way; to be under a fence of our readinesse to fall, preserves us from falling, (Hosea 13. 1.) When Ephraim spake trem-
trembling, then, he exalted himselfe; There are several fences given of that place, but according to our translation, the meaning is carried thus; When Ephraim was in an humble frame, and jealous of himselfe, not confident, nor over-bold (as some are who presume to carry all before them) when he spake trembling, or did even tremble to speake, then he did that which tended to his own advancement and exaltation. This gracious trembling doth at once settle us the faster, and raise us the higher in the ways and things of God. It is a high point of wisdome to have low apprehensions of our selves; though that be true, You shall be esteemed of Tumieru alius others, as you esteem your selves; If a man under-value himselfe quamti tibi sius others will; yet, 'tis best erring on that hand; Let the price be much too low, rather than any thing too high, when you are occasioned to put a value upon or rate your selves.

Again, Consider what an excellent speaker Elihu was when he came to it, as will appeare hereafter, yet see how he stood trembling, he durft not speake, nor offer his opinion.

Hence note.

Usually they who have most ability to speake, are most backward to speake, or sparing of speech.

They are not easily brought to it, who have it in them; The belly of Elihu was as full with matter, as an Egge with meate or a bottle with wine; yet how slow was he in opening himselfe? They who are and have leaves are most desirous; if not ambitious, to appear most, and would make up in seeming what they are not in being. As Elihu in this verse hath shewed himselfe afraid to say any thing, so he shews us in the next, who, he hoped, would have said all, and altogether have faved him a labour.

Vers. 7. I said, dayes should speake, and multitude of yeares should teach wisdome;

Or, as the text may be rendred, let dayes speake; dayes shall not be hindered by me from speaking, let dayes speake their fill. But what meanest he, when he saith, let dayes speake? how can dayes speak; 'tis an elegancy in Rhetorick, when that which belongs to a person, is ascribed to a thing, as here speech to time, let dayes præcipiam eis speake; that is, let those who number many dayes, who have lived and
and seen many dayes, let them speake; they who have lived most dayes on earth, are yet indeed (as Bildad told Job, Chap. 8. 9.) but of yesterday, and so have lived, as it were, but a day; yet, according to common account, some men are so very old, that you may call them dayes, and to them we may well say, let Dayes speake. We read of one who was called John of Times, because he had lived (if the Records speake true) three hundred yeares and more. An old man is a man of dayes; and thus Elihu might say, let dayes, that is, old men speake.

But Children can speake, why then doth he say, dayes should speake? I answer; There is a twofold speaking; First, naturall, thus Children, as soone as they are out of their swadling-bands, learene to speake; such speaking is but a naturall act; Secondly, There is a speaking which is an artificiall or studied act; thus Orators and men of eloquence speake; such speaking Elihu intended when he sayd, dayes should speake; He looked they should speake to purpose, speake by rule, even the quintessence of reason; he presumd they would have brought forth somewhat worthy of their yeares, and that he should have received such instruction from them, as they had learned from old age it selfe; I sayd dayes should speake. Children can speake words, but old men should speake things, every word should have its weight; their tongues should drop as the honey-combe, and be a tree of life to feed and refresh many. It is most truly sayd of the word of God in Scripture, Every tittle of it hath a mountaine of sence, a mighty weight of truth in it; And surely the words of old men should be weighty and convincing; They should speake truth with such evidence both of testimony and reason as may put to silence all those who speake against or besides either truth or reason. As, day unto day (faith David, Pial. 19. 2.) uttereth speach, that is, every day speakes somewhat; so men of dayes should speake much both for instruction and conviction. I sayd dayes should speake.

Hence note.
That's not to be estemed as done at all, which is not well done, or not done to purpose.

An old man doth not speake unless he speaks wisely, edifyingly, and to the poynct. The aged speak like children, when they speake foolishly, or unfruitfully. He only is a good speaker, who speaks
speak that which may doe others good, or make them better.
We say proverbially and truly both of saying and doing, *As good
never a whit, as never the better.*

I said dayes should speak,
And multitude of yeares should teach wisdome.

Elihu reckoneth the age of aged men, by multitude of yeares; this
he doth only to highten the matter; what wisdome might he not
expect from a multitude of yeares? that is, from such as had lived
a multitude of yeares. Certainly thought Elihu, they will

Teach wisdome.

There is a twofold wisdome; First, that which is meerely ra-
tional; Secondly, that which is spiritual; or there is first, a com-
mon; secondly, an holy wisdome; *Elihu* expected wisdome of
both sorts, but chiefly of the latter, from multitude of yeares.
He expected they would teach the wisdome which the Spirit of
God had taught them; that wisdome which consists in the true
knowledge of God and of our selves, that wisdome which is from
above, that which man hath not from himselfe, nor is taught him
by dayes or yeares, by use or experience only. And it was very
probable, that they who from their youth had been instructed in
the things of God, being grown old, should also be grown fur-
ther in this wisdome, and riper in this sort of knowledge. And
therefore *Elihu* spake according to the rule of right reason, when
he judged that those three aged men had attained to a very high
degree of divine light. Such is the goodness of God to his peo-
ples, that usually they grow in grace and knowledge as they grow
in yeares; For though God is Debror to no man (but Creditor to
all men) and though old age in it selfe considered, deserves no-
thing of God, yea is not only undeserving, but (because sin mul-
tiplyes as our dayes doe) ill deserving, yet as Christ faith, *To
him that hath,* (that is, who uttereth and improveth what he hath)
more shall be given; And therefore though true wisdome be a free
gift, and is infused and wrought by the Spirit of God, yet we may
in probability, and ought according to charity, judge, that they
who have most dayes, have also most wisdome. Though wisdome
be not entayled upon old age, yet there we are most likely to
finde it. *I sayd multitude of yeares should teach wisdome.*

Hence:
Hence observe first. We may well expect they should be very wise, and knowing, who have had much means, and many opportunities of obtaining knowledge and wisdom.

And therefore we have reason to expect much wisdom from those who have had a multitude of years past over their heads; it is a common rule in Logick, when sufficient causes are put in act, the effect must needs follow; and so where probable causes are in act, probably the effect will follow. Old men having been well brought up in youth, and having had fair opportunities to attain knowledge and wisdom, are rightly presumed and judged well for'd and stocked with both. Where shall we finde wisdom, if not among the Ancients? where, if not among a multitude or throng of years and days? where else should we look for it? shall we goe and enquire among the greene heads and young beginners for it? shall we goe to novices and children for it? We may say, surely they who have been long taught, have learned much, surely they who have heard many soule-searching Sermons, and continued from day to day under the droppings of divine truths, are full of fruit and very fruitful; whether shall we goe for fruit elles, if not to these? shall we goe to these that live as upon the mountaines of Gilboa, where David prayed no raine might fall? shall we goe for Gospel-fruit to the wild naked untaught Indians and Barbarians, or to the rightly instituted and plentifully instructed Churches of Christ? may we not more then say, conclude, surely these are wise, and full of spiritual understanding? The Roman Orator Cicero took it for granted that his son Marcus was well grounded in and plentifully furnished with the principles of Philosophy, because he had been at Athens a whole yeare, and there heard Cratippus a famous Philosopher read many excellent Lectures about things natural and moral. And may we not say to many thousands of Gospel-hearers and professors, what? you that have heard such, and such able Ministers, you that have had the word so long preached, and that at London (more famous for Gospel knowledge, then Athens for Philosophy) surely you are filled with all knowledge in the mystery of Christ, and with all goodness in the practice of godliness. And doubtlesse, the Lord will argue it with those that have
had time and opportunities, as a rich price in their hand to get
wisdom, as Elihu did with his friends being aged men. Who
can imagine, but that they are full of wisdom, that they abound in
knowledge and spiritual understanding, who abounding in dayes
and yeares, have abounded also in means of knowledge.

Note Secondly.
As old men should abound in knowledge, so they should approve
themselves ready to teach the ignorant.

I said dayes should speak, and multitude of yeares should teach wis-
dom. 'Tis a duty incumbent upon them who have learned much,
to teach much. To convey wisdom and knowledge to others
is most proper to such, as well as most ornamental, and honour-
able. To be knowing our selves is a great mercy, and to helpe
others to the knowledge of what we know is a great duty;
we loose one speciall end of knowing, if we know only for our
selves. To communicate and diffuse our knowledge to others is
the noblest way of using it, and the best way of improving it, and
that in a double respect; First, it is the best way of improving it,
as to encrease; Secondly, it is the best way of improving it, as to
reward. The more we give out our knowledge, the more we
shall have of it, and the more we shall have for it both from God
and men. The Apostle faith of a Gospel Minister (1 Tim.3.2.)
He must be apt to teach, not only able, but apt, that is, ready and
willing to teach; now what the Apostle speaks there of an Elder
by office, is true of those that are elders in time, they also should
be apt to teach; not only able, but ready and willing to teach in
and according to their sphere and power. I said dayes should
speak, &c.

Thirdly, Note.
'Tis a reproach to old age, not to be knowing and wise, not to be
able and apt to teach wisdom.

That old age is venerable, not which hath white hayre, but
which whiteneth with virtuous and worthy actions; Elihu speaks
here, not only narratively but reprovingly, he reflects upon the
ancient, whose abilities come not up to or doe not equall their
yeares. The aged may well blush and be ashamed to be found
ignorant of, or unskilfull in any thing that they ought to know.

\[ \text{Senecius illa}\]
\[ \text{venerabilis est,}\]
\[ \text{non que canis}\]
\[ \text{fed meritis al-}\]
\[ \text{bosecit, Ambro:}\]
\[ \text{lib: 7. Epist. 70.}\]

H
The Apostle shames the Hebrews with this, and tells them they were dull of hearing (Heb. 5. 11, 12.) because when for the time they ought to be teachers, they had need that one should teach them again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and were become such as had need of milk and not of strong meat; As if he had said, When for the time, days, and years, which have gone over your heads, (the reproofs lyes there) you should be able to teach others, what a shame is it that you your selves should not be capable of those higher teachings, which he calls strong meat, but must be dealt with about the very principles of Religion, and be fed like Children with milke and spoones? How is it that you who should have had fenses exercised to discern both good & evil, should be so little able to distinguish them, either in their kinds or degrees. These were spiritually Children, while naturally old men; They had not learned of their teachers, when the Apostle had reason to hope they had been able to teach learners, yea were learned teachers. Some are exceeding old, & exceeding ignorant, they have multitude of days upon them, yet if asked, they are not able to hold forth the least Number of divine truths, possibly not one in a right understanding; As gray haires are a crowne of glory when found in the way of righteousness, so gray haires are crowns of glory, when found in a way of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, otherwise to be old and doth, old and foolish, how dishonorable is it! yea, they that are old and ignorant, shall at last finde their old age, a strong aggravation, as of all their sins, so especially of their ignorance.
But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Great men are not always wise, neither doe the aged understand judgement.

Elihu, as was shewed in the former words, having in vaine waited for the wildome of the Ancient, proceeds in this Context to give the reason why the Ancient are not always wise.

Ver. 8. There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.

There's the reason of it; we render the first word of this eight verse by the Adversative particle (But) there is a spirit in man; it is usually rendered by the Affirmative particle, verily, truly, or indeed. Mr Broughton faith, Certes a spirit is in sad man.

These is some difference in opinion about this spirit affirmed to be in man. Divers expound Elihu intending the Spirit of God; there is a spirit; that is, the divine Spirit, the holy Spirit of God, or God the Spirit is in man. One of the Greek translations puts it into the text; Surely the Spirit of God is in man; and the Chaldee paraphrase gives it in a like expression; Surely there is a propheticke spirit in the son of man, or, in the sons of men. Some are induced to this interpretation, because it would be (say they) but a cold argument to commend what he had to say for the rectifying Job, by telling him that man hath a reasonable soule, which is common to all men. Yet I rather conceive that in this first part of the verse, the spirit spoken of is the naturall spirit of man, which in the latter part of the verse he affirmes is instructed, by the inspiration of the Almighty, with supernaturall light for speciall services. The word is often used in Scripture to note the reasonable soule, or th'o powers of the soule which are the vell-sells of reason, or in which naturall reason hath its leafe and exercise. There is a power of reasoning in man, or a spirit which is able to discoursse of all things; there was such a naturall power
implanted in man at his Creation, and though that power be much weakened and broken by the fall, yet there are, to this day, some remaines of it in all men as borne into this world; Surely there is a spirit in man; And because the word is universtall, or extendable to all men, therefore it is more then probable the word spirit here is to be taken in the largest sense; for every man hath not the Spirit of God: yea the word here used for man, notes man of the meanest ranke or lowest forme; surely there is a spirit (in enosh Mr Broughton translates) in sad man, in sickly man, in weak man, in the sickliest weakest and lowest of men there is a soule, a spirit induced with reason; this is, as the substratum or ground of the whole businesses, Surely there is a spirit in man. And in the latter part of the verse, Elihu sheweth what that is which heighteneth raiseth and improveth this natural spirit, certainly there is a spirit in man, every man hath a reasonable soule.

And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.

The worke of God inlightening man is expressed by breathing; when Jesus Christ gave his Disciples the Spirit, he breathed upon them, (or inspired them) and said, receive ye the holy Ghost (John 20.22.) For, as in the first Creation, when God gave man a natural being, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soule (Gen. 2.7.) So in the second or new Creation God breaths a spiritual life into that life, and man becomes a quickned soule; And as his own soule is quickned by the holy Spirit of grace, so he is fitted, as an instrument in the hand of God, to quicken the soules of others with grace, or to instruct them in the ways of grace.

The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.

But hath not the reasonable soule of every man an understanding? Doubtlesse it hath. Therefore I answer; The understanding may be taken two wayes; First, for the facultie; Secondly, for the furniture and enrichings of it; now though every man hath an understanding, yet every man hath not a furnished and an enriched understanding, a beautified and an adorned understanding. The Scripture speakes of some men as if they were nothing but understanding (Prov. 1.5.) A wise man will increase know-
knowledge, and a man of understanding will attain unto all Counsel: Every man hath an understanding, but every man is not a man of understanding; every man is not a man of understanding in natural and civill things, much lesse in things divine and spiritual. As some men have to much will, or rather wilfulness, that they are nothing but will; and some have to much passion, that they are nothing but passion; others have such riches and treasures of understanding, as if they were nothing but understanding. Now, it is the speciall inspiration of the Almighty which giveth such an understanding; that is, an enlarged and an enriched understanding, We say, the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.

The Hebrew is but one word, which we may expresse as some doe, It Intellectiseth. So then, the scope and meaning of this verse is plainly this; That howsoever every man, the meanest of men, hath a reasonable soule, yet the furniture of the understanding, or man's fulness of wisdome and knowledge is by gift or inspiration of the Almighty; and therefore some read the verse thus; Surely there is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty maketh them to understand. Thus Elihu would gain credit and authority to what he had to deliver, as being by the teachings and dictates of the Spirit of God. The Seventy comply fully with this rendering; There is a spirit in men, but the inspiration of the Almighty teacheth; As if Elihu had said, Though man be endued with natural knowledge and reason, which can doe somewhat, yet until light shines from above, till the spirit of God comes in and enlargeth the natural spirit, it cannot see farre, nor doe any great matter. Or take the sense of the whole verse thus, in connection with what went before; Though old age hath odds of youth, yet one man as well as another hath a spirit of reason and judgement in him, whereby through supply of speciall inspiration from God (who can doe all things) he may be able to know that which want of yeares denieth him. From the words thus opened,

Observe, First.
Wisdome or understanding is the gift of the Spirit of God.

We have a like attention by way of question in the 38th Chapter of this book (ver. 36.) Who hath put wisdome into the in-
ward parts, or who hath given understanding to the heart? who hath? hath man put wisdom into himself? or hath he made his own heart to understand? the question denies, no, man hath not done it. Wisdom is an influence or an inspiration from the Almighty; knowledge to order common things is of the Lord (Isa. 28. 26, 29.) His God doth instruct him (the husbandman he means) to discretion (in ordering the ground) and doth teach him; how much more in spiritual things and the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. (Prov. 16. 1.) The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue (that is, the fitting of the heart for any right answer of the tongue) is from the Lord; both the general preparation of the heart for service or use, and the special preparation of it to this or that service & use is of the Lord, & so is the answer of the tongue for the discharge of it. (Eccles. 2. 26.) God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom and knowledge and joy; as God giveth man the knowledge of things, so wisdom to know how to order and manage the things that he knoweth; some have more knowledge then they know how to manage, their knowledge masters them, they are not masters of their knowledge; they have more knowledge then wisdom. Now God gives to him that is good in his sight (that is, to the man whom he chooseth and is pleased with) knowledge and wisdom; and then he gives him joy, that is, comfort in the exercise of that knowledge wherewith he is endued; this is a notable and a noble gift of God. We read (Isa. 11. 2.) The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding; it is a prophesie of Christ, who being made in all things like to man, had a natural spirit, or a reasonable faculty, and he had that furnished by the spirit without measure; the spirit of the Lord rested upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of Counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; even Christ as man received an union or inspiration from the Almighty for the fulfilling of his Mediatorial office; much more doe meete men for the fulfilling of any office they are called unto. (2 Cor. 3. 5.) We are not sufficient of our selves so much as to thinke a good thought; our sufficiency is by the inspiration of the Almighty. (James 1. 17.) Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above; it is not a vapour that riseth out of the earth, but an influence which fills
Chap. 32. _An Exposition upon the Book of Job._ Ver. 7.

Hills and drops downe from heaven, it is from above; that is, from God, who though he be every where filling both heaven and earth with his essential presence, yet (according to Scripture language) his most glorious and manifestative presence is above; and therefore to say, every good gift is from above, is all one as to say, it is from God. _Daniel_ and those other three Noble youths of the Jewish race exceeded all the wise men of Chaldea in rare abilities, and the Scripture tells us, whence it was, that they did so. (Dan. 1. 17.) As for these foure Children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and the assertion is layd downe in General (Dan. 2. 21.) He (that is, God) changeth times and seasons, he removeth kings and setteth up kings, he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding; All these Scriptures speak with one Consent the language of this Text, _It is the Inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding._ And if we compare 1 Sam. 10. 1. with the 6th 9th 11th and 12th verses of the same Chapter, we have a most remarkable passage to this purpose. Where Saul having received theunction from Samuel, both as an assurance of and a preparation for the exercise of his kingly office over Israel; Samuel tells him (ver. 6.) _The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophecy with them_ (that is, with the company of Prophers spoken of in the former verse) _and shalt be turned into another man._ And the holy text adds (ver. 9.) _God gave_ (or as we put in the margin _turned_) _him another heart._ There is a twofold turning or changing of the heart, or of a man into another man. First, by gifts of Illumination; Secondly, by the grace of _Sanctification._ The great change of the heart is that change, of Conversion, by the grace of _Sanctification._ Saul was not turned into another man, nor had he another heart, as changed by Grace (for he shewed still his old heart in his new kingly state) but he had another heart, or he was another man as changed by gifts; the spirit of the Almighty gave him understanding for the Government which he was called to; for whereas before he had only a private spirit, taken up about carrel and the affairs of husbandry, then God gave him a spirit of prudence and valour, a spirit of wisdom and magnanimity, a Noble and an Heroicall Spirit, befitting the Gov: nour of so great and populous a kingdome, both in peace and warre. Every Calling is a mystery, much more.
more the Calling of Kings and Suprême Magistrates. It was said to Imperial Rome; *Doe thou remember to Rule Nations and Kingdoms, let these be thy arts;* This Art the Spirit of the Lord gave Saul, even knowledge and skill to rule and govern; yet he had a gift of Illumination, not only for government; but for prophesie, he was found amongst the Prophers; and when (v. 11th) they asked (wondering) *Is Saul also amongst the Prophers?* As if they had said, How strange and unheard of a thing is this, that Saul should be furnished with the gift of prophecy, and joyne himselfe with the Prophers? They who before were acquainted with his person and manner of education, were even amazed at the sight; And while they were surprized with this amazement, one of the same place (as it seemes wiser then the rest) *Answered and said, but who is their father?* (ver. 12.) That's the speciall word, for which I allledge this text. What? Saul among the Prophers! is it not strange that he should be Inspired! *Then one Answered and said, who is their father?* As if he had said, Doe not any longer stand wondering at this thing, but consider who is the father of Saul as a Propher, as also the father of all these Prophers. Saul was the son of Kish as to naturall descent, but he had another father as he was a Propher, and so all these Prophers, had (besides their Fathers as men) one and the same father as Prophers. Therefore wonder not that ye heare Saul prophecying, for all these whom ye heare and fee prophecying, have not these gifts by birth from men, nor by industry from themselves, but from God who is a free agent, and inspireth whom he pleaseth. The same God who, by inspiration, hath freely bestowed those gifts upon the other Prophers, hath also inspired Saul with a gift of prophecy. The Spirit of God is his father (in that capacity) as well as the father of these other Prophers. And hence that Scripture runs in the plurall number, *who is their father?* Unless God give power from above, the understanding is darke, the memory unfaithfull, the tongue stammering; It is light from on high that teacheth the skill of prophecy. Solomon had the greatest measure of understanding of any meere man since the fall of man, and of him it is said, (1 Kings 4. 29.) God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largenesse of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. Solomon's heart had been as narrow as another mans, if the Inspiration of the Almighty had not widened
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widened it. When Moses was so sinfully modest, as to excuse his Embassie to Pharoah, supposing himselfe not fitted for such an undertaking (Exod. 4. 10, 11.) O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. God pretendeth put the question to him, **Who hath made man's mouth?** &c. As it he had said, Cannot he give words into thy mouth, who gave thee a mouth? cannot he act thy organs of speech who made them? Now therefore goe and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. The Inspiration of the Almighty shall give thee understanding. Heathen Poets have boastted of their raptures and inspirations. The people of God have a promise of the Spirit to lead them into all truth, and to help them in maintaining those truths.

From this general, that the furniture of the understanding is the gift of God, or by Inspiration of the Almighty, take these hints by way of Corollarie.

First, If a right understanding flow from the inspiration of the Almighty, then pray for an understanding, pray for the Spirit; **Ye have not because ye ask not,** saith the Apostle (James 4. 2.) God gives wisdom, but he gives it to them that ask it. (James 1. 5.) If any man want wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, God; upbraideth us not, either with our want of wisdom, or with the abundance of wisdom that he is pleased to supply us with, and give out to us. When Solomon was put to his choice what to ask, he said, **Give thy servant an understanding heart.** God gave Solomon wisdom, but Solomon asked it first. All good things are shut up in promises, and the promises are opened to give out their good things, when we pray. (Prov. 23. 5.) When thou Cryest after knowledge, and livest up thy voice for understanding, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. To pray well is to find well, because by prayer light comes in from on high to make studies successful, and the worke to prosper in our hand. As the Almighty breatheth downe on us, so we must breath up to the Almighty. To expect and not to pray, is to tempt God, not to trust him.

Secondly, Doe not onely pray for wisdom, but use meanes, and be industrious for the obtaining of it; **The gift of God doth not**
not take off the diligence of man, God doth not worke in us that we should sit still. (Prov. 2.4.) Then shalt thou know wisdom when thou seest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure. And where is this treasure to be had? Surely in the mines of Scripture, and in all those Appointments wherein God hath promised to meeke his people, to shine upon them and give them the knowledge of his ways in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Be thankful for any gift of knowledge; for every beam and ray of light be thankful. It is God who commands light to shine out of darkness; and that God who at first commanded light to shine out of darkness, daily shineth into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, (2 Cor. 4.6.)

Fourthly, If understanding be from Inspiration, then they who have received much understanding, must be caution'd against two evills; First, not to be proud, nor high minded; that our gifts come from on high, should make us very low in our own eyes. What hast thou that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? These are the Apostles sole-humbling and pride-mortifying questions or expostulations rather (1 Cor. 4.7.) You that have received the greatest gifts, whom the Inspiration of the Almighty hath made most wise and understanding, be ye most humble in your selves. Secondly, let me adde (which is another dangerous rock upon which great gifts are apt to dash and split you) take heed of despising those who have received lesse; our portions are divided and allotted to us by the hand of God. Divine wisdome gives us our portion of wisdome; He that hath most, hath no more then God hath given; and he that hath least, hath as much as God is pleased to give. They despite the wisdome and question the understanding of God in giving wisdome, who despise those to whom he gives lesse wisdome and understanding then he hath given to themselves.

Fifthly, To those who have received but little, I say also two things, by way of caution; First, doe not envie those who have received much; It is of God that they have more then you, is your eye evil because the eye of God is good? Secondly, be not discontented with your own lesser portion; doe not sit downe sullen; say not, we will doe nothing with what we have received, because
we have not as much as others: we know the doome passed on him who having but one talent hid it in a napkin. If we are discontent with a little portion, or with one talent, that little is too much, and that one too many for us; nothing doth more dim the glory of God, nor more destroy and eate out our own comforts, then discontent; the Devil, since his fall, is the most discontented spirit in the world; and he was not contented while he flourished; he thought he was not high enough, & that was his undoing. They who are discontent with the gift of God, looke what is given, and so fall into deeper discontent; yea, as the Apostle speaks in another case (1 Tim. 3. 6) into the condemnation of the devil.

Sixthly, Then, let us not be lifted up in our owne natural Wiseome and reason, he that would be wise, must become a fool. (1 Cor. 3. 18) until we see our owne wisdom folly, we cannot attain the wisdom of God, or Godly wisdom.

Seventhly, This shews us the reason of the various kinds, and several measures of gifts among the sons of men. Men differ not more in the measures and degrees of their outward estates, worldly riches, titles and honours, then they doe in the measures and degrees of their inward abilities, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding: men differ not more in the feature and figure of their faces, then in the furniture of their minds. One hath five talents, another two, a third but one. And as the various degrees of the same gift, so diversities of gifts are from the sovereign pleasure of God. The Apostle is large and very distinct in this matter (1 Cor. 12. 4, 8, 9, 11) There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another prophecy, to another discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, &c. But all these worketh that one and the selfe-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. It is only the will of the Spirit, the will of God which makes this division and diversification of gifts among men. And as the Apostle sheweth here the rise or spring of all to be from God, so he had shewed that the reason and intendment of all this is the benefit of men (v. 7) The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall. Whatever your gift is God hath given it for profit and use.

One hath skill in sciences, another in languages, one is more acute,
acute, another more solid, one hath a stronger judgment, another a quicker phantast and a more searching invention, One is best at an argument to convince the understanding, another at a motive to quicken the affections; one can confute an error and state a Controversie well, and another can best discover sin, and convince the Conscience; one hath weight of matter, but is slow of speech, another hath a fluent tongue, but is lesse materiall; a third is both; but all to profit voidall. Such a Character was given of those three Eminent men in the beginning of the reformation, Luther, Erasmus, and Melachthon: Luther had matter and not words, he did not affect any exactnesse of title or speech; Erasmus had words at will, but lesse weight of matter; Melachthon was full in both, there was a concurrence or complication of many eminent gifts in him. The same Erasmus, mentioned last but one, hath a like passage in his Preface to the works of the Ancients (which he with wonderfull skill and industry redeemed from many mistakes, and set forth more delectable and pure to the view and use of the world) where observing the different veins of divers Authors in their writings, he concludes thus; several men have their several gifts, as it pleaseth the gift giving Spirit to give to them. In Athanasius we admire a serious perspicuitie of speaking, and in Chrysostome a flowing Eloquence; in Basil, besides his sublimity, a pleasant language; in Hilary we see a lofty title, well matcht with the loftiness of his matter; in Cyprian we reverence a spirit worthy the crowne of Martyrdom; and we are in love with the sweet incentives and modesty of St. Ambrose; In Jerome we commend his rich treasures of Scripture-knowledge, and must acknowledge in Gregory a pure and unpolished sanctity. He shews up thus; Least I should be tedious; others have, from the bounty of the same Spirit, their distinct abilities, by which they are commended to the conciencies of the Godly. The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding. And as this is true with respect to the gifts of Illumination, which Elfin pitcheth here upon; so 'tis much more true in reference to the gifts of sanctification; The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth a spiritual understanding to know sin, and hate it, to know Christ and love him; so to know as to be conformed unto, yea transformed into that which we know. The Inspiration of the Almighty gives this understanding, this heart-changing and life-renewing understanding.
Again, There is a spirit [in man] and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding; The word is Enos, weake man.

Hence Note.

God can make the weakest and the unlikelieft of men wise and full of understanding.

It is no matter what the man is, if God will use him; he can make Enos to be Jefh, the weake man strong, the ignorant a learned a knowing man; Amos was a husbandman, and God gave him an excellent understanding; the Apostles were Pifhermen, and yet the Inspiration of the Almighty made them wise above many; God can make the wise foolifh, and fooles wife. The power of God triumphs over all humane power, and in all humane infirmity. So much the Apostle teacheth (1 Cor. i. 27.) God hath chosen the foolifh things of the world to confound the wise, and the weake things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despifed hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are, that no fiekh should glory in his presence. God chuseth those things which have the greatest improbility for his worke, that the power and successe of the worke may be acribed to him alone. When we chuse, we should chuse those that are fit for the worke, to which they are chosen; we should not chuse a foole to governe, nor one that is of low parts himfelfe to teach others; we should pitch upon the wisest and ablefle we can get. Joseph said well to Pharaoh (Gen. 41. 33.) Lookes out a man discreet and wife, and set him over the Land of Egypt. We cannot make men wiler then they are, and therefore we must chuse and take those that are wise to doe our worke. But when God comes to doe his worke, he often takes the foolifh and the weake, because as he calleth them to, so he can fit them for his worke. As the strongeft opposition of nature against grace cannot hinder the worke of the Spirit; when the Spirit comes, he will make a proud man humble; a covetous man liberall, an unclean person modest and temperate; so the weakefle of nature cannot hinder his worke. If a man be low in parts, God can raise him; Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hath thou ordained strength (Pfal. 8. 2.) or (as Christ alledged he that text, Math:
Math. 21. 16. ) Thou hast perfected praise; one might thinke, Surely God will take the aged, the learned and great for his praise: no, he ordaines praise to himselfe out of the mouths of babes and tucklings, that is, out of their mouths who in all naturall considerations, are no way formed up nor fitted to shew forth his praise. ( Isa. 32. 4. ) The heart of the rash ( or hasty ) shall understand knowledge. Heady and inconsiderate persons, whose tongues ( as we say ) run before their wits, shall then be grave, advised, and serious, both in what they doe, and ( as it followeth ) in what they say; The tongue of the stammerers shall speake plainly; that is, cleare words with cleare reason; or they shall speake well both in matter and forme, right things rightly. All this the Lord doth that he may honour himselfe, and lift up his owne name only, which alone is to be lifted up. Never feare to put an empty vessell to a full fountaine; no matter how empty the vessell be, if the fountaine be full: God delights in broken weake and empty creatures, that he may mend, strengthen, and fill them. There is a spirit in man [ in weake man ] and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Elihu having shewed the original of mans wisdom to be from God in this 8th verse, makes an inference from it in the 9th; The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding; And what then? surely even then it cometh to passe, that,

Ver. 9. Great men are not always wise, neither doe the aged understand Judgement.

It is well conceived by some Interpreters, that the Apostle doth more then allude to, even cite this text ( 1 Cor. 1. 26. ) You see your calling Brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many Noble are called. If God should chuse only or mostlie wise men, they would be ready to say, we are chosen for our wiseome; If he should chuse and call only or mostlie rich men, they would be ready to thinke, we are chosen for our riches; If he should call only or mostlie Kings and Princes, they would conclude, we are called for our Greatamese; Therefore the Lord passeth by most of these, and calleth the Fisherman, calleth the poore man, the ignorant man, and faith, You that have nothing, you that ( in the esteeme of the world )
world) are nothing; do you follow me, who have all things, and can supply you with all. Thus here saith Elihu, Great men are not always wise; Why not? the reason is because God doth not always bestow wisdom upon them; It is the Inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding; Greatness doth it not; Not many wise men after the flesh, not many Great or Noble are Called. Elihu and the Apostle Paul speake the same thing almost in the same words. This is also a profe of the divine Authority of this booke, as well as that (1 Cor. 1. 19.) taken out of the speech of Eliphaz in the 5th Chapter at the 13th verse; He taketh the wise in their owne craftinesse, &c.

Great men are not always wise.

The word always is not at all in the Original text, and therefore put in a different Character; Great men are not wise; but 'tis well supplyed by that word always; For the meaning of Elihu is not that great men are never wise, but not always wise.

Great men, the Rabbies, the honourable men of the world, men in Authority and great place are intended by this word. The Officers which King Ahaseurus set over his feast, are called Rabbies (Est. 1. 8.) so that we may expound it here in the largest sense, as including all sorts and degrees of Great ones.

Great men are not always wise.

That is, wisdom neither floweth from, nor is it always associated with Greatness. As some are little yet great, little in the world, yet great in true wisdom; so others are Great, yet little, they are little in wisdom, or have little true wisdom, though they are great in the world, or have great worldly wisdom.

Hence note,

It is not greatness of birth, of place, or power, that can make any man wise, nor doth it at all assure us, that a man is wise, because we see him exalted to and settled in a place of power and greatness.

The Prophet (Jer. 5:4, 5;) finding some very incorrigible and hardened in sinfull courses, concluded them meane persons, and in the lowest forme of the people. Therefore I said, Surely these are poor, they are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord,
Lord, nor the Judgment of their God. To be poore and foolish is very common; these are poore and foolish (saith the Prophet) but surely I shall finde the Great ones better accommodated with wifdome; and thereupon he resolved, I will get me to the great men, and will speak unto them, for they have knowne the way of the Lord, and the Judgment of their God; That is, these great men have had great meanes of knowledge, and we have reason to suppose them as great in knowledge, as they are in place or power. But did the great men answer his expectation? did he find that in them, which he sought and looked for? nothing lefse: The great men proved more foolish, or lefse in true knowledge then the poore, as it followeth, But these have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds; As if he had said, I thought these great men had been wise, but I see they are very fools. What can be a greater argument of folly, then to brake those yokes and bonds, which the wifdome of God hath put upon us? 'Tis both our wifdome and our freedome to be bound by the most wise and holy will of God; and hence the Prophet accounts this one as strong as a thousand arguments, to prove that the Great men among the Jews were not wise, because they were not only unwilling to be bound to the obedience of the will of God, but wilfully burst those bonds. When Jesus Christ came into the world, the great ones, the Rabbies had the least true wifdome; they would not believe on him, nor receive him; yea some boasted of this their unbelief, as an argument of their wifdome (John 7. 48, 49.) Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharifees believed on him? No; they were too wise to believe; Faith in Christ was left to the fools, and counted folly by those wise men; But this people (say they, meaning the common sort or ignorant vulgar) who knoweth not the Law are cursed. And they thought them accursed because they believed in and received Jesus Christ, the chiefest blessing. Great men are not alwaies wise in civill things; very rarely in spiritual things; They have not alwaies the wifdome of a man, they seldom have the wifdom of a real Christiain. They are not alwaies worldly wise, or wise for this present world; much lefse are they alwaies wise for the world which is to come. Great in title, and wise in truth, are a sweete couple, but seldom seen. If so.

Then there is no taking of things upon trust from the greatest in
the world. As it is dangerous to follow the multitude (Exod. 23. 2.) the most are usually the worst, and they who are evil, will leade to evil; so there is no following great ones blindfold, for even they are often blind, or (which is worse) will not see; And they who either do not or will not see their own way, may soone leade others out of the way, and turne them aside to that which is not good.

Againe, This first part of the verse (Great men are not al-
ways wise) is rendred by the Septuagint, men of many yeares,
or great in yeares, are not always wise. The Original word may refer to greatnesse of age, which consists in having lived many yeares, as well as to greatnesse of honour, which consists in the enjoying of high places and dignities. But I rather adhere to our translation, that the great men here intended are the Great in power and place, not in yeares and dayes, though it be a truth, that such are not always wise; and if we take in that fence also, it is a further confirmation of the general truth in hand, That wisdome is the gift of God, and therefore those men are not always wise, whom we might most probably looke upon as such. For as we see Great men, who have the advantage of means for education in learning, are not always the wilest; so the aged, who have that great advantage of time and experience to gath-
er w'ise for do not; Both often come short in abilities of under-standing and prudence, the former of their inferiors, the latter of their Juniors. This is express in the latter part of the verse, and therefore needs not be inferred from this first part of it, by way of interpretation; Great men are not always wise, then follows this disjunctive proposition;

Neither doe the aged understand Judgement; or, that which is right.

The word Mishpat is taken two wwayes in Scripture; first, for the rule of Righteousnesse; Samuel told the people, the judg-
ment or manner of the Kingdome, (1 Sam: 10. 25.) that is, how the kingdome should be ordered and governed, according to judgement and rules of righteousness. Secondly, Such an actual Administration as is according to that rule of righteousness, is in Scripture called judgement. The aged doe not always understand judgement in either notion; they doe not always
understand the rule, nor doe they always act according to the rule which they understand; they who say in one, much more in both these, doe not understand judgement. Sometimes the aged are at a hole and know not what to doe, and oftentimes they are so entangled with their lusts, that they will not doe what they know. Yet here remember, these words are not to be taken as an absolute negation of wisdom to the ancient, much lesse as a reproach upon them: For usually the aged are most understanding in judgement, and we may more probably and doe more frequently finde Judgement with them, then among those that are young. And therefore when Eliphaz saith, neither doe the aged understand Judgement; his meaning is only this, old age doth not give wisdom, nor is it the old man's privilege only, to understand judgement.

Hence note.

As honour or greatness of estate, so age or greatness of years, doth not confer wisdom upon any man.

Time doth neither stop nor convey knowledge and understanding; old men have not their knowledge by their Antiquity, and therefore, as no man is wise at all times, so no man is made wise by time. In strict sense, wisdom is not the daughter of time, but the gift of the Eternal. It is not time but divine favour which makes wise. They are some made wise and learned, whom God will teach. The teachings of God make young men like the ancients in wisdom, and without his teaching, the aged are like children in folly. God sometimes denieth wisdom to the Ancient, and sometimes he takes wisdom from them. And God sufferers old men to act like children, to goe out of the way, to doe foolishly, that he may stain the glory of all flesh, and that all might both know and have their dependance on him alone. Hence take two or three deductions.

First, From the Connection of these two verses, we learn that, The Spirit of God is not tied to any age or degree of men; The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding; Great men are not always wise, &c. The Spirit of God is a free Spirit; and as the Spirit is free because he moves without any defect in the object; as also because he gives liberally, plentifully, and abundantly; so the Spirit of God is free as to the choice of objects, he
he gives here and not there, he paffeth by this man, and takes hold of that, he sometimes paffeth by the rich, and takes the poore, (Eccl. 9. 15.) The poore wise man faved the Citie; sometimes he paffeth by the old, and takes the young; and he doth all this, that we might atribute all to himselfe, not to the age of man, not to any thing in man. God hath promised to be with his Church, and with his Ministers by his Spirit to the end of the world; but the Spirit hath his choice as to particular men, and none have been more deceived then they that thought the Spirit in bonds or tyed to them; Come (say they, Jer. 18. 18.) let us devise devices against Jeremiah; For the Law shall not perish from the Priest, nor Counsell from the wise, nor the word from the Prophet; The Priests are of this opinion, and Jeremiah is out of the way, he is a false Prophet, and therefore certainly we may proceed in our devices against him, for we have the opinion of the Priests and Prophets with us; Thus they spake, as if the Spirit of God had been bound up to that order. We ought to seeke wifdome at the Priests mouth; yet they who reft upon their wifdome may soon be deceived; knowledge may perish from the Priests mouth, and counsel from the ancient. The great Cheate which the Pope hath put upon the world is, That the Spirit of God is tied to the pomells of his Chaire, or that there he cannot erre. But as particular men, so whole Counsells of learned and aged men have erred; True wifdome is not the birth of time, nor the peculiar of a party, but the free gift of the Spirit of God, who is most free, both in what he giveth, and to whom he giveth. Therefore

Secondly, Let us not pin our faith or our Consciences upon men, how great, or how Ancient forever they are; Let us give respect to the Ancient, and the honourable, (not to doe it is not only uncivill but sinfull) yet let us not give up our Consciences to them; For great men are not always wise, neither doe the aged understand judgement; We must not reverence any mans person to the prejudice of the truth. The opinions of great or ancient men are not to be received, as Oracles, without debate; we have liberty to consider of them, and to compare them with the rule: We must prove all things, and hold fast that only which is good. A heathen gave that direction to those who heare philo-

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Chap. 32. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 9:

Qui dicit derana... Etenim cantes dicentur, gestus supercilii, &c. factum ad percellendum imperium Audite. Plutarch de Auditione.

Tiquity, that he is an old man, and his authority, that he is a great man, must not sway you; His outward gesture, tone and gravity, his severe or demure lookes, which much affect, almost astonish unlearned auditors, and make them ready to swallow any thing that is uttered, must all be layd aside when the matter delievered and assierted, comes to be examin'd and layd in the ballance. Believe what is said because you judge it true, doe not believe it true because such or such a man hath said it; because an old man, or a great man, or a good man hath said it. How strictly then, and religiously is this to be observed in hearing the word of God, and the doctrines of faith; in that case be sure to lay aside all that concerns the Speaker, and weigh what he speaks alone, and single in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

Thirdly, Then, we ought not to despise what young men say, because of their youth. If old men be not always wise, then wildome may be with the young; sometimes an opinion is undervalued, because it is the opinion of a young man; and truths are not received, because he that delivers them hath not seene many dayes. As it is a sin to adore old age, or to give up our faith and Conscience to it; so it is a sin to flight youth, in doing so we may slie the truth. Paul faith to Timothy, Let no man despise thy youth; Which as it is a Caution to Timothy (as hath been shewed) to carry himself wisely and warily, let he should occasion others to slie or despise him; to it is a Caution to the people, that they should not despise him because of his youth. That which is the true glory of gray haying, doth sometimes Crowne the youthfull head, woldome (I mean) and ripeness of understanding. It was said of a godly woman, She had a youthfull boody, but an aged mind. Samuel was young in yeares, but in grace elder then old Ely; Ieremiah was young, but how wise did the Inspiration of God make him? Daniel was young, yet wiser then all the Magicians and Astrologers; Timothy and Titus were young, yet honourable for prudence and piety; and therefore, seeing great men are not always wise, neither doe the aged understand Judgement, as we should not accept what old men say because of their age; so let us not slie what young men say because of their youth.

When God furniseth young men with abilities, and calleth them to his worke, even old men must be willing, at least not die.
An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 9.

Chap. 32. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 9.

1. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 9.

**dii]aine, to hear them. Christ must be heard in or by whom soe-ever he will speake. God indeed doth usually serve himselfe by the aged, yet he hath abundantly testified that truth is not bound up to old age. Modesty should bridle young men from being over-forward to shew themselves, but it must not shut or seal up their lips. Old men must have the preheminence; Eliph shows us that order (v. 7.) I (faith he) said days shall speake, and multitude of yeares shall teach wisdom: We must first attend and give ease to our elders. And when we are to chuse Officers or Governours, to chuse ignorant Greene-heads before knowing Gray hayres, were a perverting of all order. Therefore men of yeares having grace and wisdome proportionable, are to be preferred before the younger. In that case it were a shame to advance young men, with a neglect of the aged. But when God gives more grace and understanding to young men then to ancients, our approbation should follow his preparation, and whom he qualifies best, we should soonest chuse. The order of Nature is good, yet not always fittest to be observed. Right reason and the rule of the word of God must swaie and cast our vote, not the age and yeares of men. When Samuel was sent to anoint a King, in the place of Saul among the sons of Jesse, he looking on Eliab said, Surely the Lords anointed is before him (1 Sam. 16. 5.) but the Lord said unto him (v. 6.) Looke not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Now, as we are not to be taken with the beauty and stature of men, so not with their gray haires and outward gravity. Old men are not always wise; wisdome and a heart for God, a good heart, or a heart to doe good, may dwell with a greene Head, even with a greener then seven, the eighth or greenest of all (so was David's) that come or stand in a day, of Election before us.
Therefore I said, Hearken to me: I also will shew mine opinion.
Behold, I waited for your words: I gave eare to your reasons, whilst you searched out what to say.
Yea, I attended unto you: and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words:
Left ye should say; We have found out wisdom:
God thrusteth him downe and not man.
Now he hath not directed his words against me:
neither will I answer him with your speeches.

Eliphaz having asserted this negative proposition in the former verse, Great men are not always wise, neither doe the aged understand Judgement, makes his inference from it in these words.

Ver. 10. Therefore I sayd hearken to me.

As if he had said; Though I am none of the great men of the world, though I am none of the aged among the sons of men, yet hearken unto me; for seeing great and aged men are not always wise, nor have ingrossed all wisdom and understanding to themselves, it is possible that some beames of wisdom may shine forth even from some a junior, even from such a puny as (I must confess) I am.

We may also make the inference from the 8th verse; There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding. Therefore I sayd hearken to me; As if he had said, Though I am, a young man, and have not had either those natural or accidentall advantages of the ancient for the gathering of any great stocke or treasurs of wisdom, yet there is an inspiration of the Almighty which giveth understanding. If the Lord will make use of me, and inspire me, if he please to breath his truths into me, and irradiate my soule with divine light, I may be able to doe and say something in this matter. The inference, you see, followes well and without straine from either of those premisies.
Therefore I said, hearken to me.

It may be queried, to whom did Elihu say this? We translate the words indefinitely, not determining them to this or that person; But the Original seemes to speake personally; Therefore I said, heare thou me. Which may be understood two ways; First, that Elihu directed his speech principally to Job, Hearst thou what I shall say. Secondly, that Elihu spake to the whole company there present, as if they had been but one man; we may speake in a congregation of hundreds and thousands, we may speake to many, as if there were but one to heare; as what is spoken to a few, may be intended to all. (Mark 13. 37.) What I say unto you, ( my Disciples ) I say unto all, watch. So that which is said to all, is surely said to every one in the assembly where ’tis said. Though we take Elihu here, as speaking directly but to one person, yet we must take him as desiring that every person present should take it as spoken to himselfe; Hearken to me.

Hence note first,

When any speake reason, and hold out truth, they are to be heard.

No man should stop his ear with a prejudice to the person. He that speaks truth, deserves to be heard: though (as Elihu) he be a young man, or inferior to many in age, yet he is to be heard, though inferior to many in power and experience, yet he is to be heard; (Eccle. 4. 13.) Better is a poore and wise child, then an old and foolish King that will not be admonished. And better is a poore and wise child, then an old man that can give no admonition. As that man is in a sad condition, whether king or subject, that will not be admonished, so that man, be he never so ancient, is not much to be regarded, that is not able to give admonition. But though both discreet young men, and discreet poore men are to be heard when they speak truth and reason, yet that of Solomon ( Eccle. 9. 16.) is too often verified; The poore mans wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. Most concludes, if a man be poore, his counsell is too roo, and if he be young, how can he be a counsellor? yet, heare me ( faith Elihu ).
'I also will shew mine opinion, or my knowledge.

I will shew what my understanding is, or what light God hath given me in this case. The words are plain.

Note from them.

What truth or truths we have received and know, we should communicate and make known.

'Tis a duty to shew our opinion when we have a call and an occasion to shew it, as Eliphaz here had. Some have knowledge, who will not shew it; They (which Christ forbids, Matt: 5.15.) put their candle under a bulbell. God hath lighted a candle, and set it up in some men's spirits, yet they either quite conceal or much obscure it. God hath given them a talent of knowledge, and they like the unprofitable servant, wrap it up in a Napkin. They will not shew their opinion. Not to shew what we have, when called to it, is a denial that we have it. As good not have a candle, or a talent, as let our candle be hid, or hide our talent. The very heathen condemned this, while they sayd, Covered virtue, is buried virtue. Yea while a man covers his virtues, parts, and abilities, he buryeth himself alive, or is dead while he lives. As, the Scripture saith, they have only a name to be alive, but are dead, who make a shew of more then they have (Rev: 3.2.) so they have a name to be dead, or may be numbered among the dead, who will not shew what indeed they have.

There are two things which hinder men from shewing their opinion; First, idleness, they are loath to take the paines to shew it. Secondly, shamefastnesse; There is a commendable modesty, 'tis not good to be over-forward in shewing our opinion; But that modesty is sinfull, which quite hinders us from shewing our opinion. They who keepe in their knowledge and opinion either through idleness, or shamefastnesse, doe almost as ill as they who shew their opinion, and declare their knowledge through pride and and high-mindedness, or meereely to shew themselves, to shew their wit, and to make a noyse of their parts and learning. 'Tis sinfull selfe-pleasing either to know only that we may know, or to publish what we know only to be knowne. With some 'tis nothing that they have knowledge, unless others know
know that they have it. An affection to appear knowing, is as bad as to be ignorant. I will shew mine opinion (said Elihu). But why would he shew it? We have reason to judge, it was from the honesty of his heart, not from the height of his Spirit. And when ever we shew our opinion, we ought to shew it out of an honest heart, and for honest ends, such as these.

First, To instruct those who are ignorant.
Secondly, To reduce those who are out of the way.
Thirdly, To feed hungry souls with wholesome doctrine. (Prov. 10, 21.) The lips of the righteous feed many.
Fourthly, To strengthen the weak.
Fifthly, To confirm the doubtful.
Sixthly, To comfort the sorrowful.
Seventhly, To encourage the fearful.
Eightly, To quicken the slothful in the ways and works of God.

Lastly, And above all, That God may be glorified by the use of the talent that he hath given. (1 Pet. 4, 10.) As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God. Stewards must not set up their own, but their Masters interest. We should minister by every gift as Stewards of the manifold grace of God.

I will shew mine opinion (faith Elihu.)

But what hast? Elihu it seemeth foresaw some ready to object; Why do you a young man take upon you to speake in a cause, wherein so many of your Elders and Betters have not prevailed? why are you so busie? 'Tis much boldness for you, or such as to declare your opinion in this controversy, wherein such wise, learned, & godly men have, without success, engaged already. To this objection, Elihu makes a preventing answer, rendring this account of his undertaking; As if he had said, I have attentive-ly observed all the passages and traverses of this dispute, I have heard all that Job's friends have offered, whether for vindication of the justice and righteousness of God in laying that great affliction upon him, or for the conviction of Job, to make him see his sin, and sit down humbled. I have heard all this (faith Elihu) and upon the whole matter I find, Job is yet unanswer'd, or that there is need of a further answer to stop his mouth, to silence his complaints, and

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Ver. 11. Behold, I waited for your words, I gave care to your reasons, whilest you searched out what to say.

Ver. 12. Yeal attended unto you; and behold, there is none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.

You have the general sense of the text, I shall yet proceed to a more particular explication of it.

Behold, I waited for your words.

The word which we translate to wait, imports three things in Scripture; First, an act of hope, or to be carried towards any thing desirable, with a wonderfull desire to enjoy it; Hope causeth the soul to breath after fruition. Secondly, the word implyeth that grief or trouble which poifeseth the mind upon a long stay or detention of that good which we desire and hope to attain. Thirdly, it notes, the foules patient waiting (though grieved and burdened with present delays) for future enjoyment. In all or any of these senses, Elisha might say, Behold, I waited for your words, I earnestly desired to heare you speake to satisfaction, and I am grieved that you did not; and I would, if need were, patiently waite still, did I not perceive you had done, and quitted your hands of this worke.

Behold, I waited for your words.

Mr. Broughton renders, Behold, I waited through your speecch, or, into your words. I stood still, but I have not been asleep, I have long expected, you would say what is right, and I have seriously considered what you sayd, I waited for your words.

I gave care to your reasons.

That is, to find what convincing reason was couched in your arguments. The Hebrew is, I gave care to your understanding; That is, I attended to find out your apprehentions, or to gather up your fence in this matter, that I might not mistake your meaning, nor answer at randome. The vulgar translation reads it, I have heard your wisdom; That is, what wisdom there was in your
your words. The truth or reason that is in words, is the wilful
of them. So that, when Eliphaz saith, I gave ear to your reasons,
or, to your understanding, it intimates that he took the exactest
heed he possibly could to find out the utmost tendency and pur-
pose of their discourse. As if he had said; I have weighed every
little that ye have spoken, and tried it by mine ear, to find whether
it were solid yea or no.

There is one clause further to be opened in this verse; I
gave ear to your reasons,

While you searched out what to say.

This implyeth that Job's friends did ever and anon, take time
to consider either each man with himselfe, or that they consulted
one with another, what answer to shape and make to Job,

While ye searched out.

The word which we translate to search out, notes the strictest
search after that which is hidden, remote and secret. 'Tis apply-
ed (Deut. 13. 14.) to that care which Judges ought to take in
finding out the truth of an accusation brought against enticers to
Idolatry. The strictness of the Original is, While ye searched out
words. As if he had said, I am persuaded you have strained your
selves to the utmost, to find out what to say, you did not speake
what came next, but searched for your answers.

We may learn a good lesson from the practice of Eliphaz; we
see he was no idle hearer; yea in him we have the description
or character of an active hearer; I wait for your words, I gave
ear to your reasonings, while ye searched out what to say.

Hence note.

We must diligently hear and give ear, weigh and consider
what is spoken, before we give answer.

No man is well prepared to answer, but he that hath been an
attentive hearer. And as no man can be a fit answerer in points
under disputation, so no man can be a fruitfulfull practiser in points
of instruction, but he that hath been a diligent hearer. 'Tis our
duty, when the word is preach'd, to waite, not for a sound of
words, not for fine words, or words dressed up with affected
elocution, but for sound savoy words, for words that have

L 2 weight
weight and light in them, for words that have strength and authority in them, to prevail upon the heart, and conquer us to obedience. These are the only words, worth the waiting for; and for these we ought to wait.

Secondly, Before Elishu comes to give his opinion, he tells Job's friends, that he had diligently heard the matter out, even all their reasonings and searchings.

Hence note.

We must not make a judgement from any one part of a discourse, we must take all together.

We must compare the first and last, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending of what is said; we must look quite through. 'Tis not ingenious to pick up this or that passage, to take a piece here, and a piece there; we can never make a true judgement, till the whole is laid together. As, many exceedingly mistake about the works of God, so about the words of men, because they judge the whole by this or that part: Whereas they should judge of the parts by the whole. As therefore we ought not to make conclusions about the providential works of God, till the last Act, or till all is concluded; so we must not judge the discourses of men, till the last word; or till they have concluded their discourse. Heare a man out, and then answer him.

Thirdly, Elishu seemes to chalenge it as his due to be heard. He speake, after he had fully heard them speaking.

Hence note,

They who have had the patience to heare others, ought to have the privilege of being heard themselves.

Heare me, faith Elishu; Why so? I have heard you. It is but equall and rational, that he should have liberty of speaking, who hath shewed an attentive perseverance in hearing.

From the last branch of the verse, while ye searched out what to say.

Observe.

We ought to ponder and try what we speake, before we speake it.

The worke of the tongue must follow that of the understanding.
ing. (Eccl. 12. 10.) The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, or words of delight, words of pleasure. The preacher sought; but how did he seek? He sought diligently and earnestly. The preacher sought, but in what way did he seek? surely he sought by diligent study and earnest prayer, to find out acceptable words. What words were those? not men-pleasing words, not soft words, which might pass with all sorts, or humour all phanties, not such words as would serve for pillows under bad men's elbows. The acceptable words which the Preacher sought, were words of truth and sobriety, words of power and Authority; in no other fence may we seek our acceptable words, or words of delight; nor is there any true delight, but in words of truth. Thus every faithful Preacher should seek to find our acceptable words; every holy and wholesome doctrine is made up of such words. Only these doctrines and exhortations which are formed and composed of such words, are (as the Apostle faith of the great doctrine of Jesus Christ, manifested in the flesh to save sinners) faithfull sayings, and worthy of acceptation (1 Tim. 1. 15.) Elihu tooke notice of this in Job's friends, they did not speak hand over head, but searched what they might say most to the purpose (as they judged) of the cause in hand, and to the profit of their hearers.

Elihu thought he had not yet spoken enough in way of apologie for himselfe. And therefore the penman of this dispute represents him speaking further, yet much to the same fence.

Ver. 12. Yea, I attended unto you, and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.

I attended unto you; That is, I did not only desire to receive full satisfaction from you, but I attended, hoping at last to find it. I stayed, I did not make haste, nor did I hasten you. Some esteem the word with a great signification, I did as thoroughly consider and attend what was sayd, as if I had looked into you. Thus (faith Elihu,) I attended unto you.

But what did he find? He found two faults in their words after he had attended unto them thoroughly. First, he found them faulty, because none of them had convinced Job. Their proofs did not make good their accusations. The second fault, which Elihu found,
found, was, They had not refuted Job's allegation. As if he had said, 'I have spoken much, but upon the matter have done little; I waited, & I attended, expecting great things from you, but I have been deceived in my expectation. For having taken out the strength and substance, the spirits and quintessence of your speech, I find nothing coming up, either to a conviction of Job, as faulty in matter of fact, nor to an answer of him, as defective in matter of argument. So that when I have laid all that ye have spoken in the balance, it weighs too light, Job is your match, yea, he hath over-match't you.

Behold, there is none of you that convinceth Job.

The Hebrew word which we here translate to convince, answers the Greek in the New Testament, which is also translated, To reprove or convince. And both the Hebrew and the Greek, carry a threefold signification.

First, to prove, or to make good what is affirmed, either first by reason and argument, or, secondly, by testimony and authority. When such proofs and reasons, such testimonies and authorities are brought in, as a man can make no exceptions against, or cannot evade nor reply to, then he is convinced. The Apostle giving a description of faith (Heb: 11. 1.) faith, It is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence (or conviction) of things not seen. The Spirit of God makes conviction before faith acts. He brings such proofs, such clear evidences, that though the thing be not seen, yet the soul's fits downe convinced, that it is so, as fully as if we had seen it. The greatest conviction we have to believe, is from authority and testimony; yea, that's properly and only faith, when we consent to a thing upon the testimony and authority of another.

Secondly, The word signifies to reprove, or rebuke with words. (Matt: 18. 15.) Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, goe and tell him of his fault. To reprove a man, is first to tell him of his fault, and then to blame him for it. Every man's fault must be clearly proved, before he can be justly reproved. Thus the Baptist reproved Herod (Luke 3. 19.) And because Light proves, therefore it also reproves (John 3. 20.) Every one that doth evil, hates the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. The same word is used (Eph: 5. 11.) Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of dark-
darkness, but rather reprove them. And againe (1 Tim. 5. 20.)
7them that sin (that is, either openly, before all, or whose sin
hath been proved before all) rebuke before all; and, as the same
Apostle directs (Tit. 2. 25.) Rebuke them sharply.

Thirdly, The word signifieth, as to prove and reprove, so to
chasten and correct, to rebuke by the hand as well as by the
tongue (Heb. 12. 5.) Ye have forgotten the exhortation which
speaketh unto you as unto children; my son, despise not the
chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.
When thou art rebuked of him by blowes, or received sensible
convictions. (Rev. 3. 19.) Whom I love I rebuke and chasten.
Here in the Text we must understand the word in the first sense.
There is none of you that hath convinced Job; That is, ye have not
proved what ye have said; Ye have called him an hypocrite,
and told him that he hath oppressed the poor, and detained the
right of the fatherless; But ye have proved none of these evills
against him. Ye have not proved the matter of fact, that he might
fit downe penitentially confessing himselfe such an offender, as ye
have accused him to be.

Hence note.

We can never convince another by what we say, until we prove
what we say.

If we reprove any man for an errour in his judgement, and
doe not prove it to be an errour; or if we reprove a man for sin
in practice, and doe not prove his practice sinfull, or that he hath
practised that sin, no conviction follows. What is said and not
proved comes to the ear only, nor to the conscience. Therefore
faith Christ (John 8. 46.) Which of you convinceth me of sin.
Find a spot in my life if you can. I know you are ready to flander
me with, but you cannot convince me of evill. It is said of Ap-
pollos (Acts 18. 28.) He mightily convinced the Jews. How did
he convince them? not by reproving them only, for not recei-
ving the Messias; he did not barely tell them, ye are a company
of unbelievers: but he reproved them by proving the necessity of
their receiving Christ the Messias, and the evill of rejecting him,
showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Here was
proofs; and so conviction followed. He convinced them by
authority, by the testimony of the word, comparing Scripture
with.
with Scripture, the prophets, with the history of Christ. The Apostle would have the Ministers of the Gospel mighty at this work (Tit. 1. 8.) They must hold fast the faithful word, that they may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gain-sayers. Not only must they be able to rebuke gain-sayers, this will not do it; they must also convince them, or stop their mouths. (James 2. 9.) If any of you have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as transgressors. How doth the Law convince? Not only by reproving, but by proving. It shews us a rule, and faith, there you have departed from it; here is the line, and there ye have transgressed, or gone over it. Thus ye are convinced, that ye are transgressors. He is both wise and faithful, he doth his work like a workman that needeth not be ashamed, whom not only gives reproofe but profe, either of error in judgement, or of evil in practice. For the close of this point, I may shew you three great convincers.

First, the holy Spirit of God, This office of the Spirit Christ foretells forth (John 16. 7.) I will send the Comforter, and when he is come (what shall he doe? ) He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; That is, he will bring proof home to the conscience, to shew sinners their evil state and evil lives; He will also bring home to their spirits the insufficiency of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and so overcome their unbelief, that they shall not be able to refuse the offers of grace. He will likewise shew them such reasons why they ought to be holy, and walke in the ways of righteousness, that they shall neither have power nor will to gain-say.

The second great convincer, is Conscience. They who were so forward to accuse the woman taken in adultery (John 8. 9.) were at last convicted by their own conscience, and went out one by one; Their conscience told them they were guilty, if not for that sin, yet of other sins as bad as that. They were so far before from judging themselves for, that they took no notice of their own faults; they were severe against the woman, but they flattered themselves, till Christ made their own consciences, their convincers. And surely conscience will one time or other convince to purpose; They who have refused or outshone conviction by the word, yea and put by the motions of the Spirit, shall at last find conscience convincing and speaking home to them.
The third great Convincer, is Jesus Christ in person; Of him in the performance of this office, the Apostle speaks clearly (Jude v. 15.) Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints (And what comes he to doe?) To execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Christ will make the greatest of ungodly ones in that great day to acknowledge, that all their hard speeches which they have spoken against the Saints, or godly men, were spoken against him. When profane men are among their wicked companions, they can jeare at the godly professors of the name of Christ, even while they pretend to honour Christ; But Christ will make them see, that they scorned him, while they scorned the leaft of thole that feared him, and believed on his name. The great day will be a day not only of executing Judgement, but of conviction, every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world of wicked men shall become guilty in their owne fight before God. These are the three great Convincers. The holy Spirit of God, the Conscience of every man, and Jesus Christ in the judgement of the great day.

And let those who now undertake that great work of conviction, often remember (which was a little before mentioned and set downe) the method to be used and observed in it; First, prove the matter, and then reprove the man. None were ever wrought to any good, by bare reproofe, much lefse by force. Men are not to be driven into the faith by fire and sword, by terrors and imprisonments; conviction must doe it, and that will doe it to purpose. This is the first thing which El'hu blamed and burdened Job's friends with; They reproved him, but did not bring sufficient convincing proofe against him. There was none of you that convinced Job.

Secondly, He lays this to their charge, that They had not answered his words. As ye have not proved your owne allegations, so ye have not refuted nor inffirmed his reasons.

But how could El'hu say, They had not answered his words, when to every word he spake we find their severall answers? Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said; Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said; The like is said of Zophar the Naamathie. They had been answering all the while, yet faith El'hu, Behold,
Behold, there was none of you that answered his words. I shall resolve this doubt, by giving this note; which was also given upon the 3d verse, where see more.

Unless we answer home to the matter, and (as we say) hit the nail on the head, we have given no answer. We have not answered, unless we give a satisfactory answer. When the Respondent in Schooles acquits himselfe well, The Moderator brings him off honorably, saying, Thy Answers suffice. Jobs friends had been answering long, and they made many long answers, but Elihu, the Moderator was forced to tell them, ye have not answered sufficiently.

Lastly, Elihu having heard all their answers, and finding that they did not reach a proofe against Job, nor answer his reasonings and replies, he speaks himselfe.

Hence note.
When we have weighed all duly, and find that others have not done the deed, we must not dissemble our judgements, nor flatter them in their faulty answers.

Elihu would not doe so, and the reason why he would not, is layd downe in the next words.

Vers. 13. Left ye should say, we have found out wisdome; God thrusteth him downe not man.

In the former verse Elihu showed his owne disappointment, while he waited upon others; I attended unto you (faith he to Jobs three friends) and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words; Then follows, Left ye should say, we have found out wisdome, &c. In which words Elihu proceeds with his Preface, that he might the more fairly fall into discourse with Job, for having told Jobs friends that he had waited in vaine, for satisfaction from their answers or replies, they having not convinced him, either by solid reason, or by Authenrick Authority and testimony, that he was so bad as they judged him to be; He adds, this I affirm.

Left ye should say, we have found out wisdome.

That is, left ye should say it boastingly, and cry victory against this.
his afflicted man. The word is often used in Scripture to signify saying with boastling, or speaking in pride of spirit. The Baptist (Math. 3. 9.) tells the Pharisees, Think not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our father; his meaning is, do not speake of your pedegree boastingly nor proudly: that ye are Abraham's children will doe you no good, unleasfe ye are good, like your father Abraham, and doe as he did. So here, Left ye should (proudly) say, we have found out wisdom; we have found the mystery of the whole matter, we have found out the key, which unlocks this secret, or as Mr Calvinis translater Wittily as well as truly expreffeth, We have found out the bane in the Cake, we say, Left ye should say, we have found out wisdom; That is, that which will surely prove us wise men, and gaine us the reputation of wisdom among all wise and knowing men. What that speciall resolve was, which they counted wise, followes in the close of the verse according to our reading, God thrusteth him downe not man. But before I deale with that conclusion, I shal briefly note two things from those words, Left ye should say, we have found out wisdom.

First, Man is very apt to speake boastingly, to have high thoughts, and then to utter great words of himselfe. Man is a proud piece of flesh, and a small matter will make him thow his pride, and spread his plumes (like that naturally-painted bird) if not explicitely in words, yet his spirit will swell, and be put up with towring conceits of himselfe. The Prophet Habakkuk describes this temper (Chap. 2. 4.) He that is lifted up, his spirit is not upright in him; A proud spirit is always a false spirit. They who think highly of themselves, think themselves higher then they are. And 'tis a great argument that man is naturally very proud, because God hath given so many fops and checks to his pride, or hath made so many provisions against it. The very contrivance of the work of Redemption in that way by the hand of Jesus Christ, had this great designe in it; For as the chiefe designe in reference to man was his salvation (that was the ultimate end as to man) so there was another designe in it, why God would save man that way, which the Apostle layeth downe (1 Cor. 1. 29.) That no flesh should glory in his sight; While God intende to give man glory, he took a course to cut off all glorying from man. God would not set up man againe to worke his owne salvation,
left he should be proud of his workes. Though we are now called to work our owne salvation (Phil. 2. 12.) yet it is wholly wrought by another; and we are there commanded to work our owne salvation with fear and trembling, not with presumption and boasting.

Againe, How apt is man to boast of any good he doth? seeing he is not ashamed to boast sometimes when he doth evil, and of that which is evil, even of the lusts and lustings of his evil heart. (Psal. 10. 3.) The wicked boaste of his hearts desire. And what good is there in the desire of a wicked mans heart? He (as such) can desire nothing, but what is worse then nothing, sin or vanity, and yet he boastes of it.

Yea, man is ready to boaste, not only of evil done, but of his ability to doe evil. They in the Prophet boaste that they were mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drinke; (Isa. 5. 22.) How doe some please themselves that they are in power, only, because that gives them an advantage to oppose whom they please, or all those with whom they are displeased. David say that spirit ruling and raging in spitefull Diog, whom he therefore checks, (Psal. 52. 1.) Why boaste thou thy selfe in mischief, O mighty man? The Apostle found those (Phil. 3. 19.) who gloried in their shame; That is, in sinfull practices (even making their belly their God) whereof they ought to be ashamed. The Prophet spake of their like long before, (Isa. 3. 9.) They declare their sin as Sodome, they hide it not; As if it had been their ornament and their honour, their beauty and bravery to be wicked.

But especially if bad men doe that which is good, they boaste of it. A carnal man may for the matter doe good; yea, he may have a zeale for God. Jehu said, Come see my zeale for the Lord; (2 Kings 10. 16.) But Jehu desir'd more to have his zeale for the Lord seene, than to be zealous for the Lord: And so his was indeed zeale for himselfe, not for the Lord. The Pharisees did many good things, but they could not forbear boasting in the good they did; They doe all (faith Christ, who knew not only what they did, but with what heart) to be seene of men, or to have prayse with men. Yea, not only are evil men ready to boaste of the good they doe, but the temptation lies hard also upon godly men to doe so, their hearts are often unduely transported, as:
as with the thoughts of their gifts, parts, and graces, so with what they doe through the gift of grace. Our very graces, much more our outward priviledges, may be an occasion of boating. Pride and boating are weeds which grow up from the best and richest soyle. *Tis rare to see any man rich in gifts and graces, and poore in spirit; poverty of spirit is the purest and truest riches of grace.

Secondly, As to the particular here spoken of, Left ye should say, we have found out widsome.

Note.

*Man is very prone to make boast of or glory in that which he calleth widsome.*

When he hath found out (though but supposed) widsome, he cannot containe, he must cry it up. It is said of the old *Mathematician* when (after long study and beating his braines) he had found out a Conclusion in Geometry: he ran about the Citie (as if transported) or ravished with this loud out-cry, *I have found it, I have found it;* and thus Job’s friends were ready to cry out, they had found, they had found out widsome. There is indeed a very great temptation in the finding out or attaining of widsome, to puff man up, and to make him vaine-glourious. We have great cause to be humbled, that we have so little widsome; and they that have any store (as they thinke) more then their neighbours, are in great danger of being proud of it. *Knowledge puffeth up,* (1 Cor. 8.1.) When the head is full, the heart grows high. Yet this is to be understood of literal knowledge, not of spiritual, or of knowledge when and where it is alone without grace, not of gracious knowledge. The more a gracious man knowes, the more humble he is, because his knowledge shewes him his own vileness and emptiness; but the more a carnall man knowes, the more proud he is, because (while such) whatsoever or how much soever he knoweth, he knoweth not himselfe, nor doth he know anything as he ought to know it, as the Apostle speakes there at the second verse. And as meere naturall men, so they who are but smatterers, or beginners in the wayes of godliness, are also very ready to be transported with an opinion of their parts and knowledge. And therefore the same Apostle gives it in charge to *Timothy* (1 Tim. 3.6.) that he who is called and received
unto Office in the Church, should not be a novice; he means it not so much of one that is young in yeares, as of one that is young in the faith, a new plant in the Church, or one newly converted. And he gives this as a reason, Left being put up (with pride he means) by being in such a function, or by having such reputation for wisdom and knowledge, as is requisite to a Gospel Minister, he (which is a fall, if not a down-fall into utter ruine) fall into the condemnation of the devill. Not that the devill will condemn him for his pride, no, the more proud men are, the more the devill approves of them; nor is it the devills office to condemn, it is his office to execute; he is the executioner, not the Judge; and what ever he condemneth any man for, he will not condemn him for pride, no nor for any sin. So that when the Apostles faith, Left be fall into the condemnation of the devill, it is as if he had said, Left be he be condemned for the same sin that the devill was condemned for, which was pride: And it was pride (for he is the right father of the Gnosticks) arising out of a high opinion, or conceit of his owne wisdom, and knowledge. Zophar sayd (Job II. 12.) Vaine man would be wise. But is it an argument of a mans vanity that he would be wise? it is a mans duty to be wise, that's a good desire; why then doth he say, Vaine man would be wise? The meaning is, Vaine man would be in account for wisdom, he would be reckoned among wise men, or he desires more to be thought wise, then to be wise. A vaine man, indeed, cannot desire any good, but in reference to some evil that cleaves to it; and upon that account he may desire to be wise. The first sin came into the world by an attempt to get wisdom, or by a proud thought in the hopes of attaining farther wisdom. The wisdom which our first parents sought for, was not wisdom to know God, for that is the most excellent wisdom, It is eternal life to know God; So then it was not wisdom to know God, but it was wisdom to be knowing as God which they affected, they would be high and lifted up above the rate of a creature in knowledge, and that was their ruine. And I shall shew (in two things) why there is such a temptation in wisdom, or the reason why when we have found out that which hath a shew of wisdom in it, we are so forward to applaud our selves, & boast in it. First, 'Tis so, because wisdom is no common Commodity, as I may say; wisdom is but in few hands, if you consider the multi-
multitude of men in the world. Now that which few have, all who have it are ready to be proud of. No man is proud of that which is every man's; no man is proud that he is a man, or proud that he hath reason, because that is common to all men; but all men are not wise, all men are not learned, all men have not an improved wisdom, reason, and understanding; that hath a peculiarity in it, and therefore of that many are proud.

Secondly, Wisdom is not only rare, but very useful, and (which reacheth this point more fully) very ornamental; and how apt are we to be proud of our ornaments? A man is not proud of his ordinary Clothes, nor a woman of her every-day dress, but when a man or woman have their ornaments and Jewels on, their Gay-cloathing and rich apparel on, then they are apt to be proud and lifted up, so it is in this case; Wisdom is like Gay-clothing, it is a Jewell, an ornament, and therefore man is under a temptation when he hath any thing of wisdom, especially any eminency of wisdom about him, to be lifted up and despise others: yea, to arrogate great things to himself, and to presume that he can do no small matters with his brain, or the engine of his understanding. It is a great attainment to be full of knowledge, and full of humility; high in parts, and lowly in spirit; Left ye should say, we have found out wisdom.

God thrusteth him downe not man; or as others read, God hath cast him downe not man.

The Omnificent doth Tofs him not man, faith Mr. Broughton. The word signifies to tose a man (as it were) in a blanket. That is, to toss him as we please farre enough from his pleasure, or to toss him in open view. As if they had layd, see how the omnipotent toseth this man; The Omnificent toseth him not man. There are two references of these words given by Expositers.

First, Some expound them as the words of Elihu. Secondly, Others as the words of Jobs three friends.

First, Left ye should say, we have found out wisdom; I (faith Elihu) say, God shall thrust him downe not man. That's the principle by which I will deal with Job, and so thrust him downe from that opinion which he hath of himselfe, and humble him, (that's the fence of the words (thrust him downe) according to this interpretation) God shall doe it and not man. Some of the learned
learned insist much upon this interpretation; wherein Elihu is supposed making a great discovery of his humility, as not daring to undertake Job himselfe, but going about it in the strength and power of God; As if he had said, 'tis a worke above or too hard for man to put Job off from that opinion wherein he is seeld. To doe this is a worke worthy of God, nor can it be done by any power, but that which is properly divine. And seeing God is graciously pleased to use the ministry of man for the bringing about such workes of Grace, farre be it from me that I should arrogate and assume that to my selfe which God is pleased to work by his word. We may parallel this speech of Elihu with two other places of Scripture, which will give light to it. First, (Gen. 42. 16.) And Joseph answered Pharoah, saying, It is not in me, but God shall give Pharoah an answer of peace. When Pharoah proposed to him his Dreams of the seven lean e, and of the seven thin ears of Corne, Joseph professed it was not in him to expound them, but only in God; and that God would doe it he was confident; God shall give to Pharoah an answer of peace. I owne no wiulde in or of my selfe, enabling me to resolve this question, or to open this secret; If ever I doe it, 'tis God who doth it, not I; unless he reveale the secret unto me, I cannot reveale it unto thee. Thus also spake Daniel, (Dan: 2. 27.) When all the wise men of Babylon were foild, and gravell'd at the Kings propoall; The secret which the King hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the Astrologers, the Magicians, and the Sooth-sayers shew unto the King. They cannot doe it; it is not put by way of interrogation, cannot they doe it? but they cannot, by way of negative affirmation; how then can it be done? or who can doe it? He answers, But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and makest knowne to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. As if he had said, As thy Magicians cannot, so I will not undertake to reveale the secret, but God both can and will, He will surely doe it, yea, he is now doing it; the text speaks as of a present act, He makest knowne to the King, &c. Thus (according to the exposition before us) Elihu saith here, Lest ye should say, we have found our wisdom; I tell you plainly, I will not undertake him, and I am much assured ye cannot, therefore Let God thrust him downe, let God deale with him, and conquer him, not I, not you, not man, not any man. If God will use me as a poore instrument to doe it, I
I am ready, but the whole efficacy and power must be from himself: This carrieth a profitable and a holy fence; every good man describes the effect of all that he speaks in persuading others for good to the power of God. God must convert the sinner, not man, nor the preacher; God must humble the proud, not man; God must cast him downe from his high thoughts, or cast downe the high thoughts that are in him, not man; God must soften and breake the hard heart, not man; in a word, 'tis God who both thrusteth man downe by a gracious work of repentance and selfe-abhorrence, and rayseth him up by a powerfull worke of faith and holy confidence in Jesus Christ: when man hath done his best, he can doe nothing effectually, only God can. Whosoever good man doth, God doth it in him and by him. Hence those creature-abasing and Christ-exalting questions (1 Cor. 3. 5.) Who is Paul? and who is Apollo? but Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Paul puts a sight upon himselfe, and a sight upon all instruments, that the whole power might be of God, as he concludes (v. 7.) So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. God only thrusts man downe from his vaine and carnal state, God only lifts him up unto a blessed and a heavenly state. This, you see, is an improveable interpretation, as the words are supposed spoken by Elihu.

But, I rather referre them to Job's friends, being collected or gathered up by Elihu, as the iluue of their whole discourse with Job. God thrusteth him downe, and not man. This is it, that you meane (saith Elihu) this is the top of your wisdome, the flower and Creame, the summe and substance of all your arguments. All that ye have sayd is reducible to this one position, God thrusteth him downe, not man; and therefore he is a wicked man: This is the wisdome which ye glory to have found.

Now though we take the words as the summe of what Job's friends had spoken, collected and drawne together by Elihu, yet there is some variety in opening the fence of them; I will but touch a little at what is offered by several Interpreters, and stay upon that which I conceive most proper to the place.

First, Some conceive that in these words an account is given why Job's friends gave over speaking, or why they stood silent, either resolving to speake no more, or presuming they had spok-
Thirdly, That which is, I conceive, chiefly intended, take thus; An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 13.

Elihu de amicorum Jobi silentio concurrens, respon-
dent. Facinus de indigitatione; hominem exagitur. 
Fobum: satis est quod a deo exagitetur.

Vatabl.
Cum dare pro-
pellat eum nihil
ultra nostra est
ut ab homine
impugneret; ut
efficio inuper
additur iis qui
infra fas est
quid dem eum
ob sua percutia
perferuentur.

Rab: Levi.

Elihu de amicorum Jobi silentio concurrens, respondent. Facinus de indigitatione; hominem exagitur. Fobum: satis est quod a deo exagitetur.

Vatabl.
Cum dare pro-
pellat eum nihil
ultra nostra est
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quid dem eum
ob sua percutia
perferuentur.

Rab: Levi.
this verse, God thrusteth him downe, not man; That Job's friends made the maine ground-worke of their hard opinion concerning him in the dealings of God with him, is evident by what hath been shewed from many passages quite through the Booke; All which may be resolved into the fence, now given, of this one; God thrusteth him downe, not man, and therefore he is a wicked man.

Hence observe,

First, The afflictions and thrustings downe of some men are eminently from the hand of God.

Every affliction is from God; but some are more from God. As God is more visibly seen in the lifting up of some men, so in the casting downe of others. Every man that is lifted up, is lifted up by the hand of God; 'Tis the most High, who one way or other, lifteth any man on high; but in setting up some men on high, his workings are so high, that every man may see them and say, The finger of God is there, the hand of God hath done it. 'Tis thus also in thrusting men downe; every affliction, every thrusting downe, is from God, there is a hand of God in it; for as Eliphaz spake (Chap. 5. 6.) Affliction comes not forth of the dust, nor dark trouble springing out of the ground. Whence then are troubles? Surely they drop downe from heaven; they are from the earth as to the contriving of them, but from heaven as to the contriving of them. Yet there are some troubles which fall from heaven more apparently then others doe; That is, there is more of God, more of the hand of God in such a dispensation, then there is in others, though there be a hand of God in every one: therefore say Job's friends, God thrusts him downe, and not man; this man's afflictions are mighty strokes from heaven. For though God hath raised up and used instruments against him, yet himselfe hath appeared most against him.

Secondly, Observe,

Those afflictions wherein God doth eminently appeare against a man, seeme to beare the greatest wittnesse against him of his sinneswesse or wickednesse.

That was the scope of Job's friends, This is, say they, an undeniable argument, that the man is wicked, because there is such an eminente hand of God upon him. This was the foundation upon which
which they built all their severall sentences of him, yea, their hardest sentences against him. And there is a faire probability in this way of arguing upon foure Considerations.

First, It may be urg'd, thus; God is just; (men indeed are often unjust and unrighteous in the evil which they bring upon others; but God is just) and therefore he would not lay his hand upon any man in this manner, unless he were a wicked man. Surely his iniquity hath found him out, whom the hand of God hath thus found out.

Secondly, God is merciful, he is gracious, (Lament. 3. 33.) He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men. Now, if God hath declared himselfe to unwilling to grieve the Children of men, surely, when we see him so willingly grieve a man, as he hath grieved this or that man, may we not say, he is a wicked man? Judgement is called Gods strange worke, but in judging some he acteth as if judgement were his proper worke, as if he were in his Element when he is laying heavie strokes on their backs; therefore may we not conclude such among the wicked?

Thirdly, God is wise; he cannot be deceived concerning any man; therefore there is some great reason why he afflicteth, and what reason can more probably be given of a great affliction, than some great sin? As God is so true that he will not deceive any man, so he is so wise that he cannot be deceived in any man. He cannot misse his mark, nor fall upon a wrong subject in his dispensations; therefore we have faire warrant to say, that a man against whom God appears so much, appears very foule to him, what ever faire appearances he may have among men.

Fourthly, Take this Consideration also, when men afflict their brethren, they often do it either out of resolved malice, or in heat of revenge, but God cannot do it with such a spirit, nor from such principles; The highest acts of revenge in God, are but the awards of Justice. Againe, Men will afflict others out of envy, or to ease themselves; as the Apostle speaks of parents chastening their children (Heb. 12. 9, 10:) we have had fathers of our flesh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much more be in subjection to the father of spirits and life? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their owne pleasure, or (as that text may more clearly be rendered out of the oiginal Greek) as it seemed good to them, or as they thought good; As if he had said,
said, They will doe it upon their naturall prerogative, or the right of paternity, without giving any account; Yea, a father will afflict and chasten his child sometimes (in another sense) for his pleasure; That is, to vent his passion, and exalt himselfe: but God never threatneth us in passion, nor ever purely upon prerogative, but with a respect also to our spiritual good, which is the best profit, and for us good. Now among the good things which God threatneth at in afflicting any man, this is not the least, the purging out of his evils. And therefore when we cannot ascribe the chastisement of man to man, but to God alone, 'tis a witness against him, at least, it draws a full conviction upon him of some great sinfulness lodged in him, or sinful ways walked in by him.

Thirdly, Observe.

It is no Concluding argument against any man that he is wicked, because God afflicts him immediately; or, how much soever the hand of God appeares in an affliction, 'tis no concluding argument against the afflicted.

'Tis one principall scope intended by Elihu in this discourse, to shew that there were other causes & reasons of Gods afflicting Job, or any man else besides him. And that we should not make Conclusions, that the greatest sufferers, are the greatest sinners. For first, though indeed God threateneth to punish the wicked, who wilfully transgress his Law, yet he afflicts many, without respect to wickedness. Secondly, though God threatens the wicked only or chiefly at least, yet he reserveth a liberty to try the innocent; yea, as Job saith in the 9th Chapter, He laugheth at the trial of the innocent; And therefore the most innocent are most tryed. I have had occasion more then once to shew why they are most so much tryed. First, for the exercise of their faith; Secondly, for the improvement of their patience; thirdly, to humble them; Fourthly, sometimes to set them up for examples to others; as the Apostle James speaks (Chap. 5. 10.)

Take my Brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience. The Prophets have suffered affliction, and God hath let them suffer, that they might be patterns of suffering; and 'tis so in many other instances; Fifthly, God doth it to mortifie their corruptions; Sixthly, to prevent future transgressions, he hedgeth up their way.
way with thornes; Seventhly, to discover or gaine a testimony of their sincerity. They serve Christ to purpose, who can suffer while they serve, and bleed under his croffe, while they sweat under his yoke. Surely then, there is no concluding against any man that he is a son of Belial, or hath cast off the yoke of Christ, because Christ burdeneth him with his croffe. Yet this was the great Maxime, which Jobs friends instifted upon, we must needs be a wicked man, because the Lord had thrust him downe, not man.

But when we see good men thrust downe by the hand of God, there, is a better use to be made of it, then to judge them, and that is to be watchfull over our selves, left we put a rod into the hand of God to chaffen us, or a sword into his hand to wound us. For as Christ spake (Luke 23. 33.) If it be thus done to the greene tree, what shall be done to the dry? If Christ suffered so much, who was a greene flourishing fruit-bearing tree, what may we who are dry and barren trees? Or take the meere sons of men, some of them comparatively to others, are as greene trees flourishing in grace and holinesse, who yet are under sore affliction; and if this be done to a greene tree, what shall be done to those who are but dry barren fruitless trees, yea, trees that bring forth evill fruit. The Apostle (1 Pet. 4. 17.) gives a suitable caution; If judgement begin at the house of God (he does not say at the Temple of Idols,) But if it begin at the house of God what will the end be of those that obey not the Gospel? Let others looke to it when they see God afflicting his people, when they see God bringing such troubles into his owne house, what troubles may they expect, who are indeed but a den of theves, and whose houses are, yea, who themselves are as a Cage of uncleane birds? Thus we see the great argument disproved, which Jobs friends used to prove him wicked, because God did thrust him downe, not man. And, faith Elihu, this is it you say and boast of, as your wisdome; but indeed you have not convinced Job, nor not by this. What you have taken for a demonstration, is but a fallacy. And though I might wave mine owne trouble in thinking that it is so, because I am not the man (but ye are the men) to whom Job hath shaped his whole discourse, yet I cannot forbearre to doe it, only I promise you, I will not tread in your steps, nor take up your method in doing it. That's the summe of the words which follow.
Ver. 14. Now he hath not directed his words against me, neither will I answer him with your speeches.

In this verse Elihu speaks negatively in two things: First, He tells us, that Job had not spoken professedly, nor directly to him. Secondly, he tells us, how he would not deal with Job; that is, not as his friends before had done.

Now he hath not directed his words against me.

As if Elihu had said, I confess I have not been at all spoken to all this while, unless in common with all the Auditory, and therefore might well enough looke upon myselfe as unconcern'd in this matter.

The word here used to direct, hath a great elegancy in it, and may be an allusion; First, to an Archer who aimes at, or directs his arrow to the mark. Secondly, to a Warrior, especially a Commander in warre, who sets his men in battel array against the enemy; As if Elihu had said, Job hath not aimed at me, nor hath he ordered or set his words in order to oppress me. Job hath not drawne up his forces, nor set himselfe in array against me, but against you; And so perhaps that hate and bitterness of spirit, which you have contrasted by this long-continued debate with Job, hath given you occasion prudently to withdraw, and forbear the entertainment of any further discourse with him. Tea, possibly ye are now fallen into a deep contempt of him, as a man forsaken of God, and therefore to be no more dealt with by man. But there is not the like reason for me to forbear speaking with him; seeing as he hath not at all opposed me, so I am not at all disturb'd in my owne thoughts about him, nor is my spirit imbittered with any undictive motions against him; and shall therefore enter the lists of this disputation, with a peaceable and quiet minde; or rather I shall (being a person every way unprejudic'd) doe my best endeavour to moderate and compose this great difference between you. Now he hath not directed his words against me, &c.

Hence note.

First, Our words should be well ordered.

They should be drawne up like a well disciplin'd Army, in ranke and file. Confusion in words is as bad as confusion in things; Some heape up words, but they doe not rightly dispose nor order them;
them; all they speake is out of joynt or frame. As a multitude or rout of men, doth not make an Army; we may see ten thousand men together, and yet no Army; why? because they are not in order of method, they are not under Discipline, and so they are but a confused throng, not an Host of men. And thus a great many words huddled and throng'd together, are of no more force nor use, than a number of men without order; Method is very good in every thing we doe, especially in what we speake; A speech rightly ordered, is like an Army rightly marshaled. A word fitly spoken, fitly as to the season of it, and fitly as to the joynting and disposing of it (we may take in both in that place of Solomon, A word fitly spoken) is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Vult offendere quod non loquitur quem provoca. Aquin: There is another thing considerable in this former part of the verse, Elihu (as was lately intimated) spake thus to (hew he came to the dispute unprovoked; He hath not directed his words against me; he hath not toucht me. Ye indeed have been provoked by his words, he hath touched you often and often to the quick, and this hath made you touchy, angry and passionate, and you have growne into heats; but because he hath not directed his speech against me, therefore I shall come upon the stage, and enter this dispute with much coolness and temper. In a word, I bring no passion against his person, as you (being stung by his words) have done.

Hence note, Secondly. They who are not provoked, have no reason to speake provokingly.

That's it which Elihu would have Job perswaded of; we use to say, Speake when you are spoken to. Then surely we are not to speake otherwise, then we are spoked to; we must not give rayling for rayling, much lesse may we rayle when rayling is not given.

He hath not directed his words against me.

One of the Ancients Commenting upon this text, faith; Elihu discovers pride in this speech, He hath not directed his speech against me; As if Elihu disdain'd to take notice of what was spoken to them; which (faith he) is the humor of a proud man; who lookes not upon himselfe as engaged by any thing spoken, unlesse
unless you speak personally and directly to him; whereas Christ speaking personally to his Disciples only, would yet have all men see themselves spoken to (Mark 13. 34.) what I say to you, I say to all, watch. Eliphaz should have taken what Job spake to his three friends, a spoken to all that were present, and so might well enough have spared this complement, as my Author conceives. But I passe that as a curiosity; Especially because it appears plainly enough, that Eliphaz, though the words were not spoken directly to him, yet did take himselfe to be much concerned; and therefore lieth up as a Moderator in this Controversie between Job and his three friends. He hath not directed his words against me.

Neither will I answer him with your speeches.

I will not goe your way, nor follow your example in this undertaking; I shall proceed upon other principles, and use other mediums then ye have done; such, I hope, as will be found much more effectuall and attaine their end. We may take these words;

I will not answer him with your speeches, two ways; First, as their speeches had too little light of reason in them; Secondly, as their speeches had too much fire of passion in them. As if he had sayd, I will use milder words and stronger arguments; I utterly disapprove the course you have taken with him; and therefore I will neither insist upon your theaine to condemn him for an hypocrite, nor use your argument to prove it, because God hath thus sorely afflicted him; for I hold that a mere Sophisme.

I will not answer him with your speeches; That is, with speeches which have so much passion, and so little true reason in them, as to the point in hand. For though Job's friends had spoken many things of much weight and reason considered abstractly, or in Theor, yet when it came to the hypothesis, as applicable to Job's special case, then their speeches had little or no weight in them. So that in this profession Eliphaz seemes to promise these two things.

First, That he would use stronger arguments then they had done; I will not use yours, that is, weake ones, I purpose to come better prepared to the Combate then you; For though Eliphaz doth sometimes use such arguments as they, yet he doth not use them to their end to prove that Job acted rebelliously, or like a wicked
wicked man against God, as they did: but to shew, that he carried himself too highly, or over-confidently towards God. And this (as it appears by the issue) took more upon Job than all his friends hard suspicions, charges, and accusations. This humbled him, this silenced him; he had nothing to return, but was downe convinced; and therefore Elihu dealt with him in more strength of reason and divine authority than they had done.

Secondly, When Elihu saith, I will not answer him with your speeches, he seemes to engage that he would deale mildly with him, or without passion; he would not use bitter words, but debate and argue the matter gently and meekly. For though Elihu gave Job many severe reproves, yet always in a more friendly manner, not to prove that he had done wickedly, but to convince him that he had spoken overboldly; or that while he was so zealous to defend his own innocency, he sometimes intrencht upon the sovereignty of God, in his eager and earnest desire of pleading his cause before him. And surely it was but need that Job should have a man of a milder temper sent in to speake to him, else his spirit might have been quite over-whelm'd and sunk. Nor was it without the speciall hand of God, that after this poore afflicted soule had been so hardly used, and so grievously cenfured by those rigid disputants, he should at last meete with a man more meeke and compassionate, in some measure, to mitigate and allay his sorrow.

First, In that Elihu saith, I will not answer him with your speeches.

Observe.

It is not good to imitate others in any thing they doe or speake, which is not good.

We must not either act or speake by example, but by rule, or by example only so farre as it answers the rule. 'Tis dangerous treading in their steps who tread awry. When Paul found that Peter did not goe right, he was resolved not only not to follow him, but to reprove him (Gal. 2. 14.) Thus saith Elihu, here I will not write after your Copy, nor take up directions from what you have done, for I see you have gone and done amisse.

Again, When Elihu saith, I will not answer him with your speeches.
Note Secondly.

What we speake should be our owne sense, not the sense of others, unless their sense, either of things or persons, be the same with ours.

Some pin their opinion upon the sleeves of others, and they will be just of the judgement of such a man; what he faith, they will say. As some expect that every one should be of their Judgement, and say as they say; they are many Masters (which the Apostle James forbids, My Brethren, be not many Masters, doe not take upon you to give the rule to all others, some are proud at this rate, they thinke themselves able to give the rule to all men) so not a few are so easie, that presently they will take up any thing as a rule from any Master; whereas we should not be so apt to follow, but labour to have the Judgment or reason of things in our selves, rather then to take it up upon trust. When Luther was much troubled about the dealings of God in the world, to see how matters went, and was saying within himselfe, Surely it were better things were carried thus and thus; while Luther (I say) was thus troubled, he thought he heard this word of reprooçe from God; O Martin, Martin, I see thou art very wise, thou canst give rules, even to God himselfe, but I am not a God, in value easy to be led by men. I will not take thy Counsell, though I see thou hast an honest heart in what thou counsellest. I have a way of my owne, and I will have my owne way, though the world, yea, though good men, and my owne faithfull servants are grieved and mourne at it. Man would appoint to God himselfe, but God will not model matters by mans will, nor in his way. Thus in the present case (I only allude) it is not good for us when we heare what others say, presently to receive it, or take the impression from them; and so answer in their words, or vote their opinions, though they are wise and good men; Elihu takes the liberty to dissent, as in his opinion, so in his Method of proceeding with Job, I will answer, but it shall not be with your speeches, I will take my owne course.

Thirdly, Note.

The saylings and mistakes of others, should be our warnings not to doe the like.

Elihu observed where they misfled as to the matter in hand,
he observ'd also wherein they misled, as to the manner of proceeding; and he observed both well, and wisely to avoid the like inconveniences; and thereupon professed, I will not answer him with your speeches.

Forthly, Note.

We should answer to every point and person with reason and sweetness, not with passion and bitterness.

There is no convincing others with wrath; The wrath of man (faith the Apostle) works not the righteousness of God, (James 1.20.) That is, wrath will never bring about nor effect those righteous things, or ends, which God would have us ayme at. The wrath of man puts him quite out of the way of righteousness, both out of the way of right speaking, and of right acting. To shew much reason, and little passion, is our wisdome.

So the Apostle gives the rule (2 Tim: 2.26.) The servant of the Lord must not strive; he doth not mean it of bodily striving; As if he had said, he must not be a fighter. As when the Apostle faith (1 Tim: 3.3.) A Minister must not be a striker; It can hardly be thought he should intend only, if at all, that Ministers should not be like grossly boysterous men, who are not so much as Civill in their behaviour; surely such are farre enough off from a fitness to be received into the Ministry; therefore some expound the Apostle to the point in hand, he must be no striker with his tongue in passion, anger, and wrath, no word-striker. There is great striking, yea, wounding with words. Though Ministers must strike and wound with the authority of God, yet not with their owne animosities. They must wound the consciences of sinners, with the Word and Spirit of God, but not with their own wrathfull spirits; such strikers they may not be, nor may the servant of the Lord strive, thus, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, yea, patient in teaching. It is a great exercis of patience to teach, with line upon line, precept upon precept; When we see little received or heeded, yet to insist upon it, this is patience; In meeknesse instructing such as oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth. As the Apostle James exhorts (Chap. 1.21.) to receive the word with meeknesse; that's a most necessary rule in hearing the word; for many times the hearer is in a passion, there is such
such a storme in his bowels that he cannot heare to purpose, therefore if any would receive the ingrafted word, they must receive it with meeknesse. I say also the word should be given out or spoken in meeknesse, though not with coldnesse; I doe not say with coldnesse or with a slightnesse of spirit, but with meeknesse. And the truth is, milde speaking, or meeknesse of speech (as to the spirit and conscience of the hearer) is not only most comfortable, but most prevailing. Meeknesse should be shewed, even where there is the greatest zeale; and zeale then prevails most, when there is most meeknesse in it. The Apostle Jude saith, Of some have compassion, making a difference, others save with feare; That is, save them by preaching that which may make them afraid, scare them out of their sins; but yet still this is to be done in a spirit of meeknesse. (Gal. 6. 1.) If any one be over-taken in a fault (what then? rayle on him, rage against him, and revile him, no, but faith the Apostle) ye that are spiritual, restore such a one with the spirit of meeknesse; considering thy selfe, lest thou also be tempted. Bones must be set (to that the word which we translate restore alludes) with a tender hand. Those three things which are required in a good Chirurgion, or Bone-fetter, are as necessary in a reprover, or in him that would reduce another from the error of his way. First, He must have an Eagles eye, to discover where the fault or sayling is. Secondly, A Lyons heart, to deal freely with the faulty, how great soever they are. Thirdly, A Ladies hand, to use them gently and tenderly. All which will more fully appear, while

Lastly, From the example of Elihu, we collect and learne, that a good Moderator or compositer of differences, must avoyd five things. First, slightnesse of spirit and of speech: It is not good to speake lightly of little things, but it is a shame to speake lightly of great things. Weighty matters must be handled weightily, and we should put not a little finger, but our shoulders to them! Secondly, passion: renels of spirit and of speech, must be avoyded. That which hinders reason, had need be shut out while we are reasoning. What a contradiction in the adjunt is it, to heare of an angry moderator? or to see a man set himselfe to compose differences between others with a dishonest spirit of his owne. Thirdly, partiality in speaking, or the favouring of a party must be laid aside; for as Elihu did not spare to tell.
Jobs friends their owne, so neither did he spare to tell Job his owne, he was not partiall on either side. What can be imagin'd more uncomely, then that he who stands between two should lean to any one? or that he who comes to be an umpire or a Judge, should make himselfe a party or an Advocate. Fourthly, he must avoyd timorousness, and not be daunted with what man shall say or can doe against him, while he is doing his duty.

The fear of man is a snare (saith Solomon) That man had not need be in a snare himselfe, whose busines it is to bring others out of the snares of error, whether in opinion or in practice. Fifthly, he must beware of an easines to be drawn aside, either by the persuasions or applauses of men. A Judge between others must keepe his owne standing.

Thus farre concerning these two verses, wherein Elihu is still carrying on his Preface, to prepare Job to receive attentively what he had to say. In the next place, Elihu turning to the standers by, signifieth to them in what condition he found Jobs friends.
They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking.
When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more)
I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.
For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.
Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.
I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

Eliphaz had spoken of his friends silence before, and here he returns to it again, with a further addition and aggravation.

Ver. 15. They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking, &c.

There are two opinions concerning the person who spake these words. First, Some referre them to the writer or penman of this Book, but I rather take them as the words of Eliphaz himself.

They were amazed.

The root signifies to be affected with a very passionate and strong fear, even such a fear as they are arrested with who flee or fall before their Enemies in battle. So the word is used (Jer. 50. 26.) A sword is upon her mighty men, and they shall be dismayed. Dismay or amazement, is the displacing, at least the disturbing of reason in itself; Eliphaz shews how unable and unfit Job's friends were to argue with him any further, seeing upon the matter, they had lost the use of their reason, and were as men crack-brain'd, or broken in their understanding. They were amazed.
They answered no more; they left off speaking, or

Speech was departed from them; there is a two-fold Exposition of that speech (they left off speaking) Some understand it ab illis ablatae passively, like that (Luke 12. 20.) This night shall thy soul be required, or taken from thee; thou shalt not freely deliver it up, but it shall be snatched from thee; So here, their speech was taken from them; or by an unanswerable conviction, silence was imposed upon them. Mr Broughton renders, They doe speake no more, speeches be departed from them. How can they speake from whom speech is departed.

We translate actively, they left off speaking, as implying a voluntary act; they gave a stop to themselves; either they were not able, or it was not fit for them to say any more. The Hebrew is, They removed speech from themselves, and to become as silent as if they could not speake at all. They were as mute as fishes.

The following verse being of the same senses, I shall open that before I give the observations from this.

Ver. 16. When I had waited (for they spake not but stood still, and answered no more)

Job waited hoping they would speake somewhat worthy of themselves, worthy of that opinion and reutation which they had in the world for widdome, but they deceived his expectation. He could not have not heare a word more from them. This Eliahu puts into a parenthesis (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more) He utheh many words to the same purpose, to shew that there was somewhat extraordinary in their silence; They spake not, their tongues stood still. As speech is the image of the mind, and from the aboundsance of the heart, so it is by the motion of the tongue. If the tongue stand still, discourse is stayd. Their mouths were flopt, as being either unable or ashamed to urge their accusations and arguments any further. They stood still and answered no more. It is said of those forward accusers of the womantaken in adultery (John 8. 9.) That being convicted by their owne Conscience, they went away one by one; they shrunke away, having not a word to reply; And so did Job's friends, who while they stood still, carried it as men unwilling to be heard or seene any more upon the place. They were amazed, &c.
First, Hence note.

Amazement unfit us for argument.

Where wondering begins, disputing ends. They were amazed, they answered no more.

Secondly, Note.

The same men are sometimes so changed, that they can scarcely be knowne to be the same men.

Eliphaz sayd (Chap. 4. 2.) Who can withhold himselfe from speaking? He was so forward that he could not be kept from words, but now he had not a word in his keeping, speech was withheld, or departed.

Thirdly, Note.

False grounds or positions, cannot be always maintain'd.

God will supply both matter and forme, arguments and words, to confirme his owne truth; they who are in the right, shall not want reason to back it: but they who are in the wrong, may quickly find a stop, and have no more to say. The Apostles were weak, because unwilling in a bad cause (2 Cor. 13. 8.) We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth; and they who are willing to be against the truth, shall be weak and not able long to doe any thing against it (They spake no more.) As God gives a banner, (that is, outward power) to them that feare him, that it may be displayed, because of the truth (Psal: 60. 4.) So he gives wisdome and understanding (that is, inward power) for the maintaining of the truth. In thy majesty ride prosperously because of the truth (Psal: 45. 4.) As Christ who is truth, and the giver forth of truth, so they who are undertakers for truth, shall ride and prosper. Truth may be borne downe by power, and our-fac'd by impudence, but it cannot be overcome. Never fear to undertake a good Cause; and ever feare to undertake a bad one, for it will be spur'd at last. Truth may be oppoted, but truth-defenders shall never be ashamed, nor want a tongue to speake for it. Christ (Matt: 10. 17.) warns his Disciples what entertainment they were like to find in the world; They shall deliver you up to Rulers, ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for my sake; But he withall encourageth them; Take no thought what
what ye shall speak, or what ye shall answer. For some might say, What if we should be called in question for the truths of the Gospel? we are willing to burne for them (as that Martyr said) but we feare we cannot dispute for them. Well, saith Christ, take no thought what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in the same hour. God himselfe by his Spirit will prompt you, he will whisper such things into your eares, as all your opposers shall not be able to gainst. Indeed we see some men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the truth (as the Apostle gives their Character) who have courage enough to set forth lyes, and slander the truth, who straine their wits to the utmost, and (as the Prophet speakes, (Jer: 9. 3.) bend their tongues like their bow for lyes. But let them remember what the Apostle sayd of such as they (2 Tim: 3. 8.) Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so doe these also resist the truth, but (v. 9.) they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men; That is, shortly all shall see that these men have but played the foolish: we may say of all those who hold wild raunting opinions, they shall proceed no further, though they act highly against the truth now, yet stay but a while, and they will have nothing to answer or returne, they will have emptied their quiver, and quite spent their powder, you shall hear no more of them.

From that 16th verse, where Elihu addeth, I waited (for they spake not but stood still, and answered no more.)

Observe, First.

It is our wisdome and our duty to stay our time before we put our selves out upon business.

It is good to wait; God himselfe is not hasty upon us, he waits to be gracious, and we must wait our season to be serviceable; Elihu did not presently engage. The providences of God, and the Exigency of things, must put us on, we must not put our selves on. Christ tells us (Math: 9. 38.) The harvest is great, and the labourers few, pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers into his harvest; he doth not say, pray that labourers would thrust forth themselves into the harvest, or run into it before they are sent, but pray the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers; that is, that he would powerfully encline their hearts to the worke, whom he hath fitted
fitted and prepared for it. And as untill we are, at least, both
competently prepared, and fairly enclined to that or any other
good worke, tis best for us to waite; so when once we are pre-
pared and enclined, tis best for us, without delay, to set upon
the worke; Elihu did so, as appeares in the next verfe.

Verf. 17. I said also I will answer my part, I will shew my
opinion.

Now Elihu addresleth to his worke, his duty; and in this with
the verses following to the end of the Chapter, we have, firft, his
resolvednesse to speake, I said I will answer for my part, &c. Se-
condly, his ability, readiness and furniture to speake (v. 18.) For
I am full of matter, &c. Thirdly, we have the motives that preft
him to speake, or that he was exceedingly preft to it in the latter
end of the 18th verfe, as also v. 19, 20. My spirit within me Con-
straineth me. Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, &c.
I will speake that I may be refreshed. Fourthly, in the two last ver-
ses, he tells us what caution, yea what conscience he meant to use
in speaking (v. 20.) Let me not I pray you accept any mans per-
son: neither let me give flattering titles unto man, &c.

I said I will answer for my part, &c.

Now you have done, I will begin; those words, I said, are not
in the Hebrew text explicitely, yet are well understood. I will
answer for my part, that is, (as some conceive, the force of the
phrase ) I will answer with my strength, and might, I will put my
shoulders to it; but better Grammarians conclude, that the word
imports, A mans share or portion in any worke to be done, rather
then the strength which the workman useth or puts forth in doing
it. And so the fence is plaine, as if Elihu had said, they have done
their part, they have gone to the utmost of their line; now I see
it falls to my turne to speake, and I will do what falls to my turne,
I will answer also for my part.

I also will shew my opinion.

We had these words in the negative at the 6th verfe; There
Elihu sayd, I was afraid and durst not shew you my opinion; But
here, as also before (v. 10.) Elihu had taken courage and was
P 2  resol-
resolved to shew his opinion. I shall not stay upon any opening of
this clause, only I shall note two or three things briefly from it,
as connected with the former verse. There we had Elihu wait-
ing, here we have him purposing to speake.

Hence note.
They who consider and wait before they speake, speake most pre-
vailingly, most weightily.

It was long ere Elihu ventured to speake, but when he did,
he did it to purpose and with full effect. That which comes from
our owne heart, is most like to take upon the hearts of others;
they speake as much from their hearts as with their tongues,
whom we see long waiting before we heare them speaking;
And therefore, it is not good, no not for good speakers, to be
speaking before they have been waiting; many through hast
bring forth untimely births, and unripe fruit; Elihu could say, I
have waited, before he sayd, I will answer for my part.

Secondly, Note.
We ought to observe order in speaking, and act our proper part.

I will answer for my part ( faith Elihu ) or my turne is come to
answer. The Apostle Paul gives this rule at large ( 1 Cor. 14.
28, 29, 30. ) He would have no Interruption, no confusion in
Church-meetings, or Church-speakings.

Thirdly, When he faith, I will answer also for my part, I also
will shew mine opinion.

Note.
He that hath received a gift or talent, should make use of it,
and not hide it.

It is good to be doing our part, and shewing our opinion where
we may be usefull. Some love to act other mens parts rather than
their owne, and to intrude into Provinces which are not theirs.
But whatsoever our hand findes to doe ( as Solomon speaks,
Eccl. 9. 10. ) that is, whatsoever is, as Elihu here calls it, our
part, that we should doe with all our might. More was given a-
bout using our talent and shewing our opinion at the 10th verse
of this Chapter, whether I referre the reader.

Fourthly, Elihu was here, but an auditor, not a disputant, not
a party, he came in only upon the by; yet having received a
word he utters it.

Hence note.

Every man should think, himselfe Concern'd to speake for the
truth, when'tis wronged, and doe his best to right it.

Or we should take all occasions and seasons of doing good by
our words as well as by our workes. As it is not good to out-
run providence, so to neglect or forellow it is not good.

Lastly, Observe.

What others sayle in, we should labour to supply in the cause
of God, and for his truth.

It is a proverbiall speech among the Hebrewes; Where there Ubi non est
is not a man, there be thou a man; That is, if we see any un-
vir, IN vir
able to carry on and goe thorow-thich with the worke before eho.
them, we should lend a hand to helpe and supply them; thus
faith Elihu, I will answer for my part, I also will show mine opini-
on. And it seemes (by that which follows) Elihu did to, not on-
ly to answer his duty, but to empty and eafe his spirit. For
In the 18th, 15th, and 20th verses, he gives us that further
account of his interposition about this controversy.

Verf. 18. For I am full of matter.

Yea I am under a mighty Constraint; there is a kinde of force
upon me, The Spirit within me Constraineth me.

I am full of matter.

The Original is, I am full of words; yet of more then words,
as appeares in the following part of this Chapter; therefore we
translate, I am full of matter; that is, I am full of such words as
are materiall; words of truth, words of soberneffe: I am full of
such words as will carry with them a Conviction home to thy
Conscience O Job, & silence all thy complaints, or as if Elihu had
said to Job's friends, Though ye have spent your store upon Job,
yet I have store and plenty by me to spend upon him. Thus he re-
fects upon them as scanty and short in their undertaking; your
Lamps have spent their oyle, you have emptied your vessels;
so have not I, I am full of matter.

The
The Spirit within me Constraineth me.

The text is; My spirit in my belly Constraineth me. Master Broughton renders, My bellyes spirit doth press me: The Seventy render, The spirit of my belly destroyeth me. A Greek translator faith, My spirit within me setteth on fire, or, I am all in a flame. The word which we render Constraineth, signifieth to press very sore ( Judges 14. 17.) And it came to passe the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him, or constrained him.

It may be questioned, whole spirit, or what spirit it was that Constrained Elihu?

Some Expound it of the Spirit of God; he dictates both words and matter to me. Master Calvin seemes to Comply with this Exposition; God hath printed such a mark in the doctrine of Elihu, that the heavenly Spirit is apparent in his mouth; God ( faith Elihu ) hath put his Seal to what I have to say, therefore doe not receive it as the word of a mortall man, the Spirit of God Constrains me. Paul useth a word in the Greeke of like signification ( 2 Cor. 5. 14.) The love of Christ Constrains me, it presseth and overbeareth me; I am not able to get out of the power of it.

Againe, Others understand it of his owne spirit, yet acted by the Spirit of God ( Prov: 29. 11.) A fool spake all his spirit; we translate, all his minde ; the spirit pressinge Elihu was his mind carried strongly or resolvedly bent upon this business. The strong inclination or disposition of a mans mind to any thing good or bad, is in Scripture language called his Spirit. The Spirit within me. The Hebrew is,

The spirit of my belly; Which forme of speech notes only that which is most in-earnall, or lyeth closeth within us. Solomon faith of the words of wildome ( Prov: 22. 18.) It is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; The Original is, in the belly. ( John 7. 38.) Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; That is, out of his inward man; there shall be a spirit in his spirit ( for this Christ spake of the Spirit which should be given ) and the same word is used of the wicked man ( Job 15. 35.) His belly (that is, his mind or understanding) prepareth deceit. And Solomon ( Cant: 7. 2.) speaking of the Church, faith, Her belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lillies; That is, the
is big with holy thoughts and conceptions, as a woman great with child, ready to be delivered. A gracious heart is continually meditating and conceiving holy things, which it brings forth, and is as it were delivered of, upon any good occasion. The spirit within me constraineth me.

What Elihu had thus spoken in plaine terms by way of assertion in this verse, he illustrates by way of similitude or allusion in the next.

Ver. 19. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.

Elihu prosecutes the same thing in another way; and to shew how troublesome it was to restrain speaking any longer, his thoughts being not only too many, but too working to be enclosed in so narrow a room as his owne breast, he compares them to wine, or to new wine, which will either find or make its way out.

The whole similitude is exceeding elegant, First, he compares his thoughts, or the matter he had in his mind to wine. Secondly, he compares his soule or spirit to bottles, his inward man was the vesseell that held this wine. Thirdly, he compares his long silence to the stople or Corke of the bottle. Fourthly, he compares that trouble and griefe of mind which this forbearance to speake brought upon him, to the working which is in a bottle to stopt, or having no vent. Fifthly, he compares his intended speaking to the opening of the bottle which gives it vent.

Behold, my belly is as wine; that is, the thoughts of my belly are as wine.

The Chaldee Paraphrase faith, as new wine, which is full of spirits, and being stopt is ready to breake the bottle; which shews the mighty force which Elihu's thoughts had upon him, they would out, there was no stopping of them. Christ faith, (Matthew 9.17.) No man putteth new wine into old bottles, but men put new wine into new bottles; why? because they are stronger, and so more fit to preserve the wine; My belly is as wine.
It is ready to burst like new bottles.

The word which we render bottles, is never used in Scripture elsewhere in this sense, but it is often used to signify Wizards, or such as have familiar Spirits (Isa: 8. 19. Isa: 29. 4.) because they who used those hellish arts by compact with the Devil, did speak out of their belly, & so as it were, out of a bottle. Now, faith Elihu, My belly is as new wine that hath no vent, and it is ready to burst like new bottles; even new bottles will break, unless the new wine have some vent. And because though new bottles be stronger then old to keepe in wine, yet the wine may be so strong as to breake them, therefore Elihu here-by shewes that his desire or necessity of speaking was so urgent upon him, that though he should strengthen himselfe, yea strive with himselfe as much as he could to refraine from speaking, yet speake he must.

I am full of matter, &c.

Observe, First.
A man should not speak, especially in weighthy matters, till himselfe be well stor'd with matter.

Secondly, Observe.
When some vessells are drawne quite dry, and instruments spent and wore to the stumps, when they can neither doe nor say any more, then God fills up and furnisheth others for his purpose.

There was not a drop more to be squeeze'd out of Jobs friends, but Elihu was a full bottle (Mal: 2. 15.) there is a residue of the Spirit; God hath more Spirit or spirituall abilities to dispose of, and bestow then he hath yet disposed of to, or bestowed upon any one or all the sons of men.

Thirdly, Note.
God can furnish Instruments with proper gifts for the worke which he Calls them to.

Here was a man Cut out on purpose for this worke, he was Cloathed with a spirit of prudence and courage, as well as with a spirit of discerning. We have a wonderfull Example of this in Luther,
Luther, who came forth against all the powers of the papacy. What a spirit had he? his was a spirit of might, his spirit Constrained him, his belly was like a bottle full of new wine, there was no stopping of it. Others would have been daunted and cowed downe with the tenth of that opposition which he met with, but he was bold as a Lyon, who turneth not aside.

Againe, Why did Ellhu come forth? why did his spirit constraine him? what made his belly like wine? Some charge him with pride and arrogancy of spirit, as if he did it out of vaine ostentation, to shew his parts and gifts, to set himselfe above those other Worthyes who had dealt and discourfed with Job before. But we have reason enough (considering what he spake, and what the issue of his speaking was) to determine, that he was moved with a zeale for God, and to doe good to Job, nor with a spirit of pride, to shew his learning, wit or widsome among men; and therefore we finde that when the whole matter was brought to an issue, and God himselfe came to deale with Job and his three friends, God commendeth Job, and reproves his three friends, but there is no reprooфе upon Ellhu. Now for as much as God himselfe doth not charge him, what hath man to doe to charge him? Not only charity but reason and judgement command us to thinke his designe honest, and his aymes sincere, while he professeth under so vehement an impulfe or impression upon his spirit to engage and speake in this matter.

Hence note, Thirdly.

To see truth ill handled, should fill our spirits with much zeal for God.

That was it which drew Ellhu to this engagement, he saw those men (though good men) had put a disguise upon the things and dealings of God; and if men disguise the truth, and maintaine error, if they deface the doctrines of faith and pure worship, with their owne phantasies and false glosses, it should kindle a holy fire and fervour of spirit in us, to assert and vindicate the truth. Our spirit within us (in all such cases) should Contraine us.

Fifthly: In that Ellhu was so Constrained and pressed in spirit, as wine which hath no vent, or as a woman with Child ready to travell.

Note,
Note.

It is a paine not to speake when we have much to utter, and much minde to utter it.

When El'hu was full he had a Constraint upon him to vent his opinion. David faith (Psal. 39. 1, 2, 3.) I held my peace, even from good words; (he did not only forbeare idle and evill discourse, but refrain'd from good) but it was a trouble to him not to speak, especially not to speak good words; therefore he adds, My heart waxed hot within me. Jeremy found it no ease worke to keepe in words; yea, he describes himselfe as much pained by not delivering his minde, as a woman is when not delivered in child-birth (Jer. 10. 9.) Then said I, I will not make mention of him, nor speake any more in his name, but his word was in my heart as a burning fire. But up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. There was wine, new wine in his belly; yea there was a fire within him; as we may be weary with speaking, so with not speaking, or forbearing to speake, (Jer. 4. 19.) My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart maketh a noise in me, I cannot hold my peace. Read him in the like trouble upon the same occasion (Jer. 6. 11.) Eliphaz (Chap. 4. 2.) was thus pressed, Who can withold himselfe from speaking? Tis a great paine, to be mind-bound, or not to deliver our mind, when our mindes are full and we full of desire to deliver it.

Sixthly, When he faith, I am Constrain'd, I am like a bottle ready to burst, It teacheth us.

The Spirit of God doth so over-power some men, that they cannot containe.

The Pharisees and high Priests, thought to stop up the Apostles' those bottles full of the new wine of the mysteries of Christ, and therefore gave them Counfell, yea a command to speake no more in his name. At the 10th verse, they said of some in a common sense, These men are full of new wine, that is, they are drunken; but the truth was, they were full of the Spirit, full of Gospel-truths, and like bottles full of new wine they could not hold. And when the Pharisees and high Priests would have stop'd up those bottles, and charged them that they should speak no more
more in the name of Jesus; they answered, whether it be meet
to obey God or man judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things
that we have seen and heard; you may cut out our tongues if ye
will, take away the organs of speech ye may, but otherwise we
cannot but speak. As it is said of Christ, they could not resist the
Spirit by which he spake; so they were not able to resist the Spi-
rit by which the Apostles spake. Some have such Impulses from
the Devill upon them, that they cannot but speak boldly as well
as wickedly and blasphemously; it is strange to see what some
both old and new Impostors have done, their bellies have been
like bottles full of new wine, they have even burst to vent their
wicked opinions. Bernard discoursing of such an Opinion if in his
time, faith, He hunger's and thirsts for Auditors, into whose bosoms
he might empty himself alone, and pour out all his sentiments, that he
might appear who and how great a man he was. He careth not
to reach thee what thou knowest not, nor to be taught by thee what he
doeth not know; but that himselfe may be known to know what he
knoweth. Now if there be such pretences upon the spirits of vaine
men to be delivered of their false and ayery conceptions: How
much more when a man hath strong impressions from the Spirit of
God (tis discernable by the matter that comes out of the bottle,
whether it be the wine of Sodome, or of Sion) is he unable to
contain himselfe? Such a man must speake not only to instruct
and refresh others, but (as it followeth in the next verse) to ease
and refresh himselfe.

Verf. 20. I will speak that I may be refreshed.

The Hebrew is, That I may breath, or, I may have room. The word properly signifieth, that which is enlarged or widened;
when a vessell is full, and you draw some of the liquor out of it,
then there is room; So faith Eliahu, I will speak, that I may be
refreshed, or have room.

I will open my lips, and answer.

To open the lips is a preparation to speaking; Christ opened
his mouth and spake; speaking is begun with opening the mouth;
a man may open his lips for other ends then for speaking, and a
dumbe man opens his lips who cannot speake, yet no man can

Speak Aquin:
speak without opening his lips: and why did Eliphu open his lips? it was to refresh himself.

Hence note.

He that speaks his mind, easeth his mind.

'Tis good to speak to refresh our selves, but 'tis much better to speak for the refreshing of others; yea, we should speak (though to our own paine) that we may refresh others, and speak away their paine (Isa. 50. 4.) Thou hast given me the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary; They are good words indeed which refresh both the speaker, and the hearers. But the designe of speaking is rather for the refreshing of hearers, then of the speaker. How vainly then doe they spend their breath in speaking, who speak without any designe of good, or of refreshing, either to themselves or others, who speak only to be applauded and taken notice of, to be cryed up and commended for eloquent speakers. These are sad designes of speaking; better be a flammerer, then such an Orator, better be dumb and not able to speak, then to speak for such ends, with greatest ability. Unlesse we speak, that others may be informed, converted, comforted, edified, saved, some way or other bettered, we were as good hold our peace and say nothing. The holy Apostle professed (1 Cor. 14. 19.) I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, then ten thousand words in an unknowne tongue. To speak strange words in an unknowne tongue, may gaine us a name among men; But neither are any foules gained, nor doth any soule gaine the worth of one farthing in spiritual knowledge by hearing thousands and ten thousands of words spoken in an unknowne tongue. We should thinke all those words even as lost to us, by which we have not, at least, intended the gaine and good of others. But suppose, while we sincerely intend the good of others in speaking, they get no good by what is spoken; yet it shall not be without good to us: for as Eliphu, here hoped, so may we to be refreshed by it; for when a man hath discharged his duty to God and man, in speaking his mind, it cannot but be a great ease to his mind. Eliphu had a great duty upon him, to moderate and for this business right between Job and his friends, to take downe that height of spirit that was in Job, and to allay that sharpnesse and
and bitterness of spirit that was in his friends. When we have in sincerity discharged our duty to all others, and done that which our Consciences charge upon us, how doth it quiet and refresh our minds? and how many have, been burdened and disquieted in their spirits for neglecting this duty: They (I say) who neglecting to speake when it was incumbent upon them to speake, and the cause of God required it, have found it a burden upon them long after. When Mordecai had acquainted Queene Esther with the sad condition of the Jews, (whose destruction Haman had plotted,) and advised the messenger to charge her, that she should goe in unto the King to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people (Est. 4. 8.) She returned him an answer by the same messenger, that she could not doe this without running the hazzard of her owne life (v. 10, 11.) yet Mordecai replyed (v. 14.) If thou altogether holdest thy peace (let the danger be what it will) at this time, then shalt thou enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy fathers house shall be destroyed: and who knowes whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? As if he had sayd, It is thy duty to speake for thy people at such a time as this, and therefore if thou dost not breake through all difficulties to speake, thy silence will cost thee deare, probably thou wilt loose thy owne life by it, or if not, then certainly thy conscience will trouble and vex thee for it as long as thou livest. Many offend in speaking, and we may in many cases offend both God and man, yea our selves too (when we see our opportunities lost) by neglecting to speake.
Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person: neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

For I know not to give flattering titles: in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away.

In these two verses Eliphz concludes (in which he had continued long) the Preface to his following discourse and procedure with Job: Here also he acquaints us in what manner he meant to proceed with him; about which we may consider two things.

First, His resolvedness or the setlednesse of his purpose what course to take. Secondly, the reasons which moved him to it. The former he expresseth negatively in the 21st verse, and that in two points.

First, He would not accept any man's person.

Secondly, He would not give flattering titles unto man.

These two negatives (as the negative precepts in the Law of God) are to be understood with their affirmatives. I will not accept any man's person, is, I will have and give an equal, or neither a more nor lesse (to the best of my understanding) then a due regard to every man's person. And, I will not give flattering titles; that is, I purpose to speak plainly, I will not complement men, but doe my best to accomplishe the matter. And as he assures us how he will proceed in this 21st verse, so

Secondly, He gives us the reasons of this his intended impartial, plaine, and down-right proceeding in the 22d. These reasons are two-fold.

First, He would not doe otherwise, because he could not with any content to himselfe. It was against the very graine of his spirit to doe otherwise; his disposition lay a Quite contrary way, he was a man of another genius or temper, a man of another mould and make, then to doe such low and unworthy things, as accepting the persons of, or giving flattering titles unto men.

He is expressè in this (v. 22.) I know not to give flattering titles.

Second-
Secondly, He would not because he durst not give flattering titles, nor accept the persons of men. The danger and dammage he should incurre by doing so, kept him from doing so, as well as his owne indisposition to it. He should lay himselfe open and obnoxious to the wrath of God by such seeking the favour of men; as appeares in the close of the verse; In so doing my Maker would soon take me away.

Thus you have the parts and purpose of these words; I shall now give a more distinct explication and account of them.

Ver. 21. Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person; or, let me not now.

So that particle is rendred (Job 5. 1.) Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; yet tis an Adverb of beseeching or intreating; and therefore we render well, Let me not, I pray you; which rendring seemes to have in it these two things. As if Elihu had sayd,

First, Expect not that I should, nor believe that I will doe any such thing, as the accepting of persons, or the giving of flattering titles.

Secondly, Be not offended if I doe not, be not angry with me, if I deale plainly with you; pray give me leave to use my owne freedome and liberty when I am speaking; for I am resoluted to doe it, and not to accept the persons of men, nor to give them flattering titles. The words may be rendred also in a direct negation, Verily I will not accept any mans person. But I shall keep to our reading.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person.

The Hebrew is, Let me not lift up any mans person; or (which the Apostle forbids) Let me not have any mans person in admiration; I will not over-reverence any man, nor give him a respect beyond himselfe. The word which we render person, is in Hebrew, face, Let me not lift up the face of a man, or wonder at any mans face, as the Septuagint often render this phrase. And it is usuall to put the face, or the countenance for the person, because the face declares the person and shews who the mans is; and it is elegantly expressed by the face, because accepting of persons, importeth a respect to others for their ouste, or in considerati—
on of some external glory. Let me not accept the face of any man, or person, let him be who he will. The original word ish, most properly signifies an eminent, or honourable man, a learned or wise man. As if Elihu had said, I will not accept or lift up the face of a man, though he be (ish) a man never to much lifted up, and exalted above his brethren. To accept the person of a man, is not a fault in it selfe; for as our persons are accepted of God, so ought our persons to be accepted with one another; yea, it is a duty to accept the person of a man; that is, to give him favour, honour, and due respect. Not only civility and humanity, but religion itself calls us to give outward reverence to them who excel, and are superior, either to others or ourselves. God himself did say, to accept the persons of his people first, and then their sacrifices or services. And we ought to accept the persons of men according to their differences in place and power, especially according to those gifts and Graces, which shine in them. Therefore when Elihu faith, Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person, his meaning is, let me not doe it in prejudice to the cause or truth that is before us. Then we are properly and strictly sayd to accept persons, when in any matter, business, or point of controversy, our eyes are so dazzled or blinded by external appearances, that we have respect rather to the person of the man, then to the matter, or the truth of the cause in hand. So then, this sin of accepting persons, is always committed when we are more swayed by, or when there is more attributed to persons then to things, that is, when the mans worth is more looked to then the worth or merit of his cause; or further, when something in a person which hath no respect to the goodnes, or badnes of his cause, moves us to give him more or less then is meete, this is sinfully to accept or respect a person. Thus Elihu acquits himselfe from all those bonds and blinds which his respect to those worthy persons before him, might lay upon him. They were ancient and grave men, they were wise and good men, he had a great respect for them, he owed much reverence to them, considering their age and gravity, their degree and dignity; yet he owed a greater respect to God, and to the truth, then to their persons, and was thereupon resolved, (though he had many and great temptations to doe it,) not to accept the persons of men.

Hence
Hence note.

To accept persons in prejudice to the cause or truth before us, is a high offence both to God and good men.

'Tis so in a double notion; First, in the act of it, because we doe that which in it selfe is not right, nor according to the mind of God. Secondly, in the illue, consequence or effects of it, because by respecting persons, we are endangered to many other sins. While Solomon only faith (Prov. 28. 21.) To have respect of persons is not good; his meaning is, 'tis very evill, 'tis flarke naught. And the reason which he gives of the evill of it, is not only because the act in it selfe is evill, but because the illue and consequence of it is worse; For, (faith that Scripture) for a piece of bread that man will transgresse; That is, he that respects persons, will turne aside from Justice, for his owne advantage, though it be very small, even for a piece of bread. The Prophet complaines of thole (Amos 2. 6.) who sold the righteous for silver, and the poore for a paire of shoes. They who have sold or given up themselves to this crooked Spirit of respecting persons, will not sticke to fell both the persons of the righteous, and the most righteous causes, not only (as the Prophet faith) for a paire of shoes, but (as we say) for a paire of shoe-bucklees. They will soone judge amiss of things, who have respect to persons, and they alwaies looke beside the cause, who looke too much upon the face; nothing should weigh with us in judgement, but truth or right, and that in a five-fold opposition.

First, Truth and right must weigh with us in opposition to relation. When a Brother, or a neere kinman be in the cause, we must not decline, nor be biassed from the truth, yea though it be on his side to whom we have no relation, but that of man.

Secondly, We must keep to the truth, and doe justice in opposition to friendship. Though he be my friend, my old friend, and my fathers friend, I must not respect him, if truth stand upon the other side, upon the side of the meereft stranger. It was anciently sayd, Socrates is my friend, and Plato is my friend, but truth is more my friend, and therefore I will stick to that.

Thirdly, We must hold to truth, in opposition to or notwithstanding the hatred of men; suppose a man beares us ill will, yea in other things hath wronged us, 'yet if his present cause be
righteous, we must doe him right: We may not bring in our par-
ticular wrongs or quarrells upon any cause, but that about which
the wrong or quarrel riseth. They shew the purest love to righ-
teousnesse, who act righteously towards those that hate them,
and will not wrong those who have attempted to oppresse and
ruine them. A true lover of Justice will do to others as himselfe
would have, others doe to him, yea though they have not done to
him, as they would be done to.

Fourthly, We must stand to truth in opposition to riches
and worldly abundance; riches usually find more friends and
favourers, then righteousness doth. And 'tis usual to favour the
rich more then the righteous. How often is truth on the poore
mans side over-ballanced by his adversaries purse. But O how
poore are they in spirituals and morals, who thus respect the
persons of the rich!

Fifthly, We must judge for truth in opposition to worldly
greatness and power; and that in a two-fold consideration.

First, Though men have a power to reward, and preferre us,
to doe great things for us, yet this should not draw us aside; woe
to those who respect the greatness of the person instead of the
greatnesse of the cause: yet how many are there who care not how
bad a great mans cause is, if he will but engage to do them good:
yea some great men look upon themselves as much undervalued,
if they be not favoured in their cause (how bad soever it be)
because they are able to doe them good who favour it. Balak
rook it very ill at Balaams hands, when he seemed unmoved
by his ability to advance and reward him. Did not I earnestly send
for thee, to call thee? Wherefore camest thou not to me, am I not a-
ble indeed to promote thee to honour? (Numb: 22. 37.) And wilt
not thou serve my interest, when I have such a power to ad-
Vance thine? Thus also Saul thought all must cleave to him, and
forfake the cause of David, because he was great and could pre-
ferre them (1 Sam: 22. 7.) Will the son of Jesse give every one
of you fields, and vineyards, and make you all Captains of thousands,
and Captains of hundreds? Hath he any great places to bestow;
and honours to give? Why then doe ye seeme to adhere to him
and his party. Hope of reward makes a great bias upon some
mens spirits, and carrieth them quite off from truth.

There is a second consideration prevailing much with many
in this matter; for though they are unmoved by rewards, and
will not bite at the bayte of selfe-advancement; yet, say they, O
he is a great man, and hath great power, he may do me a shrewd
turne, he may vex me and undoe me, he may fit upon my skirts
hereafter and ruine me. Thus where hope doth not, feare may
carry a man from respect to right to the respect of persons. But
know, That be a man never so great, and able to doe me a mis-
chiefe, yet truth must be maintained and Justice be done, though
we should be quite undone by appearing for it. It hath been
sayd of old, Let justice be done, though heaven fall; much more
should it be done, though we for doing and abetting it fall to the
earth. Moses gave that charge more then once (Levit. 19. 15.
Deut. 1. 16, 17.) Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor,
nor honour the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy
neighbour. Againe, Ye shall not respect persons in Judgement, but
ye shall heare the small as well as the great, ye shall not be afraid
of the face of man, for the judgement is Gods; neither undue pity
to the poore, nor carnal feare of the great (which two often doe)
ought to put any check or stop to the execution of Justice. So
in that excellent model of instructions which Jehoshaphat gave
his Judges (2 Chron. 19. 7.) Wherefore now let the feare of the
Lord be upon you, take heed, and doe it; for there is no iniquity with
the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. As if he
had said, Do not you respect persons, for God respects no persons;
he is no gift-taker, therefore be ye no gift-takers; your duty is
to give every one his due. That which is right to one man is right
to another, either in the same, or in any parallel case; That which
is the rich mans right in his cause, is the right of the poore man
in his cause; yea it is as sinfull not to have a due respect to the
rich man in his case, as not to have respect to the poore man in
his. Then all sorts and degrees of men are judged righteously,
when there is no regard had or notice taken in Judgement, of
what sort or degree any man is. Judges are called gods, and there-
fore should act like God without respect to men.

And as this is a truth in all those cases of judgement, where
Magistrates sit in the place of God, so it is as true in all the pri-
ivate judgements and determinations of brethren concerning
persons or things, which (by way of distinction from the former)
is commonly called the putting or referring of a matter in diffe-
rence to men. We must take heed in private judgements, that we be not swayed according to the condition of persons, nor must we make the fault great or lesse, the cause better or worse, because the person is greater or lesse, friend or stranger to us. The Apostle gives this counsel and caution to the Churches (James 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) My Brethren, have not the faith (that is, the doctrine of faith or profession) of our Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons; For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poor, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in your selves, and are become judges of evil thoughts. In administering the things of God which are spiritual, we must observe no civil difference, no distinction among men. Christ hath given himself alike and equally to rich and poor, bond and free, and therefore, as to Church-priviledges and enjoyments, they must all be alike, and equal unto us. No man is to be knowne after the flesh in the things of the Spirit (2 Cor. 5. 16.) that is, no man is to be valued mearely, upon natural or worldly accounts; if we doe, then (as the Apostle James concludes in the place last before mentioned) are we not partial in ourselves? that is (as some also translate that reproving question) Have we not made a difference, a groundlesse difference, or a difference grounded upon carnal respects, rather then upon any solid reason; and so as it follows in the close of the verse, are become judges of evil thoughts, that is, have made our judgement of those persons, according to the dictate of our owne evil and corrupt thoughts, not according to the rule of the word. 

Further, this sin of respecting persons, is found also in the ordinary converse of men; For when we cast favours upon those that are ill deserving, and commend those (as we say) to the skies, who should rather fall under our severest censure, and are led to doe all this also, because the person is a kinsman or a friend; for though (ceteris paribus, other qualifications and circumstances being equal) we are to respect friends and kindred, who are our owne flesh, before strangers, ye vertue and worth should our-weigh relations, and (as Levi in doing Justice, Deut. 33. 9.) so we in bestowing rewards, should not acknowledge our 

Bec.
Brethren, nor know our owne children; but let such have our rewards who best deserve them.

I may add this also, To take up this or that forme of religion, because such and such persons are in it, and to reject another, though better, because none but a few that are despised and condemned are in it, is a most dangerous way of respecting persons. This was the meaning of that question (John 7. 48.) Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him? As if certainly that must always be the best way and rule of believing, which is professed by the rulers? Or as if it were ground enough to reject a way of religion because the common people or the poore are mostly found in it. Thus, 'tis storied of a Great Prince that was converted to the Christian faith, and resolved to be baptized, that seeing a great many poore men in his way as he went, he asked to whom they belonged; it was answered they were Christians, and of that religion which he was entering into; what, doth Christ keep his servants so poore? (sayd he) I will not serve such a Master, and so drew back, even while he was but setting his face towards Christ. I might instance the sinfullnes of accepting persons in many other particular cases, as well as these, but these may suffice for a taft. Let me not (faith Elisha) accept any mans person.

Neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

In the former part of the verse it was \\*I\* shall, here it is Adam; I will not respect the person of the greatest men, nor will I flatter any earthly, any mortall man. Mr Broughton renders, That I respect an earthly man. The vulgar Latin translates the whole verse thus; I will not accept any mans persons, and I will not equal God to man; As if he had sayd, I will not measure God by man, in his dealings and proceedings with man; As my purpose is to speak truth, and spare no man, so I will not wrong God by drawing him downe to the rules of men. What is man that he should compare with God? But, though this be a truth, yet because it departs so farre from the Original text, I will not stay upon it. Our reading is cleare.

I will not give flattering titles.

There are severall other readings of these words, which I shall propose.
propose and paff to our owne. First, I will not use a preface; or, I will not stand prefacing with man: Flatteries are usually let forth in affected Prefaces and Apologies. Secondly, Let me not change names before men; or, let me not speak to man under a borrowed name; That is, let me speake plainly and clearly without ambages and fetches; let me speake to every man, and about every thing by its owne name, and not with covered words, as if I were unwilling to touch those to whom I speake. Our translation is yet more cleare to the scope and tendency of this place; I will not give flattering titles.

This sentence is but two words in the Hebrew; The verbe signifies (lay the Rabbins) to hide, or conceal, or to carry a matter clofely and obscurely; and they give the reason of it, because in flattering there is a hiding of what men are, and a shewing of what they are not. The word signifieth also to give a name or a by-name, and so the fence is; I will not give secret reflactions, nor gird at any man upon the by; Jabs friends had done so sometimes, though they after spake explicitely and directly enough. Further, the word signifies the giving of any addittionall title. Thus I finde it used in the Prophet (Isa. 44. 5. ) One shall say, I am the Lords: (speaking how persons shall flow into the Church) and another shall call himselfe by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himselfe by the name of Israel: He shall surname himselfe; that's the word here used, he shall take up that title, that illustrious title, he shall lift or enroll himselfe among the people of God, and thinke it his honour and glory to surname himselfe by the name of Israel. The word is so used againe (Isa. 45. 4. ) For Jacob my servants sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not knowne me. It is spoken of Cyrus, I have given thee a glorious title; God did not only name Cyrus, but gave him a surname, he called him, Cyrus my servant, and Cyrus mine anointed. Thus the word signifies to give a title, or a surname; now there are surnames or titles of two sorts; First, disgracefull and reviling ones, justly given to, but commonly by vile men. Secondly, Honorable and advancing ones. And these are of two sorts.

First, Such as are true and well deserved, many by the great acts which they have done, have purchased surnames; Alexander King
King of Greece, for his Warlike valour and successe, was called The Great; And among The Romans Scipio after his victories over the Carthaginians in Africa, was surnamed Africanus. The Romane Histories supply sundry examples of this kind. And when in Scripture Paul is called an Apostle, Peter an Apostle, They well deserved these honorable Titles, because as they were meere of Grace immediately called and sent of God, to publish and plant the Gospel all the world over, so they laboured abundantly in it, and by their ministery subdued and conquered the world to the faith and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, There are also titles and surnames, which are meere pieces of flattery, there being no worth in the person that may justly deserve them. 'Tis not sinful to give titles, but as we translate to give flattering titles unto men. We should call men as they are, and as they deserve; I will call a spade a spade, (faith Eliph.) he that is good I will call him good, and he that is bad I will call him bad; and that which is ill done I will say it is ill done; Let me not give flattering titles unto men.

Hence observe.

Flattery is iniquity: to give flattering titles unto men is to trangress the Law of God.

Some will not give true and due Titles to any man; The most truly honorable persons and highest Magistrates, shall have nothing from them but Thou and Thee. Jacob a holy and a plaine man, yet called his owne brother, My Lord Esau, (Gen. 32.4. Gen: 33.8.) Luke The Evangelist called Theophilus, Most excellent (Luke 1. 3.) And Paul surned Festus, Most Noble (Acts 26. 25.) Now as they erre upon one extreme, who will not give true titles, so doe they on the other, who give (which Eliph here disclaims) flattering titles. There is a two-fold flattery.

First, In promises.

Secondly, In praises.

Some are full of flattery in promises, they will tell you of great matters which they will doe for you, yet meane no such thing. Thus (Psal. 78. 36.) The children of Israel dealt with God, when in the time of their straights and calamities they promised to doe great and good things, they would turne to the Lord and serve him; Nevertheless (faith the text) they did flatter him,
with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, &c. Thus many upon their sick-beds, or in a day of trouble, what promises will they make? How deeply will they engage for duty, if God will restore them? how holy and zealous and upright will they be? they will leave their former ill courses, and yet all is but flattery, they really intend it not. 'Tis flattery in promises to God, when there is not a purpose in the heart to do what we say, but only, to get our ends upon him; And we deal no better many times by one another; men in freights will promise any thing, and when they have gained enlargement, performe nothing.

Secondly, There is a flattery in praises, and that's here professed against. This flattery in praising hath a double respect.

First, To the actions of men. 'Tis flattery to call that act good that is nought, that just that is unrighteous; To put titles of vertue upon those things that are vicious, to call that which is indeed a covetous act, a thrifty one, and to call that act which is cruel, just, at most but strict or severe, this is to flatter men in what they doe.

Secondly, There is a flattery of persons, as to what they have and are, when we speake more of them then is in them, when we speake highly of them, who are low in all abilities and attainments. How grossely doe they give flattering titles, who blow up very Ideots with a conceit of their learning, who extoll fooles for wisdom, and commend the wicked as vertuous, yea recommend them as patterns of vertue.

We should give honour to all men to whom it belongs; but we are not to flatter any man, for that belongs to no man. (Rom: 13. 7.) Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome, feare to whom feare, honour to whom honour. There is an honour that belongs to men with respect to their degrees, when none belongs to them with respect to their qualities. He that is very honorable as to his place, may not deserve any honour as to his worth, yet he must be honoured as much as his place comes to. And as there is an honour due to those that are above us, so there is an honour due to those that are our equalls, yea to those that are our inferiors, and below us. The Apostle gives that direction more then once; we have it first (Rom: 12. 10.) Be kindly affectionate one to another, in hon-
now preferring one another. The people of God should be so farre from an ambitious affectation of preheminence above others, that they should freely and really (not as many doe complenementally) give others the preheminence, and offer them the upper place or hand; The grace of humility, doth not only forbid us to exalt our selves above our betters, but it also (in many cases) bids us let our selves below those who are betters we are.

One of the Ancients hath made three degrees of this kind of humility. The first is, when we make our selves inferior to our equals; The second, when we make our selves but equal to our inferiors; The third, when we make our selves inferior even to our inferiors, and let then those who are lesser then we. Of this third sort of humility, the Apostle speakes againe in that serious admonition to the Church (Phil. 2. 3.) Let nothing be done through strife, or vain glory, but in lowlineffe of minde; Let each esteem other better then himselfe. As it is good to judge (according to truth) the worst of our selves, and the best of others, so it is good to have a better opinion of others then of our selves.

So then, the point lyeth not against giving honour to any man; or to men of all sorts, but only against the giving of undue honour to any. Of that the Apostle speakes (Gal. 1. 10.) If I please men, I should not be the servant of Christ; that is, if I should please men by flattering, smoothing them up in their sins or errors, I could not be the servant of Christ. They that were the strict observers of Christ, could not but observe this in him, that though he came to save man, yet he was farre enough from pleasing, that is, humoring any man. (Luke 20. 21.) And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou artest and teachest righteously, neither receivest thou the persons of any, but teachest the way of God truly.

Yet caution is to be used here. For some goe so farre to the other hand, that while they thinke they ought not to flatter or please, they care not how they slight or disrepect the persons of men; and in stead of so-bearing (as they ought) to give undue titles, they will not (as was taught before) give so much as those that are due; that's a sin in defect, as the other is in excess. And they sin much more who while they refuse to give flattering titles, are free to give reviling titles. There are these two great tongue-evills among men; Some give flattering titles,
others give reviling titles, detracting, calumniating, and biting titles; it is as dangerous not to forbear the one, as to be free and forward in giving the other, and therefore we should take heed of both these extreames, that our speech may have an equal respect to truth, both while we praise, and while we reprove.

Ver. 22. For I know not how to give flattering titles.

It seemes to have little vertue in it, or matter of commendation, not to give flattering titles, when we are notable, or know not how to give them; To heare one that is (as we speake) a meere Countryman, or a clowne say, I will not give flattering titles, speakes not his praise at all, because 'tis supposed he at most can but speake fence, or true English; but to heare a learned man, or some Great Courtier say, I will not give flattering titles, this is something, this shewes that his honesty matters his ability, and that his conscience is too strong for his parts. How is it then that Elihu saith, I know not to give flattering titles? Had not Elihu wit and skill, words and language at command to give them? Was he so courfely bred that he could not reach them?

I answer, Those words, I know not, may have a three-fold interpretation.

First, I know not, is, I have not made that piece of knowledge my study, I have not set my selfe to learne the art of flattery, nor to gaine the skill of carnal Courtship. Thus I know not to doe it, is, I have not set my selfe to doe it, I have not made it my businesse, or my ayme to doe it; A good man hath, or at least desirith no skill in that which is evill, or not his duty; how much soever any man knowes to flatter, yet we may say he knowes not to flatter who abhorreth flattery; And can say (as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 4. 20.) He hath not so learned Christ; that is, he hath heard no such lesones, nor received any such instruction in the schoole of Christ.

Thus Elihu saith, I know not to give flattering titles. And doubtlesse, 'tis best being an Ideot, or a bungler at the doing of that which is not good, or (as the Apostle saith, some are to every good work) to be reprobate to every evill work, and word.

How knowing are they, who can say in truth, they know not how to lie, or flatter, &c. I dare not say (with the Papists) that ignorance
norance is, but I am sure this nescience is not only the mother of devotion, but a great point of devotion itself. And, in this fence every godly man, and only a godly man knoweth not how to doe evil.

For as the wicked may have the Theory of good workes, and know what it is to pray, what it is to heare the word of God, yet they have no skill, they are not studied, nor fitted for the practice of those workes; So a godly man may know in speculation what it is to doe wickedly, and how to doe it as well as the most wicked man in the world, yet he is not at all disposed nor ready for the practice of any wickedness. As nature makes us reprobate good, so grace to evil workes, The Prophet faith of a bad sort of men, (Jer 4. 22.) They are wise to doe evil, but to doe good they have no knowledge. Were they an ignorant people? No, the meaning is, they had not set themselves to learn the doing of that good which they knew; theirs were not sins of ignorance, but of wilfulnesse, and perversenesse. So on the other hand, tis the commendation of the people of God, They are wise to doe good, but to doe evil they have no knowledge. I know not to give flattering titles.

Secondly, As to know a thing or person, imports the allowance and approbation of it. (Psal 1. 6.) The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; that is, he approveth it. (Psal 101. 4.) I will not know a wicked person; that is, I like him not. I regard him not, I will never give him testimony, he shall neither have my hand, nor my heart. So, not to know a thing or person, notes our disallowance and disaffection of either; in this fence Christ will say to those great knowing professors (Luke 13. 27.) I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me, &c. Thus, here when Elihu professeth, I know not to give flattering titles; his meaning is, I like not, yea, I cannot abide to doe it. I may be as much skilled as any man to speake high words, possibly I could Court it as well as others, but I have no heart to doe it, yea it is the abhorrence of my soule to doe it. A good man doth not approve the doing of evil, and therefore though he know well enough how to doe evil, yet he is truly sayd not to know how to doe it.

Thirdly, Not to know a thing, is not to be accustomed, or practised in it. Thus when Elihu faith, I know not to give flattering titles; he seemes to say, It is not my manner, I have not been
used to flatter. As use doth not only make fitted, but encreaseth our knowledge, so diffuse doth at once unfit us to doe a thing, and diminisheth our knowledge how to doe it. And therefore what we use not to doe, we are rightly sayd not to know to doe. 

I know not to give flattering titles.

Hence note.

The spirit of a good man is set against all that is evil, he cannot close nor comply with it.

His understanding assenteth not to it, his will chuseth it not, his conscience cannot swallow it, though not a camel, but a gnat, the least of sin-evils, much lesse doth he give himselfe up to the free and customary practise of great sins. A good man may well be sayd, not to know to sin, because though he knoweth the nature of all sins, yet he knowingly declines the doing of every sin. 

I know not to give flattering titles.

In so doing my Maker would soone take me away.

Those words, in so doing, are not expressed in the Original, but supplied to make up the sense; and yet we may very well read the text without them; I know not to give flattering titles, my Maker would soone take me away, or as Mr Broughton renders, my Maker would be my taker away.

My Maker.

Elihu expresseth God, by the work of creation, or by his relation to God as a creator; Elihu doth but include himselfe in the number of those whom God hath made, he doth not exclude others from being made by God, as much as himselfe, while he saith, My Maker, God is the maker of every man, and is so in a three-fold consideration.

First, He is the maker of every man, in his natural constitution, as he is a man, consisting of a reasonable soul and body. I am fearfully and wonderfully made, sayd David, with respect to both, (Psal: 119. 14.)

Secondly, God is every mans maker, in his civil state, as well as in his natural; he formeth us up into such and such a condition, as rich, or as poore, as high, or as low, as Governours or as governed, according to the pleasure of his owne will. (Prov. 22. 2.)
The rich and the poor meete together; the Lord is the maker of them both; he meaneth it not only, if at all in that place, that the Lord hath made them both as men, but he hath made the one a rich man, and the other a poore man. Thus the Lord is the maker of them both. And as the Lord makes men rich, so Great and honorable. (Psal. 75. 6.) Promotion cometh not from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; it cometh from none of these parts or points of earth or heaven, it cometh from nothing under heaven, but from the God of heaven; God is the Judge, he putteth downe one, and setteth up another.

Thirdly, The Lord is the maker of every man in his spirituall state, as good, and holy, and gracious. (Ephes. 2. 10.) We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; till we are wrought by God, we can doe none of Gods worke, nor have we any mind to doe it. Now when Elihu saith, My Maker would soone take me away, we may understand it in all these three fences; he that made me this body and soule, when I came into the world, he that ordered my way and state all this while that I have been in this world, he that formed me up into a new life, the life of Grace, and hath made me a new man in this and for another world. This my Maker would soone take me away.

Hence note.

It is good to remember God as our maker.

Man would not make such ill worke in the world, if he remembered God his maker, or that himselfe is the work of God. We should remember God our maker; First, as to our being, as from him we receive life and breath. Secondly, as to our well-being, as from him we receive all good things, both for this life and a better. (Eccles. 12. 1.) Remember now thy creator (not only that God is a creator, but thy creator, remember this) in the days of thy youth; And surely if thou remembrest him well, thou wilt not forget thy selfe so much as to forget the duty which thou owest him. Thinke often upon thy maker, and then this thought will be upon thee alwayes, If I owe my selfe wholly unto God for making me in nature, how much more doe I owe my selfe unto God, for making me a new creature. We ought to live wholly to him from whom we have received our lives. He that hath made us should have the use of us. He hath made all things for him-

selfe,
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selfe, (Prov. 16. 4.) chiefly man, who is the chief of all visible which he hath made. Those two memento's, That we are made by the power of God, and that the price by which we are redeemed is the blood of God, should constraine us at all times and in all things to be at the call and command of God. My Maker

Would soone take me away.

We had the same word in the former verse, there 'tis used for accepting a person; here for taking away a person. The Learned Hebricians take notice of an elegant flower of Rhetorick in this expression; If I take persons, God will take away my person; so we may translate the Text; If I take men, my God will take me away. Yea, my maker would not only take me away at last, or (as we say) first or last, but he would make dispatch, and be quick with me, My maker would

Soone take me away.

Some render, He would take me away as a little thing; But the mind of our translation is, he would take me away in a little time. The original word beares either signification, and so may the scope of the text; My Maker would take me away as a little thing, he would blow me away as a feather, or as dust, and crush me as a moth; and he would doe it in a moment, in a little time; all the men of the world, yea the whole world is but a little thing before God, and he can quickly take both away. (Isa. 40. 15.) Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Ballance; Behold, he taketh up the Islands as a very little thing. Now if Whole Islands, if all nations are such little things as drops and dusts; then, what is any one particular man, how big forever he be? And how soone can God take him away! Little things are taken away in a little time. So the word is used in the second Psalm (v. 12.) If his wrath bekindled but a little, or but, as a little thing; if the wrath of Christ be kindled only so farre that you see but a sparke of it, blessed are they that trust in him; There is no standing before the least wrath of the great God, by the greatest of the sons of men.

We translate, He would soone take me away, or he would doe it in a little time, my ruine needs not be long in working; he would
would rid his hands of me presently; to take or snatch a man away, notes three things.

First, A violent death, or a violence in death.

Secondly, A speedy or sudden death, a quick dispatch. When the fire was kindled and the word sent out against Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, their maker soone took them away; he bid the earth open, and it tooke them away in the twinkling of an eye; they went downe quick into hell. It is sayd of a wicked man in this booke (Chap. 27. 21.) The East wind carrieth him away; there also this word is used, that is, judgement like some fierce impetuous winde, Shall blow him from his standing, and blast all his glory.

Some give the sence by the effect of fire, My Maker would some burne or consume me. The word in the Hebrew signifieth to tolleret me, expellant, comburent, ut aliquando suntur hoc verbum insubintimi tollitur. Merc.

Hence observe.

First, As flattery and accepting of persons are great, so they are very dangerous sins, they are wrath-provoking sins.

If we flatter men, God will not flatter us, he will deale plainly with us. To receive flattery, or to suffer our selves to be flattered,
Chap. 32. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 22.

tered, is very dangerous, as we see in the example of Herod (Acts 12, 22, 23.) who having made a very eloquent Oration, The people gave a shout, saying, it is the voice of a God, and not of a man; They gave him flattering titles, or (as some render the former part of this verse) they wonder'd at his person. But what was the issue of it? Presently (faith the text) the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten up with worms, and gave up the ghost. Thus his Maker tooke him soone away, for taking that glory to himselfe. O take heed of entertaining flatteries when given, we should put them back from us, as we would a poisonous cup. High commendations of Sermons given to the Preacher, may have a sad consequence. When men give much glory to men, tis hard for men to give the glory back againe to God. Herod was so pleased and tickled with the glory which the people gave him, that he could not part with it, and so lost himselfe. Because he forget that he was a worme, he was destroyed by wormes. The translation given us by the Septuagint of this text in Job, comlyes fully with that dreadfull example in the Acts; I know not how to give flattering titles, for in so doing the wormes or moths will eatemeeup. The words of Elihu thus rendred in Job are a threatening aferition, That the wormes shall eat those that give flatteries; and the judgement which fell upon Herod, is an example threatening all those that receive flattering titles, with that dreadfull doome of being eaten up by wormes. And doublestly, if not that, yet either some other corporeal and visible judgement, or (which is much worse) some spirituall and invisible judgement, will overtake those who love either to flatter others, or to be flattered themselves. And as that example shewes how dangerous it is to receive flatteries; so to give flatteries, hath in it a double danger.

First, It is dangerous to others. When Parasites flatter Princes, when Ministers flatter the people, how doth it ensuere, their soules? 'Tis hell and death to flatter sinners, and not to deal plainly with them; to give lenitives instead of corosives; to give oyle where vineger should be given; to heale the hurt of the soule deceitfully, is the greatest hurt and wounding to the soule. Flatteries are those pillows spoken of in the Prophet (Ezek. 13.18.) sowed to the Arme-holes or elbowes of wicked men, upon which many sleepe without feare, till they dye without hope; yea these flatte-
flatteries as well as any falsities and errors of doctrine, whether respecting faith or worship, are that untempered mortar, of and against which the Prophet speaks in the same Chapter (v. 10. 15.) wherewith some daubed that wall of vaine confidence which others built, while they seduced the people, saying, peace, and there was no peace. How often do the true Prophets warne the people against these flatteries of the false Prophets. And how sadly doth the Prophet Jeremy bewail them (Lam: 2. 14.) Thy Prophets have sene vaine and foolish things for thee, and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turne away thy captivity; but have sene for thee fals burders, and causes of banishment; that is, the visions which they have sene, they pretend, at least, to have had from God, but they are their owne dreames and brain-fick phantasies, and so the cause of thy banishment; they have undone thee with these deceits, soothing thee up in those thy sins, which procured thy banishment, and caused the Lord to thrust thee out, and send thee farre away from thine owne Land. They have fed, yea, filled thee with falte hopes, till thy condition was hopelesse. How many thousands have been destroyed by flatteries both for here and for ever. And if flattery be so dangerous to the receiver, then

Secondly, It must needs be much more dangerous to the giver. It is no small sin to palliate or cover the sins of others; But it is a farre greater sin to commend the sins of others, or to commend others in their sin. And we may take the measure of this sin by the punishment of it. When we heare the Lord threatening flatterers with suddaine destruction, doth it not proclaine to all the world, that their sin is full of provocation? The Lord beares long with many sorts of sinners, but not with sinners of this sort. My maker would soone take me away.

Whence note, Secondly.

As the grace of God towards sinners, so his wrath needs no long time in preparations. When we designe great actions, we must take time to fitt our selves. Princes must have time to set out an Army or a Navy, when they would either defend themselves against, or revenge themselves upon their enemies; But God can prefently proceed to action, yea to execution. He that

T

made
made all with a word speaking, can destroy the wicked as soone as speake the word; he can doe it in the twinkling of an eye, with the turning of a hand. My Maker would soone take me away.

Thirdly, Because Elihu, being about to speake in that great cause, sets God before him, and God in his judgements, in case he should speake or doe amisse.

Note, Thirdly.

They that doe or speake evill, have reason to expell evill at the hand of God.

If I should flatter ( faith Elihu ) my Maker would soone take me away. I have reason to feare he will; not that God takes away every sinner as soone as he sins, ( God rarely useth Martial Law, or executes men upon the place, we should live and walke more by fence then by faith if he should doe so ) but any sinner may expect it. God ( I say ) is very patient and long-suffering, he doth not often take sinners away, either in the act, or immediately after the act of sin. Yet there is no sinner but hath cause to feare, left as soone as he hath done any evill, God should make him feel evill, and instantly take him away. David prayeth (Psal: 28. 3.) Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity. There is a two-fold drawing away with the workers of iniquity. First, to doe as they doe; that is, wickedly. Thus many are drawne away with the workers of iniquity; and 'tis a good and most necessary part of prayer, to beg that God would not thus draw us away with the workers of iniquity, that is, that he would not suffer the workers of iniquity to draw us away into their lewd and sinfull courses. Secondly, there is a drawing away to punishment, and execution. In that sence ( I conceive ) David prayed, Lord draw me not away with the workers of iniquity, who are taken away by some sudden stroke of judgement; though I may have provoked thee, yet let not thy wrath upon me, as thou sometimes doest upon the workers of iniquity: doe not draw me out as cattell out of the pasture where they have been fed and fatted, for the slaughter. Every worker of iniquity is in danger of present death, and may looke that God will be a swift witness against him: though most are reprieved, yet no man is sure of that.

Againe,
Againe, In that Elihus represents God to himselfe ready to take him away, in case of flattery and prevarication in that cause.

Note, Fourthly.

It is good for us to overawe our soules with the remembrance of the judgements and terrours of God.

'Tis profitable sometimes to converse with the threatnings, as well as with the promises; 'tis profitable to remember what God is able to do against us, as well as to remember what God is able to do for us; Even believers should goe into the dreadfull treauries of wrath, into the thunders & lightnings of divine displeasure, as well as into the delightfull treauries of mercy, of love & compassion; it is good for a good man to thinke God may take me away, as well as to thinke God will save and deliver me; we need even these meditations of God, to keepe downe our corruptions, and to fright our lusts. Though it be the more Gospel way to make use of love, yet the Gospel it selfe teacheth us to make use of wrath, (2 Cor. 5.11.) Knowing the terrour of the Lord we perswade men.

Lastly, Note.

When we goe about any great worke, when we are either to speak or doe in any weightie matter, it is good for us to set God before our eyes, to thinke of and remember our Maker.

As in great undertakings we should remember our Maker, waiting for and depending upon his assistance, strength, and blessing, in what we doe or goe about; so we should remember him to keepe our hearts right. And to remember seriously, believingly and spiritually, that God beholds and feeth us in all our wayes and workes, and that according to the frame of our hearts, and the way that we take in every action, such will the reward and the issue be, cannot but have a mighty command, and an answerable effect upon us. We can hardly doe amisse with God in our eye. And therefore as it is sayd of a wicked man (Psal: 10.4.) that through the pride of his countenance he will not seeke after God, God is not in all his thoughts. So David said of himselfe (though in that Psalme he speaks chiefly as a type of Christ) and so in proportion or as to sincerity every godly man faith like David,
Psal: 16. 8. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, therefore I shall not be moved; that is, as I shall not be utterly overthrown by any evil of trouble, so I shall not be overcome by any evil of temptation: or I shall not be moved either in a way of discouragement by the troubles I meete with, or in a way of enticement by the temptations I meete with. How steadfast, how unmoveable are they in the worke of the Lord, how doe they keepe off from every evil worke, who set the Lord always before them, and have him at their right hand! Could we but set the Lord before us, either in his mercies or in his terrors, we should not be moved from doing our duty in whatsoever we are called to doe.

Thus farre Elihu hath drawne out his speech, in a way of preface, preparing himselfe for his great undertaking with Job; He hath now fully shewed the grounds why he undertooke to deale with him, and what method he would use in that undertaking. In the next Chapter, and so forward to the end of the 37th, we have what he sayd, and how he mannaged the whole matter.
Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my speeches; and hearken to all my words.
Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.
My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

Elihu having spent the whole former Chapter in prefacing to Job's friends, directs his speech now to Job himselfe; yet not without a renewed Preface, as will appeare in opening this Chapter. Wherein we may take notice of foure heads of his discourse.

First, We have his Preface in the seven former verses of the Chapter.
Secondly, A proposition of the matter to be debated, or of the things that Elihu had observed in Job's speech about this Controversie, from the 7th verse to the 12th.
Thirdly, We have his confutation of what Job had affirmed, from the 12th verse to the 31st.
Lastly, We have his conclusion, exciting Job to make answer to what he had spoken, else to heare him speaking, further in the three last verses of the Chapter.

Elihu in his Preface, moves Job about two things; First, to attend what he was about to say.
Secondly, To make reply to and answer what he should say.
Elihu moves Job to the former duty severall wayes.
First, By a mild Entreaty and sweet Insinuation in the first verse; Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my speeches, and hearken to my words. As if he had sayd, I doe not come authoritatively and ri-
gorously upon thee, to command or demand thy attention, but as a
crafty friend I desire thee to attend unto my speech, and hearken
to my voice.

Secondly, He moves him to heare, by professing his own read-
dinette and preparedness to speak, in the 2d verse; Behold now
I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth; that
is, I have been (as it were) tuning my instrument, and fitting my
selfe for discourse, let me not looke my labour nor my study.

Thirdly, He moves him to attend from the sincerity and gra-
cious Ingenuity of his heart in that which he had to say to him.
This he layeth before him in the 3d verse; My words shall be of
the uprightnesse of my heart, and my lips shall utter knowledge
clearly. What better Encouragement to heare! And

Fourthly, Elihu moves him to heare from the Consideration
of his present state, as a man, not only made by God, but by him
instructed for the work which he had undertaken, the former of
which is Express, the latter Implied in the 4th verse; The Spirit
of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given
me life. Thus Elihu Calls out Job to heare. And

Secondly, As he invites him to heare what he had to say, so
he provokes him to answer what he should say, vers. 5. If thou
canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up. As if
he had said, Be not discouraged, take heart man, doe thy best to
defend thy selfe, and make good thy owne cause against what I
shall say; Spare me not; Doe thy best, thy utmost.

Having thus encouraged him in General to answer, he pro-
ceeds to give him two speciall Motives.

First, From their Common state or Condition, in the 6th
verse; Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead; I also am
formed out of the clay. As if he had sayd; You have often desired
God to plead with, or that God would heare your plea; now consider,
I am in Gods stead, though a man like your selfe.

Secondly, He encourageth him from the tendernesse of his
spirit toward him, respecting his present Condition, promising to
deal with, or treat him fairly, gently, in the 7th verse; Behold,
my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be hea-
vy upon thee. That favour Job had asked of God, in the 9th
Chapter; Let not thy terror make me afraid. Now faith Elihu,
that which thou didst fear from God, thou needest not at all fear
in dealing with me, My terror shall not make thee afraid, &c. Thus Elihu begins with Job, that he might lead him to receive fairly, or answer fully what he had to say.

The three first verses of the Chapter, Containe the first part of the Preface, wherein Elihu excites and calls forth Job's attention by those foure Considerations already distinctly proposed, the first whereof is layd downe,

Ver. 1. Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

Elihu begins very mildly, sweetly, insinuatingly, even entreatingly, and beseechingly, Wherefore

I pray thee.

The word which we translate, I pray thee, is in the Hebrew adhortation-language a monosyllable adverb of obsecration or exhortation. 

Hence note.

'Tis good to use gentleness towards those with whom we have to deal, especially with those who are either outwardly afflicted, or troubled in spirit.

Entreaties have great power; and therefore though the Prophets and Apostles speake sometimes in a threatening way, and command attention upon utmost peril, yet for the most part they bespeake it with Entreaties, (2 Cor: 5. 20.) Now then we as Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God. The Apostles went about a begging, as it were, with this message, with the best message that ever was carried forth to the world, Reconciliation unto God; we pray you. And againe (2 Cor: 6. 1.) We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that you receive not the grace of God in vaie; that is, the doctrine of the Gospel holding forth the grace and favour of God freely in Jesus Christ, (1 Thes: 4. 1.) Furthermore, we beseech you brethren, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. As he did beseech them not to receive the grace of God in vaie, so he did beseech them to a progress in & an Improvement of that grace. Again(1 Thes: 2. 7.)
We were gentle among you, even as a Nurse cheriseth her Children; how tender is a nurse to the infant hanging at her breast, or dandle on her knee. Speak ye Comfortably to Jerusalem, was the Lords direction when she was in her warfare; that is, in a troubled and afflicted condition. (Isa. 40. 2.) The Hebrew is, Speak to her heart; speak such words as may revive her heart, and adde fresh spirits and life to her. The Apostles rule for the refloaring of those that are fallen, is, that they should be kindly treated (Gal. 6. 1.) Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual, restore such an one with the spirit of meekness. It is a great point of holy skill so to order a reproofe as not to provoke; to speak as to speak open, or pick the lock of the heart; Affectionate Entreaties are blessed pick-locks, which do not straine the wards, but effectually lift up the holders and shoote the bolt of the heart, causing it to stand wide open to receive and take in the truth of promises, counsels and reproofoes. Meek words meeken the spirit. Tis hard to refuse what we perceive spoken in love; and if any thing will soften a hard heart, soft language is most likely to doe it. When Abigail came out and met David upon his way, hot upon revenge, yea having (upon the matter) sworn revenge against Nabal and his house, yet her Entreaties and mild words overcame that mighty warriour, at least, took off the edge of his spirit, and of all his party, (1 Sam. 25. 33.) Nor did he only accept of or submit to her counsel, but gave thanks both to God and her for it; Blessed be the Lord, and blessed be thy advice, which hast kept me this day from shedding blood. Gentle words, like gentle raine, soake deep, and make the soule, like a fruitfull tree, bud and blossome. For as passion in the speaker, begets passion in the hearer, and heare brings forth heate, so kinde and kindly words, are not only most usefull, but most powerfull. There is a rebuking, and that Cuttingly, or a speaking of cutting words, usefull in some cases, then especially, when sinners have not only done evill, but are setled and resolved in it. But in case of affliction, specially of inward affliction, or trouble of spirit, soft words are best and doe best. Hearre, I pray thee, faith Elihu.

And hearken to all my words.

Here’s hearing, and hearkening, to hearken is more than to heare;
heare; to heare is barely to receive the sound of words; but to hearken is to take up the sense of them, or as it were, toick out the strength and sweetness of them; to hearken is to weigh or ponder every little spoken, and take the value of it. The word in the text, which signifies to hearken, hath a singular elegancy in it. One of the Rabbins renders, Eare my words; heare my words and Eare them. The same word which in the verbe signifies to hearken, which is the worke of the eare, signifies also the eare, or instrument of that worke in the nounce. To eare words, notes the most diligent attention, as to eye a thing, notes the most accurate inspection. The word signifies also the beam of a balance, because by the eare, or by the two ears (as by a balance) words are tryed and poyted, whether they are weighty and solid, or light and chaffy; when El'hu faith, hearken to, or weigh my words, he intimates that he meant to speak words which had worth in them, or that he meant to speak matter more then words. And therefore he would not have a word lost, Hearken, faith he,

To all my words.

To all, not to this or that only, but to all; As if he had sayd, I intend not, and I hope I shall not speake one needleke or unusefull words; not a word beside the businesse. Therefore hearken to all my words.

Hence note; First.

They who speake to instruction, admonition or exhortation, should not use one word more then is usefull, not a word more then is to the purpose.

Seeing, every idle word that men shall speake, they shall give account for it in the day of judgement, ( Math:12.36.) How should every man take heed of speaking an idle word, a word of which he can give no good account for any good it is likely to doe. Idle words will make sad worke one day, and words of no value or account, will turne to a heavy account in the great day. That's an idle word, which doth neither worke the heart for good, nor strengthen the hand to or in a good worke. And if we should be carefulfull not to speake one idle word, or not one word unworthy to be heard, how should we avoyd evill words, or words which corrupt the hearers.
Secondly, As the words referre to that duty which Elihu minds Job of, and moved him to, Hearkening to all his words.

Note.

They who heare, especially about holy things and soule-matters, should heare all.

One word should not be lost, when every word is precious. We gather up the filings and leafd dufts of Gold. The eare should gather all that truth which the mouth scatters, and the heart should lay it up as treasure. We may charge many sorts of men with deficiency at eare-worke. And surely if men will not heare all that they ought to believe and doe, they can neither doe nor believe any thing that they heare.

First, Some will not heare the word at all, they are like the deafe Adder stopping their eares at the voyce of the charmer, charme he never so wisely to them.

Secondly, Others thinke that there’s not a word more to be heard, but what they have heard already, who can speak what they know not?

Thirdly, There are few who hearken to any word that is spoken; that is, who make it their businesse to heare, who heare with diligence, and labour at it. As it is a great labour to speak, so I affure you, it is no small nor easie labour to heare, if you heare indeed and as you should. To heare the word is the exercise of the whole soule. Among many hearers, there are but few hearkeners, such I meane as weigh and consider what they heare.

Fourthly, There are very few who heare and hearken to all the words of righteousnesse and salvation. As some though they heare all, yet hearken to halves, so others will heare but halfe, or only so much as pleaseth them of what is spoken. When the King of Judah (Jer. 36. 23.) had the Role brought to him which Baruch had written from the mouth of Jeremiah, he heard three or four leaves of it read to him as he sat by the fire, and then he caused it to be cut with a penknife and cast into the fire; He did not read it out, he had enough of it, he had (as we say) bis belly full, but his heart was altogether empty, he was very angry and vext at the word, but not at all humbled nor affected with it; and therefore would not heare all those words.

Againe,
Againe, To hearken is to obey, to submit and yield up our selves to the truth we heare. *Samuel* tells Saul (1 Sam: 15. 22.) To obey is better then sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams; to obey and to hearken is the same thing; the obedient ear is the hearkening ear. *Mine ear haft thou opened* ( faith Christ, *Psal: 40. 6. *) This opening or digging of his eare (as we put in the Margin) signifieth his readiness to obey, as 'tis expresed (v. 7, 8.) Then sayd I loe I come; I delight to doe thy will *O* my God. And in reference to this he had sayd before (v. 6.) *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, burnt-offering and sin-offering haft thou not required;* that is, for themselves, or comparatively to that, which in the volume of thy booke is written of me, that I should doe. Which clearely expounds and is almost the same in termes with that of Samuel; To obey is better then sacrifice, and to hearken, then the fat of Rams. Thus Elihu preteth *Job* to hearken to all his words obedientially, or to hearken with a purpose to obey. Take a few Considerations, why we should both heare and hearken to, that is, obey, the whole mind of God, all those words which have the stamp of divine authority upon them.

First, All the words of God are alike holy and true, pure and precious. Though some truths are more necessary to be knowne and believed then others, yet all are necessary; nor can we be discharged from the duty of hearing and obeying any one of them, if called.

Secondly, There is a like or the same power and authority in all the words of God; so that to neglect or slight any one word, is to put a slight upon the authority of God himselfe. There is but one Law-giver and word-fender.

Thirdly, Not to submit to any one word (though it be suppos'd we hearken to all others) drawes upon us the guilt of non-submission or disobedience to the whole word of God. That's the Apostles conclusion (James 2. 12. ver.) *Whosoever shall keepe the whole Law, and yet offend in one poyn't, he is guilty of all;* for though in many things we offend all, yet there is a Gospel-fence wherein we are fain to keep the whole Law of God. And so the Apostles meaning is, that whoever shall give himselfe a loose or a liberty, whoever shall dispence or indulge himselfe in breaking any one Command of God, he breakest all,
that is, he declares himself ready to break all, if he had a like occasion or temptation.

Fourthly, We would have all our words hearkened to by God; we would have God grant all our Petitions, all our requests, and supplications, and shall not we hearken to, and obey all the precepts of God? Shall we not receive and believe all his promises and threatenings?

Fifthly, As we desire God would, so God hath promised to hear all our words, even all the requests of his people which are according to his will. Christ speaks without restriction (Math. 21. 22.) All things whatsoever ye ask in my name, believing ye shall receive. And again (John 14. 13, 14.) whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I doe, &c. Nor are there any restrictions upon the promises of God in granting and doing what we ask, but only these two; First, that we ask right things; Secondly, that we ask aright. Now if the Lord hath promised to hearken to all our words, not to this or that, but to all our words which are according to his will, (we have no liberty to ask beyond the will of God, beyond the rule of Scripture, nor can we ask anything beyond that, but it is to our hurt and damage, now if God (I say,) will hearken to all our words) should not we hearken to all his?

Lastly, The condition upon which God hath promised to hear all our words, is, that we should be ready to heare and hearken to all his words, (1 John 3. 22.) whatsoever we ask we receive, because we keep his Commandements, and doe the things that please him. It were not confidence, but highest and most hateful impudence, to expect that God should please us by giving us what we ask, while we refuse (which is the condition of that promise) to do the things that please him. Thus Eliph would have Job hearken to all his words, he being about to speake, not his owne, but the words of God. And that Job might not delay the opening of his eare to heare, Eliph tells him further in the next verse, that himselfe had already opened his mouth to speake.

Ver. 2. Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

This phrase of opening the mouth, imports foure things.

First,
First, That a man hath been long silent; they that are full of talk, and speak out of season, may be said to have their mouths always open, rather than at any time to open their mouthes. But Elihu protested in the former Chapter, that he had waited as a Disciple to heare and to leerne, and had waited with utmost patience; therefore he might well say, Behold now I have opened my mouth, and taken upon me to speake. So (Chap. 3. 1.) after Job had late silent a great while, it is said, Then Job opened his mouth, and cursed the day of his birth; Thus to open the mouth intimates much silence or forbearance of speech, and long expectation of a season or opportunity to speake.

Secondly, Opening the mouth, implyeth as speaking after much silence, so with much prudence. A foole's mouth is therefore said to be always open, because whencesoever he speaketh, he is found speaking imprudently and impertinently. But a wise man will not speake, unless he may speake to purpose, and so opens his mouth to speake. Solomon saith, (Prov. 24. 7.) Wise men are too high for a foole, he openeth not his mouth in the gate; that is, he is unfit to speak in the presence of wise and judicious men, he may open his mouth in the streets, and in common Company, but he opens not his mouth in the gate, where the Elders and Magistrates used to meete and judge the weightiest matters. There is a four-fold Consideration to be had, as to the due opening of the mouth, And it is no small matter to open the mouth with those Considerations:

First, Consideration is to be had of the place and Company, where, and to whom we speake. We must not cast pearles before swine, nor give strong meate to children.

Secondly, The time and season wherein we speake must be considered; every truth is not fit for every time. Christ would not speak all at once to his Disciples, for this reason, (John 16. 12.) I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; and because ye cannot bear them now, therefore I will not say them now.

Thirdly, Consideration is to be had how and in what way we speake, whether instructingly, or exhortedly, reprovingly, or Comfortably, we should always labour to divide the word of God, and what we speake from it aright, giving every one his proper part and portion. Then a man opens his mouth to speake, when
when he considers how to fort his speech according to the state of things and persons before him.

Forthly, Consideration is to be had of the end or tendency of speech, what our ayme and mark is; we say, a foolish bolt is some shot, he considers not his ayme and mark in speaking; he that opens his mouth, looks to his mark, and drives a deligne, or hath a purpose in every word that paffeth from him.

Thirdly, This phrase of opening the mouth, notes liberty of speech, or boldnesse in speaking; when a man doth not speake in his throat, as untaught children doe, nor in his belly, or in a bottle, as Witches and Sorcerers are fayd to doe, that pepepe and mutter (Isa: 8. 19.) When a man (I say) doth not speake any of these covert wayes, but freely and liberally, then indeed he opens his mouth to speake. We have that Expreflion in the promise, (Ezek. 29. 21.) In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them, and they shall know that I am the Lord; That is, I will give thee boldnesse, and liberty of speech; time was when thou didst not dare to speake a word for God, or of God, of his praiie, name and worship, or if thou didst it was but in a Corner, or whisperd in secret; but the time shall come when I will give thee the opening of the mouth; thou shalt speake my truth and praiies boldly; and the Enemy shall know that I the Lord have procured thee this liberty. 'Tis a great mercy when God gives his people the opening of the mouth, or liberty of speech, to speak boldly; no man hindring, no nor fo much as discouraging them. The Prophet makes that the character of an evill time, when the prudent keep silence, (Amos 5. 13.) As in evill or calamitous times, it becomes the Godly prudent to be willingly silent, adoring the justice of Gods severest dispensations towards them with patience and without murmuring at his hand. So in some evill times they are forced to keepe silence, (though as David spake, Psal: 39. 2.) their forrows be stirred) either left by speaking, even nothing but truth and reason, they draw further forrows upon themselves; or because they see it but lost labour to speake to a people obstinate and resolved on their way.

Forthly, This phrase of opening the mouth to speake, notes the things spoken to be of very great worth, such as have been long concocted and digested, and at last ready to be brought forth
forth, as out of the treasury of an honest and understanding heart. The heart is the treasury of words, there they are stored up; and from thence issued forth; as Christ faith, Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. As there is a stock of evil words in the hearts of evil men, so of good and gracious words in the hearts of Godly men, and when they open their mouthes (according to this notion) it is to bring forth the treasures, and riches of their hearts, to bring forth the gold and silver and precious things stored up there; all these are very usefull interpretations of this phrase; and I might give distinct observations from them, but it may suffice to have named them. I shall only add, that the last is conceived by some to be chiefly intended in the latter branch of this verse.

My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

This seems a strange Expression; where should the tongue speak but in the mouth? when the tongue is out of the mouth, can it speak? as the mouth cannot speak without the tongue, so the tongue cannot speak out of the mouth: why then doth he say;

My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

The Hebrew is, In my palate, the palate being a part of the mouth, and one speciall Instrument of speech (Naturalists reckon five, The lips, the tongue, the teeth, the palate, & the throat) is put for all; but there is more in it then so, for every man speaks in his mouth, or by the palate which is the heaven, roofe or cieiling of the mouth. Therefore when Elihu faith, My tongue hath spoken in my mouth, or in my palate; The palate may be considered as the instrument of tasting as well as of speaking. We say such a thing is very savoury to the palate; And we call that Palate wine, which is quicke and lively, briske and pleasant to the tafft. Thus when Elihu faith here, My tongue hath spoken in my mouth or palate; His meaning is; I have uttered only that which I have well considered, what my tongue hath spoken to you, I have tasted my selfe; I have put every word to my palate; For as a man that that tasteth wine or any other fapid thing, must have it upon his palate, before he can make a Judgement, whether it be sweet or sharpe, quick or flat: so faith Elihu; my mouth hath spoken in my palate, I tasted my words before I spake them.

Hence
Hence note.
Judicious and wise men will taste and try what they intend to
speak before they utter it.

The speaker presents his words to the taste of the hearer; for
as this Scripture hath it at the 3d verse of the next Chapter,
The care tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat; now he that
ventures his words to the taste and censure of others, had need
take a taste of them before he doth it. My tongue hath spoken in
my mouth.

Secondly, From the scope of Elihu in adding this, namely,
to gain attention,

Note.
There is great reason we should heare that carefully, which the
speaker hath prepared with care.

They who regard not what they speake, deserve no regard
when they speake; but a weighing speaker, should have a weigh-
ing hearer. And what any mans tongue (in the fence of Elihu) hath
spoken in his mouth, that we should heare, not only with our eare,
but with our heart. This a strong argument to quicken atten-
tion, yet Elihu gives in another, and a stronger in the next verse.

Verf. 3. My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart,
my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

In the former verse Elihu called for an open eare, because he
opened his mouth, and was about to speake, or had spoken what he
had well tasted. In this verse he preslieth the same duty, by pro-
fessing all manner of Ingenuity and Integrity in what he was a-
bout to speake. He would speake not only seriously, but honest-
ly, not only from his understanding, but his conscience.

My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, &c.

The meaning is not, that the uprightness of his heart should
be the subject upon which he would treat, though that be a blest-
fed and most ufefull subject, yet it was not the point he intend-
ed to discourse: but when he faith, My words shall be of the up-
rightnesse of my heart, his meaning is, my words shall flow from
the
the uprightness of my heart, I will speake in the uprightness of my heart, or according to the uprightness of my heart, my words shall be upright as my heart is; the plain truth is this, I will speak sincerely and truth plainly. I'll speak as I think, you may see the image of my queillo suco heart upon every word; I will speak without doubting, without simulation or dissimulation. Some conceive this to be a secret reprofe, or reflection upon Job's friends, as if Elihu had suspected them to have spoken worse of Job; then they could think him to be in their hearts. But as we cannot judge men's hearts directly, so there is no reason why we should judge so of their hearts conjecturally. It is enough to the purpose, that Elihu afferts his own uprightness without reflecting upon or suspecting the uprightness of those, who had dealt with Job before; My words shall be in the uprightness of my heart.

This uprightness of his heart may have a three-fold Opposition. Firstly, to passion; Some speak in the heart and fire of their hearts, rather than in the uprightness of them; it is good to speak with the heart and fire of zeal in our hearts; but take heed of the heart and fire of passion, I will not speak in the heat, but in the uprightness of my heart, faith Elihu.

Secondly, This uprightness may be oppos'd to partiality; I will not spare when there is cause to speake home, nor presile, nor load thee with any thing where there is not cause for it.

Thirdly, This uprightness in speaking, may also be oppos'd Non loquar ad to speaking without care or ground or proofe. And 'tis supposed that Elihu aimed more specially at this, Job's friends having been so high in his reprofe, charging him with divers things for which they had no proofe, but only a vehement suspicion. The words of Eliphaz are full (Chap. 22. 5.) Is not thy wickedness infinite? for thou hast taken a pledge from Aquin; thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing:

Thus hast sent widows empty away, and the arms of the fathers have been broken; Surely Eliphaz could not speak this in the uprightness of his heart, knowing it to be so, though he speak it in this uprightness of his heart, that he really thought it to be so. Which kind of uprightness Paul had in persecuting the Saints, (Acts 26. 9.) I verily thought with myself, that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus Job's friends verily thought he had done many grosse things con-
trary to the Law of God, but they only thought so; they could not prove it; This is a lame kinde of uprightness, and in opposition to this Eliph might now say, I will not charge or burden thee with any thing but what I know to be true, and had even from thy own mouth. My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart.

I shall not say to give particular notes from these words, according to this three-fold opposition; The reader may improve them in that, as he hath occasion; Only in Generall Observe.

The heart and tongue should goe together.

The tongue should alwayes be the hearts Interpreter, and the heart should alwayes be the tongues suggester; what is spoken with the tongue should be firststampd upon the heart, and wrought off from it. Thus it should be in all our Communications and exhortations, especially when we speak or exhort about the things of God, and dispence the mysteries of heaven. Da-vid spake from his heart while he spake from his faith (Psal. 16. 10.) I believed, therefore have I spoken. Believing is an act of the heart, with the heart man believeth; so that to say, I believed, therefore have I spoken; Is as if he had said, I would never have spoken these things, if my heart had not been cleare and up-right in them. The Apostle takes up that very protestation from David (2 Cor. 4. 13.) According as it is written, I believed, therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; that is, we moved others to believe nothing but what we believed, yea, were fully assured of, our selves, as the next words of the Apostle import, Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. To speak what we in our hearts believe, is to speak in the uprightness of our hearts.

Some speak without their hearts, that is, coldly, they have no heart at all in speaking; as some heare without their hearts, only with their eares; so some speak without the heart, only with the tongue.

Secondly, Others speake what was never in their hearts; They have no experience in themselves of what they say to others. They throw out their words as a venture. It is said to speak,
speak that as a truth, or a Comfort to others, which we have not found in our selves, that is, have not felt the operation of it upon our owne hearts. How are they to be lamented, who speak of the things of God as a Stage-player, who acts the part of, or Personates a Prince, being himselfe but a poore plebeian. It is bad to speak without our hearts, or coldly, but tis worse to speak what was never in our hearts, or hypocritically.

Thirdly, Not a few speak quite against their hearts: these are at farthest distance from speaking in the uprightness of their heart; they speak with a false and malicious heart, they speak with a deceitful and double heart, with a heart and a heart. There are three ways wherein men speak against their owne hearts and Consciences.

First, In the profession which they make of themselves, (Rev. 2. 9.) Christ writing to the Church of Smyrna, faith, I know thy faith and patience, &c. and the Blasphemy of them, who say they are Jewes and are not, but lye, &c. And so at the 9th verfe of the 3d Chapter, Which say they are Jewes and are not, but doe lye. We are not to understand it strictly, that they professed themselves to be of the Nation of the Jewes, the Children of Abraham. A Jew there is, any one that holdeth out a profession of the faith of Christ. Old Testament words are often applied to the New Testament, or Gospel State; they say they are Jewes, that is, true believers, but they are not; and doe lye; to lye, is to goe against a mans mind, against his Conscience; they make a great profession of godliness and holiness, of Christ and his ways, and they lye at every word; for indeed they are the Synagogue of Satan. Thus at this day some make profession before the Church of God, and by such profession get admittance into the Church of God, who yet belong to the Synagogue of Satan. The Apostle John speakes of such, (1 Ep. Joh: 2. 19.) They went out from us, but they were not of us; that is, they were not truly of us, though they once desired to come in and joyne themselves to us, and for a time walked with us.

Secondly, The tongue speaks against the heart many times in the promises which men make to others of what they will doe. O what Courtesies and friendships will some men professe! they will tell you aloud how they love you, and how much they are your servanets, while there is nothing in their hearts, but deceit.
and guile, yea possibly nothing but wrath and revenge to death. Thus Ishmael went out weeping all along as he went (Ver. 41.6.) and sayd, Come to Gedaliah, the son of Abikam, yet he invited them into the City as poore birds into a snare, to destroy them presently; He was seemingly troubled at their affliction and wept, but his were Crocodiles tears, he murthred them as loone as he had them in his power.

Thirdly, Some speake against their hearts doctrinally or in the Doctrines which they propound and teach. There are three sorts who speak amiss doctrinally.

First, Some speak that which is not right in the uprightness of their hearts; or, I may say, they speak that which is false with a true heart; that is, they think it to be a truth which they utter, when 'tis an error, and will be found so at last. When ever we see different opinionsstitly maintained among honest and godly men, (which though it be a very sad sight, yet it is too often seen, in that case I say) one side always speaks that which is false with a true heart, and utters error uprightly. The truth is, some men defend an error with better and more honest hearts, then some others defend the truth. For

Secondly, There are such as speak right without any uprightness of heart, or they speak truth with a false heart; this Eshe specially professeth against; he would not only speak that which was right, but with uprightness. The Apostle found several teachers of this second sort (Phil. 1. 16, 17, 18.) Some preach Christ, that is, the Gospel, yea the truth of Christ in the Gospel, (else the Apostle would not have rejoiced in it, as he professeth he did at the 18th verse, I therein doe rejoice, yea and will rejoice) Yet these men did not preach in the uprightness of their own hearts; for, saith he, Some Preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some out of good will, (they preached Christ, pure Gospel, yet not with pure hearts, for, he adds, they did it) supposing to add affliction to my bonds; They preach to oppose the Apostles more then to set up Christ, and though they preached the truth, yet they did it more in pretence then in truth; as 'tis sayd at the 18th verse. The same Apostle speakes of others, (2. Cor. 11. 13, 14.) who preached what was true for the matter, and yet he calls them false Apostles, deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and no marvell, for

Satis
Satan himselfe is transformed into an Angel of light. They formed and shaped themselves into Angels of light, and took up the doctrine of the faithfull Apostles of Jesus Christ in some things, yet they did it not in the uprightnesse of their hearts, but that they might weaken the estimation of the true Apostles in the hearts of the people, and set up themselves there, that so in other things they might with greater efficacy or more effectually, mislead them or draw them into error. Thus some are found speaking lyes in the truth of their hearts, and others speaking truth in the fallenesse of their hearts.

Thirdly, Many speak that which is false with a false heart; This is the height of wickednesse. The Apostle prophesieoth of such (1 Tim: 4, 2) Who shall speake lyes in hyprocifie, the matter they speak is a lye, and they speak it with a bafe and fals heart too. And therefore he faith of these in the same verfe, Their consciences are feared with a hot iron; that is, they are insensible both of the mischiefe they doe, and of the misery they must suffer.

Elihu prophesieoth himselfe to be none of all these; He spake that which was right and true in the uprightnesse and truth of his heart. Such a one the Apostle directs the Gospel Deacon to be, (1 Tim: 3, 9) Holding the mystery of faith in a pure Conscience, which is the same with an upright heart. And he tells us (1 Thes: 2, 4, 5) That himselfe did not use any guile in the ministration of the Gospel; He had truth on his side, and he had truth in his heart, as he also prophesied to his Brethren the Jews, (Rom: 9, 1, 2) I speak the truth in Christ, I lye not, my Conscience also bearing me witness in the holy Ghost, &c. And againe, (2 Cor: 2, 17) We are not of those that Corrupt the truth; we speak the truth, and speak it truly. He is a better speaker that speaks with an upright heart, then he that speaks with an eloquent tongue; He is the happy speaker, who speaks more with his heart then with his tongue, that can say with Elihu to Job, My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart. Words spoken of that subject, and words flowing from that subject, are lovely words. Of this latter sort faith Elihu to Job, My words shall be.

And my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

Job had charged his three friends (Chap: 13, 4) that they were
were forgers of lies. This Elihu engageth against, while he saith,
My lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

The word here translated clearly, is rendered two ways.

First, As an Adjective.

Secondly, As an Adverb.

Many render it as an Adjective, My lips shall utter cleare knowledge, or distinct knowledge; cleare as to the matter; pure, plaine, without any adulteration, deceit, or guile, as to the manner. So the word is often used, I might give you many Scriptures for it. The Prophet speaking in the person of Christ (Isa. 49. 2.) faith, He hath made me a polished shaft, the Hebrew is, a pure shaft, a glittering, shining shaft. (Jer. 5. 11.) He made bright his arrows, there this word is used. It is applied also to Chiefe men (1 Chron. 7. 48.) These were Choyce men, pure men. So faith Elihu (My lips shall utter cleare shining pure knowledge.)

Hence note.

We should speake cleare truth. Truth without mixture, truth well winnowed; doctrine well refined.

The commandement of the Lord is a pure word, (Psalm. 19. 8.) There’s not any dross at all in it; ’tis like silver tried seven times in the fire (Psalm. 12. 6.) The Prophet among other blessings which God promiseth to his Church and people, hath this (Isa. 30. 24.) The Oxen likewise and the young Asses that eare the ground shall eare cleare Provender, free from the straw, and chaff, dust and darnel. But may we not here renew the Apostles question, (1 Cor. 9. 9, 10.) Doth God take care for oxen? or faith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes no doubt it is written; That the mouth of the ox treading out the corn, should not be muzzled, was written for the Ministers sake, to assure them, that while they labour in the Gospel to feed souls, their bodies should be fed. And that the oxen and young asses shall eate cleare Provender, was written for the peoples sake, to assure them, that Christ would send them such Ministers as should feed them with pure holy wholesome doctrine, not with the chaffe of unwritten traditions, nor with the mixtures of humane inventions. They should be taught cleare knowledge, as Elihu here speaketh. This mercy was also prophesied (Zeph. 3. 9.) Then will I turne to the people a pure language, or a Clean lip: it is this word, that is,
what they speak, shall be pure truth. Their language shall be, not only Grammatically pure, proper and genuine, but Theologically pure, without any tincture of error in it.

Secondly, As the word is taken (according to our translation) Adverbially.

Note.
We ought to speak truth clearly.

Some speake cleare truths, who yet doe not speak them clearly. They speak great truths, yet obscure them in their own way of expressions; they who wrap up sound doctrine in hard uncouth words, or deliver it in an unnecessary multitude of words, doe rather puzzle and confound their Auditors, than informe or instruct them. And they who speak not knowledge clearly, are like those who mud the waters, or raise a dust in the ayre, which will not let others see distinctly what they hold or put in either. Speaking in darke words and strange notions, is like speaking in a strange language. They only speak profitably, who speak clearly. We commonly say, Truth seekes no corners, truth would not be hid. What are obscure and ambiguous words, words of a doubtfull construction and interpretation, but corners, wherein many hide truth, while they pretend to speak and publish it. Such speakers as well as they who speak in an unknowne language, are Barbarians to their hearers. And therefore as the Apostle in reference to an unknowne tongue, saide we had rather speak five words that others may be edified, then ten thousand words in hard and strange expressions. Though we speak in a knowne language, yet doubtfull words hinder edifying as much as an unknowne language doth; yea such are as a forreiner to their hearers, while they speak in their owne Country tongue: ’Tis a speciall gift of God, to speak knowledge clearly. The Apostle hath left that excellent advice with all who are called to speak the great things of eternall life, (1 Pet. 4. 11.) If any man speake (that is, if he speake about the things of God, divine things) let him speake as the Oracles of God. What are they? The oracles of God are the knowne word of God. But how are those oracles to be knowne? Surely as God spake them, plainly and clearly; The oracles of God were spoken without ambiguity.
ty, therefore let no man speake them as the oracles of the devil were spoken, or as the devil spake his oracles, that is, ambiguously and doubtfully; The devil of old gave out all his answers and oracles doubtfully and darkly to his darke and blinded votaries; what he sayd might beare severall Constructions. And he spake so on purpose, that whatsoever the event or issue proved to be, he (though the father of Iyes) might have the reputation of speaking truth. The Devils oracle gave Crephi such an answer as he might Interpret either of a great success, or of a great overthrow, when he asked counsel about his warres. And when Saul came to Enquire of the Witch of Endor, that is, of the Devill, (1 Sam: 28, 11.) he gave him a doubtfull resolve; Tomorrow shalt thou and thy Sons be with me (v.19.) Which ambiguous answer might be understood as of the next day following, to indefinitely of any day neere approaching. Satan loves not to speake knowledge clearely. But the servants and messengers of Christ, must use great plainnes of speech while they are treating of and giving out the mind of God to his people; and be carefull that as the doctrine is found which they deliver, so there may be a clearnesse in their delivering of it. Their lips (as Elihu engaged his should) ought to utter knowledge clearely.
The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.

Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.

Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

IN these four verses, Elihu still prosecutes a discrete prefatory insinuation both of himself and of his intended discourse into the heart of Job, that both might find welcome, and good entertainment there. Elihu had allured him at the third verse, that he would speak in the uprightness of his heart, or that he would deal candidly, and clearly with him. That was a strong argument to gain attention. And in this fourth verse, he argueth with and urgeth Job, to give him attention, because he was a man of God's making, as Job also was. The same hand wrought them both, and therefore, why should there be a strangeness between them? or an unwillingness to give or receive counsel and help from one another?

Verf. 4. The spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

I shall open these words two ways.

First, As a direct proposition, or assertion.

Secondly, In their connection and dependance, as they are here used, for an argument of perswasion.

First, Consider the Text, as an assertion; The spirit of God hath made me, &c. The word doth not signify barely to make, or to clap up a worke any how, but to make with art, to make skilfully, to compole and fashion a thing with exactest grace, comeliness, and beauty. Thus are we made by the Spirit of God.

Man is an excellent piece of worke, yea, man is the Master-piece assert. Pind: Y of
of all the visible workes of God. The Spirit of God hath made me.

There are two things here to be enquired; First, what we are to understand by the Spirit of God, to whom Elihu attributes his making. Secondly, Why doth Elihu attribute his making to the Spirit of God? To the former question, I answer; First, negatively, that by the Spirit of God we are not to understand a power or virtue put forth by God, in which sense we sometimes read the Spirit of God in Scripture. But by the Spirit of God here, we are to understand God the Spirit. In which sense we read (Gen. 1. 2.) The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. As also (Math. 3. 16.) He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; that is, upon Jesus Christ, baptized by John in Jordan.

The second question is, Why doth Elihu attribute his making to the Spirit of God? Regeneration or our new-making is properly the work of the Spirit, but is Creation, or our natural constitution his work also? Saith not Moses? (Gen. 2. 7.) The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the earth; Jehovah Elohim formed man. And if we look into the first of John ver. 2, 3; we read thus; In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God; the same was in the beginning with God, all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made. There our maker (for the making of all things is attributed to him) is the Son, the second person in the holy Trinity, or the Word, who (as it followeth in that Chapter) was made flesh. Why then doth Elihu here attribute his making to the Spirit? And how are these Scriptures reconciled?

I answer, By that received Maxime in Divinity, The workes of the holy Trinity towards the creature are undeviled. So that, while this Scripture ascribes the making of man to the Spirit or Third person in the Trinity, it doth not at all crosse those which ascribe it to the first or second, the Father or the Son. The Spirit of God hath made me.

Hence note.
First, Man as to his bodily making, or the making of his body, is the workmanship of God.
As we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good (or holy)
holy \ workes, (Eph: 2. 10.) so we are his workmanship created to common and natural workes. We have heard of that divine consolation or resolution rather (Gen: 1. 26.) Let us make man: The Father made man, and the Son made man, and the holy Spirit made man; The Father by the Son, through the holy Spirit made man. What a glorious, what a mighty power is put forth for the production of such a poor creature as man is! And this is true, not only of the first man in his creation, but of every man since the creation, there is a concurrence of a divine power and workmanship in the setting up of man as man. (Psal: 100. 3.) It is he that made us, and not we ourselves; God doth not only make us holy men, but he makes us men. Hence David (Psal: 13. 9-14.) I am fearfully, and wonderfully made. He speaks there of the frame of his body, though that be much more true in reference to the admirable frame of the new creature which is set up in the soul; so, indeed we are fearfully and wonderfully made. (Isa: 27. 11.) This is a people of no understanding (But did God ever make a people without natural understanding? Surely no, but they were a people without spiritual understanding, they did not understand what the mind, and meaning of God was, and what their own duty was; Such are a people of no understanding, how wise forever they are in their own eyes, or in the eyes of the world, what followeth) Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour; That is, God who made and formed them, both in their natural capacity as men, as also in their civil and spiritual capacity as a Church and Nation, or as a National Church (understanding it of the Jews) will not have mercy on them, will not favour them. We read the same Church at once looking to God as their maker and most earnestly moving and imploring his pity upon the same account. (Isa: 64. 8, 9.) But now O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand; As if they had sayd, Thou O Lord, hast moulded us as thy creatures, and fashioned us as thy Church, when we were but a rude malle or heape without forme or comeliness, therefore do not marre thy owne worke, doe not breake the vessels of thine owne making, or as it followeth in the same Chapter, Be not wroth very sore O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever, behold, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. 

Hence
Hence consider.

First, That, we owe not only our well-being, but our very being unto God. And therefore

Secondly, No man ought to looke upon himselfe as his owne; So the Apostle argues (1 Cor. 6. 19.) Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your owne; No man is his owne, he is Gods, who hath made him. Saints and believers especially are not their own in that respect; as also because their bodies are the temple of the holy Ghost; that is, the holy Ghost hath sanctified them for himselfe, for his peculiar service, and for his habitation. Now as the bodyes of Saints are the temple of the holy Ghost, because he doth sanctifie them; so they are the temple of the holy Ghost, because he hath reared them up, and built them. That consideration should urge us to duty; our bodies are temples built, as well as temples sanctified by the holy Ghost; And therefore we are not our owne at all, nor in any respect; and if we are not our owne at all, but the Lords, then we ought to be always for the Lord.

Hence, Thirdly, Hath the Spirit of God made us? (as Elihu faith,) then let the Spirit use us; how sad is it, that when the Spirit of God hath made our bodies and soules, we should let the wicked spirit use either (as he doth both the bodies and soules of carnall men,) to his base services. The evil spirit did neither make your bodies nor your soules, why should he have the command of either? Therefore as your members have been weapons of unrighteousnesse to sin, so let them be instruments of righteousness unto God. Seeing the holy Spirit hath made us, let not the evil spirit use so much as a little finger of us; for, he hath not made not only so much as a little finger of our hand, but so much as the least haire of our heads (as Christ saith we our selves cannot, Math. 5. 36.) white or blacke. And therefore let not the evil spirit make use of one haire of our heads white or black, as a flagge of pride and vanity, or to be an occasion of sin to others. He that maketh the house ought to have the possession and service of it, either to dwell in it himselfe, or to receive rent and profit from him that dwells in it. The spirit having made us, should not only have the rent and revenue, but the full possession of us for ever. That which is of God should be for God, for him always, and only for him.
Secondly, in that the making of man is attributed to the Spirit.

Observe.

The Spirit of God is God.

The holy Ghost is not only a power of God, or a word gone out from God, but the holy Ghost is God. This is clear from the efficiency of the holy Spirit; The Spirit of God hath made me. The work of creation is attributable to none but God. That power which at first set up man in his creation, continueth him to this day; this power and great prerogative is given to the Spirit; therefore the Spirit is God. (Psal. 33. 6.) By the word of the Lord (his substantial Word or Son) were the heavens made, and all the host of them, by the breath (or Spirit) of his mouth; that is, Jehovah by his Eternall Son and Spirit made all things. The heavens and their host, are there expressed by a Synecdoche of the part, for the whole creation, or, for all creatures both in heaven and in earth. Againe (Psal. 104. 30.) Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; The Spirit of God creates every day; what is it that continueth things in their created being, but providence? That's a true axiom in Divinity; Providence is creation continued; Now the Spirit of God, who created at first, creates to this day. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created. The work of creation was finished in the first six days of the world, but the work of creation is renewed every day, and so continued to the end of the world. Successive providential creation as well; as original creation is ascribed to the Spirit.

The Scripture is full of arguments to prove that the holy Ghost is God; Which (because this fundamental truth is blasphemously spoken against) I shall a little touch upon.

First, As the Spirit createth and makes the natural man consisting of body and soule; so he regenerateth (which is a greater creation) the whole into a spiritual man; therefore, he is God, (John 3. 5.) Except a man be born againe of water, and of the Spirit (that is, of the Spirit who is as water) he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The holy Ghost is also call'd, The sanctifier; sanctification is regeneration in progress, and motion; regeneration is sanctification begun; and sanctification is regeneration per-
perfecting from day to day. (2 Thes: 2.13.) We are bound to
give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because
God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through san-
etification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. And the Apostle
Peter writes to the Elect (1 Pet: 1.2.) according to the fore-
knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit.
Now, who can do these great things but God? who can regenerate,
or give a new nature, who can sanctifie, or perfect that new
nature but God alone? Men and Angels must let these workes a-
alone for ever, or (as we translate, Psal: 49.8.) these acts cease
for ever from men and Angels, as much as the redemption of
man from the grave, or from hell, from corruption, or condem-
nation.

Secondly, The Spirit is omniscient, He knoweth all things,
(1 Cor: 1.12, 210.19.) The Spirit knoweth all things, yea the
deep things of God. He is not only acquainted with, and privie
to the surface and outside of things, but he searcheth things to the
bottom of them. Nor doth he search only the depe or bottome
things of common men, or of the chiefest of men, Kings and Prin-
ces, (whose hearts are usually as much deeper then other mens,
as their persons and places are higher,) but the Spirit searcheth
the deep things, the bottome things of God. the things of God
that lye loweft, and mosst out of sight, the Spirit understandeth;
therefore the Spirit is God. For (as the Apostle argueth, 1 Cor:
2.11.) No man knoweth the things of a man; save the spirit of a
man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man
but the Spirit of God, or, he that is God; if the spirit that is in
man, were not man, or the intellectual power in man, it could nev-
ever know the things of man; and if the Spirit of God were not
God, he could never search and know the deep, the deepest things
of God.

Thirdly, As the Spirit of God knoweth all things, as he search-
eth the deep things, even all the secrets, and mysteries of God;
so he teacheth all things, even all those secrets and mysteries of
God, which 'tis needful or useful for man to know. The Spirit is a
teacher, and he teacheth effectually (Joh: 16.13.) When the Spi-
rit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not
speak of himselfe (that is, he shall not teach you a private doc-
trine, or that which is contrary to what ye have learned of me)
but
A fourth argument that he is God. As the Spirit teacheth, so 
he forerelleth all things (1 Tim. 4. 1.) Now the Spirit 
expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith,
giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devills. The Spirit 
of God clearly foreseeth and infallibly forerelleth what shall be,
before it is, therefore he is God. The Lord by his holy Prophet 
(Isa. 41. 23.) challengeth all the false Idol gods of the Heathen 
to give that proofe of their Divinity; Shew the things that are to 
come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods. As if he had 
sayd, Doe that and we will yield the cause. Men and Devills may 
guelfte at, but none can indeed shew things to come but God.

Fifthly, The Spirit appoints to himselfe officers and ministers 
in the Church, therefore he is God, (Acts 13. 2.) The holy Ghoft 
said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have 
called them.

Sixthly, The holy Ghoft furnisheth those Officers whom he 
calleth with power and gifts, as he pleaseth, that they may be fit 
for the work or ministrity of the Gospel (1 Cor. 12. 8. 11.) To 
one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom, to another the word of 
knowledge by the same Spirit, &c. But all these worketh that one 
and the selfe-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 
Now, who can give wisdom and knowledge, who can give them 
prerogatively, following in this distribution, or division of gifts, 
no rule, nor giving any other reason of it but his owne will, except God only?

Seventhly, The holy Ghoft is sinned against; therefore he is 
God. Some, possibly may object and say, This is not a convincing 
or demonstrative argument, that the holy Ghoft is God, because 
he is sinned against; For man may sin against man. All second 
table sins are sins against our Neighbour; and the Apostle tells 
the Corinthians (1 Ep. 8. 12,) that while they used their lawfull 
liberty in eating with offence, they sinned against the Brethren. 
I answer, Whosoever is properly sinned against is God, because 
God is the Law-giver. And, though many actions of men are di-
rect wrongs to man, yet in every wrong done to man, God also 
is wronged; and, in strict fence, he only is sinned against by man. 
For the reason why any action is a wrong to man, is because it is 
against
against some Law of God. And it to be sinned against in strict sense, be proper to God only; then the argument stands good, that the Holy Spirit is God, because he is sinned against; especially, if we consider, that there is such an Emphasis put upon sinning against the holy Ghost in the holy Scripture (more if possible then upon sinning against the Father, or the Son) (Mark 12. 31.) Wherefore, I say unto you (saith Christ) All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men; As if he had said, Though you sin against the Father, and the Son, it shall be forgiven you, but if you sin against the holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come; that is, it shall never be forgiven. Seeing then there is more in sinning against the holy Ghost then against the Father, or the Son, who are God, the holy Ghost must needs be God. For though there is no degree or gradual difference in the deity, each person being coeternall, coequall, and consubstantiall; yet the Scripture attributes more in that case, as to the point of sinning against the holy Ghost, then to sinning against the Father, or the Son; therefore certainly the holy Ghost is God.

Lastly, The holy Ghost is the object of divine worship; are not we baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost? Is the Father, and the Son God, and the holy Ghost not God, who is joyned with them in the same honour? Shall a creature come in competition with God? And doth not the Scripture or word of God direct us to pray for grace from the Spirit as well as from the Father or the Son? (2 Cor. 13. 13. Rev. 1. 4.) Thus we see how full the Scripture is in giving the glory of the same works upon us, and of the same worship from us to the Spirit, as to the Father and the Son: And therefore from all these premises we may conclude, That the Holy-Ghost with the Father and the Son, is God blessed and to be glorified for evermore. The Spirit of God hath made me, And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

The words carry an allusion (as Interpreters generally agree) to that of Moses describing the creation of man (Gen. 2. 7.) And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living
The soul. Elihu speaks near in the same form, fully to the same effect: The breath of the Almighty hath given me life, or, enlivened me; as if he had said, That soul which the Lord hath breathed into me, hath made me live. The soul of man may be called the breath of the Almighty, because the Almighty is expressed infusing it into man at first by breathing. And therefore the word Neshamah, which properly signifies the breath, doth also by a Metonymy of the effect signifie the soul itself, which caueth breathing. Thus our translators render it (Isa: 57, 16.) I (faith the Lord) will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. As the soul of man was breathed in by God, so the soul is that by which man breathes. Breath and soul come and goe together. Some comparing the original word (Shamaijm) for the heavens, with this word (Neshamah) which here we translate breath, take notice of their near affinity, intimating that the soul of man is of a heavenlypedegree, or comes from heaven; yea the Latine word (mens) signifying the mind, is of the same consonant letters with the Hebrew Neshamah, and, as some conceive, is derived from it.

So then, I take these words, The breath of the Almighty, as a description of that part of man which is opposed to his body; The Spirit of God hath made me; that is, hath set me up as a man, in humane shape, And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life; that is, this soul which the Almighty hath breathed into me, hath made me a living man, ready for any humane act, or (as Moses speaks) God breathing into my nostrills the breath of life, I became a living soul.

Hence observe.

First, The soul of man floweth immediately from God.

Tis the breath of God; not that God liveth by breathing; the way of his life is infinitely above our apprehension; But tis cleare in Scripture, That the Almighty breathed into man the powers of life. And therefore he is called (by way of Eminence) The father of spirits, (Heb: 12, 9.) For though the Almighty is rightly entituled the Father of the whole man, though both body and soul are the worke of God, yet he is in a further sense, the father of our spirits, or souls, then of our bodyes. And here...
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 4.

So\text{\`{a}}lomon shewing how man is disposed of when these two are sepa-
rated by death, faith (\text{\`{E}}c\text{\`{o}}l: 12. 7.) Then \text{\`{s}}hall the dust (that is, the
body) returne to the earth as it was, and the spirit (that is, the
soule) shall returne to God who gave it. The body is the gift of
God, but the body is not the breath of God, it is not such an
immediate gift of God as the soule is; when the body of man
was made at first, God tooke the dust of the earth and formed
his body out of it, but when he gave him a soule, he breathed
that from himselfe; it was an immediate effect of Gods power,
not dealing with, nor working upon any pre-existing matter. The
spirit or soule of man is purely of God, solely of God. And hence
we may inferre.

First, Then the soule is not a vapour, arising from the crafts
or temperament of the body, as the life of a beast is.

Secondly, Then the soule of man is not traduced from the
parents in generation, as many learned men affirme, especially, to
ease themselves of those difficulties about the conveyance of or-
ginal sin or defilement into the soule.

Thirdly, We may hence also inferre, then the soule is not
corruptible; it is an immortall substance. How can that be cor-
r uptible or mortall, which hath its rise (as I may say) immedi-
ately from God, or is breathed in by the Almighty, who is alto-
gether incorruptible and immortal. And whereas there is a two-
fold incorruptibility; First, by divine ordination, that is, God
appoynts such a thing shall not corrupt, and therefore it doth not;
so the body of man in it's first creation was incorruptible, for
though it were in it selfe corruptible, being made out of the
earth, yet by the appoyntment of God, if man had continued in
his integrity he had not dyed. And therefore it is said, By sin
came death; yea doubtlesse if God should command and ap-
poynt the meanest worme that moves upon the earth to live for
ever, or the most fading flower that groweth out of the earth to
flourish for ever, both the one and the other would doe so. Se-
condly, there is an incorruptibility in some things, not meerely
by a law or appoyntment of God, but as from that intrinsically
nature, which God hath bestowed upon them, and implanted in
them. Thus the Angels are immortall, they have an incorrup-
tible nature, and likewise the soule of man, being breathed from the
Almighty, is in it's owne nature incorruptible; it hath naturally

no
no seeds of dissolution in it, because no contrariety, no contrary qualities in it, as all bodyes or corporeall substances have. I know
the Apostile faith ( 1 Tim: 6. 16. ) God only hath immortality; it’s true, he only hath it in himselfe independently, originally; but he derives and gives it as a talent to some creatures in a way of dependance upon himselfe:

Secondly, Observe.

The soule brings in the life of the body, The life of man.

What is the body without the soule, but a lump of clay? As soone as ever the soule departs, life departs, man dyeth and becomes a purifying carcasse; yet such is the folly of men, that all their care is for the life of the body, which is (as the dying life, they utterly neglect the soule, which, as in the life of the body, so it selfe never dyeth. The soule is the Jewell, the body is but the Cabinet, the soule is the kernel, the body is but the shell. Will you be sollicitous, about a Cabinet, and a shell, and slight the Jewel, or throw away the kernel? Will you take care of that which liveth, the body, and will you not take care of that which holds your life, the soule?

Againe, Note.

Life is the gift of God.

If the soule which is the cause of life in man, be of God, then the life of man is of God also. The cause of the cause is the cause of the effect or thing caused. But we need not argue it from Logick rules, Scripture testimony being so abundant in this thing. ( Acts 17. 25. ) He giveth to all, life and breath, and all things. And ( v. 28. ) In him we live and move and have our being. Spirituall and eternall life, are the gift of God, so also is natural life. And if so, Then

First, Live to God; Secondly, Seeing God gives us life, we should be willing to give our lives to God. Yea. Thirdly, We should therefore be ready to give up, or rather to lay downe our lives for God. And as we should give up our lives to God when he calls for them by natural death, so we should give up our lives for God, when he calls us to beare witness to his name and truth by violent death.

I shall yet take notice of one thing further, before I passe from this
this verse; The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

Some, upon good grounds, referre the first clause; The Spirit of God hath made me, to the creation both of soul and body; and the second or latter clause, the breath of the Almighty hath given me life, to that quickning which we receive by the Spirit to the duties whereinto we are called in this life. The breath of the Almighty hath given me life; that is, hath fitted and prepared me for the severall offices and services of life. As if Elihu had sayd, The Spirit of God hath not only made me a man, but a man for worke, yea the Spirit of God hath quickned me to the just worke and businesse I am come about. Thus, life imports a spirituall life in the being of it, but all the furniture, offices, and abilities of a spirituall life. The Septuagint renders the profession made by Elihu expressly, to this fence, holding out a strong assurance which Elihu had, that God had both called and prepared him for the service he was come about and engaged in. The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath instructed me. Another of the Greek Interpreters speaks as much; I am not ignorant, that of my selfe I am able to doe nothing, but I have received this power from God; As if Elihu had said, The Spirit of the Almighty hath quickned me to this worke I am now upon, and taught me what both to say and doe in thy face, O Job.

Hence note.

God giveth not only the life of nature unto men, but he fits them for all the duties, and services of this life.

We, indeed, are scarcely to be reckoned among the living, if we have no more but a naturall life; what is it to be able to eate and drinke, to heare, and see, and speake; unlesse we have more then this, we deserve not to be numbered or written among the living; we are upon the matter, but dead lumps, and clods of clay. It is the breath of the Almighty that quickens us and superadds ability to doe good; that frames, fashions, and fits us for every good word, and worke; This is the life of man; when a man is fitted for duty, and service, when he is furnished for employment, to be and God, and his Brethren in some stead while he is in this world, then he lives. The motions, impulses and influences,
ences, the teachings and guidings of the Spirit of God, are the life of our lives. We can doe nothing of our selves, till the Almighty bestows a new life upon us; and as we can doe nothing at all in spiritualis, till he gives us a new life, so we can do nothing to purpose till the Spirit acts & moves up that life in us. It is the Spirit who first bestows; Secondly, increaseth; Thirdly, excites our spiritual life, & puts the new creature into motion. All our good thoughts and holy actions, all our uprightness and sincerity, all our strength and ability flow from the Spirit; until the holy Spirit workes in us, we sit still; and when the Spirit worketh, we must not sit still; I (faith the Apostle, Rom. 15. 18.) will not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word, and deed; As if he had sayd, My owne workes are not worth the naming, I will not so much as mention any thing that Christ hath not wrought in me by the Spirit; That was a mighty worke which he was enabled to doe, to make the Gentiles obedient in word, and deed. Christ did not leave him to doe it in his owne power. The breath of the Almighty enabled him; and so he doth all those that are able and willing, ready for and successfull in any such holy worke.

Let us therefore ascribe all to his working and quickening; let us set down our severall Items of receit in our account-books, confessing that we have nothing of our own. This gift, that grace, that ability to doe, to speake, to suffer, to act, we have received from him. Let the whole Inventory of our soules riches, have Gods name written upon it, and ascribed to his praisse alone. And if we thus uncloath our selves, by giving God the glory of all, we shall loose nothing by it, for God will apparrell and furnish us, deck and adorne us better every day. The poorer we are in our selves, the richer will he make us. To be thus diminisht is the best way to our encreas. Tis the breath of the Almighty that teacheth us, and if we can but humbly enough, that is, heartily acknowledge it, we shall be taught and learne enough.

So much of these words as they are a direct alluration, I shall consider them a little in their connection, and reference both to what went before, and to that which follows after; which was the second consideration of this verse at first proposed.

First, This verse may be connected with the three former verses, and then the sentence appeareth thus; As if Elihu had sayd,
Chap. 33. *An Exposition upon the Book of Job.* Verf. 4.

Of Job, I have moved thee to heare me patiently, and attentively; and let it not seeme grievous to thee to doe soe: For, though I am thy inferior in age, and degree, yet I am a man as well as thou, and I have a soule and body like thine, yea the Spirit of God that made me, hath also furnished me; I have received ability from God as thou haft, I stand upon even ground, or equall terms with thee, as to creation, and I am not altogether void of instruction; and therefore as a man I have a possibility to understand reason; and as a man indowd by the Spirit of God, I have a capability to direct thee about the ways of God, or how to understand and comport with his providences towards thee. Thou haft been long under the hand of God, and long in the hands of men, who have rather entangled and troubled thy mind than eased it; who knowes but that I, who all this while have been but a looker on, may see somewhat in thy case, which hath hitherto been hid from thy former undertakers. Therefore pray favoure me (it may prove in the issue a favour to thy selfe) with an hour or two of patient attention. Take this note from it.

The consideration of our common originall, that we have all one maker, or are all come out of the hand of God, should make us willing to heare, and learne of one another.

Thus Elihu argueth; Hearre me; why? Because the Spirit of God hath made me, as well as thee; doe not despise what I have to say, as if you were a man of another mould, or pedigree, the same God, out of the same matter, by the same Word, and Spirit, hath form'd us both. Some pictures are more highly prized than others of the same person, because drawne by a better hand, by An Apelles, or A Michael Angelo. The fame of the Artift or workman puts a value upon the worke; And the title of the Author doth sometimes commend a piece more then, in truth, either the forme or matter. But come among the sons of men, all their faces and features are drawne by one hand; the same most exact hand of God hath wrought and fashioned them all, both as to their outside, and inside, both as to the forme of these houses of clay, and as to all the ornaments and beautifyings of them. As we all walke upon the same earth, drinke out of the same water, breath in the same ayre, as we are all covered with the same Canopy of heaven, and lighted with the same Sun, so we are all made
made with the same hand; The Spirit of God hath made one as well as another; This man hath not had a better pencill nor a more skilfull Limner then that. Thus we may argue from the common condition of man in nature, to a mutual condiscension among men. Indeed Christians, who have higher principles, have also higher topicks & arguments then that, why they should condiscend one to another, and (as the Apostle directs, Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6.) Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Saints should be lowly and meekly with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, (as the Apostle there exhorts) not only because one hand hath made all their bodyes, but because they are one body; though they are many natural bodies, yet one mystical body; There is one body, and one spirit; As one Spirit hath made them, so they are made one spirit; There is also (as it followeth) one hope, one Lord, one faith, one Baptisme, one God, and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. How should all Saints be one, who are comprehended and united under this seven-fold oneness. That we have all one maker in nature, is a very moving argument to meekness, love, and unity, but that all believers are made one by Grace, is a much more moving argument.

Againe, We may consider these words in connexion with the three following verses, and then, as in connexion with the former, they are a prevention of Job's pride, so in this, they are a prevention of his feare; or an encouragement of him to a cheerfull hearing of what Elihu had to say. Job had been dealt severely with by his three friends, and the terror of God was upon him, he was under much divipendency of spirit. Now (saith Elihu) Answer me if thou canst, stand up, set thy words in order before me, for the Spirit of God hath made me, and given me life; I am a creature, and I am but a creature; I am no more then thou art, I am made of God, and thou art made of God as well as I, I was made out of the dust, as thou art; I am not God to terrifie thee, but I am sent of God, to counsel and comfort thee; my hand shall not be heavie upon thee, I promise to deale tenderly with thee, I am such a one as thy selfe, as I am not worse, so I am not better, we stand alike together in this dispute; therefore thou mayest freely come forth, and answer me, who am but a poore creature, as thy selfe is. Thus Elihu bespeakes Job in the sixth and seventh verses; If thou canst answer
answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up, Behold, I am according to thy wish. Speak freely, and clear thy selfe, if thou art able, thou hast free leave for me.

Ver. 5. If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.

This verse may have a four-fold respect.

First, To the insufficiency, or incompetency of Job's parts and intellects to deal with Elihu in this matter; as if they were a daring challenge, Answer me if thou canst, doe thy worst. And hence some of the Ancients charge Elihu, as if he came upon Job boastingly, and spake thus in the pride of his owne spirit, and in the disdain of Job, at once to shew and fligh his weakness, If thou canst answer me. As if (like some irrefragable Doctor) he had said; I shall speak such reason, as I know thou canst not answer; doe what thou canst, set all thy wits aworke, and beate thy brains as much as thou wilt, thou wilt but loose thy labour, and weary thy selfe in vain. Thus the meaning of, Answer me if thou canst, is, Thou canst not answer. But I suppose Elihu, though hot spirited enough was yet of a better spirit & temper then to speak either thus proudly of himselfe, or despisingly of so worthy a man as he had before him; nor did Elihu look upon Job as such a puny to him, nor so much his underling as that he durst not hold up the Bucklers in dispute against him. Elihu knew Job was an old experienced Souldier, well vert'd in the wayes and things of God. And therefore

Secondly, (If thou canst) may rather referre to the weakness and soareness of Job's body, to the wounds or troubles which he had received, and felt from the Almighty in his spirit, then to any inability of his mind for argument. As if Elihu had said; I consider how it is with thee, thou art a man diseased and dis tempered in thy body, fitter to lie upon or keep thy bed, then to stand up to a dispute, fitter for a hospital then for the Schooles. Thou also hast a troubled and an afflicted spirit, I doubt thou art not in case to answer me, or to stand up longer in a way of dispute; but this I say, if thou canst answer me, pray doe; set thy words in order before me. I will not lay this burden upon thee, unless thou art willing to take it, unless thou findest thou hast strength and spirit to bear
beare and carry it through. Answer me if thou canst, otherwise I will speak my thoughts out, and make what use of it thou pleasest.

Thirdly, I conceive Elihu might here intend to let Job understand, that he was resolved to put him to the utmost, that he was resolved to bring the strongest arguments, and use the quickest way of reasoning for his conviction that he could; and that therefore he also adviseth Job to do the like, to doe his best, to buckle himselfe to the businesse with all his might, for he was not come to dally with him: he would have him set his shoulders to the work, and gather all the forces of his foule to the battaile, he bids him bring forth even his horfemen for his defence (as I may speak in allusion to that in the 7th of Jeremy; If thou hast run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, how shalst thou contend with horses) Elihu was purposed and resolved to bring out his greatest strength, his horfemen to the battaile, and therefore will heh Job doe so too. Thus he gives him faire warning, If thou canst, answer me; doe thy utmost, I am ready for thee.

Fourthly, While Elihu styleth, If thou canst, answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up. We may take his words as a gentle and sweete invitation to the worke; As if he had sayd, If thou hast spirits euen left to hold discourse with me, or to reply upon me, come friend, spare me not; set thy words in order before me, I will not be a terror to thee. Or there may be this condescending fence in these words of Elihu; Doe not thinke (O Job) because I begin to speak, that therefore I meane to speak all, or to have all the discourse my selfe; assure thy selfe, I have no purpose to hinder thee in any defence which thou art able to make for thy selfe: No, though I am come with my best preparations to urge thee, and reply upon thee, as to all that hath past between thee and thy friends, yet I am as willing that thou shouldst answer, as I am ready prepared and proft to speake; thou hast free leaue to make thy Apologie, to say what thou canst for thy selfe, I intend not to impose upon thee, nor by any Authority to compell thee to stand to my sentence, as if I were thy Master, or would Lord it over thee; Doe and speake thy best for thy owne vindication, I am ready to receive it from thee, and give thee a faire account of my thoughts about it. If thou canst, answer me.

Set thy words in order before me.

*Tis a metaphorical speech, often and most properly used for A a
the marshalling of an Army; and so is elegantly applied here in this matter of controversy, or polemical discourse. Set thy words, thy reasons, thy arguments, as it were in battle array against me; we had the word in the former Chapter at the 14th verse. It is applied also to the exactness of the heart in prayer, not an affected exactness or curiosity about words, or to word it with God, but it notes exactness or spiritualness rather in meditating and disposing the strongest Scripture reasonings, to prevail with God in prayer. Prayer is, as it were, a battle fought in heaven, not in wrath or revenge, but with faith and holy submission. Thus did Jacob when he wrestled with the Angel, (Gen: 32.) And thus David speaks (Psal: 5. 3.) In the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, or, I will marshall my prayer, I will bring up petition after petition, pleading after pleading, even till I am become like Jacob a Prince with God, till I have won the field, and got the day. Thus the word is applied by a metaphor both to disputations with men, and supplications to God. Further, we may take the meaning plainly without any strain of rhetoric, Set thy words in order before me. Method is good in every thing, either an expistle or a covert methode. Sometimes 'tis the best of art to cover it; in speaking there is a speciall use of methode; for, though, as one said very well (speaking of those who are more curious about methode, then serious about matter) Method doth never converted any man; yet methode and the ordering of words, is very useful. Our speeches should not be heaps of words, but words bound up, not a throng of words, but words set in array, or, as it were, in ranke and file. The Prophet (Joel 2. 5.) describes a terrible Judgement of God by a strong people set in battle array. In pursuance of which fence, Mr Broughton renders the next words, not (as we) stand up, but stand to it, as Commanders say to their Soulanders, stand to it; and the Italian translation thus; Set thy words in order before me, present thy selfe to the Combat. Thus he continues the metaphor; As if he had said; Chuse thy ground, and maintaine it like a valiant Champion; I do not desire thou shouldst yeild me an inch of ground, yeild to nothing but the truth, dispute every patch with me, stand up, stand to it; Stand as if thou wert to fight a battle, not only for thy honour, but for thy life. The Apostle (1 Cor: 16. 13.) speaks in that language about:
about our spirituall warre; Watch ye, and first, quit your selves as men; Man it, be strong. There is such a fence in Elihu’s exhortation here to Job; Set thy words in order before me, stand up.

Now, in that Elihu when he was thus bent to speak, and was so full of matter to speak, that as he tells us in the former chapter, he was like bottles of wine, and that he could not hold, yet gave Job faire law, and bids him answer, if he could.

Note First.

In all matters of difference we should be as willing to heare what others can answer, as we are desirous that others should heare what we can object.

If thou canst, answer me. It is good to speak in a right cause, especially to speak rightly, and it is very good to learne what can be answered.

Note.

Secondly, Elihu looking upon Job as a man in a weake condition, speaks encouragingly; stand up; as much as to say, Take heart.

It is our duty to refresh those that are troubled, or to comfort those that are weake, whether in body or in minde.

We should doe our best to put strength and infuse spirits into sinking hearts and faining spirits. Thus God dwells (Hab: 2:14) and so should we, with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Thirdly, As these words, If thou canst, answer me, import that as Elihu intended to put Job to the utmost, so he would have Job besirre himselfe to the utmost.

Hence note.

Every man should doe his best for the clearing or maintaining of a good and righteous cause.

Tis sinfull to be slight in matters of moment. Whatever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might (saith Solomon, Eccles: 9:10.) we should especially doe these two things with all our might; First, maintaine the truth of God; Secondly, our own
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owne integrity. The former of these was chiefly upon the hand of Elihu in this undertaking, the latter upon the hand of Job. To betray the truth of God, is the worst kinde both of cowardise and treachery; and to betray our owne Integrity is next to that. There is nothing more unworthy a man, much more a Christian, than to leave either truth, or our owne integrity to flinke or swim, to shift for themselues. Thus Elihu provokes Job to the, compare, and tends him a friendly challenge, which left he should refuse or not accept, he gives him a comfortable account (as a cordiall) what manner of man he should find him to be, even a man moulded and modell'd to his owne heart, or minted to his mind, as will appeare in the next verse.

Ver. 6. Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead, &c.

Here we have a very winning argument (as was shewed, in opening the whole Context) to encourage Job both to heare and answer. If ever a man will speak when he comes to a business, it is when things and persons are according to his wish. Job had oftentimes wish't that he might be mildly heard by God, & not so harshly dealt with by man; his friends having been so over-severe and rigorous toward him, that he was even compelled in the bitterness of his soule, to cry out, He that is afflicted, should have pity from his friends. Yea, when Job wish't to be heard by God, he, with much earnestnesse deprecated his severity, (Chap: 9. 34. and Chap: 13. 24.) Let not thy dread make me afraid. Thus, Job had wish't for a milde and gentle treatment from all hands. In answer to which desire Elihu presents himselfe to him.

Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead.

Those words (According to thy wish) may have a two-fold interpretation; First, as we render, according to thy wish, is, according to what thou hast heretofore spoken or drawne out in wishes; thou haft thy vote, thy wish, and what wouldst thou have more. As if he had said; O Job, I have heard thee wishing such wishes, that thou mightest be more tenderly handled; that God would not oppresse thee with his Majesty, nor thy friends with their severity. Now thou haft thy desire, I doe here promise my selfe such
a one to thee as thou hast desired: For as I will be a faithfull advocate for God, so, I, who am in God's stead; will not (as thou hast prayed God would not at the hearing of thy case) be terrible nor dreadfull to thee; I doubt not but to carry the matter with thee to thy hearts content. I am according to thy wish.

Hence note.

It is not good to be crofle-grain'd at any time to our brethren, much lefle at such a time; some love (as it were) to lie twart in every bufineffe, nor is any thing more desireable to them, then to oppose another mans desire. The sweetneffe and ingenuity of these words, I am according to your wish, in what I safely may, is fieldome heard among brethren. Some indeed are too forward to be according to the wish of others in things that are finfull. When thieves and murderers fay to them, Come, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurke privily for the innocent without cause, &c. Cast in your lot among us, let us all have one purse; They fay, we are according to your wish, we will goe with you. When the prophane fay, come run with us into all exceffe of riot; to drunkenneffe and uncleanness, they anfwer, we are according to your wish, we are for you. It is good to lie crofle to the finfull desires of men; but to comply with their honest desires, and to anfwer every good with of their foules, is a great part of our goodneffe, and of our fulfilling the law of love: we fhould strive in that fence, to fall in with every ones wish, and to become all things to all men, both for their edification and conflation. Behold, I am according to thy wish.

Secondly, These words are rendred strictly out of the Ori- ginall, thus, I am according to thy mouth, or measure; I am in the fame condition and state as thou art. Thus also they are words of encouragement to Job, assuring him that he should not be over-power'd, nor borne downe by force. This forme of speaking is used frequently in Scripture, to note the fublumenefl/ or proportion of things. The Israelites (Exod. 16. 21.) gathered Manna every morning, Every man according to his eating, The Hebrew justas as edome is, fui. Hebs.
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is, Every one did gather to the mouth of his eating, that is, according to the measure of his eating, such was the measure of his gathering. The Nazarite was to offer according to the vow which he vowed (Numb: 6. 21.) The Hebrew is, according to the mouth of his vow. Again, 'tis said (Numb: 7. 5.) Moses was to give the offerings of the Princes of Israel to the Levites, to every man according to his service, or, according to the mouth (that is, the condition and degree) of his service. Once more, Solomon (Prov: 22. 6.) prefiguring the good and genuine education of children, expresseth it thus; Train up a child in the way that he should goe. The Original upon the mouth of his way; that is, in such a way as is not only good and honest in itself, but most proper and congenial to the spirit, disposition, and capacity of the child. As children are to be fed with such measures, so to be taught in such a manner as they can most easily and profitably digest. After this manner, or to this sense, Eliphaz speaks to Job, Stand up, I am according to thy mouth or measure; As if he had said; God indeed is infinitely above thy measure, But I, who am come to deale with thee in God's stead, am according to thy mouth or measure, therefore take courage; one man is like another, the measure of one man is the measure of another. There are I grant, several differences among men, both as to civils and spiritualls; there are several graduall and personall differences, but no specificall difference among men; every man is according to the mouth or measure of any other man: in that God only transcends the measure of all men; My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my ways as your ways; but look as the heavens are high above the earth, so my thoughts are above your thoughts, and my ways above your ways, faith the Lord (Isa. 55. 8, 9.) But the ways of one man are like the ways of other men; and the thoughts of one man are like the thoughts of other men; There is no such transcendency among men; They are all (as men) of one measure, that is, not only finite, but they are all short and narrow; even they who carry the greatest length and breadth among the sons of men. If we consider man with man, as to his sinfull condition, so one man is perfectly like another; one man is of the same measure with another; as Solomon expresseth it (Prov: 27. 19.) As in water face answers face, so the heart of man to man. If man look downe into the water, that face which he seeth in the water is like that.
that face which seeth the water. Thus the hearts of the children of men answer one another, heart answers heart, as face answers face: And as man answers man fully, as to naturall sinfulness, so mostly as to naturall abilities, as for those which are acquired, though the difference may be so great that one man may be clearly discerned to excell another, yet that man who excells most, doth not exceed man; and therefore may be compared by man. It is said (Rev. 21. 17.) That the wall of the new Jerusalem was measured according to the measure of a man, that is, of the Angel. There is one measure of an Angel, and there is another measure of a man; Angels have a measure above men; why then doth he say according to the measure of a man, that is, of the Angel? I answer, he speaks so because the Angel appeared in the shape of a man, to doe that worke. Now as the measure (that is, the Ability) of an Angel is above mans; So God hath a measure infinitely above both men and Angels. But men are of a measure. I am according to thy mouth or measure.

Hence note.

First, Man and man are of a measure.

Let us not make a God of any man, no nor an Angel. The Apostle Jude reproves those who had the persons of men in admiration. Men will be lesse to us then was expected, if we expect too much from them; or more from them, then is meete. For though one man may have a little more height and largeness of parts and gifts, in that which is either acquired or infused, then his neighbour, yet what man is there in the world, but hath his match, & shall finde his measure in some other men; yea, though some men exceedingly out-goe others, yet their equalls may be found among men, no man out-goes all men. The best of men have but the measure of a man.

Secondly, Take this Caution from it; Let no man make a God of himselfe, or look upon himselfe as if he were in his measure beyond all other men. We are very apt to doe so. And if we have but little more then some others, we are ready to thinke we have more then all others, or to look upon our selves as if we transcended the measure of mankinde, and so fell presently with pride and selfe-conceit; then which nothing is more uncomely or unmanly. Nor a few esteeme themselves so unparalell'd in the
parts and beauty of their bodies, that they despise others, and many do it in reference to the endowments and abilities of their minds; they have such a quickness of understanding, such a strength of memory, such a fluency of speech, such a depth of reason, such power of arguing, as they suppose none can match them or measure with them. All such have forgotten that they are but men. Therefore as no man should admire another, so let him not thinke highly of himselfe, let him rather thinke that though possibly there are some below him, yet there may be many, yet a great many more above him, and know that are upon the same levell with him. *I am according to thy wish or measure, faith Elihu.*

*In Gods stead.*

But how came Elihu to be in Gods stead? had he a Commission from God to undertake Job? was he, as I may say, Gods Delegate or Ambassador? did God send him out upon this errand? if not, why did he take so much to himselfe, as to say, *I am according to thy wish in Gods stead*?

I cannot say, that Elihu had any formall Commission to come out, and appeare in Gods stead, as an Attorney appeares in stead of his Client, or as an Ambassador in the stead of his Prince; But doubtlesse Elihu had an equivalent or virtuall Commission, even a mighty impression upon his spirit, by the Spirit of God to doe so; his heart was drawne out secretly, but strongly to stand up and undertake for God, towards the determination of this long continued dispute. *I am (faith he) in Gods stead or place; in that place which if God himselfe should supply, he would be a dread and a terror to thee. But I a man of like passions as thy selfe, and being here in Gods behalf, and by his authority, in his name and for his glory to speak unto thee, I shall yet speak according to the measure of a man, and therefore, thou needest not feare that my terror should make thee afraid, I am in Gods stead.*

Hence note.

*They who speak to others about the things of God, should speak as God, or as put in Gods place and stead.*

Tis enough to make all the Ministers of Christ tremble and cry out in the Apostles words, *Who is sufficient for these things ?*
to remember that when they speake to men, they speake in God's stead. We ( faith the same Apostle, 2 Cor. 5:20.) are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Thus spake he who had indeed an immediate call and commission from God; and they who have not such an immediate call and commission as he had, yet speaking of or about the things of God; and coming in the name of God, they should speake as placed in God's stead. And if the Ministers of Christ ought to speake as in God's stead, then surely they that heare, should heare them as speaking in God's stead. The Apostle testifies of the Galatians (Gal. 4:14.) My temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Ye received me not only as an Angel or messenger of Christ, but as if Christ had beene there in person, so did ye receive me. He gives the same testimony of the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2:13.) For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. I doe not say, that what every man speakeh about the things of God, is presently to be taken for the word of God, or, as if God spake it. But if that be his scope and purpose, if that be his Theame and his businesse, if that be the subject matter and substance of his speech, Then he (as to the body of his speech) is to be lookt upon as uttering the word and minde of God in God's stead. 'Tis a very great means to advance our profit in hearing the word, when they who speak it are lookt upon as speaking in God's stead, and not bringing an errand of their owne.

Before I part from this first clause of the verse, I shall briefly touch two other readings and interpretation of it.

First, thus; Behold, I am, as if thy mouth were to God; that is, thou needest not as thou hadst wished to goe or address to God himselfe for the laying open of thy cause, the matter may be done between me and thee, even as if thou hadst spokne to God himselfe.

Secondly, Some render those latter words not in God's stead as we, But, in respect of God. As if he had said, In respect of God, I stand in the same proportion, or upon the same terms with thy
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felfe, for he is the God of us both, nor did God make me of any better or more excellent matter then thou art made of; which he fully expresseth in the close of the verse, as it followeth.

*I also am formed out of the Clay.*

These words are another argument (as was shewed when I gave the prospect of the whole Context) why Job should heare Elihu; I am in Gods stead indeed, but I am a poore creature, moulded out of the durt, made up of earth, as thou art; *I also am formed out of the Clay;* therefore stand up, answer me, and feare not; answer me and spare not. The highest and holyest that ever dispenced the minde of God, in Gods stead, to his Church and people here on earth, were made of earth, and were formed out of Clay. The Apostle makes that humble confession of himselfe and fellow-Apostles (2 Cor. 4. 6.) *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God.* The weakness of the instrument lifts up the glory of the superior agent. They who by commiſſion are the Ministers of God, and so in Gods stead, are yet but, as other men, in their natural structure and constitution. (Acts 10. 26.) when Cornelius gave too much respect, a kinde of Adoration to Peter, he forbad him, saying, *Stand up, I also am a man.* As if he had said with Elihu, I am formed out of the clay as well as thee. There is a respect due to the persons of men, and much more to the Messengers of God, yet too much may soone be given; I will none of that, faith Peter; *I also am a man.* So Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14. 15.) when the people were so hightned in their ignorant respects, that they would have sacrificed to them, as Gods, *They rent their cloathes* (as in cafe of blasphemy) and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, *Sirs, why doe ye these things? We also are men subject to like passions with you, &c.*

*Excisim.*

I am also [*formed*] or as the Hebrew signifies, *Cut out of the Clay.* As the potter cuts off a rude lump of clay from the whole maffe of clay before him, to make a vessell of it; so man is cut out of that maffe of mankinde; for though the birth and originall of man is now by another way, then the first mans was, yet we may all look upon our selves as having the same originall; we are cut out of the clay, and formed out of the durt.

Hence
Hence note.

For the matter all men have one original. I also am formed out of Clay.

I have heretofore met with this point, and therefore pass it here.

Secondly, From the scope of Elihu,

Note.
The consideration of our common condition, should fit us with compassion one to another; much more should it keep us from insult upon one another.

Elihu used this expression, to assure Job that he would deal very tenderly with him; What, dost thou think, that I who am a piece of clay will insult over thee, who art as good a piece of clay as I? why should one earthen vessel dash hard upon another? When we are tempted to pride in our selves, let us remember that we are clay, when we are provoked to anger against our brethren, or to any harsh and rigorous dealing with them, let us remember that we also are clay, that our pedigree and our stock is from the dust as well as others. If our feet be but a little fouled, we think our selves somewhat humbled by it, if but a little dirt flick to our shoes, or hang about our cloaths, we are somewhat ashamed of our selves, yet the truth is, we are all dust, all clay, all mire, we are nothing as to our bodies, but a little living dust and breathing clay, why then should we be lifted up in high thoughts of our selves? I might hence also give a third note; 'Tis a common Theame, but of important usefulness.

Man is a very fraile creature, he is clay.

But having had occasion to speak to this also heretofore, I shall not stay upon it. Only consider, that, as man is clay, so he is returning to clay; yea turning into clay. We are but a little well compacted and compounded dust, and we shall ere long crumble into dust. We are every day going back, and shall shortly be gone back to what at first we were. These considerations should wither and nip the buddings of selfe-confidence, and bring down the height of mans spirit; I also am formed out of the clay.

We
We may take notice of one thing farther, Elihu speaking here of his own natural formation, gives it in this style; I also am formed out of the clay. This is a peculiar Scripture-expression, or the proper phrase of the holy Ghost, not of a heathen Author, Poet, or Orator. They at first had only some rude notions about this mystery of man's original, his formation by the power of God out of the earth. Which may enforce us, that the Saints and people of God in those elder and darker times, were familiarly acquainted with the doctrine of the creation, and knew well how to speak in a Scripture language, though they had not then the written word of Scriptures; For 'tis a question whether these transactions were before the giving of the Law or after; However, they were versed in Scripture truths, and in those forms of speech by which God gave out his mind to their forefathers. Here's Scripture phrase, I also am formed out of the clay. And therefore Elihu, as sensible of another's frailty by the experience which he had of his own, subjoyns this Assurance of his respect to Job's weaknesses in what he should further say.

Verf. 7. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

Elihu had given Job much security already that he would deal fairly with him; and here he gives him a promise for it; As if he had said; I give thee my hand, I plight thee my truth, that my terror shall not make thee afraid, nor shall my hand be heavy upon thee. The vulgar translation reads, my miracles (or what I will do in any strange, and unusual way) shall not terrify thee. Indeed miracles have a kind of terror in them: But we need not put such a strain upon the Text. The word which we translate terror, signifies that which is most terrible and dreadful to man, even the Magistrates throne, the presence of great Princes; of which Solomon faith (Prov. 20. 28.) The King sitting upon the throne, scattereth all evil with his eyes; that is, with the terrible looks of Majesty which God hath stamped upon him. The Prophet (Jer. 50. 38.) useth this word to express idols or false Gods by; and he calls them so either in a holy scorn; O these dumb idols which have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, feete and walk not, are doubtlesse very shrewd and terrible things, are
they not? have we not great reason to fear what these doughty Gods will say or doe, who can neither say nor doe any thing? Thus he might call them in a way of scorn: or he calls those Idols terrible things Jehovah, from the event, because foolish, vaine, ignorant men, did exceedingly feare them, or were much terrified by them, and God left them to their owne feares and terrors, as he spake by the Prophet (Isa: 66. 4.) I also will chuse their delusions, and bring their feares upon them. As if he had said, Because they being vaineely deluded, have chosen to feare that which was not to be feared, therefore I also will make this my choyse to bring that upon them which they feared, and hoped to avoid by following and worshipping Idols, or by their Idolatrous worship. Now whereas Job was afraid of the terror of the true God, Elihu, who presented himfelfe in Gods fead, tells him, my terror shall not make thee afraid. And we may well conceive, that Elihu spake this ironically concerning himfelfe; for having sayd before, I am but a piece of clay, surely then my terror cannot make thee afraid. What terriblenefs is there in a piece of clay, in a clod of earth? What are the most terrible of the sons of men, that they should be a terror to us? we ought not to truft in the mightieft among men, why then shou’d we feare them, or what need we feare them? Who art thou ( faith the Prophet, Isa: 51. 12, 13.) that thou shou’dst be afraid of a man that shal! dye, and of the son of man that shall be made as Grass? and forgettest the Lord thy maker. We never feare men unduely, till we doe one of or both these things, either first forget God who made us, or secondly, forget of what other men are made. I am but a piece of clay (faith Elihu) what matter of terror can I be to thee? I wonder?

In that Elihu giveth Job such a promise, Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid.

Note.

Man should shew himself to men, especially to a man in affliction.

It is possible for a man, though he be but clay, as another man is, yet to cloath himself, as it were, with terror, yea as the neck of the horse is said to be clothed (Job 39. 19.) with thunder. He may put on a kinde of dreadfulnesse as a Garment, and appeare very formidable to his brother. Some men indeed appeare
peare to men as a Wolfe to a poor sheepe, or as a Beare and Lyon to a Lamb. Though but clay, yet how scaredly doe some men look and Lord it over their brethren! they will rore upon them like a Lion, and rend them like a Beare: clouds and darknes are in their faces, and storme fits upon their brows. There is a terrible enesse of man to man. Thus the holy Prophet (Isa. 25. 2.) faith, The blast of the terrible one is like a storme against the wall. Yea, some men are not only dreadfull, like savage beastes, but like devills, they even act or play the devill with their brethren. How farre have they departed from their duty, and broken all the lawes of love, which command us to be as God one to another, in kindness, in mercy and compassion? I grant, Magistrates by their place and office are said to be terrible, yea a terror, but it is to evill doers (Rom: 13. 3.) Rulers are not a terror to good workers, but to the evill; that is, not to those whose works are good, but to evill workers. And to them they ought to be a terror: For they doe not bear the sword in vaine, that is, to hold it in their hands, or let it rust in the scabbard, and never strike with it; As they are Ministers of God, so avengers towards men, to execute wrath upon him that doth evill. Againe, Gospel-Ministers in some cases are to be terrible, they may be Boanerges, sons of thunder to the obstinate and rebellious, to the proud and presumptuous sinner; they must cut him out a portion to his condition, and save him (if it may be) with feare. But the general temper and carriage of the Ministers of the Gospel is meekness and gentleness, they should be full of love and of compassion, instructing even those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth. (2 Tim: 2. 25, 26.) The Ministers of Christ must not deale our terror, till there be a necessity of it: And always they who doe well, or are humbled for the evill which they have done, must be handled tenderly. My terror shall not make thee afraid.

*Neither shall my hand be heavie upon thee.*

My Burthen shall not be heavie upon thee, faith the Chaldee Paraphrase, and so some translate out of the Hebrew, taking the derivation of the word from a roote which signifieth to bow downe the backe, as we doe when a burden is layd upon us. So the word is rendered (Prov: 16. 26.) He that laboureth, labours for himself,
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eate,
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but
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(Proverbs)
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it,
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strongest
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So
faith
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to
this
translation;
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bur-then
shall
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thee.

Others
render
it
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My
Eloquence
shall
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Eloquentiames
thee;
that's
farre
from
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text;
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there
is
a
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in
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non
erit
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As
if
Elihu
had
said,
Though
I
am
about
to
speake,
and
have
much
to
speake,
yet
I
would
not
spake
such
words,
not
to
many
(I
hope)
as
shall
be
burthenome
to
thee.
I
would
not
burthen
thee
with
Eloquence;
that
is,
either
with
affected
Eloquence,
or
the
over-flowings
of
Eloquence.
Multiplicy
of
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very
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is
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thing
in
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(according
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this
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purpose,
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engageth
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Job;
I
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We
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text;
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Job.
Improperly
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yea,
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man's
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Our:
Our hand is heavy upon others, not only by outward violence upon the body, but by any pressure upon the mind or inward man; our vexing or troubling another, whether by doing or laying that which afflicts him, is the laying of a heavy hand upon him. That's the meaning of Elihu; *My hand shall not be heavy upon thee*; that is, I will do nothing, nor will I say anything, which (in itself) shall be grievous and vexatious to thee. We finde David complaining (Psal. 32.4.) that *the hand of God was heavy upon him day and night*; that is, God appeared as displeased with him, he could not get evidence of his love in the pardon of his sin; this pressed his soule like an intollerable burden. Great afflictions of any kinde are a heavy hand upon us. Elihu who saw the heavy hand of God upon Job already, giveth him this comfortable promise, That he would not add griefe to his sorrow; *My hand shall not be heavy upon thee*; I know thou hast thy load already. These latter words are of the same generall importance with the former; And we may Note further from them.

*Meeknes and gentle dealing becomes us while we would reduce others from their error, or reprove them for it.*

*My hand shall not be heavy upon thee.*

The Apostle called God to record concerning the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1.23, 24.) that it was to spare them that he had not come as then to Corinth. As if he had said, I was loth to lay so heavy a hand upon you, or deal with such severity, as your case required. And yet he adds, what severity ever I or others shall use towards you, we shall use it, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your Joy.* We shall not come with Lordly power upon you, we purpose not to carry it by meere authority and command, but of entreaty and love; we will not Lord it over your consciences, but only regulate them, that your comforts may flow in more freely. Hard words are oftentimes more pressing then the hardest blowes. Words may weigh much more upon the spirit, then a heavy burthen upon the backe. I grant a heavy hand must be layd upon some, there is no other way to deal with them. The word is a hammer and a fire. But as I intimated before, we must distinguish of persons and of causes, and accordingly lay our hand. God hath not made his Ministers
Ministers Lyons to scare his flock, nor Bulls to gore them, but Shepherds to feed them and watch over them. And especially when the hand of God is upon any, our hand should not.

For conclusion, take here the laws of a just disputation, Elihu in this Preface (I have yet gone no farther) gives Job free leave to answer, and let himself to the battle with him, and permit to deal with him in the fairest and in the meetest way he could with or desire. It is the observation of a moderne Expositor upon this place, considering the equanimity and gentlenesse with which Elihu engaged himself to manage this dispute.

If such a spirit (faith he) could be found as here Elihu professeth Levaterror, in this controversy with Job, how soon might all our controversies be ended; but we see most men every where magisterially imposing one upon another, to a magistratically. If they cannot impose magisterially, and make others believe what they say, because they say it, then they will impose magistratically, the Magistrates sword shall make way, if strength of argument cannot. And (faith he) when they have disputed a while and answer is made, they will not receive answer, but tell of prisons, of sword and fire. Thus he taxed the Popish Magistrates of thole times, who layed indeed a most heaie hand upon all who submitted not to the Babylonish yoke. And it were well if there were not something of such a spirit, a bitter spirit, an imposing spirit, a spirit of dominion over the faith of others remaining at this day; but that we could with sweetness and gentlenesse treat about our differencies, and say as this man did (though a man full of zeale for truth) to our dissenters, we will not terrifie you with the Magistrates sword, nor will we deal by subtleneis; we will not persuade you by bonds and prisons; Our terror shall not make you afraid, nor our hand be heaie upon you, neither will we provoke other hands to be heaie on you; we will carry all things fairly, amicably, Christianly, waiting in the use of proper meanes, counsels, convictions, and prayers, till God shall make way into every mans spirit to receive the truth.

Thus farre Elihu hath (like a subtle Orator) preface'd it with Job, to prepare him for an attentive hearing, for a candid construction of, and a ready condiscension to what he had ready to propose, and say.

C e  

J O B.
Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing; and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying,

I am clean without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy.

He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

Elihu having ended his sweet ingenuous and insinuating Preface, falls roundly to his business, and begins a very sharp charge. Bitter pills will hardly downe, unlesse guilded over and wrapped in sugar; nor will any mans stomack receive and digest them, unlesse well prepared. Elihu was wise enough to consider this; He knew well, what he had to say, and with whom to doe, and therefore layd his business accordingly.

In this charge (to give a briefe of the parts of it) Elihu tells Job first, he had heard him speak (v. 8.) Secondly, he tells him what he hath heard him speak: And that may fall under these two heads; First, that he had heard him justifying himselfe, (v. 9.) I have heard thee, saying, I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me. Secondly, He had heard him unduely reflecting upon God, and that two ways; First, as over-severely observing him, as it were, to gather up matter against him, in the beginning of the 10th verse, and in the latter end of the 11th. Behold, he findeth occasion against me, and marketh all my paths. That's one reflection, and a very sore one upon God. Secondly, Elihu chargeth him with reflecting upon God, as over-severely dealing with him. That we have (v. 10th and 11th) He counteth me for his enemy, he putteth my feet in the stocks, &c. These things (faith Elihu) I have heard thee, saying; And having sayd all this, he had indeed sayd enough to make him blame-worthy.

Ver. 8.
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Ver. 8. Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying.

There is nothing difficult in this verse. That which we render, Thou hast spoken in my hearing, is in the text; Thou hast spoken in mine ear; that is, I have not gathered up what I bring against thee upon uncertain reports. But have been an ear-witness of them. I have been one of thine hearers, I have stood by thee attentively, while thou hast been complaining so bitterly. Surely thou hast spoken in mine ear.

And I have heard the voice of thy words, saying.

Thus and thus, as it followeth in the next words. As if Elihu had said; O Job, while I consider thy present suffering condition, I deny not that thy affliction is great, and thy cross heavy; I deny not that thy afflictions are many, and of long continuance; I deny not that in the debate held with thy friends, thou hast spoken many things well, and hast insisted upon very profitable and remarkable truths; nevertheless, I cannot dissemble my dislike of some things thou hast spoken, and must tell thee plainly wherein either through passion, or want of information, thou hast been much mistaken. And yet thou shalt see that I will not impose my sense upon thy words, nor strain nor torture them by undue and odious inferences to thy disadvantage; But I shall recollect and fairly represent some passages which have fallen from thee, and shew thee the error of them. I know thou canst not deny that thou hast said the things which I am offended with; and I believe when thou hast heard me a while, and considered better of them, thou wilt not undertake to defend them. Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean, &c.

First, In that Elihu coming to charge Job about what he had spoken, professed he had been a serious hearer of him, while he was speaking.

Observe.

What we object against others, we should have good evidence and proof of it our selves.

There are two infallible witnesses, or they may be so; First, eye-witnesses, such as have seene that which they say; the witness of
the eye is surest as to what is done. Secondly, Ear-witnesses, and they are the surest as to what is spoken. We should not take up accusations by heare-say, but be able to say, we have heard the accused say it. Thus said Elihu, I have not taken up this matter by the way, from those I met with, But I have been upon the place my selfe; I stood by thee and heard while these words dropped from thy mouth. Many report what they never heard, they report upon report; as those accusers in the Prophet, (Jer: 20. 10.) Report, (say they) and we will report it. They cannot say, as Elihu, You have spoken it in our hearing, and we have heard the voyce of your words, but we heare you have spoken it; or you are fam'd for speaking it. How many transgress the rules of charity, and break the bonds not only of civill friendship, but of Christian love, upon reports of what others report. 'Tis dangerous to report more of others, then we have heard them say, till (at least) we are sure the reporters heard them say it.

Again, When Elihu faith, Thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words; He would convince Job to the utmost.

Hence note.

To accuse or condemn any man out of his owne mouth, must needs stop his mouth. Or, To be condemned out of our owne mouth, is an unanswerable condemnation.

When our owne sayings are brought against us, what have we to say? Christ told the evill and unprofitable servant, who would needs put in a plea for his idleness, and excuse himselfe for hiding his Lords talent in a napkin (that is, for not using or improving his gift.) (Luk: 19. 22.) Out of thine owne mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant; I will goe no further then thy owne words. And we see, as that evill servant had done nothing before, so then he could say nothing, because judged out of his owne mouth. When the offenders tongue condemneth him, who can acquit him? (Psal: 64. 8.) So they shall make their owne tongue to fall upon themselves. The tongues of some men have fallen upon them, and crush them like a mountaine, and they have been press'd downe, yea irrecoverably oppressed with the weight of their owne words. The Apostle Jude tells us what the Lord will do when he comes to Judgement, in that great and solemn day of
his second appearing; (v. 15.) He shall convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. He shall say to them, are not these your words? can you deny them? or have you any plea for them? Have you not spoken these things in my hearing? And have I not heard the voice of your words, speaking thus and thus reproachfully of my ways, ordinances, and servants? This is like wounding a man with his own weapon, 'tis like the act of David in cutting off the head of Goliath with his own sword. He that is condemned by his own saying, dyeth by his own sword. David faith of sycophants and slanderers (Psal. 55. 21.) Their words were smoother then oyle, yet were they drawn sword. Such draw these swords with an intent to wound other men's reputation or good name, but they oftentimes wound their own; and as their words who slander others, rebound upon themselves, and turne to their own disgrace, so also doe theirs for the most part, who are much in commending or possibly only (which was Job's case) in vindicating themselves. Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, &c.

But what had Elihu heard Job speake? the next words are an answer, or declare the matter of his speech; and in them, as was said before in opening the Context; Elihu first chargeth him with an over-zeale in justifying himself; I have heard the voice of thy words, saying;

Verf. 9. I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

This thou hast sayd, and this I charge upon thee as a great iniquity. For the clearing of these words, I shall doe these foure things, because upon this charge the whole discourse of Elihu throughout the Chapter depends.

First, I shall give the fence and explication of the words as here expressed by Elihu, and some briefe notes from them.

Secondly, I shall shew what matter of accusation, or of fault there is in these words of Job, as brought by Elihu in charge against him, or how sinfull a thing it is for any man to say he is without sin.

Thirdly, I shall enquire what ground Job had given Elihu to charge him with saying these things.
Fourthly, (which followeth upon the third) I shall inquire whether Elihu dealt rightly and tairely with Job, in bringing this fore and severe charge against him.

First, To open the words, as they are an assertion, Thou hast sayd, I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me. Some distinguish the three terms used in the text, as a denial of three several sorts of sin. First, That, by being cleane without transgression, he intends his freedome from sins against sobriety, or that he had not sinned against himself. Secondly, that, by being innocent, his meaning is, he had not done impiously against God. Thirdly, that, by having no iniquity in him, he cleares himselfe of wrong done to man. These three sorts of sin, containe sin in the whole latitude of it. All sin is either against our selves, strictly called intemperance, or against God, strictly called impiety, or against man, strictly called unrighteousness. But though this hath a truth in it, as to the distinction of sins, yet it may be over-nice to conclude Elihu had such a distincht respect in these distinct expressions; And it may be questioned whether the words will beare it quite thorow. Therefore I passe from it and leave it to the readers Judgement.

Further as to the verse in general, we may take notice, that the same thing is sayd foure times; twice affirmatively, I am cleane, I am innocent; And twice negatively, I am without transgression, There is no iniquity in me.

I am cleane without transgression.

The word which we render cleane, implyeth the cleanest of cleannesse; its rightly opposed to the word transgression, which signifieth, a defection or turning off from God. Every sin in the nature of it, is a defection from God; but some sins are an intended or resolved defection from him. Some even throw off the sovereignty of God over them, and his power to command them, not being willing to submit their backs to his burden, nor their necks to his yoke. These are justly called sons of Belial, they not only tranfgress the Law, but throw off the yoke of Christ from their necks, and his burden from their shoulders, and say (like them, Luke 19. 14.) We will not have this man reigne over us. So then, when Job sayd, I am cleane without transgression, he may be very well understood thus; Though I have many failings, yet
I am free from defection, though I have many weaknesses; yet I am free from rebellion and obstinacy. I still retain an entire love to God, and am ready to submit to his will; though I often find my heart, through corruption, rising up against my duty; I am turned aside through the strength of temptations, but I turn not aside through the bent of my affections. This doublet or somewhat like this was Job’s fence when ever he said, I am clean without transgression.

Hence note.

First, Transgression is a pollution, or, Sin is a defilement.

If once men step over or besides the line and rule of holiness the Law of God (which to doe is transgression) they become unholy. Job supposed himselfe unclean, if guilty of transgression. Sin is an unclean thing, and it maketh man unclean. This the Church confessed (Isa. 64. 6.) we are as an unclean thing, or person; As if they had said, Time was, when there was a choice people among us, who kept themselves pure from common defilements; But now the contagion and corruption is to epedimical and universal, that the whole body of our people looks like a lump of filthinesse and uncleanness. We are over-spread with a loathsome leprosie from head to foote, from top to toe. Holiness keeps us faire, and righteousness sweete.

Secondly, Note.

A sinfull person is a cleane person.

When we arrive at perfect freedome from sin, we shall be cleane indeed, perfectly cleane. And according to the degree or proportion of our freedome from sin in this world, is our cleannes in this unclean world.

Secondly, Thou haft said, I am innocent; so we read; There are two significations given by the learned, which are of very usefull consideration for the clearing up of this text. First, the Hebrew word which we translate innocent, is derived from a roote which signifieth to hide, to cover, or protect; And that two ways; First, to protect actively, or to defend others; Secondly, it notes protection passively, or to be protected by another. Some conceive that Ethim here intended it of Job in an active significiation, whereas we say, I am innocent, they say, I protect, and.
Secondly, Others take this protection passively, I have been protected. Job was once protected from all outward evil, from the invasion of devils and evil men. God made such an hedge about him, that Satan could not touch him. But the sentence given of this protection here intended is spiritual, I have been protected from the evil of the world, or from the evil world, I have been kept from that pollution and corruption, which (as the Apostle Peter speaks) is in the world through lust. And that is a blessed, yea the best part of a Saints protection, he is kept through the power of God through faith into salvation; He is not given up to the defilements and apostacy of times or places, the Lord preserves his spirit and his ways pure and clean. Our translation, I am innocent, compared with this, I have been kept or protected from sin. The one is a very good exposition and illustration of the other; For innocence is our safety, and integrity our best keeper. Innocency

15
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 9.

is our faire haven, and safest harbour. When the windes are high-
est, and the Seas moft rough and angry, there, if any where, we
may shelter: and anchor our selves from the storme and tempest.
Thus David prayed (Psal. 25. 21.) Let integrity and uprightness
preserve me; that is, let me be preserved in mine integrity
and uprightness. And that he had been so preserved, he tells us
(Ps. 41. 12.) As for me thou upholdest me in mine integrity. He that
can say, I am innocent, shall have cause to say, I am protected; the
innocent person is under covert: God protecteth the innocent, yea
makesth innocency their protection. Man is never so well fiel-
ter’d, as by the righteousness of Christ, and by his own innocency.

Tis guilt which leaves our breast naked to every dart and thrust.

Again to come a little nearer to our translation (though
this be very significant) I am innocent; ’Tis a negative, I have
done no hurt, or I have no guilt upon me. The Rabbins tell us,
the word cometh from a root which signifieth to wash, and so
the Chaldee Paraphrase renders, I am washed; Others thus, I am
brusht or comb’d; Mr Broughton, I am neat, like a man that hath
put on his apparel decently; some are in a slovenly habit, or
their cloaths are soule; but Job could say as to his better part
and spiritual cloathing, I am innocent, washed, brusht, comb’d.
I have no filth in my skirts, nor fouleness in my hands. I goe not
in the safty habit of sin, but in the lovely, comely, beautifull
dresse of Grace. Thus various is the fence of the word which
we translate innocent. Job’s conversation was so well ordered,
that it had not a plight nor an haire (common infirmities ex-
cepted) amitle or out of order. Our translation gives in his
mind fully, yet it is not unprofitable to take in this plenty and
copiousness of elegant metaphors rising out of the original words,
here rendred, I am innocent. But if we take the word strictly,
then to be innocent, is to doe or to have done no hurt, to be
harmlesse, and so guiltlesse of the hurt or harme of any.

Hence note.

Sin is an hurtfull thing.

It hurts, first our selves; Secondly, it hurts others in whose
fist it is committed, either first by the ill example given them;
or, secondly, by injury done to them; either first in their credit,
or, secondly, in their estates. Yea, thirdly, sin hurts God him-
selves; it hurts God in his honour. Innocency is properly that which doth no hurt; Innocent persons are harmless persons; no man ever hurt himselfe, or others, much lesse the name and honour of God, while he holdeth his innocency.

Job's last assertion is;

Neither is there iniquity in me.

Iniquity is that pravity either of spirit or action which is contrary to all that righteousness or rectitude which the rule of God's word requireth. It comprehends both the irregularity of our actions, and the irregularity of our thoughts or conceptions. 'Tis a departure from the way in which, and from the scope and mark, to which we should direct our whole course. Iniquity is an unequall undue or crooked thing. It turneth others from their right, and is it selfe a continual swerving from it. So much for the opening of these words, as they are a proposition containing a charge brought against Job, I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane from transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

The second point proposed was, to consider what matter of accusation there is in these words. Matters of accusation arise from our evil deeds; That we are not cleane from transgression, that we are not innocent, that there is much iniquity in us; these are proper matter of accusation. But here Elihu makes it matter of accusation, that Job sayd, he was cleane from transgression, that he was innocent, that there was no iniquity in him, And indeed, to be charged with the greatest transgression, is not more then this, to be charged with saying, we are cleane from transgression. To say we have no sin, is very sinfull, to say we are without iniquity, is a saying full of iniquity, (1 John 1. 8.) If we say we have no sin (Here is Job sayinge so, as Elihu chargeth him,) we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. And (v. 10.) If any man say, he hath no sin, he maketh God a lyar, and his word is not in him. Now what greater sin can there be, if we consider the force of these two verses, then for any man to say he hath no sin? How extreameely sinfull this is, may be shewed in foure things.

First, It is extreame pride for any man to say, I have no sin; What is pride? but an over-reckoning of our selves. When we value
value our selves, 'tis best to doe it at an under rate, and to say
leffe of our selves ( if it may be ) then we are, as Paul did, who
called himselfe leffe then the least of all Saints ; Pride always o-
ver-recks and callus us up more then we are worth. Some re-
ckon their temporall and many more their spirituall estates at
many thousands ( as I may say ) when upon a true account they
are worse then nothing. So did the Church of Laodicea ( Rev: 3,
17.) Thou saysst I am rich, and encreased with goods, and have need
of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable,
and poore, and blind, and naked. They who are soule-blind, can-
not see either how bad they are, or what good they want ; No-	hing hinders the light of our wants so much as a conceit that we
are full.

Secondly, It is the greateat deceit, even selfe-deceit, to say
or suppose that we are ( in this sense ) cleane without transgres-
fion ; so faith that text of the Apostle ( v. 8.) He that faith he
bath no sin, deceiveth himselfe. It is bad enough to deceive o-
thers, and woe to them that doe so ; but how bad is their condi-
tion who deceive themselves! He is in an ill condition who is
deceived by others; But if a man deceive himselfe, where shall
he have his amends? Selfe-admirers, and selfe-flatterers, are the
Greatest selfe-deceivers. And who or what shall be true to that
man, who is false to himselfe?

Thirdly, It is a lyse and the greateat lyse, ( that's more then a
bare deceit ) for it is such a lyse as leaveth no truth at all in us.
He that faith he hath no sin in him, hath no truth in him ; what
hath he in him then, but a lyse? Every sin is a lyse, and he that
faith he hath no sin in him, hath nothing of truth in him ; what
hath he then in him, or what is he, but a lyse? ( v. 10.) The word
of God is not in him, which is the treasury of all truth ; and there-
fore he hath no truth in him, nor can have, till he hath repented
of that lyse.

Fourthly, ( that ye may see there is exceeding much in this
charge ) To say so, is blasphemy, and the highest blasphemy; Why?
Because it makes God a lyar. He that faith he hath no
sin, doth not only deceive himselfe, but as much as in him lyeth,
he makes God a lyar ( v. 10.) To deceive with a lyse, is the
worst sort of deceivings; and what lyse is worse then, or so bad as
that which makes the God of truth a lyar, and turns the truth of

God
God into a lye. Lay these four considerations together, and then it will appeare how heavie a charge is contained in these words, when Elihu faith he had heard Job say, he was cleane without transgression, he was innocent, and no iniquity in him.

Therefore, thirdly, consider a little further, what occasion had Job given Elihu to say that he had sayd, I am cleane from transgression, &c.

I answer, There are severall passages upon which Elihu might pitch this charge; I will only name four texts, out of which possibly this might arise. First, (Chap: 10. 7.) where Job speaking to God himselfe faith; Thou knowest that I am not wicked. He appealed to the knowledge of God himselfe in the thing. The second may be collected from (Chap: 16. 17.) Not for any injustice in my hand, also my prayer is pure. The third, from (Chap: 23. 10.) But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold; My foot hath hold his steps, his way have I kept and not declined. In the fourth place Elihu might take those words (Chap: 27. 5.) God forbid that I should justifie you, till I die I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it goe, my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live. All these are Job's assertions concerning his owne innocency, And these or such like passages as these, Elihu (tis likely) being an attentive hearer, had observed and picked up as the matter of this first part of his charge, Job's self-justification.

Fourthly, and lastly, let us consider whether Elihu did rightly bring this charge against Job from these sayings? or whether he dealt so ingenuously with Job as he promised, while from these or the like passages he faith, Job had sayd, I am cleane without transgression, &c.

For answer, first, take notice that Elihu was not the first that had charged Job thus; he had been thus charged by his three friends before. Zophar sayd (Chap: 11. 4.) Thou hast sayd my doctrine is pure, and I am cleane in thine eyes; that is, in the eyes of God. Eliphaz seemes to say as much (Chap: 15. 14.) What is man that he should be clean? and he which is borne of a woman that he should be righteous? While Eliphaz put these questions, he intimated that Job had made such affirmations. Bildad likewise was upon the same strain with him (Chap: 25. 4.) How then
then can man be justified with God? or how can he be cleane that is borne of a woman? We see then, this was not the first time by three, that Job had heard this charge, and had made answer for himselfe. And as these charges, so Job's answers have been opened heretofore upon those former passages, and therefore I shall not stay much upon the point here. Yet because Elihu re- assumes this argument, yea makes it his strongest argument against Job, I shall a little consider whether he did rightly or no in this thing.

To cleare (which we must remember) that Job's innocency had received a three-fold testimony in this booke.

First, He received a testimony from God himselfe, and that a very notable and glorious one (Chap. 1. 8.) Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man.

Secondly, He received a further testimony from the pen-man of this book, who having recorded the several afflictions of Job, and his behaviour under them, repeats it twice (Chap. 1. 21. Chap. 2. 10.) In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. The testimony which God gave him, referred to his former actions or conversation before his affliction. The testimony which the writer gave him, referred specially to his latter words or speeches under his affliction. Besides these testimonies which are not at all questioned nor can be; we find a third testimony, and that he gives of himselfe. Now though Elihu did highly reverence the testimony which God had given (if we may suppose he had notice of it) and would also the testimony of the pen-man of the booke, had it then been written; yet he questioned the testimony which Job gave of himselfe. Now, that there was some severity in this charge upon that suspicion, may appeare by considering it in a few particulars.

First, It must be laid on Job's part, or in favour of him, according to truth, that he never affirmed, he was not a sinner. Nay we shall find him more than once, twice, or thrice, confessing the sinfulness of his nature, and the sins of his life. We find him also confessing that notwithstanding all the righteousness and integrity in him, yet he would owne none of it before God; and that if he should justify himselfe, his owne cloaths would abhorre him. Therefore Job was far from saying he had no sin in him, in a strict sense.
Secondly, Most of those passages wherein he speaks of himself as clean and righteous, may be understood of his imputative cleanness and righteousness, as a person justified in the redeemer, of whom he spake with such a Gospel spirit and full assurance of faith, that he might well assert this of himselfe, *I know that being justified, I am cleane and without sin.* It is no fault for a believer to say, *I am cleane without transgression, through free Grace, in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.* Much of what Job spake in this matter is to be taken that way.

Thirdly, When Job affirms these things of himselfe, we may say this in favour of him, he means it of great transgressions. The words in the text note defection and wilfull swerving from the right way. His friends charged him with hypocrisy, with oppression, with taking the pledge for nought, with stripping the naked of their clothing. *Thine iniquity is great (said Eliphaz) and thy sin is infinite.* Now faith Job, *I am cleane, I have no such transgressions.* And he might well answer his friends charge of impiety against God, and iniquity towards men, with a flat denial, yea with an affirmation of the contrary; There is no such iniquity in me, prove it if you can. He was unblameable in the sight of man.

Fourthly, In favour of Job this may be said; what he spake of himselfe and of his owne righteousness, was upon much provocation, or when his spirit was heated by his friends, who so constantly urged these crimes against him. In these heats he spake highly of himselfe, and though it doth not excuse any mans sin when he hath spoken sinfully, to say I was provoked; yet it doth abate the greatness of the sin. Good Moses (who was the meekest man upon the earth) when through provocation he spake unadvisedly with his lips, felt the smart of it, and God reckoned sorely with him for it: Yet to speake amisse upon provocation, is not so much amisse, as to speake so in cold blood, or unprovoked.

Fifthly, Elihu might have put a fairer interpretation and confirmation upon these sayings of Job; He might have taken them in the best sense, as Job meant them, that he was righteous, cleane and innocent in all his transactions with men, and had not wickedly at any time departed from God. And then their had not been such matter of fault in what he said, as was brought against him.

Yet
Yet, in vindication of *Elihu*, it must be granted, *Job* gave him occasion to rebuke and blame what he had laid, and that chiefly upon these three accounts.

First, Because he spake many things of himselfe which had an appearance of boasting, and so of vaine speaking. A little truly sayd of our selves, or in our owne commendation, may be thought too much, how much more, when we say much.

Secondly, He spake such things as carri’d a shew of overboldness with God. He did not observe his distance, as he ought, when he so earnestly pressed for a hearing to plead his cause before God; especially, when he so often complained of the severity of God’s proceeding with him, with which *Elihu* taxeth him directly in the two verses following. Upon both these grounds *Elihu* thought (and was no doubt guided in it by the Spirit of God) to cut him to the quick, that *Job* might learne to speake more humbly of himselfe, and more temperately to God. And therefore

Thirdly, The Lord did righteously, yea and graciously, let out the spirit of *Elihu* upon him in another way then his friends before had done. He did not charge him with wickedness in fact, but dealt with him about the unwarniness of his words. *Job* could not say he had never spoken such words, for such words he did speake, though he did not speake them as *Elihu* tooke them. When words are out they must stand to the mercy of the hearers, and abide such a judgement as may, with truth be made of them, though posibly, besides the purpose of the speaker. A man (in that case) is not wronged, he should learne to speak more warily, and not give occasion of offence. Doubtlesse the Lord had a gracious intent upon *Job*, in stirring the spirit of *Elihu* to represent his words in the hardest fence, that he might humble him. *Job*’s spirit was yet too high and not broken enough, as it was afterwards. Nor doth *Job* reply or retort upon *Elihu* for this; And when the Lord himselfe began to deal with him, he faith, *Who is this that darkeneth counsell by words without knowledge* (Chap: 38. 2.) and *Job* himselfe being brought upon his knees *confesseth* (Chap: 42. 3.) *I have uttered that I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not: I have been too bold I confesse. Though it was not *Jobs* purpose or meaning to speake so (he had integrity in what he spake) yet
yet his words did beare such a construction. And the Lord suffer'd Elihu to urge them upon him to the utmost.

Yet, notwithstanding all that hath been sayd, I doe conceive, that Elihu had not the least imagination, that the meaning of Job in those assertions concerning himselfe, was, that he had not sinned at all, or that there was no sin in him; But taking his words in the best and fairest construction they could beare, he yet saw causeth to check and reprove him, for laying so much, in that condition, about his innocency; whereas he should have been chiefly taken up in glorifying God, and humbling himselfe under his mighty hand. So much for the answer to the fourth query, what reason Elihu had to charge Job thus? It hath been shewed what may be sayd in favour of Job; And also, that Elihu might without breach of charity charge him with these sayings.

To shut up this verse, take only two briefe notes from the whole.

First, The best of men have their failings, and are apt to over-report themselves.

Our most deliberate actions and speeches have some tincture of the flesh, how much more those which passe us in a passion. Though Job spake what was true, yet he spake more then was meete. And they that heard him might take just occasion of offence, not knowing his spirit and the strain of his heart in speaking so. The Apostle James faith (James 3. 2.) If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. He hath a mighty command over his spirit, that can command his tongue; especially when he is provoked. It is a real part of perfection, not to offend in word. This good man spake many things well, yet all was not well spoken.

Againe, In that Job spake thus, under the pressure of affliction.

In times of affliction it is better to be much in bewailing of sin, then in making reports wherein we have not sinned.

There will no hurt come of that; but while we are reporting our innocency, and good deeds, though what we speak be true, yet 'tis subject to construction, and layeth us open to reproofe.

Lastly, We may learne from the dealing of Elihu with Job, That
That in all disputations, and matters of controversy with others, we should take heed, that we fasten no uncharitable interpretation upon the words of our adversary, nor add to any thing of our own to them, nor wrest them besides their grammatical and genuine construction; yet even those speeches which are true in some respect, if they exceed the bounds of modesty, may freely be reprehended. For we ought not only to do that which is good, and speak that which is true for the matter, but we ought to do and speak in a good or becoming manner. Thus farre of the first fault which Elihu found and reproved in Job, his over-confidence in saying he was not faulty, or in justifying himself. In the two next verses, he blames him with reflecting over-boldly and unduely upon the dealings of God; The particulars whereof were expressed before in opening the whole Context, and come now to be further opened.

Ver. 10. Behold, he findeth occasions against me, and counteneth me for his enemy.

These words contain the first part of the second charge. For the clearing of which I shall first explicate the words, & then by way of observation, shew what matter of charge or evil there is in them.

Behold, he findeth occasions against me.

I have heretofore shewed the emphasis of that word, Behold; And therefore, I pale it here; Behold,

He (that is, God) findeth occasions against me, or, (strictly from the Hebrew) he findeth breaches.

The verse is translated Breake (Psal: 141. 5.) It imports such a breaking as is also a bringing to nought (Psal: 33. 10.) Tis likewise applied to the breaking of the heart by discouragements (Numb: 32. 7.) And it is significantly enough translated here, He findeth breaches against me; that is, something or other to make a breach upon me, something to complain of against me. The word is rendered in these three senses; First, An occasion; Secondly, A Breach; Thirdly (as the Septuagint) a complaint or accusation. We may joyne all three together; for a complaint

Ec or

Querit adversum me et inventit contrefationes, i.e. ut conftringat et irrita fasiat omnia mea studia, institia et constructiones, ut nihil affectur eorum, quae quero et instituo. Merc: Ecce controversiae adversum me inventit.

Bez: 

Contrafationes, controversiae et quas vi abulationes. Stunt qui reddunt occasiones, quaefit effectus, transposuit, aliq querelas, Radix et inde Hiphit frigidit, confregit irritum facit.

Merc:
or accusation is commonly an occasion of breaches among men; he that loves breaches will seeke, and seldom misleth occasions of complaint. We say of a man that is of a troublesome spirit, and given to contention (which is also Mr. Broughton's translation) Behold, he picketh a quarrell against me; though I give him no just matter of offence, yet he either findeth or maketh one. Thus most of the Hebrew writers carry it; he findeth occasions to alter his former course with me, to cast me off, to lay his hand upon me, even to ruine and break me to pieces.

Hence observe.

To seeke occasions against another is hard and uncharitable dealing.

Joseph's brethren were very suspitious of this (Gen. 43. 18.) The men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, because of the money that was found in our sacks mouth the first time, are we brought in that he may seek occasion against us; As if they had said, we well perceive he would gladly have some matter to accuse us, and so to detaine us upon that occasion. Thus said the King of Israel (2 Kings 5. 7.) when Naman came to him with a message from his Prince to desire him that he would heale him of his Leprifie; The King of Israel began presently to startle, and thought it was nothing but a meere trick and a device to bring on some further designe, what? said he, Am I God to kill and make alive, that this man is come to me, wherefore consider I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrell against me. They may be judged to watch for a discourtesie who desire courtesies of us beyond our power. This made the King of Israel jealous, that the King of Syria being confident of future success, by his former successes against Israel, was by this device only seeking an occasion to renew the warre. We have an eminent Scripture to this purpose (Dan. 6. 4, 5.) Daniel being advanced high at Court, it drew a great deale of envie upon him among the Princes and Presidents; and therefore they resolved to try their utmost to pull him down; And hereupon (faith the text) they sought occasions against Daniel concerning the kingdom; that is, they enquired narrowly into his proceedings as to the managemnt of that great power and trust which the King had committed to him in civill things, but they could find no occasion.
An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 10.

...forasmuch as he was faithful. They could not pick a hole in his coat (as we say) neither was there any error or fault found in him. When this would not do, then they would needs goe another way to worke (envie is reticellc) and because they were disappointed in their first attempt about civills, they proceeded to matters of religion; Then said these men we shall not finde occasion against this Daniel, except we finde it in regard of the Law of his God. And we see in the following parts of the Chapter, what occasion they found against him. This is hard dealing indeed, and it is quite contrary to the Law of Love in all the astings of it. The Apostle assures us (1 Corinth. 13. 7.) *Love beareth all things, love hath strong shoul- ders to bear wrongs and injuries; and Love believeth all things;* not that a believer is a vaine credulous person, giving out his faith he knows not how, or to he knows not what; but he believeth all things to the utmost line of truth and reality, as also of appearance and probability; he that loves is very willing to believe that things are meant as they are spoken, and that they are intended as they are done. Thus he that loves much, *believeth all things,* and further, *charity hopeth all things;* it hopes the best, and puts the fairest interpretation that may be upon those things and doings which carry in them at least some colour of supposition; this is the Genius of Charity, the Character of Love. *It beareth all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things.* All which stand in direct opposition to the seeking of occasions against our neighbour. And I shall briefly shew how much such practices militate against and contradict the royal Law of love, by seven steps.

First, *This against the Law of love, to be ready to take an occasion when it is given; we should be very slow and backward, in case of offence, to embrace or admit what is offered: though indeed, it is with the heart of man, I meane with the flesh in his heart in this point of the Law, as it is with the flesh (that is, full corruption) in the heart, as to the whole Law of God;* Of which the Apostle saith (Rom. 7. 8.) *Sin taking occasion by the Commandement, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. And againe (v. 11.) Sin taking occasion by the commandement, deceived me, and by it slew me:* *Sin took occasion by the Law;* *The Law gave sin no occasion to work concupiscence in Paul.* *The Law is farre enough from being the cause of sin,* but it is (by accident...
not of it selfe ) the occasion of sin ; yea, sin presently takes occasion when it hath not indeed the shew of any just occasion. The Law by its prohibition, by the stop and check which it puts upon the flesh, by the discoveries which it makes of the contrariety of our corruptions to the holiness of it, doth many times provoke and irritate, yea enrage and enflame them, but it affords not the least countenance or encouragement to our corruptions. Now this ( I say ) is the wickedness of the heart of man, with respect to sin in General, that it takes occasion by the commandment, to bend it selfe against the commandment: and so as to any particular act against a brother, to take an occasion to doe him a mischiefe, is wickedness, and a worke of the flesh.

Secondly, It is sinfull to use our Christian liberty, when it may be an occasion of sin, or the laying of a stumbling block before others, though we use it not with an intent or purpose to make them stumble or fall into sin. The Apostle earnestly cautions the Romans to take heed of this ( Rom. 14. 13 ) Let us not therefore judge one another anymore; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brothers way. St Paul is there speaking about the observation of dayses commanded, and the use of meates forbidden by the ceremonial Law. Now though some had a liberty in their consciences, to observe the one, and use the other, yet he would not have them doe either with offence to weaker brethren: our care should be, either first to keepe our brother from falling, or to raise him up when fallen. Is it not then very sinfull not to forbear those things ( which are no absolute duties ) by which another may fall? And if it be so sinfull to doe many things which in themselves are not sinfull, when we know they may be an offence or occasion of falling to others, though we intend it not; then how extremelly sinfull is it to do any thing with an intent to make them fall! This is properly the devills trade, and woe to those who take it out of his hand, or joyne partners with him in it.

Thirdly, When any shall desire and even hunger after an occasion of accusing others, this is a very great height of wickedness. The Apostle speakes of such ( 2 Cor. 11. 9, 12 ) where he tells us that he did forbear his own right, not receiving maintenance for preaching the Gospel; when ( faith he, v. 9 ) I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man. But
But why? he answers (v. 12,) what I doe I will doe, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion. Some did it, it seems, desire an occasion to charge him with covetousness and worldly mindedness, that he preached the Gospel for filthy lucre; therefore, faith he, I will doe this, that I may cut off occasion from them that desire occasion to charge me with. The heart of man is full of evil desires, and this is one of the worst of them, to desire another might be found doing that, which might minister an advantage to render him odious or blame-worthy.

Fourthly, Which is yet higher, some even pursue and hunt for occasions to calumniate and flander their brethren. The good Prophet Jeremie had store of these ill neighbours (Jer. 20. 10.) I have heard the defaming of many; fear is on every side; report, say they, and we will report it; all my familiars watched for my halting, saying, peradventure he will be inticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. As if he had said, How glad would not only my open familiars, but close enemies be, of an occasion against me, it would make them leave for joy to see me halt. By his halting they meant his sinning, his doing that which was uncomely, or not suitable to his profession; they watched, they lay at catch for his halting, not to hold him up, but to cast him downe: They sayd, report, and we will report it; we will make something or other of it, though in truth there be nothing. They had (which may be a fifth step of this wickedness, a secret hope that he would halt and give them occasion of insulting. Peradventure (say they,) he will be inticed, peradventure we shall catch him in this snare; this was their hope, and, if attained, their joy.

Which makes a 6th step of this wickedness; For so David describes his enemies (Psal. 38. 16, 17.) They rejoice when my foot slippeth; for I am ready to halt; or (as we put in the margin) for halting. There is a double halting, a halting by transgression, and a halting by affliction; that I conceive David chiefly spake of in that place, because he presently adds in the close of the 17th verse, And my sorrow is continually before me. He shewes his enemies possessed with the same evil spirit, and in the same posture (Psal. 38. 15.) In mine adversity, or in my halting, they rejoiced. The same word is used in this Psalme for adversity which we had in the 38th for halting. This is as true of evil men,
men; as halting is taken in the other notion, for sinning. The wicked are as, if not more, ready to rejoice at falls, or halts, by sinning, as at falls or halts by suffering. In both these cases (as David found in this 35th Psalm, v. 15.) the very objects will teare the beft of men (as they did David) and not ceafe. But what doe they teare? their flesh: if they can; but to be sure (and so 'tis meant there) their good names and reputation by flanders and accusations. O how contrary is this practice and that joy to the spirit of the Gospel! The Apostle tells us, the Grace of charity utterly abhors it (1 Cor. 13. 6.) Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity. It neither rejoiceth in doing iniquity it selfe, nor to charge others with iniquity.

Seventhly, (which is the highest step) Some rather then faile will forme and frame occasions against others; they will forge or fancy them in their own braine, and then accuse their brethren, as if they had been acting, what themselves have been imagining. Such the Apostle Peter speaks of (1 Pet. 3. 16.) where admonishing Saints to much strictnesse and exactnesse in walking, he gives this account, why they should doe so, That whereas they speake evil of you as evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. They who have not so much as a shadow of truth, will make something out of a lie; they will falsely accuse, and strongly impeach, knowing that if they doe so, some of the dirt (at least) will disfigure the faces, and stick upon the skirts of those who are impeached. Thus I have given seven degrees of this wickednes, every one of which plainly discover, and all put together, mightily aggravate the sinfullnes of this sin, the seeking of occasions against any man whosoever, much more against any good man. And therefore (which was the second point propos'd for the clearing of this truth) you see how great a matter of charge was brought by Elisha against Job, when he faith, Job hath said, He, (that is, God) seeketh occasions against me.

Hence note, Secondly.

To charge the Lord with a willingness to brake with us, either upon no occasion, or to seek an occasion that he may, is exceeding sinfull, and dishonourable to his Majestye, neere to Blastihomy.

How
How sinfull is it, that we who give the Lord so many occasions against us, that he needs not seek any, should yet say he seeketh occasions against us? The people of Israel (as it appeares) intimated, at least, that God had broken with them, or sought occasion to doe it (this word is used in that text, Num. 14. 34) while the Lord to shew how ill he resented such thoughts and jealousies of him, tells them, According to the number of the days in which ye searched the Land, even forty dayes (each day for a yeare) shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty yeares, and ye shall know my breach of promise, or (as read in the margin) my altering of my purpose. As if he had said, Ye shall know whether I have sought occasion against you, whether I have frustrated your hopes and endeavours, these forty yeares in the wilderness or no; ye shall know whether I have done any thing to break and entangle you, or whether all this hath not proceeded from your owne forwardness and unbelieve. The Lord who searched their hearts, and saw the utmost scope of their complaints, found this evill thought lying at the bottom of all, that he surely had put them upon all those difficulties, or brought them into those straites on purpose to breake with them. And therefore, he faith, Ye shall know my breach of promise; Ye shall see one day, or at last, whether I have kept covenant, and stood to my engagement or you, whether I have sought an occasion against you, or you have given me occasion to deal with you as I have done. So that when the Lord sayd, Ye shall know my breach of promise, his meaning was, ye shall know that I have kept my promise to you exactly, or to a tittle, and that ye only have been the promise-breakers. 'Tis infinitely below the nature of God, to seek occasion against the creature; And 'tis strange that the Jews had any the remotest suspicion of him as doing so, after they had heard of those glorious titles and titles in which he proclaimed his name (Exod. 34. 6.) The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, abundant in goodnesse and in truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin. What can be said out of this name that should yield the least shadow of a jealousie, that the Lord would seeke occasions against them. A good Prince desires to finde many good subjects who deserve to be rewarded, but it troubles him to finde any who deserve to be punished, or whom he is necessitated to punish; Now what is the
the goodness of the most benigne and gracious Princes in the world, to the graciuosnesse and benignity of God! Againe, his precious promisses evidence the unworthinesse of such a furnifle; all which are full of mercy, and goodnesse, and patience, and pardon, and tenderenesse to poore sinners: so farre is the Lord from secking occasions to charge any one with what is not, that he seakes all the wayes and occasions he can to doe good, and to extend compassion to those who have done amistle. He even labours to deliver poore soules from their dangers, and from their sins. How farre is he then from desiring to find them tripping and sinning, or from urging sin hardly hardly or causelie upon them? yea all the experiences of Saints bring in witness against this blatphemous apprehension. They will tell us from what they have found and felt, that when they have given the Lord occasion to destroy them, when they have put a sword into his hand to smite them, when by their unbeliue, and pride, and neglect of knowne duties, they have layd themselves open to ruine and destruction, even then he hath held his hand and spared them. Is it not then a great, a grosse sin, to charge the Lord, that he seakes occasions against us? Yea indeed (as was touched before) the Lord needs not secke occasion against any man, for as much as the best of men give him too much occasion; and too often. He needs not stand to spy advantages against us, we lay our selves too open and naked to him continually. As in Fenceling, when two that are very expert at that art are engaged, there is watching for an occasion or advantage to get the mastery; but if an expert Master of Defence be to deale with an ignorant fellow that knows not his posture, nor how to use his weapon, he needs not secke occasion, he may have him here and there and every where. It is so with the best of Saints, when they have to doe with God; He needs not watch for an occasion where to hit, or smite them, for they through their ignorance and folly, lay their naked breasts open to his strokes every day. Were he not infinite in mercy to cover our sins, and to pardon our transgressions, we must needs perish under his justice.

Againe, The word is rendred, Infirmities, saylings, or lesser sins; that's another translation of the text, and 'tis a usefull one; For as the former supposeth the Lord taking occasion, where none at all was given; so this supposeth him to take the least occasion.
As if Elihu supposed Job saying, 
Behold, he seeks out my little faults.

Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 10.

To take strict notice of the sayings, infirmities, or lesser sins of others, is a point of very great severity.

Some are pleased with nothing more than to heare and discourse of other mens sayings. 'Tis a great fault to be picking up the lesser faults of others; yet how many are there, who if they can but see, as it were, any bare place, they will be charging at it; if they see but the least scratch or sore, they as the fly, love to be feeding upon it, or raking in it. 'Tis our holiness to take notice of the least sin in ourselves, and the more holy any man is, the more quick-sighted and quick-sented he is in taking notice of his lesser sins (when the least neglect of duty and of the least negligence in performance of duty, any ill frame
of heart, any vaine thought, any idle word, any undue carriage, any uncomelincffe, is taken notice of and corrected, this shewes an excellent frame of (spirit, and a great measure of Grace) but it is not good to do so by others, yea it is an argument we are very much wanting and sayling in holiness our selves, when we are so apt to take notice of and aggravate every want and sayling in our brethren. Yea, when as Christ faith (Matt. 7. 3.) We see a mote in our brothers eye, we seldome see the beame in our owne. And it is an argument men have beames in their owne eyes, when they are so quick-sightted in looking after motes in their brothers eye. I grant, it is a duty to be watchfull over one another as brethren, and to take notice, for right ends, of the least saylings and faults of any. This is a duty if we doe it with a purpose to pray for them, that they may walke more circumspectly; or that we may lovingly reprove, admonith, and counsell them; as also that we may consider our selves and our owne ways, lest we fall as they have done. Thus to take notice of the least saylings of others, is a great Gospel duty. But to take notice of mens faults, to cenfure or defame their persons, to insult over them, or accuse them, this is the spirit of a Cham, who mocked at his fathers nakedness. And thus to be critickall about the faults of others, argues that we are careless of our owne.

Secondly, As to the particular case in the text, for which Job is tax'd by Elihu, that he said thus of God.

Observe.

To say or think of the Lord that he takes a strict and severe notice of our infirmities to reckon with us riggishly for them is very sinfull.

Such thoughts are a great derogation from the goodnesse and mercy of God. The Lord doth not willingly see the faults of his people; Though he seeth them, yet he doth not willingly see them; he is glad when it is with his people, as it was at that time with Israel (Numb. 23. 21.) He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seene perversenes in Israel. But was there no sin to be seene in Jacob? Was Israel altogether innocent at that time? Surely they, even they, and even then were a sinfull people, and had their faults, neither few nor small, but because there was no iniquity, no perversenes nor prevarication against God found
found among them at that time, therefore he over-looked all
their ordinary faylings and transgredions. As the Lord is so holy
and of such pure eyes that he cannot behold any sin, the least
iniquity to approve of it (Habak. 1. 13.) so the Lord is so gra-
cious and so full of compassion, that he doth not severely take no-
tice of, nor look upon the lesser sins of his people. David ex-
alts the name and glory of God at large for this (Psal. 103. 8,
9, 10.) The Lord is mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, plente-
ous in mercy, he will not alwayes chide. They are alwayes chide-
ing, that are alwayes spying faults in children, servants or rela-
tions; they who take notice of every little fault, shall finde chiding-
worke enough in a family. But the Lord will not alwayes chide;
neither will he keepe his anger for ever; He hath not dealt with us
after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: Like as
a father pittith his children, so the Lord pittith them that feare
him. A father doth not enquire into, much leffe punish every
neglect of his child. I will spare them (faith the Lord) (Mal. 3.
17.) as a father spareth a son that serveth him. If a father seeth
or is well persuaded that his son hath a heart to serve him, he
will not curiously spy out the faults of his service, but faith to
his child, It is well done, or at leaft, I take that well which thou
haft done. Yea the Lord is to farre from a strict inquiry after
such faults, that he passeth by great transgredions (Mic. 7. 18.)
Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by
the transgression of the remnant of his people; he retaineth nor his
anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. Though Afa
(1 Kings 15. 14.) was not through in the reformation; the high
places were not removed, yet the Lord did not charge this up-
pon him, for presently it followeth in the sacred Story; Neverthe-
lesse, the heart of Afa was perfect with God all his dayes. Yea,
though Afa did fall into severall sins afterwards, imprisoning
one of the Prophets, and oppressing some of the people, and in
his sickness seeking to the Physitians, and not to the Lord, yet
the Lord did not charge these acts upon him; He was so farre
from a strict inquiry after his lesser sins, that he tooke no notice
of those greater sins, but faith, His heart was perfect all his dayes.
So in the case of David, the Lord would not see many of his sins,
he would not blot David, nor burden his owne memory with
them, but passd an Act of Oblivion upon them for ever.

F f 2

Sarah
Sarah (Gen: 18. 12.) spake very unhandsomely when the Angel came to her and told her she should have a son; yet the Apostle (1 Pet: 3. 6.) referring to that story, gives Sarah a very high testimony or commendation for one good word that was mingled with a great many ill or undue ones, yea and actions too; for she laughed; Notwithstanding which, Peter sets her as a pattern for all good women professing the Gospel to imitate: He would have them be in subjection unto their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord, whose daughters ye are (faith he) as long as ye doe that which is well. That one word which she spake well, is recorded, yea reported to her praise, and all that were ill are buried in silence, forgotten and covered. The Lord hath respect to a little pure gold, though mingled with a great deal of dross, and owns a little good Corne, though a great deal of chaffe be in the same floor, or heape. Surely then he will not bring our infirmities and slips to account against us, while our hearts are upright with him.

Thus you see what matter of charge there was in these words, when Job sayd, God sought occasion against him, when he had given none, or that he had only given some smaller occasion, and yet God dealt with him as an enemy.

But did Job ever say, That God sought occasions against him, or rooke notice of his lesser sins so severely?

I answer, Though some acquit Job wholly of this charge, and recriminate Elihu with this accusation as a slander, yet Job had spoken words which might give occasion to charge him thus, (as was theed also concerning those former speeches, I am cleane from transgression, I am innocent, there is no iniquity in me) though Job had not spoken these or such like words, with that scope and spirit as Elihu might seeme to alledge them; yet he had given Elihu cause enough to say so, while he spake more of himselfe then came to his share, considering that he was a sinfull man, and more then did become him in his condition, being an afflicted man. Upon both which accounts, it had better becom'd him to have been much in humbling himselfe, rather then at all in justifying himselfe. Now as Job had spoken words which might beare out Elihu in his former charge, so we finde severall speeches or complaints concerning God, which may justifie him in this. As for instance (Chap: 14. 16, 17.) For now thou num-

Secundum veritatem neutru

dict: Job in

senfu quem im-

ponent in Elihu.
brest (or numbering than numbrest) my steps; dost thou not watch over my sins? As if he had sa\d, thou watchest me so strictly, so narrowly, that I cannot (in the least) step awry, but presently I am observed and shall be sure to hear of it; Yea, my transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou s\owe\st up mine iniquity; that is, thou keepest the memory of my sins, thou dost not passe them by, but haft them ready by thee. When shall Joseph wanton mischief disappoynted in her-fight, was resolved to seeke an occasion of revenge, she laid up his garment by her until her Lord came home (Gen: 39. 16.) To lay up the evill deed of another, presageth ill to him. And therefore when Elihu heard Job speaking thus, might he not say, Job hath sa\yd, God seeketh occasions against me, yea, (which is more) as it followeth in the verse under hand; And counteth we for his enemy.

These words having been insifted upon somewhat largely from other passages of this Booke (Chap: 13. 24. & 19. 11. & Chap. 30. 21. In all which places Job spake this complaint sometimes expressly, alwayes Equivalently.) I shall not here stay upon the explication of them, only for as much as Job having sa\yd, That God took hold of small occasions given, or sought occasions not given, is presently charged further by Elihu, with saying, He counteth me for his enemy. From this Connection of the former with the latter part of the verse.

Note.
To seek or take ease occasions against another, is an argument that we beare no good will to him, or, It is a signe we look up-on a man as an enemy, when we are apt and ready to seeke or take occasions against him.

There are two things which we are very ready to doe towards those we beare no good will unto, or whom we account our ene-mies. First, to diminish the good which they doe, to speake lightly of, and under-value their most prafef-worthy deeds. Ill will never speake well either of persons or actions. Secondly, whom we love not as friends, espe\cially whom we hate as ene-mies, we are prone to highen their faults, and double their fay-lings; we (mostly) look on the evill deeds of an enemy in a multiplying, or in a magnifying glaf; we make one fault many,
and a little one great. A true friend will speak the most of what is well done, and the least he can, with truth, of what is ill; He is so farre from seeking occasions against whom he loves, that he will hardly see them, when findes them unsought. A noble enemy will not seeke occasions against a man, much lesse will a cordiall friend. It is no wonder when Job is taxed with saying, God sought occasions against him, that he should also say, He counteth me for his enemy.

From the matter of these words, He counteth me for his enemy, take these two notes.

First, Even good men when they are sorely grieved under the afflictling hand of God, are tempted to have hard apprehensions of God, at least to suspect and feare that God is no friend to them.

And this comes to passe upon a double consideration; First, Nature when pinched will shew it selfe; Now, man naturally, hath not only hard thoughts of God, but an enmity against him, And when nature is pinched, all the corruptions working in man, worke this way, unless over-power'd and checkt by grace. Secondly, when 'tis hard with us from the hand of God, then Satan takes his time to prompt us with hard thoughts of God, and to foment that enmity to the uttermost, of which our corrupt nature hath such store. What? will Satan say, Doth God love thee, and starve thee? What? Doth God pretend kindness to thee, and deale thus with thee? is God thy friend, who takes away thy friends? is God thy friend, who leaves thee in the hand of enemies? doth he pitty thee, and yet keepe thee in these paines? is this his kindness to his friend? How can he say he loves thee? And hast not thou cause enough yet to say, He counteth thee for his enemy. Thus Satan takes his time to provoke nature, which is forward enough of it selfe to thinke and speake hardly of God, if at any time he is pleased and sees it fit to deale hardly with us. And how great a combate hath many a gracious soule both with Satan and his owne heart, to get and keepe up good and honorable thoughts of God in a sufferinge condition, or under darke and (to some) dismal dispensations.

Secondly, Note.
Whatsoever God doth to or with a godly man, he should main
tain good thoughts, and speak well of God, or, when God deales
most strictly and severely with his people, they should not look
upon it as an argument of any enmity or ill will against them,
or that he counteth them his enemies.

Let us take heed of such thoughts; David professed (Psal: 73,1.) Truly God is good to Israel, even to them that are of a clean
heart. He is good to them (that's David's intent there) not only
when he doth them good, (as to outward things I mean, and to
sensible appearances, for all is good in the issue to the Israel of
God; now, I say, God is good to his people, not only when he
in that sense doth them good) but when he affliceth them, and
layeth many outward evills upon them. When, as it is said after
in that Psalme (v. 14.) He plagues them (that word imports
forest troubles) all the day long, and chasteth them every morn-
ing; when he gives them their breakfaft in soure herbes, or
with severest whippings, yet then, even then he is good to them,
and meanes them no harme at all. Therefore how hardly soever
God deals with us, let us not thinke he counts us enemies. The
Temptation was strong upon David to take up hard thoughts of
God in that case, yea it prevailed so farre upon him, that he con-
cluded (v. 13.) Verily I have cleansed my heart in vaine, and
washed my hands in innocency. As if he had sayd, A man hath
little priviledge from the worst of outward evills by his godli-
ness; But the Temptation did not prevail long, he soone reco-
vered himselfe (v. 15.) If I say I will speake thus, (that is, that I
have cleansed my heart in vaine) Behold, I should offend against
the generation of thy children; that is, I should wrong the whole
kind or race of godly men throughout the world, as 'if hypoc-
crites, or as if God did not love them, or were not good to them,
for who is there among all thy children whom either thou haft
not or mayest not chasen as much as thou haft countened me. As
no man can know the love of God by that which is before him,
how prosperous soever it is; so it is most unsuitable for any of
the children of God, to thinke that God is not good to them,
or doth not love them, because of the evil that is before them,
how adverse or disafterous soever it is. For, God having loved
his people in Christ, he loves them for ever; when once he hath
broken
broken the enmity in our hearts towards himselse, there is nothing shall ever be done by him towards us, which may speak us his enemies, or him our enemy, though a Job in great affliction may say, He counteth me for his enemy, And handles me like one too; as it followeth.

Ver. 11. He puttest my feet in the stockes, he marketh all my paths.

We had these words expressly (Chap. 13. 27.) there they have been opened already, Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths. That which hath been said as to the Generall fence and scope of that text, may serve for this; And therefore I referre the reader thither. I shall only add two or three notes from the metaphor; He put my feet in the stockes, that is, he presses me with very close and sore afflictions.

Hence Observe.
First, To be in affliction, is to be in a painfull condition; there is little ease in the stocks.

No chastning for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous (Heb. 12. 11.) To be under a croffe is be under a burden.
Secondly, Afflictions keepe us under restraint. He hath little liberty as well as little ease that is in the stocks: afflictions hold us in, they are as a prison to us. Afflictions are a restraint two wayes; First, to our corruptions; yea, through the grace of God, afflictions are more then restraints to corruption, they become the death of corruption, they are appoynted (among other services) for the mortifying of corruption, that it may not live in us, much more are they a restraint to corruption, that it may not get out, nor worke in us as before. Many times, when a good man hath the world at will, his corruptions thinke to have their will too; and when he is at liberty, lufts would grow licentious: Therefore God seeth it necessary to put his servants in the stocks, that their lufts may be in the stocks too. Thus he told the Church (Hos. 2. 6.) Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thornes, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths. The thorne-hedge was as a stocks to stop them that they should not walk disorderly, nor act inordinately as they had done. This course God takes with
with many, he puts them in the stocks, that he may keepe them from the ways of sin, or give check to some unruly affection. When we need this discipline, we may looke for it, and'tis a mercy to be under it. Will you not keep order? (faith God) then you shall to the stocks. Secondly, afflictions are a restraint to our comforts, as well as to our corruptions. As this expression notes the taking of lots short, so the taking of us short as to lawfull liberties and enjoyments. Sickness upon the body lowres all that this world hath to us, and will not suffer us to use much of it, how much soever of it we possesse. Many have enough to eate, who never eate in pleasure, as Job sayd (Chap: 31. 25.) And when in our prosperity we run out and-take unlawfull liberty, God sends an affliction, as his stocks, to hold us from our lawfull liberties. When we have had vaine our-goings and excelles of spirits, all going well with us and comfortably in the world, we may expect the stocks next, or that things should goe ill with us, yet for our good.

Thirdly, To be in the stocks is a disgracefull thing; it is not only a paine and a restraint, but it is a reproach; He that is in the stocks, or in the pillory, is exposed to shame, every one points at him, and many revile him. Affliction as to the eye of the world, carrieth a disgrace with it, or, at least, subjects the person afflicted to disgrace; And it hath been shewed from severall passages of this booke, how Job's afflictions were interpreted to his disgrace; and he lookt upon, as I may say, like a vagabond in the stocks, that God had brought him thither, and clapt him by the heelis for his misdemeanours. Though afflictions diminisht no mans honour or esteme with God, or with his people (an afflicted Saint is as precious and honorable in their eyes, as when in the greatest prosperity; The clouds of trouble cannot eclipse the glory of Grace, nor render the gracious contemptible to those who know them such) yet, as to the eye and opinion of worldly men they doe. Job sayd his afflictions were a witnesses against him, as if all were not right with him, yea, as if he had been very unrighteous. The stocks are a witnesses against a man, that surely he hath done some ill thing. Thus you see there is paine in affliction, restraint in affliction, disgrace in affliction, especially in the opinion of the world, and therefore to be in affliction is to be as in the stocks. He putteth my feet in the stocks.
He marketh all my paths.

Which some expound, as if when the Lord had let him out of the flocks, yet he was but like a prisoner with his keeper at his heels; He marketh all my paths. I have spoken to this also before; I shall now only note.

There is no stepping out of the eye or sight of God.

He marketh all our paths, not only our open paths, but our secret paths; not only what paths our feet walk in, but paths our hearts walke in. He marketh what our thoughts are, what our scope is, what our aymes and ends are. He marketh not only our day-paths, but our night-paths; He watcheth all our paths. Take this Caution from it;

As the Lord marketh all our paths, so it will be our wisdome to mark our owne paths.

If the Lords eye be so strict over all our ways, shall we be careless of our ways? If he look upon our walkings, shall not we look to our walkings? There are many arguments (from love, from returns of thankfulness for received benefits) which should provoke the people of God to heed and marke their own ways; but surely this ought to be a very cogent argument, because God marks them, He marketh all our paths. Therefore as the Apostle gives counsell and admonition (Eph: 5. 15.) See that ye walke circumspectly, not as fools but as wise. What our wisdome is, yea whether we have any wisdome, whether we are wise or fools will be seene by our walkings. Some can talke and discourse very wisely, who yet walke very foolishly, and whose whole course is folly.

So much for the opening of this charge brought by Elihu against Job, his over-justifying of himselfe, and his reflecting upon the goodness and love of God. Elihu proceeds yet further to deale with and refuse him, as also to anfwer for God. Behold, in this thou art not just, &c. This I charge thee with and will prove it, thou haft spoken finfully and unbecomingly of God and of thy selfe in all this.
JOB. Chap. 33. Verf. 12, 13.

Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee,
That God is greater then man.

Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not
account of any of his matters.

In these two verses Elihu gives the first part of his answer,
wherein we may take notice of these five things; First, He
tells Job that he had erred and was mistaken, Behold, in this thou
art not just. Secondly, He sheweth him wherein he had been mi-
staken, or what his error was; In this thou art not just, or, Behold
this, thou art not just in it. Thirdly, Elihu lays downe the generall
ground, upon which he intended to convince Job of his error and
mistake, The greatness of God, I will answer thee that God is
greater then man. Fourthly, from that ground he draws out a
check or reproofe, in the beginning of the 13th verse, why dost
thou strive against him? Fifthly and lastly, He gives a reason of
that reproofe, which ariseth also out of the former ground, the
unequellable Sovereignty of God; For he giveth not account of
any of his matters.


Behold, he calls for serious attention, and diligent considerati-
on; Behold This; so the Hebrew rendred strictly; we render,
Behold, in this thou art not just; What is this? what's the ante-
cedent to this? we may assigne the antecedent in three things,
or make it threefold, according to what Elihu hath layd downe
before in way of charge against Job in the former Context; First,
This, that thou hast boasted thy selfe so much of thy innocency
and integrity, Verf. 8th. Thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I
have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am cleane without tran-
gression, &c.

Behold, in this thou art not just.

Secondly, In this, That is, in that thou hast complained so
much
much of the severity of God's dealings and proceedings with thee,
(10. & 11.) Behold, he findeth occasion against me, and account-
eth me for his enemy; He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all
my paths; Behold, in this thou art not just.

There is a third antecedent, which we may take up from se-
veral passages in the former part of the Book; and that is, be-
cause thou hast so often and so inopportune desired to plead
with God, and hast made so many suits for a hearing with him,
as if thou hadst somewhat to say, which might acquit thy selfe
and shew reason, why God should not deal thus with thee;
For though Job did not desire to plead with God as having any
intent to accuse him of doing him wrong, yet he was therefore to
be blamed, because he desired to plead with him; seeing it be-
comes man to submit to the judgement of God without murmur-
ing or complaining. So then Elihu had cause to charge him with
this; God indeed passed it by, as knowing it did not proceed (as
in the wicked) from malice, but from weakness and ignorance,
as Job also himselfe humbly confessed at last. Behold (thou hast too
often called for Justice) in this thou art not just.

Mr. Broughton renders, Loe here thou art not in the right. These
words, in this, or here, may also have a negative reference to what
Job had been charged with before by his friends. As if Elihu had
sai d; I doe not charge thee with such crimes as thy friends have
loaded thee with heretofore, I do not burden thee with grosse impi-
ety, nor with hypocrifie, I do not tell thee thou hast oppressed the poor,
or wronged the widower and the fatherlesse, I have nothing of this
sort to say against thee. But in this or here, I have somewhat to say,
wherein my judgement also is that thou art not just, nor in the right;
for however thou art otherwise, or in other things upright and righte-
ous, however just thou hast been in thy transactions with men, and
pure in thy worship toward God, yet in this I am sure, and I dare say
it openly and avowedly, thou art no ways justifiable, much lesse just
in that thou hast cryed up thy owne innocency, and spoken so much of
the hard dealings of God with thee; yea, hast been so bold as to de-
sire a day of hearing even before God himselfe. Let this be the Que-
sition or matter under debate; whether or no, Job speaking thus
highly of himselfe, and thus boldly of God, hath done right or no? El-
ihu undertakes the negative, he engageth to prove that Job had
not done well, or right, how innocent soever he was, in speaking fo.
so much of his own innocency, or (how hardly soever God dealt with him) in making so many complaints of his severity, Elihu undertakes to prove this negative; and Job never durst undertake the affirmative, that he had done right or well in speaking or doing so; and therefore in the close of the business he sits downe convinced, that he had been too bold with God, and too forward in justifying himselfe.

His argument (which runs through this whole discourse) to make good his negative assertion, may be formed up thus; He that speakes much of his owne righteousnesse, and seems to reflect upon the righteousness of God, at least that God hath been over-rigorous with him, is not just, nor justifiable in this.

But thou O Job hast spoken thus of thy selfe, and thus of God in the extremity of thy paine, and in the anguish of thy spirit.

Therefore in this thou art not just, nor justifiable. No man of understanding can take thy part, or be an Advocate for thee in this matter; As for me, I must needs be and am resolved to be an Advocate for God against thee. The Major or first proposition is not express in the text, the conclusion is given in the beginning of the 12th verse, and the assumption or 2d proposition, is collected from Job's owne mouth in severall places of this Booke.

Againe, besides the generall scope of the words, and the tendency of Elihu in this dispute, we may consider the manner of his speech, how he deals with Job; Behold, in this thou art not just. In this manner of treating with Job, the sweetnes of his spirit, and likewise the boldnesse of it are observable. These two vertues or excellencies of an Advocate, shew themselves plainly in this one passage; Behold, in this thou art not just. For consider, First, He expresseth his reprooche negatively, he doth not say, Behold, in this thou art wicked, or thou hast impiously blasphem'd the name of God, but he speakes at as low a rate, as may be, Behold, in this thou art not just, or justifiable, thou hast not done right, or thou art not right; there is a great good temper of spirit, and a mixture of much meeknesse in such negative expressions: it being much lesse to say to a man, in this thou art not just nor justifiable, then to say positively or directly, in this thou art unjust, and deservest to be condemned. For though there be no difference in the thing between not being just and being unjust, yet there is much more mildnes in the words; and a man takes lesse offence,
when told that he is not just, then in being told that he is unjust.
The imputing of a crime to a man, is more and worse, then the
denyng him a vertue, or that he is vertuous.

Hence note.

We ought to temper our reproves with much gentlenesse and
meeknesse.

We should not speake cutting words, if other words will serve
the turne. Thus the Apostle directs us (Gal: 6. 1.) Brethren,
if a man be overtaken with a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore
such a one with the spirit of meeknesse, considering thy selfe, lest thou
also be tempted; deale as gently with a fallen brother, as thou
wouldest with a man whose bones are dislocated or broken. (so
much the metaphor there used imports.) There is a time indeed
when we must rebuke (as the Apostle gives direction (Tit: 1.
3.) sharply, or cuttingly; we must goe to the quicke, that they
may be found in the faith: but there is a great regard to be had to
the state and spirits of those with whom we have to deale. As it
is our duty to receive the word with meeknesse (James 1. 21.
some receive the word proudly, riggidly, in the worst fence they
can, yea they receive it rebellingly, now as we ought to receive
the word with meeknesse) so 'tis good to speake the word with
meeknesse, with as much meeknesse and tendernesse as the case
will beare.

Secondly, consider this manner of speaking; Behold, in this thou
art not just; Elihu tells him plainly of his faults, he reported them
before, and here he applyed them home to his person; Behold, in
this, thou rememberest thy owne words; Thou canst not but take
notice what thou hast spoken; now I tell thee, in this thing thou
art not just; Elihu doth not speak doubtingly nor fearfully, nor
doeth he tell Job what the thoughts of others were upon the mat-
ter, but he tells him directly, categorically, plainly from himselfe,
in this thou art not just.

Hence note.

We are to hold out our convictions and reproves with plainnesse,
and to lay our finger upon the very sore; Behold, in this (or
that) thou art not just.

We are to speake meekly, but not at randome, not uncertain-
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 12. 231

ly, not flattering (Pro. 29. 25.) A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet; he doth but intangle and infinare him; in stead either of counselling or comforting him. When a man is our, it is best to tell him so; how else shall he get in again? Flattering words are insinuating words; Behold, in this thou art not right. One of the Ancients speaking to this point, tells us; It is more sinfull to flatter those that doe evill, then to doe evill our selves. And, surely it argueth a more corrupt mind, or a worser principle to dawbe sinners with the untempered morter of flattery, then to be dawbed with the mire of any particular sin or iniquity. A flatterer is a dawber and pillow-ower; A flatterer hath not a true sight of sin himselfe, and he doth what he can to kepee others from the sight of it. It is safer to make sinners smart then itch. David invited a wounding rather then such a skinnning of his fore (Psal. 141. 5.) Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, (that is, I will not only take it kindly, but shall find it a kindness) and let him reproove me, and it shall be an excellent oyle, which shall breake my head; that is, it shall be so farre from hurting that it shall be (through Grace) a healing to me. No man had ever any cause to repent, either the giving or receiving of a wise and seansable reproose.

Behold, in this thou art not just.

But what is it, not to be just? I answer, not to be just, is not to give every man his due; yet Elihu intents it chiefly, of what Job had spoken unduely to God; Behold, in this thou art not just.

Hence note.

They who doe not give God his right are unjust, as well as they who doe not give men their right.

Yea not to give God his right, is by so much the greater injustice, then not to give man his right, by how much God is greater then man; looke how much God is higher and greater then man, by so much is their sin higher and greater, who give not God his right, then theirs, who give not man his right. Many thinke they are very just, very honest men, because they give every man his due, they wrong, they defraud no man, not any neighbour, not any brother with whom they deale: come and charge them if you can. Tis very good, & more then most men can truly lay of themselves,
selves, when a man is able to lay he is just to his neighbour, no man can challenge him of injustice. But many say this, who take no notice, how unjust they are to God; they are not at all sensible, how often they have denied God his right, nor how often they have done God-wrong; they take no notice of this. They have second-table Justice, but they have not first-table Justice; this is it that Elihu chargeth Job with. His friends charged him with second-table injustice, that he was an oppressor, &c. but Elihu charged him with first-table injustice, that he had done wrong to God. Therefore, remember, not to give God his due feare, his due love, his due trust and submission (these are his rights by the first Commandement) is to be unjust; not to give God due worship according to his will, is to be unjust, because in so doing you deny him his right in the second Commandement; not to speake or thinke reverently of the name, of the word, wayes, and ordinances of God, is to be unjust to God, because you deny him his right in the third Commandement. To break the Sabboath, to steale Gods time, and convert it to your owne private use, to put it in your owne purses, as many doe, this is sacriledge, this is to be unjust to God, because you give him not his right, nor that which is due to him by the fourth Commandement; so not to submit to the rod of God, not to be quiet under the chastizings of God, not to take all well at Gods hand whatsoever he doth with us, or to us, is to be unjust to God, because we then deny him the right of his soveraignty, and of that just power which he hath over his creatures.

Behold, in this thou art not just.

Elihu proceeds to give an account distinctly, wherein this injustice lay.

I will answer thee, or (as Mr Broughton) I will tell thee, God is greater then man.

We render well, I will answer thee, &c. There is a four-fold way of answering; First, by information to a Question propounded. Every Question would have an answer. Secondly, by solution of an objection made; When any thing is objected against what is tayd or held, then to untie the knot, is to answer. Thirdly, there is an answering by confutation of a false opinion or tenet;
net; thus whole bookes that hold unsound or heterodox opinions, are to be answered; Fourthly, there is an answer by way of reproofs, or reprehension of faults or mistakes, either in speech or practice. *Elihu* his answer was of this last sort. For he observing how *Job* had spoken, and what his carriage and demeanour had been, gives him a reprehensiv answer, *Behold, in this thou art not just, I will answer thee.* And what was his answer? even this, *God is greater then man; or, I will answer thee, that God is more then man.* The roote of the word signifies to encrease or grow Great; but God is great, not by growth or encrease, but in his essence and being. He who is infinite in greatness, can have no addition to his greatness. God is the Great one, and he only is great. All men and things put together, are not only little nothings, but lesfe then nothing compared to the Great God. Further, the word by which God is here exprest, notes the great power of God, the strength of God; in opposition to which the word by which *man* is here exprest, notes his weaknesses and pitiful frailty. And therefore Mr *Broughton* translates strictly according to the propriety of the Originall; *I must tell thee the puiffant is greater then the sorrowfull man; we say barely, God, he, the puiffant, or the strong, the mighty God; we say, God is greater then man, he, then sorrowfull man.* There are three originall words, as I have sometime noted, which express *man; Adam,* importing the matter of which man was made, *earth; Ish* noting his best perfection; and *Enosh,* intimating that sad condition which was brought upon us by the fall; *Surely the puiffant is greater then sorrowfull man.*

But is not God greater then *Ish*? The wisest and moft accomplisht, the moft perfect and mightieth of men, as well as he is greater then *Enosh* sorrowfull or miserable man? I answer, the word *Enosh* is not to be taken exclusively, as if when he faith, *the puiffant is greater then the sorrowfull man,* he were not also greater then the greatest or strongest man; but it notes, that all men, or man considered in his best estate, is but weakneffe and wretchednesse, when put in the baillance with the great God, or the puiffant. Lord what is man ( faith David, one of the best and greatest of men, a King, *Psal:* 144. 3.) that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man that thou makest account of him? Now if it be even too much that God should make any account of man,
then what is any man in account to God? O what man or Angel is able to cast up the account, how much the great God is greater or more then man. The words are plaine, only there is somewhat yet to be added or touched upon, to cleare up further the scope of Elihu in speaking thus to Job, which I shall endeavour to cleare and make out, when I have given a note or two from the words, as they are a plaine proposition; God is greater then man.

Hence Observe,
First, God is Great.

He that is greater then the GREATEST, is certainly great; he that is higher then the highest, is high. This greatness of God is ev ery where celebrated in Scripture. The Prophet (Isa: 12. 6.) calls the inhabitant of Zion to cry out and shout; why? For great is the holy One of Israel in the midst of thee; that is, the holy one of Israel who is in the midst of thee, is both Great in himselfe, and declares his greatness in thee. (Mal: 1. 14.) I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadfull among the heathens. I need not stay to give particular Scriptures to hold forth the attribute of Gods greatness, his greatness runs through all his attributes. Whatsoever God is, he is great in it; He is great in power (Psal: 56. 3. Psal: 147. 5.) he is great in all sorts of power, great in authoritative power, and great in executive power. As God commandeth what he pleareth to be done, so he can doe what he commandeth. The power of man in doing is not alwayes commensurate with his power in commanding; but Gods is. He needs no helpe, much leesse any leave to execute what he willeth. Againe, God is great in wisdome, he hath the compasse of all things in his understanding; God is so wise, that he is called the only wise God (1 Tim: 1. 17.) The wisdome of men and Angels is folly to his. God is great also in his goodnes, so great that Christ himselfe as man would not be called good, but told him that called him so by way of rebuke, There is none good but one, that is God (Math: 19. 17.) Holy David brake out into the admiration of that goodnes which God hath layd up, yea of that which he dayly worketh for man. How much more did he and ought we to admire that goodnes which is not so much in himselfe as himselfe? (Psal: 31. 19.) O how great is thy goodnesse, which thou haft layd up for them that feare thee, which thou workest.
workes for them that trust upon thee before the sons of men. The
goodnesse which God acts and puts forth for the creature, is a
great goodnesse (Isa: 63. 7. Neh: 9. 25.) but that goodnesse
which is the goodnesse of his nature, is a goodnesse as great as
God is, a goodnesse infinite in greatnesse. A gains, how often is
God called great, yea admired for his greatnesse in mercy? When
David (2 Sam: 24. 14.) made choyce to fall into the hands of
God; he gave this reason of it, For his mercies are great. He is
also great in wrath; we read (2 Kings 23. 26.) of the fierceness of
his great wrath. And how great is his Love? First, in redeeming
us by Christ (Job: 3. 16.) God so loved the world, that he gave
his only begotten Son, &c. God loved us so much in that gift, that
no man could ever tell how much love he hath given us in it.
Secondly, His love is great in quickning us with Christ (Eph: 2.
4.) God who is rich in mercy, for the great Love wherein he hath
loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickned us together
with Christ. His love both in redeeming and quickning us, is so
great, that while we are called to the greatest study after the
knowledge of, we are told we cannot know the greatnesse of it,
(Eph: 3. 18.) That you may know the Love of God which passeth
knowledge. I will not stay upon this Attribute, the Greatnesse of
God, onely take these five briefe inferences from it; God is
Great. Then

First, God can doe great things, the greatest things, for us; eve-
ry thing is in working as it is in being; they that are but little, can
do but little; God being great in his being, that is, in his power,
in his wifdome, in his goodnesse, in his mercy, how easily can he
do great things! The Scripture is abundant in shewing forth the
great things which God hath done, and will doe, 2 Sam: 7. 22,
of God in all ages and in all places, have borne the stamp of and
given testimony to his excellent Greatnesse. We say, There is
nothing great to a great mind, or to a man of a great spirit. A Great
spirited man will overcome not only great difficulties, but seem-
ing impossibilities, yea he is glad to meete with greatest difficul-
ties, because they march the greatnesse of his mind. Then cer-
tainly the Great God, doth nothing but great, and can doe the
greatest things. 'Tis no matter how great the things are which
we have need to be done for us, if we can but interest the Great
God in the doing of them. God can doe great things in ways of
mercy for his people, and he can doe great things in ways of
Judgement against his enemies. Though his enemies be Great
Oakes and Cedars, he can hew them downe (Amos 2.9.) Though
his enemies be as great as the greatest mountaine, he can remove
and level them; Who art thou O great mountaine before Zoroba-
bell, thou shalt become a plaine (Zech: 4.7.) that is, the great
power of God, with Zorobabel, can overthrow or overturne those
powers which oppose or stand in the way of his Church and peo-
ple, though they appear as inseparable and immovable as a
Great Mountaine.

Secondly, If God be Great, then he can pardon great trans-
gressions; you that are great sinners fear not. Were not God a
great God, the least of our sins could not be pardoned; were not
he great in mercy, and great in goodness, our hearts would sayle
us, yea our faith could have no bottome to come to him for the
pardon of our great sins; But why should great sins discourage us
to ask their pardon of God, who is great in mercy? David
made the greatnesse of his sin his argument to move the Lord to
pardon it (Psal: 25.11.) Pardon my sin for it is great; who could
speak thus, unless he had that upon his heart that he spake to the
great God, who is greater in nothing, and hath magnified his
greatnesse in nothing more then in acts of mercy to Greatest
sinners?

Thirdly, If God be a great God; then he must have great
services and duties; He must have great praise (Psal: 48.1.)
great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, he must have great love,
we must love him even with all our heart, and with all our might.
He must have great feare (Psal: 89.7.) Great faith (Math: 15.
28.) Great honour from all his people. When David was about
to make great preparations for the building of the Temple, he
faith (1 Chron: 29.11.) Thine O Lord is greatnesse, and the power,
and the glory, &c. And when Solomon was about to build the Tem-
ple, he faith (2 Chron: 2.5.) The house which I build is great,
for great is our God above all Gods. We see David prepared and
Solomon builded in proportion to the God for whom the one pre-
pared and the other built a house. Thus I may say of all you doe
for God or to God, let it be the greatest your flocke and ability can.
can reach to, because he is a great God. The Lord himself utth that argument by the Prophet to urge his people to doe their ut-
malt in whatsoever they were called to doe (Mal: 1, 14,) Cur-
sed be the deceiver which hath a male in his flocke, and voweth and
sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing; (that is, who when he is
able to performe a greater service to the Lord, purs him off with a
lesser one,) for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, &c. Therefore
take heed of putting me off with weake female services, I ex-
pect a male, your best, that service which is most spirituall and
masculine.

Fourthly, If God be great, then, they who are but little them-
selves, having an interest in God, may doe great things too. The
least creature having an interest in the great God, is as great,
yea infinitely greater then the greatest in the world, who stand in
their owne strength. Moses faith (Deut: 4, 38. Deut: 7, 1.) that the presence of God with Israel was such, that by it they o-
vercame Nations, greater and mightier then they; their little-
nesse did not hinder them, because the great God was with them
in their workes and wayes; yea God loves to use small instru-
ments, that his owne greatnesse who is the efficient may appeare.
That question which was twice put in the Prophet (Amos 7, 2,
5.) is very often put in that case; By whom shall Jacob arise? for
he is small. That which made it so questionable whether Jacob
should rise, was his smallnesse; And could we remember the
Greatnesse of the God of Jacob, we should either never make such
questions, or easly answer them.

Fifthly, Seeing God is great, we should be alwayes ascribing
greatnesse to God, we should lift him up in his greatnesse. Thus
Moses exhorted others (Deut: 32, 3.) Because I will publish the
name of the Lord, ascribe ye greatnesse to our God. And David at
once prophesieth the fame of others, and promiteth it for him-
selue (Psal: 145, 6.) Men shall speake of the might of thy terrible
Acts, and I will declare thy greatnesse.

Again, Consider these words as they are expressed compara-
tively, God is greater then man; As God is great, so greater then
the greatest men. God is great above all Gods; that is, above
all the Kings and Princes of the earth. Now I know (sayd Jethro,
Exod: 18, 11.) that God is greater then all Gods (greater then
Pharaoh and his Egyptian Princes) for in the thing wherein they
dealt
dealt proudly he was above them. David challenged all the Gods on Gods behalfe (Psal. 77.13.) Who is so great a God as our God? Let any man name him if he can; He is a God above all Gods, that is, above the greatest powers in this world who are called Gods. Thus Christ comforts believers with an assurance of safety for ever (John 10. 29.) My father is greater then all, then the devill and all.

But some may say, who knoweth not this that God is Great, or that he is greater then men or devill? Job himselfe spake much of this subiect, yea his friends made it their businesse to exalt the greatnesse of God, as we may see in severall passages of this Booke. So that Elihu seemeth to say no more here, then had been sayd already, and doth no more then hath been done already. Is not this then a cold way of arguing to tell Job that which he knew already?

For answere to this I shall stay a while (as was promised) before I goe off from these words, to shew why though for the matter this is no more then hath been sayd already; that, yet Elihu had reason to bring this argument for the conviction of Job, that God is greater then man; for though the Greatnesse of God hath been often spoken of in the course of this disputation, between Job and his friends, yet neither Job nor his friends did handle or improve it to that poynct, or in that extent, as here intended by Elihu, as may appeare by these following Considerations.

First, When Elihu spake of the greatnesse of God, we are not to understand this greatnesse abstractly or alone, but concreetely or in conjunction with his goodnesse and righteousnesse, with his mercy and faithfullnesse, &c. Job confessed the greatnesse of God, but he seemed to intimate severall things, to the disparagement of the goodnesse, mercy, and righteousnesse of God. For though in his frequent complaininges he did not question, yet he did much darken and obscure these Divine perfections. And therefore Elihu speaking of the Greatnesse of God, urgeth it in conjunction with all his perfections, and indeed they cannot be dis-joyned, except in notion or discourse.

Secondly, Elihu insisted so much upon the greatnesse of God, to humble Job, and to convince him that he had done amisse, in his bold appeales to him and complaints, about his dealing with him, Elihu doth wisely to hold out the greatnesse and sovereign
raignity of God; for the keeping downe and repression of his yet, unhumbled spirit.

Thirdly, Elihu manageth this argument for another end and purpose, then his friends did. They uted it to prove Job was wicked or had done wickedly in the former passages of his life; He to shew that Job ought to be patient under and quietly submit to the present providences of God.

Fourthly, This argument which Elihu brings from the greatness of God, hath not at all the least force in it, because grounded upon to common and generally received a principle, the greatness of God; yea, it hath therefore the greater force in it; for what is more unreasonable then for man to intimate any thing which reflects upon God, or to complain of what God doth; when as God, by the common consent of all reasonable men, doth infinitely surpass all men, both in greatness, and in righteousness, both in Justice, and in goodness. When the greatness of God appears in all these things, what can be more unreasonable then for man to insinuate any thing complainingly concerning God. From the consideration of this scope which Elihu had in arguing from the greatness of God;

Note.

We may speake and believe ariht, that God is great, and that he is greater then man, and yet not answer it in our practife, nor be duly affected with it.

Elihu did not at all question whether Job thought God greater then himselfe; that was not the point in controversie: but he saw this principle was not answered in Jobs practife, or that he did not demeane himselfe suitably to the greatness of God, which he had proclaimed to others, and professed himselfe to believe. And thus it is with many, most of all with those under great tempations and pressing afflictions. How apt are they to speake and act below, yea beside those principles which they believe and hold forth in their profession. It is an easie matter to say, and in words to acknowledge what God hath revealed himselfe to be, but O how hard is it to live and walke up to such sayings and acknowledgements? Many tell us, God is greater then man, yet while they doe not fully subject themselves to God, they in effect deny that God is greater then man. Many acknowledge fully that
that God is righteous, yet when they rest not in his dealings with them, they imply some unrighteousness in God. Many say God is wise, only wise, yet while they will be their own carvers, and are unsatisfied with God's allowances and providences, they make themselves wiser than God, or at least imagine things might be ordered with Greater wisdom then they are. Many say God is great in mercy, greater infinitely then man, yet when they should act faith about the pardon of their sins, they act it as if God had but the mercy of a man, or as if his thoughts were as our thoughts, and his ways (in dispensing favours) like our ways, and so they bring God downe to their owne size and scantlings. If these had been asked the question, whether God hath not greater mercy then man, they would have answered, double the he hath; and yet they are no more in believing, then if the mercy of God were of the same measure with the mercies of narrow-hearted man. Thus we modle the Great God, and our Idea's or apprehensions of him according to what we see in our selves, not according to what he is and hath said of himselfe. And what are our rightest notions of God, but hoverings in the ayre, till we bring them downe into practise, or live up to them, till every thing we doe be an expostition of what we speake and believe of God. And when we believe indeed that God is greater then man, we make our selves just nothing before God: if we are any thing to our selves, or glory in any thing of our owne, be it little or great before God, we do not give God the glory of his greatness. The Lord speaking of his owne greatness by the Prophet, faith, All nations are but as the drop of the bucket to him, yea they are as a little thing, as nothing, less then nothing; if therefore you make not every thing little, yea nothing before God, you detract from the glory of his greatness. Again, they only acknowledge God in his greatness, who both agree to all he doth as just, and receive it as good, yea as best, how bad soever it be to nature, or bitter to their fence. Once more, they only acknowledge God fully in his greatness, who though God changeth and varieth his dispensations every day with them, though he empty them never so often from vessell to vessell, yet set downe and say, God is unchangeable to them. It is because the Lord changeth not that we are not consumed (Mal: 3. 6.) therefore what changes soever his people meete with, his heart and thoughts towards them are not changed.

Secondly,
Chap. 33. *An Exposition upon the Book of Job.* Ver. 12.

**Secondly, Note.**

The very reason why we do not stoop to God in silence, why we do not suffer him quietly to doe with us and dispose of us how he will, is, because we doe not lay to heart as we ought the great-ness of God.

Did we remember, that the great God is great in goodnesse, and great in wisdome, as well as great in power; in a word, did we, when we say God is great, and greater then any man, know what we say, it would presently stop our mouthes, and for ever silence all our discontents & complaining, whether in reference to our personall or the publick concerns. We may pray that God would remove any affliction or evill that is upon us (to doe is so not only our liberty but our duty) but we may not complain of any affliction, as an evill to us, nor would we ever make such a complaint, if our hearts were taken up with this thought, that God is great in Goodnesse. Why doe we say, at any time, Surely we have suffered enough, or too much already? Why doe we demand so curiously wherefore God should use such severity against us? What is the reason of all this? even this, we do not consider enough of his greatnesse. *All our inward troubles are outward troubles arise from this, because we do not enough believe or not remember who God is.*

We by our ignorance and unbeliefe divest God (as much as in us lyeth) of his great goodnesse and wisdome, when we feare, especially when we conclude, things are not ordered for our good. And though every man is ready to say, he loathes yea trembles at such thoughts, yet we may lodge many such guessts before we are aware. *Whenever we are over-grieved at any affliction, our owne or others, or would (without much free submission to the will of God) have things doe otherwise then they doe, we, upon the matter, make our selves greater and wiser then God.* And though this be farre from our purpose, yet we cannot avoyd the imputation of it. That which is not (as some distinguiish) the aime, scope, and intendment of the speaker or actor may yet be the aime and scope of his action, worke or speech; no doubt *Job* was very farre from the least thought of diminishing much more of denying the greatnesse of God, either in his power, wisdome, or goodnesse, yea (as was granted before) he spake very highly of him in all these his glorious and divine perfec-
fections. It was not his end when he spake so impatiently and
complainingly, to rob God of that honour of his greatness, yet
Elihu did him no wrong when he said his impatience and com-
plainings did it. And if any shall be found complaining like Job,
though they do not formally deny, that God is greater then
man, yet that interpretation and construction may justly be put
upon their complaints.

But some may here object and say, how was Job such a mirror,
such a pattern of patience, as the Apostle James makes him
(Chap. 5. 11.) if he manifested so much impatience as might
be interpreted by others, though not intended by him a denial
of the greatness of God?

I answer, though all agree (and the testimony of the Spirit of
God is enough to confirm it, though all should not agree) that
the patience of Job was exceeding great, yet no man may say
(nor doth the Spirit of God, in Scripture, say it) that his patience
was perfect; his patience was such as exceeded the most, yea
(for ought that we know) the best of men, yet his was but the
patience of a man, of a man compassed about with the like pa-
thons as other men. His patience was sincere and without hypo-
critie, but his patience was not complete nor without infirmity;
or his patience (we may say) was perfect as to the kind, but it
was not perfect as to the degree. His patience deserved both
commendation and imitation; yet he shewed (at times) such
impatience as deserved reproof, and should not be imitated but
mortified and avoyded. Good men do not only act leffe in
goodness sometimes, but ill and much amiss. And while we see
rallent Cedars fayle (they shall not utterly fall, Job did not) Let
him that thinketh he standeth (that is, who hath a strong opinion
of his owne strength) take heed lest he fall, (as the Apostle cau-
tions him, 1 Cor. 10. 12.) for even the impatient complaints of
Job in his sufferings (like those sufferings of the Israelites for their
fins spoken of in the former verses of that Chapter) fell from him
for an ensample (or type) and are written for our admonition,
upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Thus you see the reason why Elihu tooke up this common prin-
ciple, which every Child learnes out of a Catechisme, to con-
vince this holy man with. What was more knowne to Job, or to
any knowing man, then this, that God is greater then man? yet
Elihu:
Elihu chose this as the most commodious and effectual argument, to compose his spirit, and quiet him after all his distempered and tumultuating complaints; nor hath Elihu yet done arguing downe the hight and unquietnesse of Job's spirit. We have him both reproving him for it by way of question, and giving him another unanswerable argument against it, in the next verse.

Ver. 13. Why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?

The words are a reproving question; As if he had sayd, Thou dost ill, very ill to strive. There is a four-fold striving, three of which are held forth in Scripture under the word of the text.

First, There is a striving with outward force and power, either personally man with man (properly called contention) or more generally, nation with nation, properly called warre.

Secondly, There is a legall striving, a striving by way of plea, about matters of right and title. The word in the text chiefly imports such a judiciary striving, a strife in law, when the adverse party or Plaintishe impiles and commences his suit against the Defendant. Striving is taken in this sense and joined with warring in the description of that contest which Jephthah had with the King of the Children of Ammon (Judg. 11. 25.) And now are thou any thing better then Balaam the son of Zipur, king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel? or did he ever fight against them? That is, did he either make warre with Israel, or did he so much as challenge and plead his right to their land by law? That other name which Joash Gideon's father occasionally gave him (Judg. 6. 31; 32.) takes part from this word; Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown downe his altar. As if he had sayd, Let Baal come and enter his action against my Son if he please; and let my Son alone to answer him.

Thirdly, There is a logical striving, or a striving by dint of argument and reason. Thus disputants strive; and Books of controversy about matters of faith and worship are called Bookes of Polemicall Divinity. Nor indeed hath any kind of strife been carried on with higher and hotter animosities then those managed by tongue and pen in writing and disputing.

Fourth-
Fourthly, The word is applied to any angry passionate chiding and complaining. Thus 'tis used in that famous history (**Exod**: 17.) where the people of Israel (having journeyed from Sin and pitched in Rephidim, v. 1.) did chide with Moses: from which act (v. 7th) He called the place Massia and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not? Because the people of Israel strive with Moses, or rather with God himselfe, Therefore to keep them under the fence of this Sin and provocation, Moses called the name of the place Meribah, which signifieth Striving. In this last fence, as striving is used by way of chiding and complaining we are to understand it here. *Why dost thou strive against him?* (saith Elihu.) That is, why dost thou chide and complain about the dealings of God with thee? or because he will not render thee a reason of his dealings with thee in this affliction. *Job* made many striving and chiding complaints, his first were eminently such (**Chap**: 3. 11.) *Why dyed I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? why did the knees prevent me, or why the breasts, that I should sucke?* He chideth hard about the hardness of his condition in this life, who chideth because he liveth. Read him in the same language (**Chap**: 10. 18.) and in a language not much unlike it in several other places. Yea *Job* doth (I say not formally yet virtually) call out or challenge God more than once to plead with him, and make good his cause against him. *Why dost thou strive with him?* 

For he giveth no account of any of his matters.

The word signifieth properly to answer, and so the text might well enough be rendred here out of the original. He answereth not. Mr. Broughton faith, **He will not speak for all his dealings.** If any man demand of God a reason of his doings, he may chuse whether he will give it him or no: He will not be brought to a reckoning; **He will not, he needeth not to answer, or give an account of any of his matters, or, of any of his words.**

'Tis frequent in the Hebrew to expresse matters or things, by this word, which in strictness signifieth but a word. (**Chap**: 19. 28.) *Seeing the root of the matter (the text is the root of the word)*.
word) is found in me. So here, He giveth not account of any of his words or matters. Again, The original faith, He giveth not account of all his matters. We translate full and right to the sense, when we say, He giveth not account of any of his matters. For the meaning of Elihu is not that God giveth an account of some (though that be a truth) but not indeed of all his matters, he hath some reserved cares and counsels, but his meaning is, that he is not obliq'd to give any man an account of so much as of any of his matters. And then, that universally is to be taken distributively, All for any. So we render it (Psalm 147.20) where the Psalmist thew the special priviledges of Gods people, faith, He hath not dealt so with all nations; We translate more emphatically, He hath not dealt so with any nation. God was so far from giving the same priviledge to all nations, which he gave to his Israel, that he gave not the same to any nation. As if he had sayd, God hath honoured his peculiar people with peculiar favours, gone enquire and search all the nations of the world, and ye shall not pick out a people upon whom God hath bestowed such rich and precious mercies, as he hath upon his Israel. And to this day the Israel of God in every nation enjoy such spiritual priviledges and mercies as the Nations with whom they are civilly mingled know not of. But to the point; Thus here, He giveth not account of all; that is, not of any of his matters.

Most of the Greeke translators render (according to the strictness of the letter) not matters but words: Why dost thou strive with him? for his words are such as to which none can answer. As if the meaning of Elihu were; when God speakes, no man is able to reply upon him, or contradict him. His sayings are indeed irrefragable. Thus they gloss their translation; Why dost thou call him into judgement, or strive with him? for all his speeches are such as cannot be contradicted. If God oppose, who can answer, and if God answer, who can oppose him? That's a good fence, though not a good translation.

Some others interpret the latter part of the verse as containing Job's answer to the question put by Elihu in the first part of it; Why dost thou strive with God? (faith Elihu) To which Job is supposed, replying, Because he gives me not an account of my matters; God doth not answer to my words, and therefore pardon me if I complain or strive with him: I hope while I am thus unanswered you, quid ignorant ivin judicium omnes enim sermones ejus sunt ejusmodi, quibus contradicunt non possit. Theod:

Graci in prima persona verbis meis non in tertia us nos legitur verbis Jobi verba Jobi referar, cur cum eo ausus es contendere dies,
you will hold me excused if I move againe and againe, yea, even strive for an answer. But the Grammar of the text is against this reading, the words being plainly in the third person, *his matters*, not in the first, *my matters*; and 'tis too great a boldness with the text, to make such a change in the translation. Besides 'tis more agreeable to the scope of the place, to take the latter part of the verse as a reason given by Elishu, why Job should not strive with God, then to take it as a reason given by Job why he did.

I find a learned translator among the Modernes, who taking the latter part of the verse as a reason given by Job of his striving with God spoken of in the first, yet keepes to the third person; why dost thou strive with him? Because he will not give an answer (or an account) of all his matters. As if Elishu had sayd, I plainly perceive the cause why thou (O Job) art so unquiet, and still persistest striving with God, 'tis even because he doth not answer thy so often repeated desire, to summon thy appearance before him, and then to give thee an account of his proceedings with thee. But consider, man? art thou well in thy wits? knowest thou what thou dost, or sayest? wilt thou a poore narrow-hearted creature take it ill at the hands of the great God, and as it were strive with him, because he doth not render a reason of all his matters, and expound all his doings unto thee? The argument may be formed thus.

He is not just or right who striveth with God, because God doth not give him a reason of all his actions and administrations. But thou seemest to strive with God, because he hath not given thee an account or reason of his administrations towards thee; therefore thou art not just.

This is a faire and proper fence; yet I shall keepe to our reading, and make this latter part of the verse, as a ground or reason given by Elishu why Job ought not to strive with God, as those two other readings make it a reason why he did. As if Elishu had say'd, why dost thou strive against him? Consider as God is greater then man, so he is absolute in his greatnesse, or his is a soveraigne Greatnesse.

*For he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

This I conceive the best and clearest rendring of these words, which thus understood yeilds us severall usefull observations:

First, upon the whole matter, thus:

*Gracius*
Gracious men doe not alwayes hold out the same gracious frame
of spirit.

There was a time when Job was far from striving with God, far from doing or speaking any thing which had the least shadow or favour of it. Time was, when Job was altogether for, and in submitting to God; Let God doe what he will with him, he had not a word to say against him. After all the sad reports and messages which were brought to him of the devastation of his whole estate in the field, yea of the disfasterous death of all his children in one day, and at once; did Job strive with God? did he utter one word of complaint, or so much as of any dissatisfaction? No, not one, but gave Glory by this confession; The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the name of the Lord. Was not here a cleare yielding of himselfe up to God, to doe what he would with him? Did he not freely lay himselfe low, when God had layed him at the lowest? who ever heard or read of a more perfect worke of patience in a meere mortall man? Yet in the process of the business, Job did not only speak such words as carried a shadow of striving with God, but were real strivings and uncomely pleadings with him. His heart did not retaine that first sweet submissive frame throughout the affliction, which appeared to admiration at the beginning of it. The state of grace abideth alwayes, 'tis not (as some affirme) loseable; 'tis not, like the best things of this world perishing. But though a state of Grace abideth alwayes, yet every mans grace (if any mans) doth not alwayes abide in the same state. A true frame of grace shall never be destroyed, but the heart of a gracious man doth not alwayes continue in the same frame. The heare of grace may be cooled, the hight of it abated, the strength of it weakned, and the beauty of it faded. He that a while agoe walked and acted very humbly, may upon another temptation act very proudly, and walke as if he were above all his brethren. He that one while hath acted very self-denyingly, may at another time act very self-seekingly. He that hath acted very lovingly, (the very law of love being stamped upon his words and workes,) may at another time act very unlovely and lovelessly, and doe things which are very much beside and below, yea contrary to the fulfilling of that royal Law; He may be so far from bearing his brothers burden;
(which is the fulfilling of that law of Christ, Gal: 6. 2.) that he may be a burden to his brother. And while at one time you might have done and spoken almost what you would to him, and he could bear it, at another time, do what you can, or speake what you can, he is offended. Such changes and varieties are found upon the most gracious frames of spirit, which the best of Saints have in this world: We have only this to hold to, the state of grace is unchangeable, and we are waiting for such a frame of grace as shall never change. That gracious frame in which the hand of God will set us up in the day of our resurrection to glory, shall never change, nor decline a haires breadth to all eternity. We shall be as pure, and as holy, and as spirituall, and as heavenly, and as meeke, and as full of the praise of God for ever, as ever. As full to eternity as in the very first moment in which that glorious frame shall be set up. But in this life to how great a degree of grace soever we attaine, we seldome retaine the same degree, but are flowing and ebbing like the water, waxing and waining like the Moone. Job was found striving with God, who a little before had so humbly submitted and was so fully resigned unto him.

Secondly, Observe.

There is a spirit in man very apt to strive with God.

Doe ye thinke ( faith the Apostle, Jam: 4. 5.) that the Scripture faith in vaine, The spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to enyne, or (as the margin hath it) enviousely surely no; the Scripture doth not speake this in vaine, and if any thinke it doth, their thoughts are vaine. Now, as there are lustings in men to envie against their brethren, because of the gifts and good things of God which they enjoy, so there are lustings in men to discontent against God, because of the evills which themselves suffer. When God seemes to contend with us, we really fall to contending with God. The waters of Meribah will be an everlasting winces of this; of which Moses sayd ( Numb: 20. 13.) This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them. The Apostle doth more then intimate this readiness of man to strive with God, while by a vehement expostulation he checks it, and reproves all men for it. ( 1 Cor: 10. 22.) Doe we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger then he? They presum
sune much upon their strength, who are forward to strive, they especially who provoke and challenge others to strive with them. There is a spirit in man which flouts it with God, even to a provocation of strive with him.

But you will say, When may we be sayd to strive with God? I answer, we doe it these foure wayes.

First, Man striveth with God by disobeying his commands; that's a strive with his holiness. The lawes of God beare the image or flampe of his holiness. All disobedience is an unanswerableness to the Law, wilfull disobedience is a making voyd the Law. He that is resolved to sin, witheth there were no Law to stop him from sinning, or to punish him when he hath sinned. What greater strive can be raied against the Law-giver, then to with him he had given no such Law?

Secondly, Men strive with God, by not believing or distrustting his promises. That's a strive with his faithfullnesse, or with his power. Unbeliefe is one of the worst wayes, if not the worst of all the wayes of striving with God. The reason why that place at the rock in Horeb was called Meribah (Exod: 17. 7.) was because the people did not believe. They thought they must dye with thirst in the wilderness when they saw no water. They fell to this sin againe a second time upon the like occasion, while they abode in Kadesh (Numb: 20. 1, 2, 3.) And as the people strove there with God by their rebellious unbeliefe, so also did Moses and Aaron by their unbeliefe, that God would give water to such rebels, as it follows in the same Chapter (v. 10, 11, 12.) There is no sin so often, or so properly called a provocation as unbeliefe is. Yea by unbeliefe we strive so much with God, that we are sayd to weary him (Isa. 7. 13.) O how doe they weary God, who either thinke him so weake that he cannot, or so unfaithfull that he will not make good his word, or performe his promises! The first of these is alwayes in unbeliefe, the latter often.

Thirdly, We strive with God by not bearing his hand, or by our impatience under the cross which his hand layeth upon us: while we quarrell with the rod, we quarrell with God who charfeneth us with it. This was the most speciall way in which Job strove with God; and the sinfulness of it hath been several times toucht upon in this booke.

Fourthly,
Fourthly, any murmuring word about, yea any discontented thought with our own condition, though not vented by words, though it be kept in, and lye close in the bosome, is a striving with God. And so likewise is any tumultuating thought about his providences towards others, and his rating of affairs in the world.

Now as there is such a sinfull principle in man to strive with God; so considering, as hath been shewed, how many wayes it works (and many more wayes of its working might be shewed, this, I say, being considered) we may be found striving with God before we thinke on it, yea while we oppose the very thought of it. Therefore (as Gamaliel warned the Jews, saying (Acts 5. 39.) Take heed what ye doe, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God; Those Jews did not thinke their opposing the Mefengers and Minifters of Christ, was a fighting against God; But Gamaliel told them plainly it was. So in many other cases, we may do & say that which brings us under the same charge of striving with or against God, though we have no purpofe (as Job had not) to strive with him.

Againe, As this text sheweth us Job striving with God, so it sheweth us Elihu striving with or questioning Job about it. This question or expostulation, why doft thou strive with him? was a chideing severe reproofe of him for doing so.

Hence note.

For man to strive with God is most uncomely:

Doth it suite the condition, or become the state of man to doe so? it doth not become man as a creature to strive with God, much leffe as a new-creature, as a profefled servant of God, as a Saint, as a Chriftian. We never act so unlike either creatures, or new creatures, Saints, and Chriftians, as when we strive with God. 'Tis a shame for a childe to strive with his father, or for a servant to strive with his Mafter, how much more for a creature to strive with his Creator, man with God?

Fourthly, The rebuke which Elihu gave Job, did not only import the uncomeliness of his striving with God, but the sinfulness of it.

Hence note.

To strive with God (in any of those wayes before described) is a sin exceeding sinfull.
How extremely sinnfull it is for man to strive with God, appeares by all the relative duties of man to God: Every servant and son of God, is bound, first, to submit to God; is it not exceeding sinnfull to strive where we ought to submit? Secondly, Every godly man by these relations to God, is bound to be content with (which is more then barely to submit to) all his dealings; Doe not they sin, who in stead of being content, strive with God because he deals so with them? Thirdly, Man ought, not only to be content, but to be well-pleased with what God doth; How farre are they departed from a well-pleasednesse with God, who strive against him, which is an act of high displeasure? It is saide of David (2 Sam. 3. 36.) whatsoever the King did pleased all the people. The people did not say to David their King, doe what you will, we will be pleased with it; But David was so gracious a Prince, so good a King, that he did nothing that was justly displeasing to the people. Tis more then comes to the share of a man, though a King to say, Let him doe what he will, we will be pleased with it, but tis certainly our duty to say to God, Doe what you will, doe your pleasure with us, and to us, we will (through grace) be pleased with it. Is it not very sinnfull to strive with him about any thing he doth, in and with all whole doing: we ought to acquiesce, and be well pleased?

Fifthly, These words, Why dost thou strive with him? import a high presumption in those who doe so.

Hence observe.

Striving with God is a presumptuous sin.

The Prophet saith, (Isa. 45. 9.) Woe unto him that striveth with his maker. Let the potter strive with the potterds of the earth: Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what maketh thou? or thy work he hath no hands? When the Prophet saith, Let the potter strive with the potterds of the earth; his meaning is, let man strive with man, but let not any man presume to strive with his maker; for then the potter strive with the potter.

In all which he doth not encourage man to strive with man, (though his march) but sheweth how insufferable a boldnes it is for any man (how muchlesse for ever among men) to strive with God. The King of JUDAH having sent a challenge to the King of ISRAEL, He returned this answer (2 Kings 14. 9.) The thistle

K k 2
that was in Lebanon sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, &c.

As if he had sayd, What a presumption is it for a thistle to equal it selfe with a Cedar ? and therefore he adviceth. ( v. 10. ) Thou hast indeed smitten Edon; and thy heart hast lifted thee up: glory of this and tarry at home; for why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurts that thou shouldst fall; thou and Judah with thee? As if he had sayd, thou canst get nothing by medling with me but blowes, and most probably, thine owne ruine to boote. Now if an earthly King shall look upon it as a presumption for another King, his equal in dignity to contend with him, how much more may the God of heaven, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, count it an high presumption for any man, though the greatest King on earth, to strive with him ?

Sixthly, We use to say to those who act foolishly, Why do you this ? And therefore when Eliphath to Job, Why dost thou strive against him ?

We learne.

Striving with God is a foolish and a most irrational thing.

Sinners are foole s, all sin is folly, irrationality is stamped upon every sin. Striving with God is a sin so eminently foolish as may carry away the bell, for foolishnesse, from all other sins. I will give you three things, to shew why it must needs be so.

First, We cannot helpe our selves by striving with God. Christ argues the folly of inordinate cares from this ground ( Math. 6. 27. ) Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature ? It is not mans care, but the presence and blessing of God which encreaseth both the stature of man and his estate. Cares may breake our sleepe; yea breake our hearts; but they cannot fill our purses; nor heighten our persons, either in a naturall or in a civill notion. Is it not then a foolish thing to take inordinate care ? is it not greater folly to strive with God ? Seeing as by caring you cannot get any of the good things of the world, so by striving with God, you cannot get off any of those evils which he layeth upon you. Secondly, Is it not a very foolish thing to strive with God, seeing we are so farre from helping our selves out of trouble by it, that we doe but increase our trouble, and the more entangle our selves by it ? What doe we by strugling but straite the bonds of our affliction, and get wearinesse,
He giveth not account of any of his matters.

Observe.

First, The power and dominion of God is absolute.

God is not subject to any reckonings with man whatsoever he doth. He that may doe what he will, and can doe nothing but what is right, neither may nor can be brought to any account for what he hath done. He that is unaccountable is absolute in power.

Further, God needs not give man any account, upon these three grounds. First, He oweth no man any thing; He hath received nothing of us, and if a man hath not received, he needeth not account. They that have any trust from men, are to give account. But what hath God received from man? Man receives all from God. Why then should God give any account?

Secondly, Consider, the Lord hath wronged no man, nor can he. He is infinitely just and righteous in all his ways; He doth only do just things, but things are just because he doth them. Why should he give an account of any of his matters, who neither doth nor can doe any matter which is unrighteously done, and were fully assured of a man (in whose hands we have trusted much.)
much that he were so just, that he would not (though he had opportunity) deceive us of a faithful thing, we would never call him to an account. As it is said of those treasurers in the story of the Kings (2 Kings 12:15.) They reckoned not with the men into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen, for they dealt faithfully. An example hardly to be parallel’d in an age by the sons of men. Many are more desirous of trufts, then careful to discharge them; They love to have much treasure pass through their hands, that some of it may, in passage, slip into their owne pockets and purses. Justice and faithfulnes are rare Jewels among men, and therefore it is but need they should have a check upon them, and be called to an account. But the holy God is altogether just and faithful, therefore to what purpose should he be called to an account. Let us rest quiet in this acknowledgement, That he whose will is the highest reason, can doe nothing without reason. Man was created under God, and then he returns to the order of his creation, when he prefers the judgement of God, even when he doth not understand it, before his owne.

Thirdly, There is no man, no nor Angel, that hath any authority to call God to an account. They that are accountable to others, are under their power, either as being in degree above them, or as having made a compact & covenant with them (though their equals) to give them an account. But who shall call God to an account, who is higher then the highest? And though God hath condiscended to make a covenant with man, and therein given him assurance that he will doe him good, yet God hath engaged himselfe to give us an account how or in what way he makes good or performs his Covenant. Man must give an account to God how he hath performed the Articles of the Covenant, not God to man. As man is a fraile dying creature, so he is an accountable creature (Luke 16:2.) Give an account of thy Stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer Steward (Rom: 14:12.) So then everyone of us shall give an account of himselfe to God. God will call every man to a strict account of his receipts and expenses, what talents of time and opportunities of parts and abilities, of power and Authorities, have been put into his hand, as also how he hath husbanded and improved them. We, alas poor creatures, by thriving with God, call him (upon the matter) to give us an account of his matters; And in the mean time forget the
the account which we must give to him of all our matters. It is
our duty and will be our wisdome to account so with our selves
every day, that we may be ready for our account in that Great
and laft Audit-Day; And as to remember & prepare for our own
account in that day, will keepe us from doing or saying any thing
which may be interpreted a calling of God to an account all our
dayes: so that remembrance will make us strive how to im-
prove and be bettered by the afflictions and troubles wherewith
we are exercised in the world, in stead of striving with God, be-
cause he puts us upon those severer exercises; for how we have
improved our afflictions will be one part (and that a very con-
iderable one) of our account to God in that day.

Lastly, The two parts of this verse connected and considered
(together, (Why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not ac-
count of any of his matters) The latter being a reason of the for-
mer, give us this Observation.

God being absolute in power we ought to sit down quietly under all
his dealings: Or thus, The consideration of Gods absolute
Soveraignty, that he gives not account of any of his matters,
should stop all our strivings and pleadings with or against
God.

Our strivings against God are of two sorts, or in a double re-
spect; They respect either our eternall, or our temporall estate.

First, With respect to our eternall estate (for about that we
are apt to call God to account.) O what strivings are there in the
hearts of men about Gods absolute sovereignty in ejecting of some
and rejecting of others. The Apostle is much upon it (Rom. 9.)
where having represented the Lord speaking thus by Moses (ver. 15.) I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have
compassion on whom I will have compassion: He presently prevents
an Objection, or the strife of man with God about that saying,
(vers. 19.) Thou wilt say then, why dost he yet find fault? (As
if men might find fault with God, if he in that case should find
fault with them?) for who hath resisted his will? This is mans
plea against the soveraigne will of God. But what saith the Lord
by the Apostle to such a pleader? we have his reproof of him
for an answer in the next verse, Nay but O man, who art thou
that replyest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that
formed
formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the Potter power over the clay? The Apostle brings in this Argument as to man's eternal state; he must not strive with God about that. He must not say, why dost thou do this, or this with God? His absolute power is his reason why he diptoleth thus or thus of thee, or any man else. He will give thee no account why it is so, but his own will to have it so. For shame sit downe, stop thy mouth for ever, speak not thus to God. If thou art, as thou canst not deny, a thing formed by God, then say not why hast thou made me thus? And as now thou strivest with God about that which thou canst not understand, so at last (though now thou dost not) thou shalt understand that thou oughtest not to have striven with him about it. And indeed it men have a mind to strive with God, they may find as many occasions for it in the doctrine of his conditionall decrees of foreseene faith, repentance, and persevering obedience, as in his absolute. We shall never want matter of quarrelling with God, till we have learned simplicly, that is, graciously to submit.

Secondly, This truth should much more quiet our spirits, and stop our strivings in reference to our temporal estate. And that,

First, As wrapt up in common with others. Did we consider the soveraigne power of God in ordering the affairs of Nations and Churches, we would glorifie him in a gracious silence however we see things goe with them. The Scripture urgeth us often to this fixedness of mind in the midst of all publick revolutions and changes upon this only account. Heare David(Psal.46.9,10.) Come behold the works of the Lord, (What works? ruining works) what desolation he hath made in the earth. God made strange work in the World at that time, Those countrys which before were as the Garden of God, became like a desolate Wilderness; who was able to beare this with patience? Yet the Spirit of God faith in the next words, it must be patiently borne; when God lets men strive and warre with one another to a common confusion, yet no man may strive with God about it; and the reason given why no man may, is only this (which is indeed all the reason in the world) He is God. So it follows in the Psalme, Be still and know that I am God; As if the Lord had said, not a word, do not strive nor reply, whatever you see, hold your peace; know that I being God I give no account of any of my matters. Thus the Prophet cautious
An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 13.

cautions the whole world (Zech. 2. 13.) Be silent O all flesh before the Lord, (doe not dispute the doings of God, doe not murmur at them) for he is raised up out of his holy habitation. That is, God is going to work (as a man raised out of his bed is) therefore doe not you trouble your selves, nor rise up against him in your words or thoughts what work soever he makes. Like counsell is given (Psal. 75. 5.) Lift not up your horn on high, speak not with a stiffe neck; for promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South: But God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another. All great changes proceed from his judgment; take heed of judging the sentence of the great Judge. Remember, That he whose name alone is Jehovah, is the most high over all the earth. (Psal. 83. 18.)

Againe, This is as true if we respect the private or personal estate of any man. If God makes a man poor in estate or despised in the World; if he make him sick or weak in body, he must not say unquietly, why doth God thus? If he taketh away our Relations, if he empty our families we must not strive with him. When old Ely had received one of the saddest messages that ever was sent man. *It is the Lord (said he) let him doe what seemeth him good* (1 Sam. 3. 18.) So *David* (Psal. 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because they didst it* (Psal. 62. 1.) *Truly my soul waiteth patiently upon God. The word is, my soul is silent before God.* And (Psal. 42. 5.) *How doth David chide his soul for making a noyse? Why art thou disquieted O my soul, hope thou in God.*

But you will say, May we not at all strive? what ever God doth in the World, or with us, must we sit downe under it, or rest satisfied in it, and say nothing?

I answer, First, we may and ought to be very sensible of all the dealings of God. But we must not be unquiet under any of them. It is one thing to seel the smart, and another thing to dispute the rod. Some are under a kind of Stoical stupidity; they doe not strive with God, because they doe not mind what God doth; they are not sensible. Others are fount, flurdy, and proud spirited, they care not for the croffe, they flight and despise rebukes. Thus or upon these grounds not to strive with God is as bad, if not worse then that striving with him which this poynet dissuades and disapproves. We may, yea we ought to take notice of every stroak we receive from God.

Secondly,
Secondly, As we should be sensible of the hand of God at any time upon us, so we may pray for the removing of his hand; 'Tis not a sinful but a gracious act, to strive with God by prayer for deliverance out of trouble.

Thirdly, A man under the Rod may use means to get it off, and free himself from it, even while he is quiet under it. So then, the quietness of mind in our afflicted condition here intended and pressed, is opposed only, first, to fretting and repining. Secondly, to vexing and tumultuating. Thirdly, to distracting cares. Fourthly, to desponding fears. Fifthly, to killing sorrows. Sixthly, to uncomposingness of spirit for our callings. Seventhly, to hard thoughts of God. Eighthly, to the using of any unlawful means to help or rescue our selves out of the hand of evil.

And that we may be preserved from all these strivings against God, and unquietness of spirit under any of his faddest and darkest dispensations, which will certainly run us upon some of, if not all those eight most dangerous rocks, last mentioned, Let me lay down a few considerations, why we should not strive with God in such a manner: And prescribe some preservatives to keep us at the greatest distance from it.

First, Consider, to strive with God dishonours God, and darkens his glory; for hereby we call his wisdom and goodness, yea his truth and faithfulness to us in question. What can be done more dishonourable to God, then this? God resented it as a great dishonour, that Moses and Aaron did not sanctifie him (that is, give glory to his name) before the children of Israel (Num: 20, 12,) and therefore told them, Ye shall not bring the children of Israel into the land which I have given them. As if he had said, Ye have not honoured me as ye ought in this thing, and therefore I will not honour you in that. But what is it, that Moses and Aaron did not sanctifie God in? it was (faith the text) in not believing. And what is that (at best) but a striving with God, as to the truth of his word and his faithfulness in fulfilling it?

Secondly, Such striving with God hinders the exercise of grace, and stops the worke of the new creature. He that striveth with God by way of murmuring, can never strive with God by praying and believing.

Thirdly, Such strivings with God are the exercisings of our lusts and corruptions. Then is the time for anger and discontent,
or any evill affection to come forth and act their part.

Fourthly, Striving with God is an argument that sin hath much strength in us, and that corruption hath got a mighty hand over us.

Fifthly, Striving with God layeth us open to all the temptations of Satan, to all the fiery darts of the Devill. Our shield is gone, when once we strive with God, who is our shield in all Satans strivings and assaults against us; And then we stand naked before that armed enemy.

Sixthly, Striving with God, doth at once unfit us for every good duty, and putteth us further off from every desired mercy.

Seventhly, and lastly, Striving against God, makes man most like the Devill, who is the most unquiet and discontented creature in the world, and is always both striving with God, and vexing at his owne condition. The devill’s sin at first was striving with God, and ’tis the summe of all his actings and workings against man ever since: None resemble the devill more lively then male-contents; and who are they but such as strive and struggle against the afflictive providences of God.

Now for the preserving and keeping of our hearts from this great, this complicated sin, a sin containing many sins in it; and disposing us to all sin. Lay these things to heart.

First, let us consider our own nothingnes in comparison of God. God is all, and what are we? we are nothing, and shall we strive with God? shall folly strive against wisdom, and weakness against strength? When the Prophet would comfort the people of God against the strivings of the nations with them, he doth it upon this consideration (Isa. 40: 17.) All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him lesse then nothing, and vanity; To whom will ye compare him? And surely we may by the same argument, much more deterre all men from striving with God. Shall single persons strive against him, to whom not only they, but whole nations are nothing, yea and lesse then nothing?

Secondly, Doe we find our selves under a crose, or in a hard condition? remember we have deserved no better. As we are nothing, so we have deserved nothing. Jacob to keepe his spirit quiet in a time of great distresse confesstled (Gen. 32: 10.) Lord I am unworthy of the least of thy mercies. As if he had sayd, I have no reason to complaine, or be angry, to fret or vex at this dis-
penetration, yea though thou shouldst let the cloud of my brothers wrath bake upon me, and swallow me up, for what am I? If we consider we have deserved no good, we shall never strive with God about any evil that befalls us; especially, if we consider.

Thirdly, That we are ill-deserving, or such as deserve the greatest evils. None of us suffer but what our own sin hath procured, yea sin might have procure usfarther sufferings. Every sin hath a cross in the belly of it. And shall we strive with God because of our crosses, when our sins have made them?

Fourthly, Why should we strive with God about these things? Are they worth the striving with God about? Surely they are not worth the striving with men about, much less with God. If we were in the best outward estate that ever any man enjoyed in this world, yet we were not then got a step beyond vanity. (Psal: 39. 5.) Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity.

Suppose God should give you a blank, and bid you sit downe and write what you would have as to your outward estate, and then below it upon you, yet in this best estate, you and your all are altogether vanity. And will ye strive with God for taking a vaine thing from you? Will you be so much dissatisfied for the taking away or want of that which could not satisfy you when you had it, nor can when you have it again? If a man had all these comforts which he strives for, they could not make him happy, why then should he strive because they are removed from him? But as they are vanity, because unable to satisfy when we have them, so they are vanity, because of our uncertainty to hold them. Yea suppose we hold them as long as we can have them, it is but a while. And shall we strive with God about loosing that which at longest we cannot keepe long? To be sure these things are not necessary for us: Christ sayd to Martha, There is one thing necessary (Luke 10. 42.) But a worldly comfort of any kind is not the necessary thing which Christ there intends; And shall we strive with God about unnecessaries?

Fifthly, Know, afflictions are the portion of the people of God in this life. They are the corrections of a father, and there is no son but hath his correction, or may have it. And shall we strive with God for sending us our portion, our son-like, child-like portion?

Sixthly, I would say this to believers: Why will ye strive with:
with God about any of your afflications? they are for your good and benefit. And will ye strive with God, because he is doing you good? let your afflications be never so sad, never so sore, and to fence never so bad, yet God is doing you good by them; be not angry with your own good?

Lastly, Why do we strive with God under our affictions? He loveth us as much under affliction, as in a prosperous condition. God is tender to his in their troubles, and shall they be harsh to him, when he is so tender towards them? A parent that hath but nature, will tender his child most when sick and weak, and will not God? Let us take heed we be not found striving with, or having hard thoughts of God while the bowels of his most tender compassions are moving towards us.

To shut up this whole point. As Christ when he saw his Disciples in danger to be carried away with the fear of man, saith to them (Luke 12. 4, 5.) Be not afraid of them that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can doe; But I will forewarn you, whom ye shall feare; feare him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea I say unto you, feare him. Now, as because men are apt to feare, yea mostly to feare that which they should not, Christ sheweth them whom to feare. So (as hath been shewed) because men are very apt to strive, but they commonly strive with those, and about those things, which they should not. Therefore I will tell you with whom and with what ye should strive. If ye will needs be striving, pray

First, Strive with the sin in your owne bosomes, strive with your owne lufts and corruptions. One of the great Gospel duties which we are called to, is to mortifie our earthly members. To strive with all inordinate affections, with pride, with envie, with love of the world, and with uncharitableness to the death, is our duty, if ye will needs strive, strive with these.

Secondly, If you will needs be striving, then strive with the sins of others in a gracious and zealous manner, as Nehemiah did, who contended with the Nobles for their prophanation of the Sabbath, and their unlawfull marriages (Neh: 13. 17. & 25.) we should strive with one another to hinder that which is evil. Gideon broke downe Baals altar, he strove with Baal, and was therefore firnamed Jerubbaal (Judg: 6. 32.) So let us strive with the corrupt practices, courtes, and customes of the times, we live in,
in, not dilly and comply with them as many doe. The Apostle faith (Heb: 12. 4.) Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. That is, either the sin of others, or the sin which others would force you to. Though we should strive against our owne sins especially, yer 'ris good to strive against sin in whomsoever we see it.

Thirdly, If you will be striving, then strive with Satan, The Adversary; Submit to God, and resist the Devil, containe the whole duty of man. (James 4. 7.) Our business is not to strive with God, but to submit to him; And our business is not to submit to the Devil, but to strive with him. How doe most run a contrary course? They resist God, and submit to the Devil. O sad! Here's a threefold blessed strive; First, Strive with the lusts and corruptions of your owne hearts; Secondly, Strive with the sins of others, and their solicitations of you to sin; Thirdly, Strive with the Devil and his temptations. Doe not strive with God, why should we strive with God at any time, or in any thing, whom at all times, and in all things, we ought to serve, honour and obey? So much of this chiding question, in which Elish reproves Job, and he had given but too much occasion for it. why dost thou strive with him, he giveth not account of any of his matters.

For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

In this verse and the context following, Elihu begins his second answer to Job, which is also continued to the end of the Chapter. His answer is laid downe.

First, In generall at the 14th verse.

Secondly, In particulars by way of instance, from the 15th verse to the 29th.

Thirdly, He summes up or recapitulates the whole of his discourse, in the 29th and 30th verses.

Fourthly, Concludes, seriously inviting Job to answer what he had sayd, as also, what he had yet to say, vers. 31, 32, 33.

This 14th verse hath some difficulty in it; And though the crosse and various thoughts of Interpreters about it have made it more difficult, yet there is one thing wherein all Center and agree; That, Elihu in this 14th verse and so forward propounds certaine ways by which God is pleased to reveale and manifest himselfe unto man. First, to humble and bring man to a true fence of himselfe; Secondly, to worke in him an acknowledgement of his great goodness and righteousnesse in all his dealings with the children of men. For having sayd at the 13th verse, God gives not account of any of his matters; He is above all reckonings and dayes of Audir (having thus, I say, asserted the absolute sovereignty of God over man) he adds, to niggitate and allay the seeming severite of this assertion, That although God be so high and great, that he is not at all obliged to give any account of himselfe or of his ways to the creature, nor will allow any man to be so bold as to strive with him about, or question any of his matters, yet he is pleased freely and graciously to condescend unto man many ways; and not only once but often; not only often in one way, but by severall ways to give him cleare intimations what his will is, what he requires of him, and calls unto him for, if man had but will and understanding to perceive it: for he speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not. So then, man hath no reason to complaine (as Job sometimes had done, and many others.

Deo nemini rationem red. -
dere tenetur. Tanto tamen-
amore nos comp-
pletitutur ut se-
psum judicioru-
orum rationes
aperire digne-
tur, et si non
sempor obser-
vamus. Lavat.
others in like distresses doe) that he is in the darke, and doth not perceive the minde of God towards him, why he is so afflicted, and why God contendeth with him; for God doth give touches, hints, and admonitions, sometimes more privately, sometimes more openly, and if man doth not perceive them, it is his owne fault.

Ver. 14. For he speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

We render the first word of this verse by that causall particle, For; yet because the text doth not strictly carry a reason in it of what was sayd before, but is rather an explication or an accommodation of it; therefore some begin the verse, not with that causall particle For, but with an adverb of time, When. So Mr Broughton, When the omnipotent speaketh once, &c. And the reason of it is, because we find another adverb of time answering this at the 16th verse, When God speaketh once or twice, and man perceiveth it not, &c. then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. As if Eliphaz had sayd; If speaking will not doe it, somewhat else shal; or when God having spoken once or twice; yet findes man unattentive and unsensible, he takes another course; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth up their instruction. If they understand not his meaning by dreams and visions, he will awaken them to purpose. We say,

For God speaketh.

As if here a reason were given why God should not be called at all (as being so great he ought not) to give man an account of any of his matters, for he speaketh once or twice, he is aforehand with man.

For God speaketh.

To speake, in strict sense, as speaking is the forming up of words by an articulate voyce, is proper to man; yet in Scripture God is sayd to speake, when or howsoever he maketh knowne his mind to man. Which he alwayes doth in such a way, as is most suitable to his owne greatness, with respect to mans weaknesse. When God giveth us any intimation of his owne will, and of our duty, of what he will doe for us, or of what he would have us doe, 

then
then he is sayd to speake to us. (Heb. 1. 1.) God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spok en to us by his Son. God spake to the old fathers, as at many times, or by many parts, so in divers ways and manners; he delivered his mind unto the people usually by the Prophets, and to the Prophets in dreames and visions. The speaking of God was either immediate from himselfe in those dreames and visions to the Prophets, or mediate by the Prophets. And though now God doth not speake to us immediately as he did to the Prophets before Christ came in the flesh, and to the Apostles after he was come in the flesh, yet All the Propheticall and Apostolicall writings are the speakings of God to us, besides what he dayly speaketh to us (answerable to what is written) both inwardly by the workings of his Spirit, and outwardly by the workes of his providence. For he speaketh once, &c.

Hence note. In what way soever God reveales his minde unto man, he speakes unto him.

Every manifestation of the will of God to us is a Sermon; what man speaketh to us according to the word of God, is). to be received as the word of God. For as God speaketh to us, though not formally, yet expressely in the holy Scriptures, which are his word, so he speaketh to us vertually, though not expressely by his works. And that, First, by his works of creation; by them God is continually opening and manifesting himselfe to man in his wisdom, power, and goodness. He speaketh to us. Secondly, by his works of providence, whether first they be works of mercy (every mercy hath a voyce in it, every blessing a speech) or secondly, whether they be works of judgement (Micah 6. 9.) The Lords voyce cryeth unto the Citie; and the man of wisdome shall see thy name; heare ye the rod, and who hath appointed it. Sickneffes and troubles, the croffes and troubles that we meet with in the world, cry aloud to us, especially when they make us (as they often doe) cry aloud. As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy worke, day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth knowledge (Psal. 19. 1, 2.) so those things that are done and acted night and day, utter the
mind and speak out the heart of God unto man.

For God speaketh once, yea twice.

The Hebrew is, in once, that is, for one Turne or Time, or by one meanes or way. The word once, hath a threefold signification in Scripture, all which are applicable to the text in hand.

First, Once, is as much as surely, certainly, verily, irrevocably. Thus (Psal: 89. 35.) Once have I sworn by my holinesse, that I will not lie unto David; That is, I have surely sworn, certainly sworn, irrevocably sworn, my word, yea, my oath is out, and it is immutable; That which God (in this sense) once faith, it is always sayd, or 'tis sayd for ever; how much more that which he swareth? Thus the Apostle argueth (Heb: 6. 17, 18.) God willing more abundantly (or more then needed as to him and the truth of the thing in it self) to shew unto the heires of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lye (namely, his promise and his oath) we might have strong consolation, &c. In like manner we may expound that once, which we finde (Heb: 9. 27.)

And as it is appointed unto men once to die (or to dye once) and after that cometh the judgement. Some referre, once, to dye, as if the meaning were, it is appointed unto men to dye once, that is, men must expect to dye a naturall death, which happens but once, and once (at leaft equivalently) will and must happen to all men. Others referre the once to appointed in the sense of this present exposition; It is appointed once; that is, God hath certainly and firmly appointed established and decreed this thing, he hath ratified it in heaven, that men must dye; This nature is irrevocable; The thing is appointed, and there is no reversing or revoking of that appointment. This is a good sense, and surable enough to the scope of Eliphu; God speaketh once, that is, what he speaketh is a sure and certain word, an infallible word; the word settled for ever in heaven (Psal: 119. 89.) his promise is not only sure but most sure. As the Apostle speaks (2 Pet: 1. 18, 19.) And this reason which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount. We have also a more sure (the Comparative imports the Superlative, a most sure) word of prophecy, whereunto ye doe well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a darke place, untill the day dawne and the day-starre arise in your hearts.
hearts. As the whole propheticall, so the whole historickall and doctrinall word of God is most sure, being once spoken it is spoken for ever, And written as with a pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond, and that upon a rocke which cannot be removed. That which was vaine-gloriously, and beyond the line of man, sayd of the Law of the Medes and Persians, (Dan: 6. 8.) is only true of the word of God, it altereth not.

Secondly, This once speaking, notes the speaking of a thing so sufficiently or fully, that there is enough sayd at once, and no more needs be sayd. The vulgar translation takes up this sense, God hath spoken once (that is, he hath spoken fully or sufficiently for mans instruction and admonition at once, and therefore he translates the latter part of the verse, thus; And he doth not reape it the second time. That which is done at once sufficiently, needs not be done a second time; This is a truth; There is a sufficiency and a fullness in the word of God once spoken, there needs nothing to be added; or as others expound this translation. When once God speaks, that is, resolves and determines a thing, he doth not (as man who often repents of what he hath purpos'd) bring it into a second consideration, for he cannot err, and therefore he needs decree but once. But though this be a truth, yet I doe not conceive it to be the meaning of this place, because it doth not well agree with what goes before, and lesse with that which followeth at the 29th verse; Loe all these things worketh God oftestimes, or (as our Margin hath it) twice and thrice with man. And therefore here Elihu rather intimates the variety of those ways by which God reveals himselfe to man, then the sufficiency of any one of them. For though we grant any one of them sufficient, yet God out of his abundant goodnesse is pleased to reveal himselfe more ways then one, and more times then once.

Thirdly, This once, may be taken exclusively; so in Scripture, once is once and no more, once and not againe; or as we say, once for all, and so it is opposed to the repeating and acting over of the same thing. Thus Abisha sayd to David (1 Sam: 26. 8.) God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day, now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time. Once limiting is there opposed to smiting more then once; As if he had sayd, I
will pay him home, or dispatch him at once; there will be no need to fetch another blow. Thus when the Apostle had said in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chap. 9. 27.) It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgement, presently he adds, So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; there also once is opposed to twice, or a second time, excluding all repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. As 'tis said (Heb. 10. 10.) By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And therefore the same Apostle in the same Chapter (v. 26.) terrifieth Apostates with this dreadful doome; If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; that is, neither will Christ give up himselfe to be a sacrifice againe for such as have (after light received about it, and some seeming closings with it) cast off that his sacrifice, nor can any other sacrifice be given. In this sense also sometimes God speaks, once, He speaks once and will speake no more, once and not a second time; though we have a twice here in the text, yet, I say, in some cases and unto some persons, God speaketh once and will not speak again. Whence take this observation or Admonition rather.

It is dangerous refusing the first call, the first Word of God. Possibly, you may never heare more of him or from him, once may be all.

God may speak in thy case, not only once, that is firmly and certainly, not only once that is sufficiently, but once (that is exclusively, once) and no more for ever. That moving caution of the Apostle is grounded upon such a sad possibility as this (Heb. 3. 7.) Wherefore as the holy Ghost faith, to day if ye will heare his voice, harden not your hearts; and again (ver. 13.) Exhort one another daily, while it is called, to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. As if it had been taid; heare to day, hear this hour of the day, for you know not, first, whether there will be a morrow or another day for you; secondly, if you have a morrow, yet you know not whether you shall have a word to morrow; both time and season, dayes and opportunities are in the hand of God; and he that neglects the season of one day, hath no assurance of another day, much leffe of a season with the day. Who knows whether the cock shall crow twice or no? possibly the cock
cock may crow but once; in what a condition had Peter been if it had been so with him, for after he had (as Christ notwithstanding all his confidence to the contrary, told him (Mark 14. 30.) denied his Master thrice, he never called to mind the words of Christ, nor had any thought of humbling himself for what he had done, till (as 'tis said, ver. 72.) The second time the Cock crowed, Every one hath not a promise (as Peter equivalently had) that the cock shall crow twice, or that God will afford him means a second time to awaken him out of his sin. That which the Lord spake of affliction, to shew the fullness of it, may also be fulfilled concerning his warnings and admonitions (Nahum 1. 9.) I will make an utter end, affliction shall not rise up the second time: We should hear at first speaking, let it should prove that when the Lord hath spoken once, he should make an utter end, and say, instruction and admonition shall not rise up a second time. And to be sure, as Abraham after he had interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah several times, said at last (Gen. 18. 32.) O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once. So the Lord when he hath spoken oft to sinners and is not heard growes so angry, that he comes at last and faith, I will speak yet but this once. God will at last come to his, but once more to all men; and with some he is at his once at first and no more for ever. There is a time when every man shall hear his last word, and God will speak but that once; and somtimes it is but once in all that God will speak. Therefore take heed, it is dangerous dèferrings if God speaks once, if he call & knock once, it is our sin & folly too, that we doe not hearken to, and open at his first call and knock, though the Lord doth (I grant) usually and mostly exercise much patience towards sinners, calling and knocking once and again, as it followeth in the text, He speaketh once.

These twice, or a second time.

Several of the Jewish writers interpret this twice of the two sorts or ways of divine revelation which are spoken of in the following parts of this context; God speaks to man by visions and dreams; and God speaks to man by diseases and sicknesses, as we shall see afterward. But I rather take it more generally, or only as to the divers manner and distinct ways of his speaking, but as to the divers times, or reiteration of his speaking; he speaketh once.
once, yea twice: As he speaks severall waises, so severall times, twice or thrice, possibly, in the same way; twice by visions, twice by dreams, twice by sicknesses, and often by his Ministers; He speaks eth once,

Yea twice.

I shall consider this twice three waises, and give a brief note from each.

First, consider twice as to number; twice strictly taken is more than once. One is no number, but two is.

Hence note.

God is so gracious that he speaks once and again, once and a second time to sinners.

Who is there among us that hath not had experience of Gods speaking to him more then once? And that not only with respect to the various waises of speaking, but with respect to various times of speaking. He speaks more then once by his word, more then once by his works, whether of judgment, or of mercy. Some sinners are consumed in a moment or at once, (as it is said of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram with their confederates (Numb. 16, 21) others dye of a lingering consumption. God waiteth to be gracious, and therefore he rarely speaketh his all or striketh his all at once. He gives precept upon precept, line upon line, he sends sorrow upon sorrow, croose upon croose, that sinners may at last remember themselves, returne and live.

Secondly, As twice notes a number, so it may be considered as a small number, yea as the smallest number; twice or two is the first number, the first step into number. They that doe a thing more then once cannot do i t lesse then twice, nor can that number which is more then one be lesse then two. When the woman in the book of Kings told the Prophet (1 Kings 17, 12) I am going to gather two sticks. Her meaning was, a very few sticks, only enow to make a little fire to bake a Cake with. And when the Spirit of God would shew how few, comparatively to the rout of the World, they are and will be that bear witness to the truths of Jesus Christ, he calleth them two Witneses (Rev. 11, 3) they are a number, yet express by the left number, that we should not have our eyes upon the multitude, or think, that is not the truth
truth which is not followed by great numbers, or the most of the World. The traine of Christ is not large, nor are his wayes throng'd, few there be that find them. As they whom he calls forth to be eminently his witnesses are not many, therefore called two; so they that receive their witnesse are not many; The world wonders after the beaft. Thus as two or twice imply a small number; so in Scripture language, that which is done more then twice is supposed done often or many times (2 Kings 6. 10.) When the Prophet had told the King of Israel where the forces of the King of Assyria would come, and by that means defeated him of his purpose; it is said, And the King of Israel sent unto the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once, nor twice; that is, many times, which made the King of Syria wonder how it came to passe that he was so often defeated; he thought he had laid his plots so wisely and closely that the King of Israel could not escape, but he saved himself not once, nor twice; more then twice is many; but bare twice is the narrowest compass of number imaginable.

Hence note.

God hath not given us any ground to presume upon frequent warnings or speakings.

Though he speake more then once, yet it may be but twice, possibly but twice precisely, probably but twice restrainedly taken. The Lord would not have us build upon the hope of future speakings, to the neglect of what is presently spoken. Though God be very patient and long-suffering to sinfull men, yet he hath not given any man, the lealt occasion, no not by a promise of speaking a second day, to continue one day much lefse to continue long in sin. When God spake (as I may say) at the largest rate of his patience to sinners, he sayd (Gen. 6. 3.) My spirit shall not alwayes strive with man; not alwayes; that is, though it strive long, yet it shall not strive very long; and that he may know it, I will give him a day, yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty yeaeres. This was somewhat a long day indeed; But remember this hundred and twenty yeaeres, was all the time that was granted to all the men of that world, there was not so much granted to every particular man of that world, possibly the Spirit of God did not strive a day longer with many a one among them. Therefore take heed.
heed of presuming. When the Lord speaketh once, do not say, I will stay till he speakes a second time, and if he confondscend to speake twice, doe not believe that he will always speake.

Thirdly, Twice, may be considered as a small certaine number, put for a small uncertaine number. 'Tis frequent in Scripture, to put a certaine number of any kinde, for an uncertaine; Sometimes a certaine great number, for an uncertaine great number; and sometimes a small certaine number, for a small uncertaine number. As twice is not to be tyed up stricly to the small-leaf number; so not to any number whether small or great.

Hence note.

No man knows how oft he shall be warned or spoken unto by God.

God doth not put an absolute stint upon any of his actions. Beware of neglecting the least twice, the first twice, which is the lowest twice; for though we cannot binde God up stricly to twice, it may prove three times or four times, yet whether it shall be so many, or how many it shall be, no man nor Angel knoweth. Twice cannot be very often, and 'tis uncertaine how often. Therefore if you hearken not when God hath spoken once (take it stricly) doe not stop your eares at the second speaking. It is said, Moses smote the rock twice (that was twice beyond his Commission, for he should not have smitten it at all) and the water came out abundantly. How many rocks, that is, hard hearts, hath God smitten by his word and his workes twice, and yet we see not the waters of Godly sorrow flowing out; the rocks are smitten more then twice with the rod of God, with the rod of his mouth in the ministery of his word, they are smitten with admonition upon admonition, with reproofoe upon reproofoe, with threatening upon threatening, and yet the waters came not out abundantly, yea scarce at all. May not they feare that they shall have penall sorrow upon sorrow (Paul tooke notice of the goodnesse of God to him, that he did not let him have afflictive sorrow upon sorrow (Phil. 2. 27.) but, I say, may not they feare they shall have penall sorrow upon sorrow) that is, everlasting floods of sorrow, who after the Lords speaking upon speaking, and reproving upon reproving, give no proofe of their godly penentiall sorrow? O how angry was the Lord with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared to

so him twice (1 Kings 11. 9.) God appeared to him in Gibeon (1 Kings 3. 5.) when he was first made King, putting him to his choice, or giving him a blanke to ask what he would, and he chose well, he chose wisdome and had it. God appeared to him a second time after the building and dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 9. 2.) And said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me, &c. Thus the Lord appeared solemnly unto Solomon twice, and but twice for any thing that appears upon record in that solemne manner. Now when notwithstanding these two appearances of the Lord to Solomon, the heart of Solomon was turned away from the Lord God of Israel, his anger was kindled against Solomon, and the Lord smote him once, yea twice, renting his kingdom, and pulling away the tribes at once, from his son and successor. O doe not refuse God's speaking to you twice, or the renewed speaking of God; to doe so is very sinfull, and therefore very dangerous. For as 'tis a signe of a holy heart, of a gracious frame of spirit, to heare twice at once speaking; as David professed he did (Psal. 62. 11.) God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God: also unto thee O Lord belongeth mercy. There are several renderings and interpretations of those words; But that which to me seemes most intended by our rendring is, I heard what was once spoken twice at once, that is, I heard it speedily, and I heard it believingly; as soon as ever the word came to me I received it, and I received it not only with my eare, but with my heart. That's a blessed way of hearing, and they who heare so, at first speaking, may well be sayd to heare that twice which God speaketh once. But how sad is it that God shoulde speake twice, thrice, yea foure times, and yet not be heard so much as once! When Job was brought upon his knees (Chap. 40. 5.) he said, Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice but I will proceed no further. Job began to be sensible of that which Elihu was working him to, that he had been too forward, yea too forward with God; Job began to fee his error, and recanted it; I have spoken once, yea twice, but I will proceed no further. 'Tis good, that after once or twice sinning or failing, we yet say we will proceed no further. O how deplorable is mans condition, when the Lord shall say, I have spoken once, yea twice, but now I will proceed no further, I will speake no more! And this usually comes to passe, N n when

when men are dull and slow of heart to understand what he speaketh, which as natural men always, do godly men often are, as it followeth in this text; *He speaketh once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not.

That is, apprehendeth it not sometimes that God is speaking to him, and he seldomly understandeth what God is speaking to him.

There is a little variety in the exposition of this latter clause of the verse; The word *man* not being expressly in the Hebrew (and therefore we finde it put by our translators in a distinct character) the text runs only thus; *God speaketh once, yea twice, he perceiveth it not.* This hath occasion'd the vulgar latine interpreter to referre this last clause of the verse to God also; giving out the sense thus; *God speaketh once, and a second time he doth not repeat it.* As if here were a warning given, that all should attend the very first motion of God's voice to them; *For he speaketh once, and doth not repeat the same.* But I shall not stay upon that, because I see not how the Hebrew word by us rendered to perceive, can with any tolerable significance be rendered to repeat: yet, there is a second rendering of the text in the same sense, giving a genuine sense of that word, which is very profitable and proper enough to the scope of the place, *God speaketh once, and he doth not consider upon it a second time;* That is, when God speaks or decrees to give forth any thing, he doth not take it into consideration againe or review and bring it about upon second thoughts, as men often doe; yea it is their duty (though it be a duty arising from their frailty) so to doe. Men ought to consider often and review their owne words as well as their works. But (faith Eliph. according to this reading) *God speaks once, and doth not consider of it again;* for he hath the measure and compass of all things so fully in himselfe, that he needs not turne backe his thoughts upon any of his determinations, as if there could be a mistake, or any error in them. This is a very glorious truth, highley advancing the name of God above every name among the best of the children of men. And it ariseth clearely from the text, leaving out the supplement which we make of the word *man.* Yet according to the opinion of the most and best expostiers, yea according to the clearest scope and tendency of the text, that word.
word man is rather to be supplyed, God speaketh once, yea twice, And man perceiveth it not. 

Tis common in Scripture to leave such words unexpressed, as must necessarily be understood. And therefore I shall only insist upon our owne translation.

Yet before I proceed to that, I shall touch upon another reading of these words, as referring unto man, which doth not so much carry a reproofe of mans dullnesse, as a commendation of Gods goodnesse, thus; God speakes once, yea twice, if man perceiveth it not. As if he had sayd, If man be so weake and darke, so dull and slow of apprehension, as not to perceive Gods minde at his first speaking, yet God is usually fo gracious and condescending as to speak twice, or a second time, even to that man. This reading doth exceedingly exalt and set forth the goodnesse and graciousnesse of God; and we have frequent experience of it, that when God speaks once, and findes creatures dull of hearing, he speaks a second time.

Our reading gives in these words as a charge of mans darknesse and slownesse to apprehend the meaning of God speaking to us either in his word or works. God speaks once, yea twice, Yet man perceiveth it not.

The Hebrew is, man seeth it not. There is an eye in the understanding, the mind of man beholdeth the fence of words, even as his bodily eye beholdeth the colours, and dimensions of any materiall object: Yet the eye of mans mind is so bleared and dim-sighted that though God speak once, yea twice, he seeth, he perceiveth it not. That is, he doth not clearly perceive it. Elihu utitur species makes use of this word six times, Job thrice, Zophar once, in all which places, they intend an exact observation and through speculation of the matter which they treat upon, either in the affirmative or in the negative; here as a rebuke to man Elihu makes use of it in the negative, man perceiveth it not.

Hence note, Man of himself cannot perceive the mind of God in spirituall speakings, or God speaking about spirituall things.

The propheticall Sermons are called visions; The vision of Isaias.
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 14

iah the son of Amos, which he saw (IIa. 1. 1.) yet when they preached them to the people, many of them saw nothing; their visions were to the people as parables or dark sayings. Man in general falls under a twofold consideration; first, as unconverted or carnall; and in that state he perceiveth not at all when God speaks once and twice, yea thrice, he perceiveth nothing. And that proceeds from a double ground.

First, from the naturall pravity of his heart, and the blindness of his mind. Of such the Apostle saith (Eph. 4. 18.) They have their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. And hence he concludes (1 Cor. 2. 14.) The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned; spiritual objects must have a spiritual eye to see them.

Secondly, this comes to pass sometimes from the judgment of God upon carnall men; who as in mercy he causeth the blind to see, so in wrath he stricketh those that have no mind to see with greater blindness, and punisheth their former rebellion and obstinacy against the word received with an impotency to perceive it. Yea God doth not only leave such in the blindness of their mind and dullness of their understanding, but gives them up to it. The Prophet Isaiah was a Gospel Preacher, he held out the light clearly, yet his hearers were under such a doome, that the very light which he held out blinded them; so that the more he spake the less they perceived (Isa. 6. 10.) And he said, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed. This is a dreadfull Scripture; The Lord is highly provoked indeed, when he judicially shutts up the eyes of men, and hardens their hearts against his own messagges, not that he influfeth any hardness or instilleth any ignorance into them, but gives them up to that ignorance hardnese and darknesse which already posseffeth them. And then though God speak once or twice, or a hundred times, they perceive it not: They that harden their hearts, shall have them hardened by that which is the ordinary meanes.
means to soften and melt them; and they that shut their eyes against any truth, are in danger of having them shut against all truth, even by that means which usually openeth eyes. Thus we see that this first sort of men, mere carnall men, cannot see or perceive when God speaketh, and why it is so.

Secondly, (which I conceive rather to be the meaning of Elihu here) Man may be considered in his spiritual state. That is, as converted and renewed in spirit, by the mighty working of the Spirit. Now to men in this estate God speaketh once, yea twice, and they perceive it not. They that are spiritual do not always perceive spiritual things. For

First, they have much corruption in them. Though they are renewed, yet they are renewed but in part; we see in part and but darkly, yea sometimes Saints can hardly see at all, especially as to some dispensations and manifestations of God! he may speak once, yea twice and thrice to them in such a thing, or to such a purpose, and they take little or no notice of it. He may point unto them by such providences, and by such Sermons, and yet they look upon themselves as un-concerned, not making any home-application of what they outwardly hear or see, yea feel and smart under; and all this by reason of some prevailing corruption.

Secondly, this may proceed from their negligence and slothfulness; good men are not always careful as they should, much less critical and wisely curious to observe every providence of God, and to consider why or for what end such or such a word is sent to them. As carnall men thrust the word from them, so godly men faile much at all times, and at some times wholly neglect to lay the word to heart. They do not compare themselves, that is, their lives and consciences, their thoughts and ways with the word, and then no wonder if they perceive not what is spoken to them. Even a Job may be hindered by his own indulgence from perceiving what God faith unto him. The Prophet complained of the people of God for not striving to take hold of him. (Isa. 64: 7) There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold on thee. And may we not complain that few stirre up themselves either to take hold of the word of God, or that the word may take hold of them? Paul exhorted Timothy (2 Tim. 1: 6) to stir up the Gift of God that was in him. They that have received both gifts and grace may be much wanting to themselves in
in stirring them up. Though we deny man's natural power, yet persons converted have a spiritual power, which they often neglect to stir up. When the servants of Benhadad (1 Kings 20, 32, 33.) came to Ahab upon that message to beg his life, it is said, The men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him that they might take hold of, and urge it in favour of their Master; and as soon as Ahab had dropt that word, he is my Brother, as soon as they had that word, they did hastily catch it and applied it for their present purpose. So they that are godly should observe what is spoken unto them, what corruption is smitten by the word or by the rod of God, and as soon as ever such a word is spoken, they should take it up and apply it to themselves.

Thirdly, those many lusts that are in the heart of a godly man, not yet fully mortified, as secret pride, self-love, and unbelief, these hinder him from understanding the mind of God. And therefore we are counselled by the Apostle James (1 Pet. 2, 1.) to lay aside (that is, to get subdued and mortified) all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and (so) receive with meekness the engraven word which is able to save our souls. As if he had said, we can neither perceive nor receive the word savingly, unless our lusts are cast out and cast off. How much any man neglects this duty of mortifying his lusts, by so much is he rendered both unable to perceive the word, and unfit to profit by it.

Lastly, Mr. Broughton renders the words thus, God speaks once, yeatswise, and man will not mark it. We say, man perceiveth it not; he faith, man will not mark it. As our reading shews the weaknesses and imperfections, or the negligence and slothfulness of man, when he doth not perceive what God speaketh; so his conceiveth the obstinacy of man. The will of man is as perverse, as his understanding is blind. Man hath not only a wound or a weakness in his will unto that which is good, but he hath a rebellion in his will against that which is good, and that not by some occasional disturbance of passion, but he is naturally set and resolved against that which is good. Man will not mark what God speaketh in his word and works. Christ upbraids the Jews (Job. 5, 40.) Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life; he chargeth the fault upon their wills. 'Tis certaine man hath a will not to come to Christ for life; yet that is a forced and farre fetcht inference which some make from it, that man hath therefore power and will
will to come. Sure enough man hath a will not to come, he hath not only an inability, but an enmity and an opposition in his will against Christ; he will not come to Christ that he may be saved, but would take up his salvation somewhere else; he would be his own Saviour, or let any one save him, rather then be saved by Christ; all things considered, especially this, that he must deny himself, and neither be found trusting to his own righteousness, nor acting any unrighteousness, if he desires to be saved by Christ. And as there is a resistance in the will of man against the true dispensation of Gospel grace; so against any other dispensation whereby God speaketh to him. The unchanged will of man riseth up against the will of God manifested in his works, as much as against his will manifested in his word (Isa. 26. 11.) Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see. If his hand be lifted up in publick judgments they will not see it, if in family or personal judgments and afflictions they will not see it, but shut their eyes and hoodwink their own understandings. Yea, they are oftentimes so wilfully, or rather so madly blind, that they had rather say it is the hand of blind Fortune, then the hand of the Allmighty and All-seeing God. Now who is so blind as they that will not see? Till this rebellion against the holy will of God with which the will of man is filled be cast out and subdued, let him speake once, yea twice, let him speake by word or works, by promises or by threatnings, by good or evil, yet man will not mark it. Thus much in general of God's revealing himself to man; In the next words we have the distinct wayes set downe by and in which he revealeth himself: In dreame &c.
JOB. Chap. 33. Ver. 15, 16, 17, 18.

In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed: Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.
That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.
He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

Eliphaz having said in the former verse, that, God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not; proceeds to give instance of those severall ways by which God speaketh to man.
His first instance is given (v. 15.) where he brings in God speaking to man in dreams and visions. And as he shews us God speaking in dreams and visions, so he sets downe his saymes or ends in doing so, and they are three-fold.

First, God aimeth at mans instruction (v. 16.) Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.
The second aim of God in such dispensations, is repentance and humiliation (v. 17.) That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.
The third and last end here express why God speaks by dreams and visions, is man's salvation (v. 18.) He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. These are the parts and specialties considerable in this context.

Ver. 15. In a dream, in a vision of the night, &c.

The roote of the word representeth a dreame, signifieth that which is thick, grosse or fat, and by a metaphor a dreame, because dreams are naturally caused by gross and thick vapours, arising from the stomack & fuming up into the head. Sleep is caused immediately by vapours and dreams are our work in sleep. A dream is an Imagination which the minde frames and formes, or which is formed and framed in the minde while we sleepe; or, A dream is the worke of the soule, while the body is asleep. Sleepe is the binding up
up of the outward fences, hearing, seeing, feeling, &c. yet then the inward fences, phantastie and memory are at liberty and free to worke. The phantastie is very quick and nimble, when the body lieth as a logge and stirres not. The phantastie (as we say) builds Castles in the ayre, and makes strange Chimera’s in the braine by day, much more by night. In Dreams, there is an image of things or persons represented to us. When Pharoah dreamed, he saw seven lean kine, and seven thin ears, as also seven fat kine and seven full ears of corn. Jacob saw a ladder in his dreame reaching up to heaven, and the Angels of God ascending and descending. Joseph saw his brethren throw their sheaves doing obeyeance to his sheafe, he saw also the Sun and Moone and eleven Starrs, doing obeyeance to him. Nebuchadnezzar dreaming saw an Image with the head of gold, with shoulers and breast of siluer, with belly and thighs of brass, and legs of Iron, &c. These dreamers had images as clearely represented to their mindes, as any thing can be to the most waking and wakefull eye of the body. And though in many dreams there are no such formall similitudes presented to the mind, but only a voyce heard speaking, yet nothing can be declared to us in a dreame without forming in our mind some kind of likenesse. When it is said that God came to Abimelech (Gen: 20. and to Laban Gen: 31.) and an Angel of the Lord to Joseph (Matt: 1.) speaking to them in dreames, they had such things exhibited to and impressed upon them, as gave the former two assurance that God spake to them, and the third that he was spoken to by an Angel of God.

Further, We may disinguish of dreames; First, some are meere natu ral dreames; and they arise foure wayes; First, from the temperature of the body, Melancholly and flegmaticke persons, have their speciall dreames, and so have men of a sanguine and of a cholericke complection. The first encline to dreame of sad, the second of fottish, the third of pleasant things, and the last of wrathfull wranglings and contendings. Secondly, Natural dreames are caused by the diet or food which we eate, speciall meate inclining to speciall thoughts and imaginations. Thirdly, Meere natural dreames flow from the business or speciall worke wherein we have been engaged in the day; as Solomon speakes (Eccles: 5. 3.) a dreame cometh thorow the multitude of business; that is, a man dreams at night of what he hath been do-
ing in the day. Fourthly, Naturall dreams arise from vehement
affections to or desires of what we want, and would have. Thus
(Isa: 29. 7.) The hungry man dreams he eats, and the thirsty
man dreams he drinks; For being pincht with hunger, and
parcht with thirst, his appetite is not only strong, but fierce and
violent after meat and drinke. These and such like are naturall
dreams, I call them so because the rite or reason of them is
seated in nature, and they are such as have no other cause but
what is common and naturall to man. Nature let alone or left un-
der such outward accidents will produce such dreames.

Secondly, There are diabolicall dreams; the devill knows how
to stirre the humors and worke upon the phantasies of the chil-
dren of men. Satan is skilfull and diligent in soliciting our lufts
and corruptions both day and night, and they being once solicited
or moved to worke, cannot but worke in us both sleeping and
waking. Yea the devill can inspire false doctrines and opinions
by dreames; as well as provoke to wicked practises. Of such
dreamers we read (Deut: 13. 1, 3.) If there be among you a
false Prophet, or a dreamer of dreames. Falle Prophets had many
dreams (Jer: 23. 25.) Such were wont to say, I have dreamed,
I have dreamed. Because the holy Prophets had their dreams
from God, the Devill would give his unholy Prophets dreams
too, which were lies and vanity, deceits and errors, leading them
out of the way of God, whether we respect truth of doctrine, or
purity of worship. We may reduce all diabolicall dreams to
these two heads; They are either, First, false dreams, that is,
dreames of falsity, for he is the father and former of lyes; or,
Secondly, they are filthy defiling dreams; for he is an unclean
spirit, and the feweller of all filthy fires and uncleannesses, whe-
ther corporeal or spiritual.

Thirdly, There are divine dreames, so called, First, because
immediately sent by God; Secondly, because the subject matter
of them is divine and heavenly, or some manifestation of the holy
will of God to man. There are five speciall Messages upon which
dreames are sent from God.

First, To reprove or admonish; Thus God dealt with Abi-
melech in a dreame, that he should not meddle with Sarah,
( Gen: 20. 3.) and with Laban, that he should not hurt Jacob,
nor hinder him in his journey back to his fathers house (Gen: 31.
24.)
24. Whereupon Jacob told him, God rebuked thee yester night. That dream of Pilate's wife (Math. 27. 19.) was sent to admonish Pilate about giving judgment against Christ.

Secondly, God sends dreams to instruct, and informe; there are teaching dreams, that of Joseph (Math. 1. 21.) was not only to shew him what to doe about Mary his espoused wife, but to instruct him about that great mystery of God manifested in the flesh, to save lost man.

Thirdly, Dreams are sent for support and consolation in a time of trouble (Gen. 28. 12.) God comforted Jacob by that dream, when he was in a desolate condition, and assured him of his presence.

Fourthly, Some dreams are sent of God upon a sad message to afflict and terrifie; Job bemoaned his sufferings and torrows by such dreams (Chap. 7. 13, 14.) When I lay my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifies me with visions.

Fifthly, God foresheweth what shall come to passe, he reveals his own counsels, as to future providences, by dreams and visions. The seven years of famine were revealed to Pharaoh in a dream. And the great things of the Church, and of the world too, were revealed to Daniel in a dream, and in visions of his head upon his bed (Dan. 7. 1.) The message of the dream in the text was for instruction and admonition, as will appeare at the sixteenth verse; God speaketh in a dream; and further.

In a vision of the night.

Some take vision here as a second way of divine revelation. And 'tis true, the Scripture speaks of dreams and visions distinctely (Numb. 12. 6.) Others make visions to be only appurtenances to dreams; for though there have been visions without dreams, yet dreams are seldom, if at all, without some kind of vision. This seemes the intendment of this text, In a dream, in a vision of the night; That is, in a dream with a vision of the night, as making the vision to be nothing else, but either a representation of the matter dreamed of, or of the manner wherein it was represented to the dreamer. And I conceive, that Elihu in this verse is speaking only of one, not of two ways of Gods revealing himselfe to man; or rather of one then two. Yet whether we
take the vision distinctly from or joyntly with the dream, the
scope of Eliph in this text is equally answered and fulfilled.

Further, Eliph doth not only report the way of Gods discov-
ering himselfe, that is, in a dream, in a vision, but he declares
the time or season of these dreams and visions, or of these visions
in a dream; that is, the night, and the night considered under
this division.

First, when deep sleep falleth upon men.

Secondly, When they have their slumberings upon their bed;
that is (as I apprehend) at the beginning of the night, and
break of day (for those are the slumbering times of the night) or
in the middle of the night or midnight, for then usually men
are fallen into and abide in a deep sleep, or as we render, Then

Deep sleep falleth upon men.

Some sleep, as we may say, are but shallow sleeps, light sleeps,
in comparison of other; Deep sleep is that which we call, Dead
sleep. The word here used by Eliph, notes the strongest and the
soundest sleep, and therefore 'tis fitly distinguished from slum-
berings upon the bed.

There are three words in the Hebrew which signify sleep;
whereof the first signifies sleep in general; the second, deep sleep;
the third, any light sleep, which we here translate slumbering.
Ordinary sleeping is more than slumbering, and a deep sleep,
more then ordinary sleep; we commonly say, such a man is fast
asleep, he is, as it were, bound hand and foote. Sleep is the bind-
ing of the senses, and so, by consequence the binding of all the
members of the body. We often finde this distinction in Scripture
(Psal. 132. 4.) I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slum-
ber to my eye-lids; that is, I will not only give my selfe to fall
asleep, but I will not so much as (according to our manner of speak-
ing in that matter) forget my selfe. We find the same distinction
(Ps. 121. 4.) Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor
sleep. The words are a description of the exact watchfulness of
God over his people, he that doth not so much as slumber, he that
never lays his eyes together, he that doth not only not take a nap
(as we say) but not so much as once nod (to so little the He-
brew word may be drawne downe, which is likewise the impor-
tance of the Greek word; he, I say, that doth not so much as
nod.)
nod,) is farre from sleepe, furthest of all from deep sleep. In both these degrees of sleep, the Lord speakes by Dreames, first, in deep sleepe; Secondly, in flumbrings.

Some conceive that Elihu intended by these different words, to fet forth two sorts of dreams: First, those dreams which men have when extraordinary deep sleep falls upon them; such as that spoken of (Gen. 2. 21.) God commanded a deep sleepe to fall on Adam, when he tooke the rib out of his side and formed the woman. We read also (Gen. 15. 12.) that a deep sleep fell on Abraham when God revealed to him what should become of his posterity, and how they should be in Egypt, and there much oppressed four hundred yeares, &c. It is said also (1 Sam. 26. 12.) A deep sleepe from the Lord was fallen upon them; that is, upon Saul, and his guards, who lay round about him. And that might be called a sleepe from the Lord, both because it was a sleepe which the Lord sent, and because it was an extream deep sleepe. Secondly, there are dreams in ordinary sleepe, or in very flumbrings or noddings upon the bed, we may call them waking dreames. Thus Elihu sheweth God taking severall times or seafons for the revealing of himselfe in dreams; sometimes in deep sleepe, and often in the least and slightest sleepe, called flumbrings.

I shall not here insift upon or discourse the way of Gods manifesting himselfe to the Ancients, by dreams & visions, but referre the Reader to what hath already been done upon the 4th Chapter at the 12th and 13th verses; where Eliphaz speaks almost in the same manner as Elihu here about visions; And, indeed there is a very great Consent between their two parts in this booke, that of Eliphaz, and this of Elihu; They were both holy and propheticall men, both of them had the same designe in speaking about dreams and visions, namely, to convince and humble Job; and both of them express themselves in terms of a very neere Cognition. So that if the reader please to consult that place (Job 4. 12, 13.) he will find these words farther cleared, as to the nature and severall kinds of visions. And if he turne to what hath been done upon the 14th verse of the 7th Chapter, he may find the doctrine of dreams further opened.

Only let me adde here a note or two.

First, It hath been the use of God to reveale his mind by dreams.
And I may give you five reasons why God used to apply himself to man in dreams: First, because in sleep man is, as I may say, at best leisure for God to deal with him; he is not distracted with business; nor hurried with the labours of this life, but is at rest. Secondly, when we are awake we are very ready to debate and discourse what we receive by our own reason, we are ready to Logick it with God; but in sleep we take things barely as offered without discussions or disputes. Thirdly, in sleep when all is quiet, that which God represents, takes and leaves a deeper impression upon the mind of man. Common experience teacheth us how dreams stick, and how those apprehensions which we have in our sleep dwell & abide with us when awake. Fourthly, I conceive the Lord doth this chiefly that he may shew his divine skill in teaching & instructing man, or that he hath a peculiar art in teaching; he teaches so, as none of the matters of learning were ever able to teach and instruct their Scholars. There was never any man could teach another when he was asleep; they that are taught must at least be awake, yea they must not only be awake but watchful; but now God is such a teacher, such an instructor, that when we are asleep he can convey instruction and teach us his lessons; this (I say) doth wonderfully magnifie the divine skill and power of God, who is able to make us heare and understand doctrine even when we are asleep and cannot heare. There may be also a fifth consideration moving God to this. Possibly God would hereby assure us, that the soul is a distinct essence, and hath its distinct operations from the body; and that even death it self cannot deprive the soul of man of its working. For what is sleep but a kind of death? sleep is a short death, and death is a long sleepe. Now when the body is (upon the matter) laid aside, the soul can goe to work: when the body lyes like a block and stirrs not, the soul can besitt it self about many matters, and run its thoughts to the utmost ends of the earth, yea and raise them up to the highest heavens, in blessed intercourses with God himself. There's no need to prove the matter of fact that 'tis so; what night, with reference to some or other, doth not utter this point of knowledge? nor need I say to prove that this is, if not a demonstrative, yet a very probable argument of the distinct substantiality of the soul from the body, namely its operations when the body (with all its proper and peculiar faculties and powers) is a sleepe, and contributes
butes nothing to those operations. For though it be granted that
some irrational creatures (who have no immortal part, nor any
thing substantiall in them distinct from their bodies, though it be
granted I say, that these) may have dreames; yet their dreames
differ as much from those of men, as themselves doe.

Secondly Note,
The revelation of the mind of God by dreams and visions, was
much, yea most used in those ancient times. When God had not
so fully revealed his mind by Scripture or his mind in the
Scripture, then he spake often in dreams and visions; and hence
the old Prophets were called seers.

The Apostle reports, God speaking at sundry times, and in di-
vers manners in times past, unto the fathers by the Prophets,
(Heb. 1.1.) The Greek text hath two very significant words,
the former most properly implying how God gave out his mind in
divers measures, or how he parcelled it out, the other implying
the severall wanes in which he gave it out. As the measures were
various, sometimes more sometimes less, of his mind about di-
vine matters and mysteries being dispersed, so the wanes manners
and formes of this dispensation were very various; yet the most
usual way was by dreams and visions (Numb. 12.6.) If there
be a Prophet among you (faith the Lord) I the Lord will make
my self known unto him in a vision, and speak to him in a dream.
Yea we find that in the first dayes of the Gospel, dreames and
visions were frequent. The Apostle falling into a trance h
vision (Acts 10.10.) He saw heaven opened and a certain ve-
descend, &c. And when Christ would have the Apostle Paul
carry the Gospell into Macedonia, a vision appeared to him in t
night (Acts 16.9.) There stood a man of Macedonia, and pray
him, saying, come over to Macedonia and help us. The same Ap-
stle faith (2 Cor. 12.1, 2.) I will come to visions and revelation
of the Lord, whether in the body I cannot tell, or out of the body
cannot tell. Paul’s soul was wrapt up in such high and intimate con-
verses with God, that he even forgot how it was with his body, or
had little to doe with it. Which suits well with that descrip-
tion which the Apostle John gave of himself, when he had the whole
mind of God concerning the state of his Church to the end of the
world, revealed to him in severall visions. I (faith he Rev. 1.10.)
was
was in the spirit on the Lord's day, &c. That's is a famous promise, which was first reported by the Prophet Joel (Chap. 2. 28.) and after repeated by the Apostle Peter (Acts 2. 17.) I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c. and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Thus it is every where clear in Scripture, that dreames and visions were frequent both in the Old Testament times, and in the beginning of the New;

But now in these last days (as the Apostle faith Heb. 1. 2,3. passing from those former ways of Revelation described in the first verse) God having spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the Worlds, who is [also] the brightness of his glory, and the express Image of his person: God I say having spoken to us by his Son, and we having now a clearer manifestation of the mind of God then the old fathers had, the Son who once spake to us in person on earth, still speaking to us in the Gospel every day; therefore now for any to look after dreames and visions, or visible apparitions for the revealing of the mind of God, is to goe backward to the old state of the Jewish Church, or to the infancy of the Gospel Church, while the Canon or Rule of the Scripture as to all matters of faith and holy life was not fully finished and compleated. And though we ought to be farre from limiting God, yet he hath limited us from looking after any wisdome in the knowledge of his will above that which is written (1 Cor. 4. 6.) The Apostle also testifying by the Spirit of God, that the Scripture is sufficient to make every man wise to salvation and the man of God perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works (that good work especially of helping others to salvation) 1 Tim. 3. 15. 17.

Luther observing how many were deluded in his time by dreames and visions, which they falsely attributed to God, as the immediate Author of them; earnestly prayed about two things: First, that God would give him a sound understanding of his mind revealed in the Scriptures. Secondly, that he would not send him dreames or visions, yea, faith he, I even contracted with God that he would not. And doubtlesse he did this upon a double ground, First, to oppose the wild opinions and practices of those who had nothing to pretend for them but dreames and visions. Secondly, to advance the honour of the written word in its sufficiency, not
only without the help of any humane tradition, but without any 

further divine revelation. And therefore though God should 

please to speak to us now by dreams and visions, yet that were 

only (as the Apostle speaks of his adding of an oath to his pro-

mise (Heb. 6. 17.) to shew that he is (ex abundanti) more 

abundantly willing to satisfy our weakness by such a consolati-

on, then that there is a necessity of it, with respect to any de-

ficiency of the Scriptures fullness. And hence it is, that if men 

shall profess they have received anything from God by dreams 

or visions, concerning what is either to be believed or done, the 

matter of those dreams must be examined and weighed at the 

ballance of the Scriptures, and is no further to be credited then 

as 'tis found agreeable thereunto.

It cannot be denied but that men may make profitable use of 

their dreams at this day; they may see much of themselves 

when their eyes are shut up by sleepe. Evill men may see their 

lufts at worke in the night, and find out what luft is most working 

and wakefull in them. What is said in History of the ancient Per-

sian Kings, that they were seldome seen in the day, but came to 

view in the night, is true of a mans speciall sin, or of that sin which 

regains and Kings it in him. What ugly apparitions of luft hath 

many a man in his nightly dreams, especially of those filthy lufts 

which are most proper to the night? Thus also good men have 

sometimes a clearer sight of their graces in the night by dreams, 

then in the duties of the day. What holy frames of heart? what 

lively actings of grace? what sweet and ravishing communion 

with God have many godly men found and felt in dreams? That 

may at least, be somewhat of Davids meaning, when he said 

(Psal. 16. 17.) My reins, also instruct me in the night sea-

son.

Lastly, Though we cannot make any certaine conclusions, either 

what we are, or what we are to doe from dreams; yet from them 

they who are wise and watchfull may sometimes gather strong con-

jectures about both or either. To make dreams the rule or war-

rant of what we doe is extremly dangerous, yet that we may 

have hints what to doe in a dreame, I nothing doubt, nor can there 

be any danger in it, while the matter hinted is consonant to the 

rule of the word, both as that which is lawfull to be done, and 

lawfull for us (all circumstances considered) to doe. Other-

wise
wife, whatsoever we may think our selves warned or warrant to
doe by dreames, is but a mock or trick put upon us by the Devill,
or a deceit of our own foolish selfish hearts.

Thus we have seen the first way of Gods speaking to men of
old, by dreames and visions of the night; what work God is pleased
to make with and in man by such speakings, will appeare distinctly
in the three following verses.

Ver. 16. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth there
instruction.

In this verse Elihu gives us the first of those gracious designs
or purposes of God in sending dreams or visions of the night; 
then he openeth the ears of men. There is a twofold care of man,
first, externall, that organ of hearing placed in the head. Secondly,
internall, that power of hearing seated in the heart. God can un-
dcover or open both. There are but few who have their outward
care stopp, we rarely meet with a deaf man. But we every where
meet with and speak to those who are internally deaf. The
Lord openeth this inward ear, and he only is able to doe it. God
opened the heart (or internall ear) of Lydia to attend to the things
which were spoken of Paul (Acts 16.14.) The Septuagint render
this place of Job expressively so. Then he openeth the mind of men.
Their translation comes close to the sense, though not to the letter
of the Original.

Further, the Hebrew is (as we put in the Margin) He reveal-
eth or uncovereth the eares of men. This revealing or uncovering
of the ear, say some, noteth only private speaking, and is a simi-
litude taken from a common custome among men, who when they
would convey their mind secretly to a friend that standeth by, put
their head near to his eare, and take up the brim of his hat, or put
by his haire (if long) that they may whisper in his eare. This
in a dreame God whispers and speaks silently unto men. This
seems to have a fitableness with that (Chap. 4. 12, 13.) where
Elipha spake of a thing brought secretly to him, or that was whis-
pered or stoln into him. But I conceive there is more in this
place then the intendment of a secret and private conveyance of
the mind of God unto man in a vision or dreame.

And therefore this opening of the eare imports the removing
or taking away of that ( whatsoever it is ) which hinders the ef-
fectual hearing or obeying of those messages which God sends to
men. When God spake in a dream, he did more then speak, he
open'd the ear, yea, he gave an eare to hear: This powerfull work
of God upon the heart is elegantly express'd by opening the eare,
because when the ears are flopt, we cannot hear, till that which
stops them is pluckt out or taken away; so that here we have
speaking with effect, or the clear and penetrating power of the
Spirit of God, sweeterly and prevailingly insinuating his mind
unto man. God speaks so as he will be heard.

Hence Observe.

First, The eare of man is naturally flopt against the teachings of
God.

There are many things which flоп the eares of man, or man
hath many eare floppers. I will name seven, all which God re-
move's and takes away when he effectually reveals his mind to
man. First, the eare of man is flopt with ignorance, that's a thick
vaile or covering upon the eare, and keeps out the mind of God	
till it be removed. And, Secondly, Unbelief is another eare-flopper;
till the Lord removeth that we cannot hear. Thirdly, Im-
penitency or hardenesse of heart stops the eare, there are a number
of Scriptures I might give for each of these. Fourthly, the love of
any particular sin is an eare-flutter or an eare-flopper, and the Coc:
Lord removes that, when he opens the eare. Fifthly, Prejudices
flоп the eare, prejudices sometime against the person speaking;
t sometime against the word spoken. That man will never hear a
word to purpose, who hath a prejudice against the person, or a
prejudice against the word, either a prejudice against the man, or
against the matter. Sixthly, Pride stops the eare too, the proud
man will not hearken, therefore God humbles and brings down
the spirit that the word may be heard. Seventhly, and lastly, the
World is a great eare-flopper, that locks up the eare against the
word; the world in the profits of it, and the world in the plea-
ures of it, and the world in the eares of it, and the world in the
fears of it, the world by or in every one of these stops the eare;
and by these the eares of all men naturally are flopped, so that they
are as it is said ( Psal. 58.4. ) like the decease adder, that stops her eare,
and will not hear the voice of the charmer, charme he never so wisely.
Pp 2

Till
Till all these stoppers are removed, and the eare opened, there is no receiving of the word.

Secondly Observe.

God is able to open and unlock the eare of man.

Though it hath never so many stoppers in it, he can pull them out, never so many locks upon it, though all the seven spoken of, and seven more obstruct the ear, yet he can open them all, and make a free and uncontrollable passage for his word into the remotest and closest chambers of the soul. God can speak loud enough, not only to make the dead, but the dead hear his voice.

Verily, verily I say unto you (faith Christ, Joh. 5. 25.) the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. By the dead he means not those who are corporally, but spiritually dead, that is, dead in sins and trespasses, and in danger of eternall death for their sins and trespasses; even these heard the voice of the Son of God then speaking personally, and heard it afterwards ministerially, in the dispensation of the Gospell, and that voice revived them; not only by giving them the comfort of that natural life which they had before, but by bringing in a new spirituall life which before they had not. Then the internall ear is opened to purpose when those internall or mystically darke graves of sin are opened, and the soul comes forth into the light of life.

Yet more distinctly, God may be said to uncover or open the eares of men, when he doth these four things.

First, When he makes us not only to heare but to attend, not only to heare but to hearken; or not only to heare but to give eare. Many give the word of God the hearing, but they do not give ear to the word of God.

Secondly, God opens the ear when he makes us not only attend, but understand, or when he takes the vaile off from our minds. The Apostle faith of the Jews (2 Cor. 3. 14.) The vaile remaineth upon them untaken away to this day in the reading of the old Testament (and it doth so still) so that as they could not, so yet they cannot, Looke to the end of that which is abolished; that is, to Christ, who was the end or scope at which the whole Ceremoniall Law (now abolished) did then ayme. When once the eare is divinely opened, then the vaile of ignorance and spirituall blindness.
nefte is taken off from the mind, both as to that greatest truth, and all other necessary truths. The opened eare is an understanding eare.

Thirdly, God openeth the eare when he causeth us to believe what we perceive and understand. As faith sets the whole soule aworke for God, so faith is the great worke of God upon the soule. When the eare is opened, truth is not only knowne, but favingly believed.

Fourthly, This opening of the eare maketh the soule obedient; Jesus Christ in that great prophecy of him (Psal. 40. 6.) to shew his ready obedience to his fathers command, faith, Mine eare haft thou opened (or digged.) The eare of Christ was never shut in the leafl, either through ignorance or unbeliefe; but he is sayd to have his eare opened, only to shew his constant preparednes and readiness for obedience. He came into the world with an open eare to all the will of God; and therefore it followeth in the 7th and 8th verses of that Psalm, Then said I, loe I come, in the volume of thy booke it is written of me, I delight to doe thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart. Christ is brought in by another Prophet speaking to the same point with some little variety, but with very great significance of expression (Isa: 50. 4, 5.) He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine eare to heare as the learned; we usually say, Sleep is in the eye, yet this prophecy intimates a sleep in the eare, thou haft wakened mine eare. What we are to understand by this wakened eare, is cleare in the next words of the same prophecy, The Lord hath opened mine eare, that's the word of Eliphaz, and the consequence of opening the eare, set downe in the Prophet, is the same now given in this point, The Lord hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious. He doth not say, The Lord opened mine eare, and I heard, but, I was not rebellious; that is, I gave up my selfe to obey the word or command, which I heard. The same Prophet (Isa: 48. 8.) describing the rebellion of the Jews, puts this as the reason of it, Yeah thou heardest not; (that is, thou didst not attend) yeah thou knewest not, that is, thou didst not understand, yeah thine eare was not opened; as if he had sayd, thine unopened eare was the cause why thou diddest neither attend, nor understand, nor obey the word spoken to thee. So much of the first gracious designe of God in speaking to men by dreams and
and visions of the night; Then he openeth the ears of men. The second is given in the latter part of the verse.

And sealeth their Instruction.

The word signifies not only to seal, but to perfect or conclude. He sealeth Instruction.

There is a threefold use of seals and sealing; First, to distinguish one thing from another; Secondly, to keep things safe and secret; Thirdly, sealing is to confirme and ratifie; A Bond, Deed, or Evidence in writing, till it hath a Seale, is but a scrip of paper of no force, but when once the Seale is put to it, then it is confirmed, then there is strength and force in it. A seale fortifies the writing, or maketh it authentick. He sealeth their Instruction.

The word here used signifies both correction and Instruction, and so it is rendered by some here, He openeth their ears, or sealeth their chastisement. Mr Broughton takes that sense, And imprinted why they are chastised; that is, (as himselfe expounds it) when he hath chastised them, he sealeth up the decree of their judgement; or as another, He proposeth it unto them as firm, and concluded, if they doe not repent and imprinted in their mind the certainty of it, as also the true cause of it. We render fully to the sense of the word and scope of the text, He sealeth their instruction; that is, upon the opening of the ear there is a sealing or setting home the word which is received. When the ear is opened to receive, God will make men hold what they have received. The sealing of instruction, signifies the efficacy, energy, or effectuall working of God with the word, he ratifies and confirmes it to the soule, he maketh his word as sure to them, as a sealed Bond, both with respect to the duty commanded, and the mercy promised. And indeed, we have as much need to have Instruction sealed, as to have the ear opened; for 'tis possible the ear may be opened, we may heare and understand, and in some sense believe, yea obey, and yet not have the instruction sealed. The instruction is then sealed, when we keepe what is received, as the ear is opened when we receive what is offered. Unless the instruction be sealed, we heare and obey only for the present, not for the time to come, that is, we do not retain, and
and hide the word received for use and practice.

Now, whether we take this sealing in reference either to correction or instruction, it yeelds us matter of profitable meditati

Note.

God affurcth sinfull man that he shall smart for it, unlesse he hearken and obey.

It is as sure that he shall, as if he saw it under hand and seal; or as if the sentence were engraven upon his conscience, and fixed before his eyes. If the ear be not obedient to instruction, the back must submit to correction; If the word will not doe it, the rod must; if teaching will not serve the turne, chastning shall; He sealeth their correction. Every correction threatened is not certainly inflicted; for Elisau faith afterward (v. 26.) He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him; but the meaning is, mans correction is sealed in case he proceeds on in his sin; if he does not give proof that his ear is opened by his obedience to instruction, there is no escaping correction. The correction of the dearest children of God is sealed, if they heare and doe not. God will not cocker his stubborne children, nor spoyle them by sparing the rod; He will certainly meet with them one time or other, either by sickness, or poverty, or reproach; the order the warrant is sealed for their correction.

We may much more apply this to the wicked, to the ungodly and rebellious, who though they have their outward ears open, yet their hearts remain shut; If the correction of the godly be sealed in that case, to be sure, the destruction of the wicked is; they are sealed for death, yea they are sealed for hell; the wrat of their eternall Judgement is sealed. If Judgement must begin at the house of God, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God?

Further. Take it as we render it, referring to instruction, He sealeth their instruction.

Whence note.

God is able to set home his instructions effectually upon the soule.

He can leave such an impression upon the heart, as as shall never be forgotten nor wore out. He can make every word stick;

And
And so this is but a further illustration of what was said before; he openeth their ears to receive the word, and then sealeth instruction upon them. The Apostle speaking of some persons converted, who were the fruit of his ministry, faith, Ye are the scale of mine Apostleship (1 Cor. 9, 2, 3.) that is, ye confirm and ratifie my ministry, that it is of God, and that God is in it. Now as the conversion of sinners, and the building up of Saints, is the scale of our ministry; so the sealing of instruction upon the soule, is the conversion of sinners, and the edification of Saints. When a sinner is converted, his instruction is sealed upon him, and when a Saint is built up and edified, and increaseth in the things of God, then instruction is sealed upon him also. And untill we thus profit by the word, we have the word, as I may say, without a scale, nothing fastens upon us.

Thus much of the first designe of God in sending dreams and visions in those times, it was to open the ears of men, and to seal their Instruction; This being only a generall benefit aymed at by those means, we have those which are more speciall set downe in the words which follow.

Ver. 17. That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.

This 17th verse contains two of those blessed ends or designes of God in revealing himselfe to man by dreams and visions, or by visions in a dream, of which Elihu spake in the two former verses; as then he takes an opportunity to open the ears of men, and seal their Instruction, to fasten and fix his word upon them; to make it stick and stay by them; so in all this his purpose is;

That he may withdraw man from his purpose.

The word rendred to withdraw, signifieth, to take off, or put away, to remove or change for the better. (Isa. 1, 16.) But away the evil of your doings; that is, doe no more evil, or (as the Lord speaks by another Prophet, (Jer. 44, 4.) O doe not this abominable thing that I hate; we render the word in the other sense (Job. 27, 2.) He hath removed my judgment farre from me. There is in man a kind of settledness and resovedness upon his
his purpose, he will on; but faith Elihu, the Lord withdrawes him, he stretcheth forth his hand, and pull's him back; He withdraweth

Adam. The earthly man; The proper name of the first man, is the common name of all men. Man is earthly by nature, and so are all his natural purposes. To draw an earthly man from that which is earthly, is no ease matter; only the power of God can doe it, He withdraweth man

From his purpose.

The word which we render purpose, properly signifies a work; and so it is translated not only elsewhere, but here by several interpreters. Mr. Broughton is express, That the earthly man leave off to work, and then by work, he means an evill work, as by purpose an evill purpose. The word work set alone usually signifies an evill work, as the word wise put alone is taken for a good wife (Prov.8.22.) He that findeth a wife, findeth good; every one that findeth a wife doth not find good, (there are many bad wives) only he that findeth a good wife findeth good. So on the contrary, the word worke standing here alone implyeth a bad work. And to withdraw man from his work, or from his purpose, is to withdraw him from his evill work or purpose: The Septuagint gives it clearly so, that he may withdraw man from unrighteousnesse. And Mr. Broughton glossing his own translation, faith, that he leave off man's work, and do the work of God.

Again, This terme work, seemes opposed to the thought or concupiscence of the inner man; he withdraweth man from his work, that his hand may not effect what his heart hath contrived: that the bitter root may not bring forth evill and bitter fruit. Or if we follow our translation, the sentence will be the same; He withdraweth man from his purpose, that is, he checks and stops the inward motions and workings of man's heart, and so keeps him from bringing it to perfection by an outward evill work. (Japan. 1. 15.) Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death; God in great mercy takes man off from his purpose when he finds him upon an evill device or purpose; he crusheth the Cockatrice's egge that it may not be hatch-ed.
ed, and destroyeth the conception of those Babylonish brats that they may never come to the birth: (Mie. 2. 1.) Woe to them, that devise mischief on their beds, when the morning is light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. The work begins at the heart, there 'tis plotted and contrived; the heart is the workhouse of sin; now the Lord withdraws man from his purpose, and will not suffer the inward work to be accomplished by the outward work.

Further, we may refer these words either to what is past, or to what is to come; some translate (referring it to what is past) that he may turn, or withdraw man from those things which he hath done; that is, from those evils to which he hath already set his hand; this is done by giving man repentance, which is our being humbled for, and turning away from any evil already committed.

Our translation refers it to what is intended to be done, for that's a purpose. So the meaning is, God doth these things that he may keep man from doing that evil or mischief which he hath resolved upon, or at least is forming and hammering in his thoughts. Abimelech had an evil purpose for the matter (though possibly the purpose of his heart was not evil, for he said to God (and God said he spake true) in the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this, Gen. 20. 5, 6. (he was I say about an evil purpose for the matter) when he thought to take Abrams wife from him, but the Lord came to him in a dream, and withdrew him from the evil of his purpose. Laban intended evil, or hard dealing to Jacob, but the Lord met him also in a dreame, and withdrew him from his purpose, saying, (Gen. 31. 24.) Take heed thou speakest not to Jacob, neither good nor bad, that is, hinder him nor in his journey, either by threatenings or by promises. Thus man is taken off or withdrawn from evil purposes by preventing grace, and from evil workes by repenting grace.

I shall prosecute the words according to our reading only, which imports that when man hath some evil purpose upon his heart, the Lord visits him in dreames and visions of the night, to withdraw him from that purpose.

Hence observe First,

**Man is very forward and eager upon evil purposes.**

God himself must come to withdraw and fetch him off; or oth-
that the act hath no other purposes but evil purposes, and upon them it is set (as I may say) to purpose; that is, he will effect and bring them about if he can. When Moses reproved Aaron concerning the golden Calf which he had made, at the instance and violent impor-
tunology of the people, Aaron answered for himself (Exod. 32. 23.) Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot, thou knowest the people that they are set on mischief, they are bent to it, they have such a mind to it, that there's no turning them from it; they will hear no reason nor take any denyall, when the fit is on them. There is a setting of the heart of man continually upon evil; the wind blowes that way, and no other way, the wind fills alwayes in that bad corner till God turneth it. There are two gracious acts of God, spoken of in Scripture, which doe exceedingly shew forth the sinfulnesse of man; every act of grace doth in its measure aggravate the sinfulnesse of man, and alwayes the higher grace acteth, the more is the sinfulnesse of man discovered, especially (I say) in this twofold act of grace. The former whereas consists in drawing; the latter in withdrawing; there is a gracious act of God in drawing the sinful sons and daughters of men to that which is good. Man is drawne, First, into a state of grace or goodnesse, by this he is made good. He is drawn, Secondly, to acts of grace or goodnesse, by this he doth good. Of the former Chrift speaks (Joh. 6. 44.) No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, that is, no man can beleev, (for by faith we come to Chrift) except he receive power from on high. God draweth the soul to Chrift, and that's a powerfull act of divine drawing, though not a compulsory act; and as God must draw man into a state of grace, which is our union with Chrift by the Spirit in beleevings, so he draweth him to the acting of his graces. Of this latter the Church speaketh to Chrift (Cant. 1. 4.) Draw me, and I will run after thee. These gracious drawings shew that we are not only utterly unable, but averse to the receiving grace, and so becoming good, while we are in a state of nature; as also that we are very backward to doe that which is good, even when we are in a state of grace. Now as God acts very graciously in drawing man to good, so Secondly, in withdrawing him from evil, from those evil purposes and evil practices, to which all men are so easily yet so strongly carried. The Prophet (Jer. 2. 23, 24.)
23, 24. elegantly describes the exceeding forwardness of that people to evill, while he compareth them to the swift Dromodary, traversing her wayes, and to the wild Ass in the Wildernesse that snuffeth up the mind at her pleasure (or the desire of her heart) in her occasion who can turn her away? As the wild Ass set upon her pleasure, &c in her occasion, when the hath a mind to it, will not be turn’d away; such is the heart of man. That other Prophet (Isa. 5. 18,) telleth us of those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope; that is, they set themselves with all their might to do mischief. When men are thus vainly bent upon vanity, ’tis a mighty work of God to withdraw them from their work. When, what men are purposed to doe, they are fastened to it as with cords and cart-ropes, what but the power of the great God can withdraw them from it?

Whence note Secondly,

Unlesse God did withdraw and fetch us off from sin, we should run on in it continually.

When man is in an evill way, he hath no mind to returne till God turneth him; let come on’t what will he will venture. ’Tis only through grace that the heart either abstains or returns from evill. David faith (Psal. 18. 23.) I have kept my self from mine iniquity. David kept himself from his iniquity, yet he was not his own keeper: It was by the power of God that he kept himself from that sin to which he was most prone, even from that sin to which his own corruptions and the Devils temptations were always drawing him. David had some speciall iniquity to which his heart was inclined more then any other, and from that he kept himself, being himself kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Of our selves we can neither keep our selves from doing iniquity, nor leave off doing that iniquity, which we have once done. How can man withhold himself from sin, while sin hath so great a hold of him, yea the Mastery over him?

Thirdly Note.

God is graciously pleased both to withdraw man from doing evill and to draw him to repentance when he hath done evill.

Between these two the grace of God is daily working in and towards man, and it worketh for the effecting of both many wayes.

First,
First, by his word, and that in a fourfold consideration. First, by the word of his command, he every where in Scripture forbids man to doe any evil, and bids him repent of every evil which he doth. Secondly, by the word of his threatenings, they are as thunderbolts to deterre him. Thirdly, by the word of his promises, they are divine allurements, sweetly yet effectually to entice him. Fourthly, by the word of his persuasions, they are full of taking arguments to convince and win him.

Secondly, God withdrawes man from sin, and draws him to repentance when he hath sinned, by his works: First, by his works of Judgment, they break him to these duties. Secondly, by his works of mercy, they melt him into these duties.

Thirdly, God withdraws man from sin and draws him to repentance by his patience and long-suffering. (Rom. 2.4.) Despifest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance. As if the Apostle had said, O man, if thou knowest not the meaning of Gods patience towards thee, and that this is the meaning of it, thou knowest nothing of the mind and meaning of God towards thee.

Fourthly, The Lord withdraweth man from evil purposes by seasonable counsells. David was going on in a very bad purpose (1 Sam. 25.) and God stirred up Abigail to meete him, and by good counsell to withdraw him from his purpose: This David acknowledged (ver. 32, 33.) Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me. As if he had said, I was fully purposed to revenge my self upon Naball, and had not surely left a man of his house alive by the morning light, if thou hadst not met me; therefore blessed be God who hath sent thee, and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which haft kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and haft by thy good counsell withdrawn me from that evil purpose.

Lastly, consider God withdraweth man from his sinfull purpose, all or any of these wayes, by putting forth his mighty power with them. For his word alone, his works alone, his patience alone, the counsell of man alone would not doe it, if God did not stretch forth his own arm in and with these meanes for the doing of it. Nothing is any further efficacious then as God is with it. (Num. 22.) Balaam was going on in his wicked purpose, being sent for by:
by Balak to curse the people of God: And though the Lord sent his Angel to be an adversary to him in his way (ver. 22.) so that his Ass turned out of the way into the field, yet Balaam went on in his purpose; yea though the Angel standing between two walls caused his Ass to turn suddenly, that the cruel Balaams foot against the wall (ver. 25.) yet Balaam went on in his purpose: Once more though the Angel went further and stood in a narrow way, where there was no way to turn to the right hand nor to the left, so that the poor Ass fell down under him (v. 27.) and speaking (as the Apostle Peter expresseth it, 2 Epist. 2.) with mans voice rebuked the madness of the Prophet; Yet so mad he was that all these checks and warnings, could not withdraw him from his purpose. And what the Lord did at that time to Balaam by an Angel, that he doth by some other means and providences to stop many from their evil purposes, who yet will not be stopped. He speaks to them in the ministry of his word, he speaks to them in his works; he spreads their way with roses, he hedgeth up their way with thorns, he bestoweth sweet mercies upon them, he sends sharp afflictions upon them, to withdrawing them from their evil purposes, yet on they go like Balaam, unless he send more than an Angel, even his holy Spirit to withdraw them.

Lastly, Elihu reports it as a speciall favour of God to withdraw man from his purpose.

Whence note.

'It is a great mercy to be hindered in sinful purposes and endeavours.'

Disappointments are acts of grace, when we are acting against grace; If God stop us from doing evil, not only by his word, but by blowes, or by a hedge of thorns, yea if he stop us by a drawn sword, it is a great mercy. Though God throw us to the ground (as he did Saul, afterwards Paul, when he went with a bloody purpose to vex and persecute the Saints (Acts 9.) let us count our selves exalted, and rejoice in it more then in any worldly exaltation. 'Tis a rich mercy to be kept from executing an evil purpose, though by our owne poverty and outward misery. The doing of that which is sinfull, is worse then any thing that can be done to us, or endured by us, as a stop against sin. Sin hath

bath
hath death in it; sin hath wrath in it; sin hath hell in it; sin hath
Devill and all in it; therefore to be kept from sin, let it be by
what means it will, if by paines and pining sicknesses, if by re-
proaches and disgraces, yea if by death, we have cause to bless
God. The greatest and foreft Judgement which God powres up-
on sinfull men, is to let them alone in or not to withdraw them
from their sins. To be suffered to goe on and prosper in sin, is
the worst of sufferings, the last of Judgements, the next Judg-
ment to hell it selfe, and an infallible signe of an heire of hell.
Thus the wrath of God waxed hot against Israel when he gave
them up to their owne hearts lufts; and they walked in their owne
Counsell ( Pial: 81. 11.) This was the highest revenge that God
could take upon that sinfull people. He sayd a little before, Is-
rael would none of me; when God wooed them they were so coy,
you would have none of him; and then, said he, goe on, take
your fill of sin; I give you up to your owne hearts lufts. The Lord
did not say, I gave them up to the sword, to the famine, or to the
pefifence, but to their owne hearts lufts, and to walke on in their
own way; That person or people may be sure, God hath purposed e-
vill against them, whom he will not withdraw from their evil pur-
poses. The severity of the wrath of God against the Gentiles is
express and summd up in this ( Rom: 1. 26, 28.) He gave them
up to vile affections; he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to dce
things which were not convenient. A natural man left to himselfe,
will done do such things as nature it selfe abhorreth: and blufheth
at. The same dreadfull doome is denounced ( Rev: 22. 11.)
He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let
him be filthy still. I will not withdraw him from his way, let him
goe on and perih, let him goe on and sink downe to the pit of
perdition for ever. As St John in the Revelation foretelling the
Church, given up or left to ( not in ) great sufferings of all forts;
Here is the patience of the Saints, So when we see the world given
up and left in great sinnings of any fort, especially if to sinnings
of all forts, we may truly and sadly say, Here is the wrath of God.
'Tis therefore a great mercy, if God will any way withdraw man
from his sinfull wayes and purpofes; especially when he taketh
such gentle wayes, as dreams and visions, counfels and instructions,
to withdraw man from his purpose, and ( as it followeth in
this verse ) to.
hide pride from man.

The word which we render to hide, is to hide by casting a covering, a vayle, a garment, or any other thing, over what we desire should be hid, (Prov. 12. 23.) A prudent man concealeth knowledge; it is this word; he doth not pretend to know so much as he knoweth; he puts a vayle upon his own abilities, (as Moses upon his face when there was such a shining beauty imprinted there) rather then reveals them unnecessarily or uncalled. 'Tis the foolish man, or he that hath but a show of wisdom, who loves and affects to be shewing it. But to the text. The word is used also, to note that gracious act of God, his pardoning the sin of man. (Psal. 32. 1.) Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. God covers our sins in the riches of his grace, by the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Now there are two ways by which God hideth pride from man. First, by pardoning it; Secondly, preventing it. Here to hide pride from man, properly, is not to pardon it when acted, but to prevent or keep man from the acting of it; God indeed hides the pride of man by pardoning it (and that's a high act of grace) and he hideth pride from man by keeping man from doing proudly, or from shewing his pride in his doings.

The word rendered pride, signifies Eminency, or Excellency, because men are usually proud of that wherein they are eminent and excell; there lyes the temptation to pride. And therefore as a man should turne away his eyes from a beautiful harlot, lest she should ensnare him, so God hides mans owne beauties, eminencies, and excellencies, even his best workes from him, lest he should be proud of them, and so goe a whoring after them: or as God did with the body of Moses, he not only buryed him, but hid him (for 'tis sayd, (Deut. 34. 6.) No man knoweth of his sepulcher to this day) and 'tis well conceived that the reason why God hid his sepulcher, was, lest the people of Israel should be drawne aside to some undue or superstitious veneration of him. So God hideth (by some means, or other) that which is most eminent in us, from us, lest it should draw us aside to some undue estimation of it, and fo prove but matter or factel for pride to kindle upon. Thus the Lord hideth pride from us, when he hideth that from us, which (considering our corruption) may probably make us proud.

And
And the original word here used to signify the man from whom God hideth pride, hath a neere cognition to this notion about hiding pride it selfe. Man is twice express in this verse, yet not by the same word; The first word notes man in the weakness of his constitution, an earthly man; This second notes man in the powerfulness of his condition, a strong man, a mighty man, an eminent man, a man with all his furniture, in the fullness of his earthly glory and greatness; when man hath much natural power, much civill power, with the various additions and ornaments of both these powers upon him, then man is in greatest danger to be proud, & then God hideth pride from man. And who can hide pride from such a man but God alone. Men commonly blow up such men with pride by great applauses, and such men have mostly great thoughts and high apprehensions of themselves, and are very forward to discover (which is the greatest discovery of their weakness) their owne pride, God only hideth pride from man; that is, he makes it not to be, as well as hindres its appearing; that which is hidden is as if it were not. The word is used in that sense (Job 3. 10.) Because he did not hide sorrow from mine eyes; Sorrow is hidden from us when the matter of sorrow is so taken away, that we sorrow not at all. To hide pride is to take away the matter and occasion, the incentives and motives of pride, whatsoever is a nurse of pride, or doth encourage the pride of our hearts, that's to hide pride from man.

Again, We may take this word, pride, in a large sense, as Comprehending all sin, He withdraweth man from his purpose, and hideth pride; that is, sin of all sorts from man; and doubtlesse there is pride of one kinde or other in every act of sin; There is a heightening of the spirit against God, some disatisfaction with the mind and will of God, and thence a setting up of our will against the will of God in every sinner, especially in bold and willfull sinners. Such sinners would not let the will of God stand, but desire that their own may. This is pride; This in some degree is mingled with every sin, and pride leads to all sin; therefore in Scripture sometimes an humble or meek man is oppos'd, not only to a proud man in speciall, but to a wicked man in generall (Psal: 147. 6.) The Lord lifteth up the meek, he casteth the wicked down to the ground. Where the wicked man in the latter part of the verse, stands in opposition to the meek, or humb-
ble man in the former part of it. Nor can it be denied, but that as pride is in it selfe a very great wickedness, so it gives a propension and fitnesse for the doing of all manner of wickedness. And thus take it in the largest sense, 'tis a truth that God hideth pride, that is, every sin from man, otherwise he would shew forth any sin as much as pride. But I rather keep to that strictness of Interpretation here, as pride is opposed to humilitie, which is not only a choyce grace, but the ornament of all those graces which are hidden in the heart, and held out in the life of a gracious man. And thus the Lord by exercing man with dreams and visions in his affliction, doth first stop and check the very purposes of evil, that they come not to act, and when man hath brought to passe or acted any good purpose, he keeps him from ostentation. He hideth pride from man.

It being the Lords designde to hide pride from man, by those fore-named dispensations.

Observe, First.

Man is naturally much disposed and very prone to pride.

Those things which Children are apt to abuse or hurt themselves with, their parents hide from them; They will hide edgetoolees from them, left they get a wound by medling with them; They will hide fruit from them, left by eating overmuch they get a surfeit. Thus the Lord our tender father often hides all the means and occasions of pride from the eyes of his children, because they are so ready to boast and lift up themselves in pride.

Man (as was shewed at the 13th verse of the former Chapter) is a proud piece of flesh, and hath much proud flesh in him. The Prophet saith (Ezek. 7. 10.) Pride hath budded; pride hath a roote, and it brings forth fruit. There is a two-fold pride, or pride of two sorts. First, secret unseene pride, or pride of heart; Secondly, open visible pride, or pride of life. In allusion to the Prophets metaphor, we may say, there is pride in the bud, and pride in the roote, pride buddeth outwardly.

First, At the tongue, men speak proud words, they speak boastingly and vaine-gloriously (Psal. 75. 5.) Speak not with a stiff neck, that is, speak not proudly. Pride budded at the tongue of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4. 30.) when he walked in his Palace and said, Is not this great Babed that I have built for the house of
the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty. Here was pride budding at the tongue.

Secondly, Pride buddeth also at the eye, in scornfull lofty looks. David protesteth that his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty (Psal. 131. 1.) The haughtines of many mens hearts may be seene at those windowes of the body, the eyes, in lofty looks. These are threatened with a downfall (Psal. 18. 27.) The Lord will bring down high lookes, that is, proud men who looke highly. And againe (Isa. 2. 11.) The lofty lookes of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed downe. Once more faith the Lord (Isa. 10. 13.) I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high lookes. There we have pride in the roote, a stout heart, and pride in the fruit, high lookes. (Isa. 3. 11.) The skewe of their Countenance testifieth against them; that is, they look proudly, though (which should lay them in the dust) they live very lewdly, yea they are proud of their lewdnes.

Thirdly, How often doth pride bud in apparell, in vaine fashions, and new-fangled attires, in the affected adornings and trimmings of a body of clay? What are these but the budding of pride? yea the flaggs and banners of pride. Some are as proud of their gay dresse, as the Peacock of his feathers. We commonly say, Fine feathers make fine birds, but how foolish are those birds that are proud of Feathers!

Secondly, There is pride of heart, or pride budding in the spirit of man, which doth not shew it selfe; only the mind swells within. When men have high thoughts of themselves (though they doe not (as the Apostle Jude hath it) speake great swelling words of vanity, yet they have great swelling thoughts of vanity, then pride buddeth in their spirits, their minds swell, and the mind will swell more then the tongue. The tongue swells mightily, but the heart much more. The spirit of a man may lift up it selfe on high, when the man looks very demurely. (Hab. 2. 4.) Behold, his soule which is lifted up, is not upright in him; If the soule be lifted up, the man falls; He that is high-minded, cannot be upright in his minde.

It may be questioned, Whence it cometh to passe, that the soule of man is so much and so often lifted up with pride? What causeth this swelling and heaving of his spirit? I answere,

First,
First, Some are proud of their birth, either, that they are born of great men, or that they are born of good men. The Baptist admonished the Jews of this piece of pride (Math. 3. 19.) Thinks not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our father. As if he had sayd, I well perceive what makes you (as we speake proverbially) stand so much upon your pantaflos? and talk within your selves, at such a rate of your selves, is it not because you are of Abraham's flock? But I say unto you, let not your heart swell with these thoughts; we are Children of Abraham; for God is able even of these stones to raise up children to Abraham; that is, God will not want a people, though he should lay you aside, and entertaine you no longer for his people.

Secondly, Others are proud of riches, yea they boast of the multitude of their riches (Psal. 49. 6.) Even they who desiere to hide their riches as much as they can, yet cannot but tell the world they are proud of their riches, so proud, that they slight and contemne all men that have not as much riches as they; O what rejoyclings have most rich men over their riches? Hezekiah a great King and a Good man (a rare conjunction) had much of that upon his spirit (Isa. 39. 2.) when Ambassadors came from Babylon, He was glad of them, and shewed them all his treasure; He affected they should see what a rich King he was, and what masses of Gold and Silver as well as what multitudes of men were at his command.

Thirdly, Many are proud of their honours and powers in the world; They are high-minded, because they are set in high places; 'Tis a dishonour to some great men that they have not truly great spirits. And 'tis the temptation of all great men to have proud spirits.

Fourthly, Not a few are proud of their bodily perfections and strength; many a soule is defiled and deformed with pride by the bodyes beauty and fairenesse; many look not after the beauty of holinesse, while they doat upon the beauty of their owne comelineesse; they see themselves in their beauty, till they are proud of it, and care not (which should be our greatest care, and shall be our greatest priviledge, Isa. 33. 17.) to see the King in his beauty. As some trust in their spiritual beauty (Ezek. 16. 15.) so others over-weene their corporall, both are the effects of pride; and the first is by so much the worse of the two, by how much it riseth from a better object. 

Fifthly,
Fifthly, Many are proud of their natural parts, proud of their gifts, proud of their wit, proud of their memory, proud of their eloquence and abilities of speaking. As knowledge it selfe puffeth up (1 Cor: 8. 1.) so doe all those endowments which serve either for the getting or expressing of our knowledge. Gifts and abilities, whether natural or improved and acquired, do not more fit us for service, then tempt us to and (unless grace workes mightily) taint us with pride.

Sixthly, As many are proud of what they have, so others are proud of what they have done, they are proud of their actions, their spirits swell with the thoughts of their owne workes. Some are so wicked, that they are proud of their evil workes. The Apostle saith, They glory in their shame (Phil: 3. 19.) David complain'd of many (Psal: 4.) who turned his glory into shame; but these turne their shame into glory, that is, they are proud of that for which they ought to be ashamed. Now if some are proud of the evil, of the mischief which they have done, how easily may we grow proud of the good which we have done? proud of our duties, proud of our righteous deeds, proud of our charitable deeds to men, proud of our prayers to God, proud of our zeale for God, as Jehu was who sayd, Come and see my Zeale for the Lord. The heart of a good man may sone have too much to doe with what he hath done, his thoughts may quickly worke too much towards and upon his owne workes. But as for hypocrites and selfe-seekers, who doe good to be seene of men, they cannot forbeare seeing it themselves, and surely that sight of the eye cannot but affect the heart with pride.

Seventhly, Pride riseth often from the success of what is attempted and done, men are proud of victories. The Assyrian is described (Isa: 10. 13, 14.) triumphing and insulting, because he had put downe the nations as a valiant man. And (Hab: 1. 16.) we have the Chaldeans sacrificing to their net, and burning incense to their drage, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plentiful; that is, they boasted of and gloried in their great achievements in warre; so it seemes to be explained in the next words (v. 17.) Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?

Eighthly, Pride springeth out of the very mercies and salvation of God. Thus 'tis sayd of Hezekiah (2 Chron: 32. 25.)
after he had received two great mercies; First, deliverance from a great enemy; and, Secondly, from a great sickness; He rendred not againe according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up. How lifted up? not in thankfulnesse, for he rendred not according to the kindnesse, but in pride and high-mindednesse; for presently it is said (v. 26.) Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himselfe for the pride of his heart.

Ninthly, The heart is lifted up and waxeth proud with Church-Priviledges; Some say, they are in the Church, or they are the Church; they enjoy pure ordinances and administrations of holy worship above others. For this kind of pride the Prophet reproved the Jews (Jer. 7. 3, 4.) Hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord, &c. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we; The temple of the Lord are these; As if he had sayd, Be not proud of the Temple (what we trust to, besides God, we are proud of) nor of your Temple priviledges, you will find no sanctuary, no security there, unless you amend your ways; these things will doe you no good, except you be better. The Jews were taxed also by the Apostle for such a proud cry. (Rom. 2. 17.) Thou makest thy boast of God; and can a man doe better then to boast of God? but they swell’d with pride, they did not rejoice with thankfulnesse, they contemnimd others, as if God were a God to them only, and saw somewhat in them above others, as the reason why he chose them for his people above others. This was pride of spirit, or spirituall pride. And againe to the Jew (v. 22.) Thou that makest thy boast of the Law; And is it not our duty to boast of the law or word of God? But the Apostle sayd, them proud of the Law, not obedient to it; He perceived their hearts were lifted up in their priviledge of having the letter of the Law, while both their hearts and lives were unconformed and un subdued to the spirituallnesse of the Law.

Tenthly, Pride is ready to rise in the heart of man from that divine light & those extraordinary Revelations which he receives from God; and it is hard to keep the heart under when God discovers very much of himselfe to man. This was Pauls case (2 Cor. 12. 7.) Lest I should be lifted up above measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given me a thorne in the flesh,
flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. Even Paul in that case needed a thorn in his flesh to let out or prevent the Impostum-
ination of his spirit. Some conceive the reason why the Prophet
Ezekiel is so often called, Son of Man, was to keepe him humble,
while he had many revelations from God.

Eleventhly, Some have beene proud not only of divine and
heavenly, but of diabolicall and hellish Revelations. We read
of one Theudas boasting himselfe to be some body (Acts 5. 36.)
This vaine man pretended revelations from God, which were
indeed from the Devill; And he swell’d with this conceit,
boasted himselfe to be some body, that is, he thought himselfe to
be every body; as if the perfections of all men were Center’d in
him, or as if all others were no body, and he himselfe the only
some body. The Apostle (Acts 8. 9.) speaking of Symon, who
had used forcery and bewitched the people of Samaria, saith,
He gave out that himselfe was some great one; he swell’d with
pride, from his diabolicall Revelations; giving out not only (as
Theudas) that he was some body, but that he was some great one.

Though indeed for a man to report himselfe some body, is (as both
learned Grecians and Latines noted in the Margin tell us) to re-
port himselfe a Great one. And who are greater in pride, then
they who make Great reports of themselves, or report them-
selves great?

How great a proneness there is in the heart of man to pride,
may appeare by all these instances; by which it appears that as
there is much pride abiding in man, so by all or any of these oc-
casions it is daily budding out, unless God hide it from man,
and nip it in the bud.

Yet here it may be questioned; Whence it cometh to passe,
that man is so prone to pride? or what is the spring of it?

I answer; First, Pride springs from Inordinate selfe-love,
(2 Tim. 3. 2.) Men shall be lovers of their own selves, Covetous
Boasters, Proud. They that are undue lovers of themselves, or
in love with themselves, they presently grow proud of them-
$p$. Selfe-love, and selfe-flattery, are glasses in which if a man
look upon himselfe, he appears double to what he is, or much
greater then what he really is. Selfe-love is a multiplying, yea
and a magnifying glasse. 'Tis dangerous to see our selves through
our owne selfe-love; That sight of selfe affects the heart with,
high
high thoughts of selfe, which high thoughts the Lord would have all men cast downe, or cast away, while he gives that admonition by his Apolistle to the Romans (Rom: 12. 3.) Let no man think of himselfe more highly then he ought to thinke (that is, let him not thinke highly of himselfe at all) but (as it followeth in the same verse) Soberly, or to sobriety. For indeed many are drunken, ye mad, or mad-drunkne with high, that is, proud thoughts of themselves. Hence that of the same Apolistle (Gal: 6. 3.) If a man think himselfe to be something, when he is nothing, he deceieth himselfe; he that thinks himselfe to be something, is he that hath proud thoughts of himselfe; and such a something, is a meere nothing, that is, is no such thing as he thinks himselfe to be; as is cleare in the case of the Church of Laodicea (Rev: 3.16.) Hence 

Secondly, Pride springs from an opinion that what we have is better then indeed it is; the proud man thinks all his silver gold, and his brass silver. We speak proverbially of such, All their geese are swans; they always over-rate their own commodities.

Thirdly, Pride springs from this false opinion, that what we have, we have it from our selves, or that 'tis of our own getting. The Apolstles Pride-confounding question, is, (1 Cor: 4.7.) What hast thou that thou hast not received? As if he had sayd, the true reason why men boaft, or the ground of all their proud boasting is this, they think not themselves beholding to any for what they have; all is of themselves, or by a selfe-improvement; they have somewhat (they imagine) which they have not received.

Fourthly, The proud man thinke what he hath, he alone hath it; at least, that he hath it in a greater measure then any other. He is the Cedar, others are but Shrubs, He is the Giant, others are but dwarves. Only the humble attaine that rule (Rom: 12. 10.) In honour preferring one another: as also that (Phil: 2.3.) In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better then himselfe.

Fifthly, Pride rieth from this thought, that what we have, we shall always have. Holy David began to be blowne up with pride, as soone as ever he sayd in his prosperity, I shall never be moved. Babylon glorified herselfe, having sayd in her heart, I sit a Queene, and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow, (Revel: 18. 7.) Secondly,
Secondly, In that God is here sayd to hide pride from man;

Observe.

Pride is a very vile and most odious sin.

If God hide it from mans eyes, then surelly God himselfe is of purer eyes then to behold it, and be pleased. (Psal. 138. 6.) The Lord knoweth the proud afar off; He that meetes a spectacle or person which he cannot endure to look upon, avoydes it, or turns from it while he is yet afar off; whereas if the object be delightfull, he draweth neer, and comes as close as he can; when therefore tis sayd, the Lord knoweth a proud man afar off, it shews his disdain of him, He will scarce touch him with a paire of tongs, (as we say) he cannot abide to come neere him. He knows well enough how vile he is even at the greatest distance. Pride is the first of those seven things which are an abomination to the Lord, (Prov. 6. 17.) And how abominable a thing pride is, may appeare further by these six Considerations.

First, The folly and Irrationality of pride, renders it odious to God; nothing is more odious to a wise man then folly, how odious then is pride to the most wise God! When Paul did any thing which had but a shew of pride in it, though he did it only upon Constraint, yet he calls himselfe foole for doing it (2 Cor. 12. 11.) I am become a foole in glorying, ye have compelled me. Doth not this intimate, that in Pauls opinion, all proud selfeglories and boasters are fools, that is, such as act below common sense or reason. In the Hebrew language, the same word that signifies boasting and pride, signifies folly and foolishnesse. The empty vessell yeilds the greatest sound; and they that make so great a noise of themselves, are usually nothing else but a Great noyse themselves, at least they unavoidably raise a fulpition of themselves, that they are but empty vessells, or shallow rivers. This was Solomons conclusion (Pro. 25. 27.) For men to search their owne glory is no glory; that is, a man obscures himselfe by selfe-glorying. How foolish, how irrational a thing is it for any man to glory proudly, when as by doing so he obscures that which is the chiefest glory of man as man, his reason; and seemes to put himselfe to the question, whether he be a reasonable creature yea or no.

Secondly, Pride is more abominable, because it is not only
the folly of man, but a robbery of God; nothing robs God of his
honour so much as pride. It is said (c. Jesus Christ (Phil. 2. 6.)
He thought it no robbery to be equal with God; He did not wrong
God in making himselfe his equal, himselfe being God. But if
men will match themselves with God, or are lifted up in their
spirits, (as proud men are beyond the line of man) this is a robb-
ery of God. Whosoever we take to our selves more then is
due, we take from God, yea we fleale from God. They who for-
get God the author and fountain of all they have, and take glory
to themselves, commit the worst kind of robbery, and are the
most dangerous Theeves. (Isa: 42. 8.) My glory will I not
give to another; therefore if any take glory to themselves (as
(I say againe) all proud men doe) 'tis flealeing, and 'tis not only
(as I may say) picking of his pocket, but the breaking open of
his Treasury, of his Cabinet, to carry away the chief Jewel of his
Crowne, so is his glory (Rom: 11. 36.) All is from him, there-
fore all must be to him; all is from the father of light, therefore
what light, what gifts, what strength ever we have, it must re-
turne to him in prayses, and in the glorifying of his name; we
may not deck or adorne our own name with it, nor put our name
upon it? How much soever we have we have received, it is from
the Lord; therefore 'tis extremally sinfull and sacrilegious to take
or keepe it to our selves. And as whatsoever good we have we
have it of God, so whatsoever good we have done, we have had
light and strength from God to doe it; naturall yea spiritual
strength, not only the first power of acting, but all subsequent
actings of that power are from God; therefore to have secret
lifting up of spirit, in our owne actings, is to rob God (Psal: 51.
15.) Open then my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy prai-
se, sayd David; As if he had sayd, Lord if thou wilt open my lips,
and help me to speak as I ought, I will not shew forth my owne
praise, nor boast of what I have either spoken or done, but I will
shew forth thy praise; because the opening of the lips is from
thee:

Thirdly, It is an abomination to be proud; for whatsoever
any man hath done, or how good soever any man is, he is no bet-
ter then he should be, and hath done no more then was his duty
to doe; he hath done but his duty to God, and his duty to man,
when he hath done his beft, he hath done no more; every man is
bound
bound to doe the good that he doth, how much soever it be that he doth; therefore it is both an ignoble and an abominable thing for any man to boast of what he hath done.

Fourthly, Is it abominable to boast of what we have done, seeing how much soever we have done, it will appeare upon a right and due account, that we have done leffe then we ought, and are much fhort of our duty, (Luke 17. 10.) when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, and have done but that which was our duty to doe. We can doe nothing but what is our duty, but all we doe is not the one halfe of our whole duty, and shall we glory as if we had obliged God by doing more then all!

Fifthly, It is an odious thing for any man to be proud of what he hath done, for God might have done it by another if he pleased. No man is necessary to God, as if his worke could not be done unleffe such a one doe it. He hath choyce of instruments, and is able to fit thofe for his businesse who are moft unfit of themselves. It is matter of thankfulnesse that God will call and use us to doe him any service, and enable us to doe it; God could have put his talent into another mans hand; the riches, the power, the wifdome, the learning, the parts which thou adteft by, he could have put it into other hands; he can make the dumb to speak, as well as the greateft speaker; He can make an Ideot, a Dunce, knowing and learned, as well as the moft knowing among the learned. Therefore the learned, the eloquent, have no reafon to be proud, but much to be thankful; He can make the weakeft to doe as much as the stongeft; therefore the stongeft have no reafon to be proud, but much to be thankful; He can raife Children to Abraham out of the ftones of the street; therefore the Jews must not be proud, or thinke that God is beholding to them for being his people; He can ordaine strength and his owne prafe out of the mouths of babes and fanclings (Psal 8. 2. Math: 21. 16.) therefore the wife and prudent have no reafon to be proud; but much to be thankful.

O remember, It is of Gods vouchsafement not of our defert, that we are admitted to his service.

Lastly, Pride muft needs be an odious thing, and that which God greatly abhorreth, because it quite croffeith the defigne of God in the Gospel; which is to keep the creature humble and low,
low, that he himselfe alone may be exalted; He will not beare it that any flesh shou'd glory in his presence; He that glorifieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Cor. x. 29, 31.) God will have his end upon all flesh, and therefore he will dreadfully glorifie himselfe upon thofe, who proudly glory in themfelves.

Further, The word by which man is expressed, from whom God hides pride signifying (as was fhewed) a ftrong mighty man, the moft accomplifhed and best furnished man.

Obferve, Thirdly.

Great men, wise men, rich men, are very {ubjeft to and often carried away by pride.

God therefore hides pride from them, because they lie fo open to the affaults of pride; our rising is oftentimes an occasion of our falling. And that which God gives man for his good, proves (by reafon of this corruption moftly) his snare. One of the Ancients speaking of Pride, faith 'tis the greatest sin for four reasons.

First, In the antiquity of it, because it was the first sin, the Devill's sin, before man sinned; that sin which he firt dropt into man to make him fall, was the sin by which himfelfe fell; he would be higher, and more then he was, and he provoked man to be fo too. 'Tis difputed what was the original of original sin, and the doubt lyeth between two, whether unbeliefe or pride had the preceodency in mans fall, (a quefion much like that, whether faith or repentance hath the preceodency in his rising) I fhall only state it thus; that which appear'd firt was unbeliefe; the woman put a peradventure upon the threatening of God in cafe of eating the forbidden fruit. But certainly pride was Contemporary with unbeliefe; man would needs lift up himfelfe beyond the state he had, and fo fell from and loft that estate.

Secondly, Saith he, Pride is productive of many other sins, tis a fountaine sin, a root sin, it nourifheth, nurfeth, and bringeth up many other sins; no man knoweth what sin may be next when pride is firt.

Thirdly, The greatnes of the sin of pride, may be argued from the ever-spreading of it; pride hath infected many mor- taly; and who can fay his heart is free from this plague, though poftibly it be not the plague (or {peciall matter sin) of his heart?

Pride.
Pride is an Epidemical disease, all labour under this sicknesse, and this sicknesse hath got the mastery over many.

His fourth reason is that of the text and point; Pride is a great wickedness, because usually it infects great men. They that are great in power, great in gifts, great in learning, great in any thing, are sure to be assaulted if not blemished and blasted with this sin, insomuch that it had been better for many to have been fools, then learned, low then high, meane then great, poore then rich in this world. There is a temptation in power, in greatness, in riches, in knowledge, in gifts, in the best things, to make the mind dwell, and the man that is stored with them proud. Pride is (as I may say) of a very high extraction, it was conceived in and borne by the now Apostate Angels, whose place, first estate (or principality, as we put in the Margin of the Epistle of Jude v. 6) was aloft in heaven. Angels were the neeref servants and attendants upon God himselfe, who calleth heaven the habitation of his holinesse, and of his glory; And surely the habitation which the Apostle Jude, in the same verse faith the Angels left, (and he calls it their owne, that is, that which was allotted and allowed them by God as their portion, this habitation, I say,) must needs be a very high and excellent one, as themselves by nature were in the highest classis or forme of creatures. Now as pride began from and had its birth in these high and noble spirits (which gave one occasion (though it be as hellish a lust as any in hell) to call it Heavenly by Nation) so the higher men are (who at highest are but dust) the more doth pride haunt them, and infinuate it selues to get a dwelling or seate in them, as the most proper and congeniall subjects which it can find here on earth it selues, with those of whom it first tooke possession and whom it made its first habitation, being for ever caft downe from heaven. Pride having once dwelt in those who were so high, loves still to dwell or take up its lodging (at last) in those, who upon any reference whether to naturall, civill, or spirituall things, are called and reputed Highest.

Observe, Fourthly.

God by various meanes, even by all sorts of meanes, gives check to the pride of man, he speaketh once, yea twice to man in a dreame, in a vision of the night, that he may hide pride from man.
Pride is a sin which God prosecutes both night and day; if speaking by day doth not mortifie it, speaking in the night by dreams shall. Nebuchadnezzar was full of pride, and God humbled him by a dream, and brought downe the haughtinesse of his heart by a vision of the night. This great Monarch of the world was so full of pride that he boasted it out (Dan. 4. 30.) Is not this great Babylon that I have builded for the house of the kingdom, and by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majestie? Now while he spake thus walking in the Palace of the kingdom of Babylon, there fell a voyce from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken. The kingdom is departed from thee, &c. And they shall drive thee from among men, And thy dwelling (who haft thought thy selfe more than man) shall be with the beasts of the field. The effect of this voyce Nebuchadnezzar had in a dreame, as appeares by Daniels interpretation of it in the former part of the Chapter. God shewed him in that dreame what his condition shoulde be, and he executed it upon him to the full, to pull downe his pride; That, he at last might know that the most High ruleth the Kingdomes of men, and giveth them to whomsoever he will. Whereas then he thought that he alone ruled the world, and could give kingdomes to whom he would. How wonderfully did God oppose the pride of Pauls spirit, he could not favour pride, no not in that eminent Apostle, Least through the abundance of revelations he should be exalted above measure, there was given him a thorne in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, (2 Cor. 12. 7.) that is, God used extraordinary means to humble him. As here. God is said to humble by visions, so there Paul being endanger'd to pride by receiving visions, God found a strange way to humble him, even by the buffettings of the messenger of Satan, who is the Prince of pride, and as (God speaketh of the Leviathan at the 43d Chapter of this booke, v. 34.) a king over all the children of pride, God doth so much resist pride, that he cannot but resist the proud (James 4. 6.) and scorne the scorners, (Pro. 3. 34.) yea he hath told us of a day (Isa. 2. 11.) wherein the lofty lookes of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

There are foure speciall pride-subduing Considerations.

First, They who are proud of what they have, are like to have
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 17.

no more. When the Apostle had said (James 4.6.) he resisteth the proud (he presently adds) but giveth more grace to the humble. As if he had said, Though the Lord hath given proud men much (for 'tis some gift of God, and usually a great one of which men grow proud) yet he will now stop his hand and give them no more. The Lord gives to them who are humble and praise him, not to those who are proud and praise themselves.

Secondly, Not only doth the Lord stop his hand from giving more to those who are proud, but often makes an act of revocation and takes away that which he hath already given. As he who Idly puts his talent into a mepkin, so he who vainly and vain-gloriously shews it, is in danger of having it taken away from him. It is as sinfull to shew our talent proudly, as to hide it negligently. Nebuchadnezzar boasted proudly of his kingdom, and presently it was said to him, The kingdom is departed from thee. Hezekiah boast of his treasure (Isa. 39.6.) and by and by the Lord told him, his treasure should be taken away, (though not immediately from him, yet from his posterity) and carried to Babylon. 'Tis so in spirituals, when we proudly shew our treasure, the treasures of our knowledge, or other gifts and attainments, the Lord many times, in judgement, sends them into captivity, takes them from us, and strips us naked of that cloathing and adorning whereof we are proud.

Thirdly, If God doth not take all away, yet what remains is withered and blasted, it dries up and comes to little; if it be not quite removed, yet it appears no more in its former beauty and luster. When God with rebukes correcteth man for (this) iniquity, he maketh his beauty (the beauty of his parts and gifts, yea of his graces) to consume away (as David expresseth it, Psal. 39.11.) like a moth. O what a dryness, and so a decayedness falls upon that soule from whom the soaking dewes and drops, the sweete influences of heaven are restrained! And surely if they are restrained from any, they are from proud men; no marvel then, if others see and they feele their witherings, and even sensible declinings every day.

Fourthly, Suppose the gifts and parts of a proud man continue florid and appeare still acting in their former strength, vigour, and beauty, yet God sends a secret curse upon them, and though he doth not wither them, yet he doth not delight in them, not
give them any acceptation. The best things how long soever continued to proud men, are no longer blessings to them; yea it had been good for them, that either they had never had them, or that they had been soone taken away. That as one sayd falsely of the life of man in generall, but truely of wicked men; It had been best for them not to have been borne, and their next best would be to dye quickly. So I may say in this case of proud men; It had been best for them they never had received any eminent gifts from God, and their next best would be to have them quickly taken away; For as wicked men in General (if they dye unconverted) the longer they live, the worser they live, and every day by adding new heapes of sin, heape up further wrath against the day of wrath; So proud men in special, the longer they have and hold their gifts, their riches, their honours, their powers, doe but abuse them the more, to the increase of their sin here, and. (without repentance) shame hereafter.

And therefore to shut up this observation, and the exposition of this verse, I shall only give some few directions or counsels for the cure of this soule-fickness pride, or for the pricking of a pride-fwolne heart, that so the winde, that noxious winde of ostentation, by which proud men are vainely puff up in their fleshly minde, may be let out and voided.

First, Let the proud man consider what he is; Some have asked blasphemously, What is the Almighty? as we saw at the 21th Chapter of this Booke: But it may well enough be asked, What is man that the Almighty should be mindful of him? (Psal: 144. 3, 4.) and may we not much more question againe, What is man that he should be so mindful of himselfe? David, a great king said to the Lord (2 Sam: 7. 18.) Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hither? Thus every man should say to himselfe, or put the question to his owne soule; Who am I? or what am I, that I should have a proud thought? All men indeed differ in some things, and some differ in very many things. Men of high degree, and men of low degree differ, men of knowledge and ignorance differ, learned and unlearned men differ. And it is not only, as I may say, a peice of heraldry, but a peice of divinity to keep up the differences of men. Yet what is any man, whether high or low, knowing or ignorant, learned or unlearned, that he should be proud? they all agree in this, they
they are all dust and ashes, they are all but as a shadow, or a vapour, they are all as grass, or as a flower of the field, and at their best estate (in the very height of their excellency) they are altogether vanity: How much soever men differ in other things, yet in this they all agree, or are all alike in this, they are all vanity. Then what is man that he should be proud? shall dust and ashes, shall a passing shadow, or a disappearing vapour, shall withering grass, or fading flowers, shall vanity itself be proud? The best of men at their best, are the worst of all these, why then should any man be proud? Yea I may put the question further, *How can any man be proud, who knoweth what man is?* and acknowledgest himself to be but a man. I will add yet further in this questioning way, *How can any man be proud who knoweth himself to be* (which is a more humbling consideration, than any of or then all the former) a sinfull man! We ought always to be humbled for sin, and shall we who are at all times sinning, be proud at any time?

Secondly, To cure pride of spirit, Consider what ever man is (as to this world) he cannot be long what he is. He that is high in the world, cannot be long in his worldly heights, he that is rich in the world, cannot long enjoy his worldly riches; yea knowledge vaniseth; all such kinde of knowledge, learning and skill as men now have, is a meere vanishing thing; man, in his highest perfections, is very mutable, and the higher he is, the more mutable he is; what hath he then to be proud of? We have some changes every day, and when a few dayes are past, we shall come to our great change; our change by death is but a few dayes off, for the utmost of our dayes are but few. As man is not to be accounted of by others, so not by himselfe, because *his breath is in his nostrills, and he may quickly perish* (Isa. 2: 22.) Shall perishing things be proud things? Shall they be lifted up with what they have, who (as to this world) have so little being, that they can scarcely be sayd to be. By this argument all men are called off from trusting those that are highest in this world (Psal: 146. 3.) *Their breath goeth forth.* And we have the same argument, not to be high in our owne thoughts, because our breath goeth forth, and there is an end of us.

Thirdly, Consider all those things which are as fewel and occasions of pride in man, even for those man must shortly give an account.
account. And surely he who remembers that whatsoever he hath, be it riches, strength, honour, parts, knowledge, or learning, he must come to a reckoning for it, that man will not over-reckon himself so much for it, as to be proud of it. The Apostle concludes, So then every man must give an account of himselfe to God, (Rom. 14. 12.) That is, of all his receits, and of all his expences, what hath been bestowed upon him, and how he hath improved what hath been bestowed. He must give an account of himselfe in his natural capacity as a man; and he must give account of himselfe in his civil capacity, as a rich or great man; and he must give account of himselfe in his spiritual capacity, as he hath enjoyed means to make him gracious, or to grow in grace. He must give an account of himselfe about all the good things he hath received, what good he hath done with them, either to himselfe or others. He that is serious upon such a meditation as this, shall finde two effects of it; First, it will keep him very busy, and free him from Idleness; Secondly, it will keep him very humble and free him from pride. Who can glory vainly in his Stewardship (for all we have is put into our hands as Stewards, who, I say, can glory vainly in his Stewardship) that alwayes hearers this voyce sounding in his ears, Come give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer Steward. O how ill an account will they make when they are asked, what they have done with their riches? who must answer, we have been proud of them; who being asked, what have you done with your honour, must answer, we have been proud of it; who being asked, what have you done with your knowledge? must answer, we have been proud of it. These will be sad answers in the day of account, yet proud men (whatsoever they have done with their receits) must make this answer, what other answer sooner they make.

Fourthly, Consider that the more any one hath received (and it is the degree upon which pride riseth the more, I say the more any one hath received) in any kinde whatsoever, the stricter will his account be; for the account will be proportionable to what the receipt is. (Luke 12. 48.) To whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more; where much is sowne, there God looks to reap much. He looketh not only for improving, but for suitable, for proportionable improvement. If he that had received
received five talents (Math: 25.) had brought only two talents more, and so made his five seven; this had not been proportionable; or if he that had received two, had made them three, this had not been proportionable; but he that received five, brought ten; and he that received two, brought four; This account was proportionable to the receipt; and therefore to thele their Lord sayd, well done good and faithful servants. God looks for doubling, (as I may say) that we should make his five ten, his two four. Therefore why should any man be proud of what he hath received, seeing the more he hath received, the more great and stricter will his account be.

Fifthly, That pride may be cured and hid from your eyes, I advise, That in the midst of your fulness, you would think of your emptiness, and in the midst of your perfections, of your deficiencies; think how much, and in how many things you are wanting, when any thought of pride ariseth concerning what you enjoy, or where-in you abound. He that thinks how much he is wanting, will not be proud how much soever he aboundeth; and indeed our wantings being a great deale more then our aboundings, and our imperfections then our perfections, should be to us greater matter of humbling, then our aboundings or perfections can be an occasion of pride. To cleare this further, Consider your deficiencies two ways; First, in your selves; consider how low you are in knowledge, how low in grace, how low in duty; remember that there is a great deale of darkness in the best of your light, a great deale of water in the best of your wine, and a great deale of dross in the purest of your silver; remember those weaknesses in your selves, and then say as blessed Paul (Phil: 5. 22.) I count not that I have already attained; that is, that I have attained perfection, i.e am very much behinde, very much below my duty, I am below what I might be and have attained to, both in the light of knowledge, and in the strength of grace. I am below what I might be attained to, both as to zeale for, and as to faith in God.

O how many are our deficiencies when we have profited most! Secondly, Consider your deficiencies in reference to others; The Apostle faith (2 Cor: 10. 12.) They who compare themselves with themselves are not wise. The reason why many think themselves over-wise, is, because they do not (as they ought) compare themselves with others; or if they compare themselves with others,
they compare themselves only with those that are below, not with those who are above themselves. They who compare themselves with themselves, or with those only who are below themselves, are not wise, though they think themselves very wise. If we would compare our selves with other men, who are above us, it would mightily keep down the pride of our spirits; for who is there but might see more in some, yea in many others then in himself? Now, as it is an excellent means to keep the soule from murmuring and discontent, to consider that many others are below us; so it is an excellent means to keep us from pride, to consider that many others are above us; so much above us, that our knowledge is but ignorance to their knowledge, our strength weakness, our faith unbelief, our patience unquietness of spirit, our very fruitfullness barrennesse compared with theirs; or to speak allusively, that our fat kine are but lean to the fat ones of others, and our full ears but withered looked upon with their full eares. And as it is a good means to keepe the soule humble or to cure it of pride, to compare our selves with men who are much above us, so especially, if we would but remember how much God is above us, in comparison of whom all our fullness is indeed emptinesse, our strength weakness, our riches povertie, and our light darkness. And therefore when Job (Chap. 42.) began to compare himselfe with God, and to set God before him, then he was in the dust presently; though he spake over-valuingly of himselfe sometime, yet when once he came to set himselfe before God, then saith he, I have spoken once, but I will speak no more; I abhorre my selfe, and repent in dust and ashes. And when the Prophet Isaiah saw the Lord in his Glory, and compared himselfe with him, he cryed out, I am undone, I am a man of poluted lips; all his graces, and all his gifts vanished into nothing, when he considered the Lord before whom he stood. Thus we may keepe downe pride by considering our deficiencies, and comparing our selves with others who are above us, especially by comparing our selves with God, to whom we are not so much as a drop of the bucket to the whole Ocean, nor the dust of the ballance to the body of the whole earth.

Sixthly, For the hideing and keeping downe of pride, often reflect upon your own sinfullnesse; our defects in good may keepe our hearts low, but our abundance of sinfull evills may keepe them
them much lower. While we consider sin in a two-fold notion, how should it humble us? First, as dwelling or abiding in us; Secondly, as acted and brought forth by us in either of these ways; look on sin, and the heart must needs come downe; thus poysen may expell poysen, the remembrance of sin abiding in us and acted by us, may be a stop to the further acting, as of all other sins, so especially of this sin, pride.

Seventhly, Let us be much in the meditation of Christ humbling and abasing himselfe for us. What can kill pride, if the humblings of Christ do not? O how may we schoole and catechise our proud soules with the remembrances of Christ in his abasements! What! an humble Christ, and a proud Christian! an humble Master, and a proud Disciple! did Christ empty himselfe and make himselfe of no reputation, and shall we who are but emptinesse be lifted up with a reputation of our selves, or with the reputation which others have of us; did he abase himselfe to the forme of a servant, and shall we lift up ourselves, as if we reigned as Kings! he humbled himselfe and became obedient to death, even the death of the Croffe; and what have we to glory in but the Croffe of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 6. 14.) if we have any thing to be proud of, 'tis the Croffe of Christ, God forbid (faith Paul) that I should glory (or rejoice and triumph) save in the Croffe of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby I am crucified to the world, and the world to me. Think often and much of the humblings of Christ, and then you will think of your selves as meere nothings. This is the most effectuall means, through the Spirit, to bring downe the swellings of our hearts, and to hide pride from man. Thus much of the second designe of Christ in speaking to man in dreames and visions of the night; the third followeth.

Ver. 18. He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

This verse holds out another gracious intendment of God, in revealing himselfe to man by dreames and visions of the night. He doth it thereby to give man warning and wisdome to prevent and escape that destruction which is ready to fall upon him.

He keepeth back his soule from the pit.
Some referre this He to man himselfe, that is, when God hindereth pride from man, then man keepeth his soule from the pit, that is, thereby man is both admonished and instructed how to keep his soule from the pit. They who avoyde the mountains and precipices of pride, are most assured of escaping a downe-fall into perdition. Solomon tells us (Prov. 16. 18.) Pride goeth before destruction, and a high mind before a fall; such a fall as Eliphaz here speakes of, falling into the pit; therefore turning from pride is the escaping of the pit.

But rather (as most Interpreters) the relative (He) referres to God himselfe, who both begins and perfects this great work of Grace; As he speakes with a purpose to withdraw man from his purpose, &c. so he having effectually withdrawne him from it, and hid pride from him, he thereby humbleth him in the dust of repentance, and so keepeth back his soule from the pit.

The word rendred, keepeth back, notes a threefold keeping back: First, by force, as a man holds another from falling into a pit, or running into danger; he holds him whether he will or no. Secondly, there is a holding or keeping back by persuasion or entreaties; by reasonable advice and counsel; so Abigail kept David from shedding blood (1 Sam. 25.) Thirdly, there is a holding or keeping back by authority, when a Command or an injunction forbids a man from going on, and so stops his proceeding. Thus we see there is a keeping back, either by outward force, or by counsel, or by command. And there is a keeping back according to any of these three notions, two ways. First, such a keeping back, as hinders the very attempt, such a keeping back, as stops the first motions, or step into an undertaking. Secondly, there is a keeping back when a man is deeply engaged in an undertaking, when he is gone on and is neere the journeys end of his owne purpose. Thus David was kept back from destroying Nabal when he was far advanced in that enterprise; and Abimelech was kept back from taking Sarah Abrahams wife when the matter had made a very great progress in his spirit. Both these ways we may understand it here, though chiefly, I conceive, in the latter. Sometimes God keepeth man, either by his power, or by perswasions and commands sent to him, from setting so much as one foot forward in any sinfull way leading to the pit; yet often he suffers him to goe on a great way, and when he is advanced far
far towards, yea is near, very near to the pits' brink, even ready to drop into it, then, then the Lord graciously keeps his soul from falling into it. This word is used in the negative twice to set forth the high commendation of Abraham (Gen. 22. 12. 16.) When God had commanded Abraham to offer his Son, and he was so ready to doe it, that presently God tells him, *Now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld (or kept back) thy Son, thine only Son from me.* Abraham might have had many reasonings within himselfe to keep back and withhold his Son from being a Sacrifice, but, faith the Lord, *thou hast not withheld or kept him back,* There the word is used in the negative, as also upon the same occasion at the 16 verse of the same Chapter. And so by Job (Chap. 7. 11.) Therefore *I will not refraine (or keep back) my mouth.* It is as hard a matter to keep back, or hold the mouth in, as it is to keep back a head-strong horse with a bridle. Therefore the Holy Ghost useth that Metaphor (Psal. 39. 1.) But faith Job, *I will not refraine my mouth,* I will not keep it back, let it take its course, *I will speak in the bitterness of my spirit.* The word imports powerfull acting, take it either in the negative or affirmative. When the tongue is kept back, tis done by a mighty power of grace, and O how great as well as gracious is that power, which the Lord putteth forth to keep back a poor soul that is going, going apace too, from falling into the pit. *He keepeth back his soul from the pit.*

But doth the soul fall into the pit? I answer, first, The soul is often in Scripture (by a Synecdoche) put for the whole man; *He keepeth back his soul,* that is, he keepeth him from the pit; secondly, possibly tis said, *he keepeth his soul from the pit,* to teach us that man by running on in sin, ruines his best part, it is not only his body, and his skin that he destroyeth by sin, but his very soul, 'Tis a mercy that God telleth us aforehand the worst of that danger, and the greatness of the hazard, or how great a matter we venture upon evill wayes and workes. *He keepeth back his soul from the pit.*

What pit? The word is rendered variously. First thus, *he keepeth back,* variously, *back corruptio, mois.*
back his soul from corruption. The word is used for corrupting by
sin (Gen. 6. 12.) And God looked upon the earth, and behold it
was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; that
is, all men were grown wicked and stark naught. In the very
next verse (ver. 13.) The same word is used to denote cor-
rupting by punishment due to sin; Behold I will destroy (or cor-
rupt) them with the earth; that is, I will destroy the face of the
earth, or deface the beauty of the earth, and I will also destroy all
men from off the face of the earth. Secondly, the Septuagint ren-
der, He spares his soul from death. Thirdly, the Caldee Para-
phrase (as we) He prohibits his soul from the pit; these three,
corruption, death, and the pit are of near alliance; and the same
word in the Hebrew tongue signifies corruption; the pit, and death.
The pit (or grave) is the place of corruption and the seat or house
of death. We find the pit and destruction put together (Psal.
55. 23.) they shall go to the pit of destruction; So then the same
word may well serve to signify a pit, corruption and death; be-
cause in the pit dead bodies or carcasses putrifie and corrupt.
Yet David prophesying of Christ speaks his assurance of escaping
corruption, though not the pit or grave. (Psal. 16. 10.) Thou
wilt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption, or the pit. It is this
word; that is, thou wilt not suffer him to corrupt in the pit of the
graves; though being dead, was buried and laid in the pit, yet he
did not see corruption in the pit. That is, corruption had no power,
no mastery over him; for he loosed the bonds of death (it being
impossible that he should be held by them) the third day, yea
with the first of that day, or as soon as it might be truly said that it
was the third day; Christ was buried in the latter part of the
fifth day of the week, and arose early the first day of the week,
even when it did but begin to dawn towards the first day of the week.
(Math. 28. 1.) And therefore seeing as naturalists (according to
Scripture evidence, Job. 11. 39.) testifie corruption doth not
naturally take hold of the body till the fourth day after death. The
dead body of Christ was altogether free from corruption, or
Christ (as was fore-shewed by David in the Psalme) saw no
corruption.

Further, this word pit, is taken not only for death, the grave, and
corruption; but for those contrivances and plots which are made
and laid for any mans death or destruction, Thus David said of
his
his malicious and subtle enemies (Ps. 7. 5.) Into the pit which they have digged, themselves are fallen; that is, they are taken in their own plots; Those words of the Psalmist are an allusion to Hunters or Fowlers who make pits to ensnare birds or beasts; we must not imagine that there were pits literally made for David, but the pit was a plot or a contrivance to doe him mischief, and he blessed God that as himself had escaped that mischief, so that the mischief-plotters and contrivers were taken with it themselves. We have David speaking againe under the same metaphor (Ps. 9. 15.) The Heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made. And (Psal. 35. 7.) Without cause they have hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause have they digged for my soul; that is, they have laid a plot to undoe and destroy me. And if we take pit in this sense it may hold well enough with the scope of the Text; for what is the pit, into which pride and evill purposes thrust in full man, but that mischief and misery which Satan is continually plotting against him? And from this mischiefous plot it is that God delivereth man, while 'tis said by Eliahu, he keepeth back.

His soul from the pit.

Some expound the word soul in this former part of the verse, in opposition to life in the latter part of it, and his life from perishing by the sword. Soul and life are sometimes taken promiscuously, or indifferently for the same thing; yet there is a very great difference between soul and life; the life is nothing else but the union between soul and body; but the soul is a spiritual substance distinct from the body while remaining in it, and subsisting it self alone when separate from it. That bond or knot which ties soul and body together, is, properly, that which Eliahu speaks of in the next words.

And his life

As God keeps back his soul from everlasting destruction, so his life from temporall destruction. Though the soul be most precious, yet life is very precious; skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life (Chap. 2. 5.) 'Tis therefore no small mercy for God to keep back a mans life.
From perishing by the sword.

The sword is put sometime for warre, that being the principal instrument of warre; some insist much on that sense here, as if the words contained a promit of being kept from perishing by the sword of an open enemy. But the sword is here rather put for any kind of for all kinds of hurtfull evills; what ever doth afflict, vex, or destroy may be called the sword. The text strictly in the letter is thus rendred, and his life from passing by or through the sword, we say, from perishing by the sword; which passing by the sword is not to escape the sword, but to fall by the sword. Thus 'tis said of that idolatrous King Ahaz (2 Kings 16. 3.) He caused his sons to passe through the fire, the meaning is not that he delivered them out of the fire, but consumed them in the fire; for he made them passe through the fire to Molech, which was a sacrificing of them to that abominable idol. It is also said (2 Sam. 12. 31.) when David took Rabba and destroyed the Ammonites, he made them passe through the brick-kilne, not to save them, but to consume them. Some conceive that this brick-kilne through which David made those captive Ammonites to passe was the fire or furnace of Molech; that infamous Idol of the Ammonites (with whose bloody and most cruel devotions the apostatizing Jews or people of God, were in after times ensnared.) And if so, then they might see God turning their sin into their punishment; and declaring his fiery wrath against them in that, by which they had declared their foolish and abominable zeal. But that which I quote their punishment for, is only the forme of its expression; He made them pass through the brick-kilne; that is, perish in it. Thus here, and his soul from passing by the sword, is rightly translated from perishing by the sword. The word rendred sword signifieth also any missive weapon, or weapon cast with the hand, especially a dart; so Mr. Broughton translates, and his life from going on the dart. The general sense of this verse is plainly this;

The Lord withdraweth man from his purpose, and hides pride from man, that so he may in mercy preserve him from perishing both in body and soul, or that he may keep him not only from the first, but from the second death, which is the separation of the whole man from the blessed presence of God for ever. 'Tis a great favour to be kept from the pit where the body corrupts, or from the sword that wounds.
wounds the flesh, but to be kept from that everlasting woe which shall overwelm the wicked in that bottomlesse pit or lake of fire and brimstone, this is the highest favour of God to lost man. This is the pit, this the perishing from which (saith Elihu) the Lord keepest back the soul and life of man.

First, from the emphasis of the word, be keepest back, import- ing, that God, as it were by strong hand or absolute authority and command, keepest the soul of man from the pit.

Note.

Man is very forward to run upon his own ruine, even to run upon eternall ruine, if the Lord did not hold, stay, and stop him.

Man would tumble into the pit, at the very next step, if God did not keep him. The way of man naturally is downe to the pit, and all he doth of his own self is for his own undoing: And as he is kept back from the pit, so (as the Apostle Peter hath it, 1 Epift. 1. 5.) he is kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

Secondly, considering the sealon signified in the former verse, that when man is going upon an evill work, or walking in the pride of his heart, God is keeping him from the pit.

Note.

While man hath sinfull purposes and pride in his heart, all that while he is going on to destruction, both temporall and eternall.

Every step in sin is a step to misery, and the further any man proceedeth on in sin, the further he wanders from God; and the further he wanders from God, the neerer he comes to misery. As the further we goe from the Sun, the neerer we are to the cold, and the further we goe from the Fountains, the neerer we are to drought; so they that haft to sin, haft to sorrow, yea to hell. Solomon faith of such, they love death. There is no man loves death under the notion of death, there is no beauty, no amiableness in death; but all they may be said to love death, who love sin, and live in it. Every motion towards sin, is a hastning into the armes and embraces of death, sinners wooe and invite death and the grave, yea hell and destruction.

Thirdly, note.

The warnings and admonitions which God gives to sinfull man, whether waking or sleeping are to keep him from perishing, to keep him from temporall, to keep him from eternall perishing.
This is the great end of preaching the Gospel, the end also of press'ng the terrors of the Law; both have this aim to keep man from perishing. When man is press' to holiness, and when he is re-prest from the ways of sin, 'tis that he may not perish for ever. God hath set up many ordinances, he hath imployned many instruments to administer them; many thousands goe up and downe preaching to the world, and crying out to the sons of men, repent and beleue, beleue and repent; and why all this cry, but to keep souls from the pit, and their life from perishing by the sword? The Apostle Jude exhorteth to save some with fear, and of others to have compassion, that is, terrifie some that you may save them, make them afraid that they may not be damned; save them with fear, plucking them as it were out of the fire. Sinners are running into the fire, and do not perceive it; they are tumbling down to hell and consider it not; they must be pulled out of the fire, else they will burn in it for ever. The great business of the Gospel is to pull souls like firebrands out of the burning.

Fourthly, note.

They who turn from their evil purposes and the pride of their hearts, escape wrath, the pit, and the sword.

The wages of sin is death, and well are they that escape, that misse such wages. If a sinner turne from his purpose, from his sin-full way, if his pride be subdued and he emptied of himself, then his soul is kept from destruction, and his life from perishing by the sword.
He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.

So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.

His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out.

His soul draweth nigh unto the grave, and his life to the destroyer.

The context of these four verses, containeth a description of the second means, which the wisdom of God is pleased often to use for the humiliation of man, and for the discovery or revelation of his mind unto him. He speaketh in a dream, in a vision of the night, as was shewed before, he speaketh also by pains and sicknesses, as is now to be considered.

Ver. 19. He is chastened also with pain.

That particle which we render also, gives the text an emphasis (He is chastened also.) For it imports, that here is a further addition or supplement of means, whereby the Lord doth awaken sinners to attend and obey his voice. The subject of these four verses, is a sick man, or, the sickness of man. A sorrowful subject. And the sickness of man is set forth in these four verses, by four sad symptoms or effects.

The first is pain, grievous pain, ver. 19: He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.

The second symptom of this sickness, is loss of appetite, and his nauseating all manner of food (v. 20.) So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.

The third symptom of this sickness is a general languishment or consumption all his body over (v. 21.) His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out.

The fourth and last symptom of this grievous sickness is fainting,
ing, swooning, or a readiness to expire and give up the ghost (v. 22.) His soul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyer; That is, he is sick, and even sick to death. All these are speciall symptoms of a sick man, or of the sickness of man. I begin with the first.

Ver. 19. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed.

The word which we render to chasten, hath a twofold signification in Scripture.

First, to reprove or convince both by authority and reason (Lev. 19. 17.) Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke him; or, reproving thou shalt reprove him; that is, Thou shalt sureely reprove him. And in that famous Prophecy concerning Christ (Isa. 11. 4.) He shall reprove with equity; we put in the margin, He shall argue with equity, or convince by such reasons and arguments as shall carry the greatest equity in them. Thus when Christ had finished his Sermon on the mount, it is said (Math. 7. 28, 29.) The people (his Auditors) were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes. This Sermon carrying so great a reproose of the Scribes and Pharisees, both as to their life and doctrine throughout, may well be expounded as a fullfilling of that ancient prophecy; it being confessed in another place of the Gospel, even by the Officers that were sent to attach him (John 7. 46.) Never man spake like this man. The words of Christ had so much evidence, so much equity in them, that they who came to take and catch him, were taken and caught, if not to conversion, yet to such a conviction, by what he spake, that they could not (though they highly displeased their Masters in saying so) but say, Never man spake like this man; As if they had said, Surely, the man that spake thus is more then a man.

Secondly. The word often signifies to correct, which is also to instruct; correction is for instruction. Chastening is the most reall reproving. And so we render it, He is chastened. Man is instructed not only by speech and counsell, but by stripes and corrections. Thus David prayed (Psal. 6. 1.) O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. The first word which we render rebuke, is that in the text; As if he had said, Lord doe not rebuke me by angry affictions, let me not find thee greatly
greatly displeased, and my selfe sorely chastened at once. He depre-
cates the same againe, and how grievous the effects of such dis-
penations are, he sheweth (Psal: 38, 1.) Reuoke me not in thy
wrath. (Psal: 39.11.) When thou with rebukes dost correct man
for iniquity; (He means it not only of word-rebukes, but of
hand-rebukes also, when thou with such doubled rebukes dost
chaften man for iniquity.) What then? The effects of it follow,
even the staining of the glory of all flesh; Thou makest his beauty
to consume away like a moth. And so some interpret that (Psal:
105, 15.) He reproved Kings for their sakes? (speaking of his
owne people) the Lord did not only speak to those Kings, but
made them feel his hand, for his peoples sake. Abimelech felt
his hand for Abrahams sake. And so did Pharaoh that hard-heart-
ted King in a whole decade of plagues for Israels sake, whom he
had oppressed and would not let goe. We render the word in
this second sense, for a rebuke by blowses or by correction, which
yet hath a language in it, and speaks with a loud voyce to man:
He is chastened

with paine upon his bed.

Paine is both the concomitant, and effect of sickness. The
word noteth, First, the paine of the body, caused either by the
violence of inward distempers, or from the outward stroake of a
wound (Gen: 34.) When the sons of Jacob had prevailed with corpore vel
the Shechemites to receive Circumcision, It came to passe on the animo.
third day, when they were sore, or pained with the wound of it,
Simeon and Levi came upon them (Gen: 34, 25.) Secondly, the
word signifieth as bodyly paine caused any way, so paine of the
mind, which is griefe or sorro (Psal: 69, 29.) I am poore and
sorrowfull. Sorrow is alwayes the effect of paine, either outward or
inward, either of the flesh or spirit; yet the wounds of the spirit
cause the greatest paine; for of that Solomon faith, (Pro: 18, 14.)
Who can bear it? The same Solomon (Pro: 14, 13.) speaking
of a wicked man in his highest jollity, faith, In laughter the heart
is sorrowfull. His conscience aketh (if he have an awakened con-
science) even while he laugheth; and surely while the heart is
sorrowfull and pained, laughter yeeldeth little pleasure. We may
take paine in this text in both senses, but specially in the former.
The sick man is often pained in mind, but alwayes in his body.

He:
He is chastened with pain

Upon his bed.

There he used to have rest, but being sick his bed becomes restless to him. To be upon the bed is a paraphrase of sickness; that of Christ (Luke 17:34). There shall be two in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other left, as it may be meant of any two bedfellows (especially of husband and wife) in their health, so some take it principally of two in a sick bed; Grace takes hold of one and not of another upon a sick bed. I insist not upon that sense, though it be a probable and a profitable one. But surely to say, A man is chastened with pains upon his bed, implyeth, the man to be in extraordinary pain; as to say, such a man keepes his bed, implyeth, he hath more then an ordinary sickness, or that he is very sick. We have three expressions in our language gradually setting forth the sickness of a person; First, we say, he keepes his house. He that is not well doth not goe abroad, sickness househath him. Secondly, we say, he keepes his chamber; that's a further degree, when sickness hath brought a man up stairs, and shut him in his chamber, he is sick indeed. Thirdly, we say, such a man keepes his bed; The meaning of which every one understands to be, that he is dangerously or extreamly sick. Thus when Elihu saith, He is chastened with pain upon his bed; we may conceive him so ill, that either he must not, or is not able to fit up. And Elihu in speaking thus, seemes to have relation to what Job had sayd (Chap. 7:13.) When I sayd my bed shall comfort me, and my couch shall ease my complaint; Then thou scarest me with dreames, and terrifiest me through visions. As if he had sayd, O Job, thou hast indeed hast had recourse heretofore, to thy bed for refreshing and comfort, in silent meditations and soliloquies with God, but he terrifiz thee with dreames, and speak to thee by seeing visions, to turne thee from thy purpose. And not only so, but finding thee dease to those admonitions, or not regarding them, yea still continuing thy unquiet murmurers, he hast now even made thee bed-ridd, or unable to rise from thy bed. Though Elihu spake here in the third person, yet in all his speech he intended and pointed at, yea set forth and pointed out Job's condition. He is chastened with paines upon his bed.

And the multitude of his bones with strong pain.
A man may have paine, yea many paines, yet no paine in his bones. Bones are to the body as beames and rafters, as posts and pillars are to a house. And when paine comes to the bones, when it shakes those posts and pillars, it must needs be a very strong paine. Satan sayd to God concerning Job, while he fought new tryalls for him, in the second Chapter of this Book (vers. 5.) Touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And that he might be fully tryed, the Lord suffer'd Satan to afflict him to the bone, nor did Satan leave a bone unafflicted; what Elihu spake here of man in General, was true of him, The multitude of his bones were chastned with strong paine. To have any one bone in paine is an affliction, much more to have many bones pained and aking at once. But when the multitude of a mans bones, that is, all his bones are pained together, that's grievous. And such a man is the while as it were upon a rack. That by the multitude of bones here spoken of, we are to understand, not only many, or a great many of his bones, but all his bones, may appear from (Job 4. 14.) where Elihu describing those terrible visions with which God sometime visitid him, faith, A spirit passd before my face, the haire of my flesh stood up, &c. which made all my bones to shake. We put in the margin, The multitude of my bones. The multitude of his bones are all his bones, he hath not so much as one bone free. The whole systeme of his bones is as it were confounded and disjoynted. The multitude of his bones is chastned with strong paine.

The word paine, is not express'd in the latter part of the verse; the Hebrew is, The multitude of his bones with strong paine. Mr Broughton renders thus, And all his bones with a sore one. The word which we translate strong, signifieth two things; First, as we render, strength or might (Psal. 74. 15.) Thou driedst up mighty rivers; God dried up the river Jordan for his people to passe through, yea and the red Sea. Secondly, the word signifieth perpetuall lasting or continuall. So some render that place in the Pfalmes, not strong or mighty rivers, but he dried up everlasting or perpetuall rivers, such as had always run with a full streme, and were not like those deceitfull brookes (spoken of in the 6th Chap. of this book (v. 15th) to which Job compared his Brethren) which in winter over-flow the bankes, but in summer, what time they
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They waxe warme, they vanish when it is hot, and are consumed out of their place. Now, in this place, I conceive, we may take the word in either sense, either for strong and great or chronicall, and lasting paine. The man is so sick that he hath no good houres, no comfortable intermissions, his paine continteth. And because the word paine is not in the text, therefore it hath caused severall renderings of these words, yet all meeting in the same sense.

First, Some joyne the word strong to bone, or make it an epithet of the mans bones. Though the multitude of his bones be strong, that is, though he were once a strong man, found and perfect all over, or as we say, found wind and limbe, not crazy, not having the least flaw in him, yet he is chastened all over with paine.

Secondly, Others thus, in the multitude of his bones, or, in all his bones there is a strong one, that is, a strong paine or griefe feizeth and possesseth all his bones.

Thirdly, Thus, The contention of his bones is strong; the word which signifieth a multitude, being alike in the letters with another which signifieth contention or strife, hath given occasion for this reading; that of David is neere the same, There is no rest in my bones (Pial: 38, 3.) As if Elihu had sayd, the paine and anguish by which God doth contend with all his bones is strong, or God hath a strong controvertie with his bones upon his sick bed.

Lastly, The vulgar translates, He makes all his bones to wither, decay, and rott. When there is a consumption or a withering among the bones, how intolerable is the paine! Broken bones cause the acutest paines, but decaying bones the most constant paine. Withering bones are oppossed to fainted bones in that promise made to him that farts spiritually, not carnally only in abstaining from flesh (Isa. 58, 11.) The Lord will make fat thy bones; As if he had sayd, Doe not feare that thou shalt pine by spiritual fasting, I will make fat thy bones. Which is true even in regard of that which is naturally, the Lord reneweth bodily strength to those who humble themselves soule and body. The body shall not suffer in this service of the Lord, if the soule be truly afflicted in it. Yet when he faith, he will make fat thy bones, it respects especially their spiritual strength, that thrives best in a day of holy abstinence and fasting. Here, when 'tis sayd, their
their bones shall wither through paine, it notes the declining of the whole body, because as the bones are strong in themselves, so they are the strength and support of the whole outward man. When God smites the bones, then he shakes the pillars and rafters of our earthly house, and threatens the downfall of it. He is chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.

Taking these words in connection with the former, where Elisha spake of those dreames and visions by which God speaks to man, and supposing (as there he doth) that because the man is not well awakened by those dreames and visions from his security, therefore the Lord sendeth paine and sickness upon him, as a second meanes to humble him, and make him understand himself.

Observe.  
They that will not be instructed by dreames, that is, by gentler meanes, shall be instructed by paines.

They who will not take instruction, even in their sleep, shall be taught by that, which will keep them awake. Several Scriptures tell us of the Lords proceeding with man from words to blows. And if the Lord proceeds from dreames (which are warnings in sleepe) to blows, if when he hath spoken to us in a dreame, we hearken not, he will chasten us with paine, even the multitude of our bones with strong paine. And then much more will he proceed from words to blows with them that are warned to awake, if they heare not and take warning. That’s an awakening word to those who sleepe waking (Psalm 7, 12, 13.) If he turn not he will whet his sword: He bath bent his bowe and made it ready. If men will not returne upon word-admonition and reproofe, the Lord hath his arrowses and his sword to reprove them with. Turne ye at my reproofe, faith the Lord (Proverbs 1, 23.) I give you warning to turne, but if you doe not, then (as presently it followeth) I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your feare cometh. As you have seemed to mock at my counsels, so I will shew you no pity, as you have shewed me no respect. Thus the Lord deales with proud rebellious man, who calleth off his yoke, yea sometimes he deales very severely with his owne people (for they may put him

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to it) if words will not serve their turne (words in sleepe, and words when awake) they may expect blowes next; and be made to see the hand of God, because they have not understood or not obeyed his will.

Secondly, From the manner of expression, He is chastened with paine upon his bed. The Spirit of God useth a word referring to instruction both by hearing and speaking, to shew that there is a voyce in the rod.

Hence note.

The chastifements of God upon us are our documents.

When God sends sickness and grievous paines, he reproves sinners from Heaven and chides them for the errors of their lives. The chastenings of the Lord are speakings. He speaketh by his rods beyond all the eloquence of words (Mic. 6. 9.) Hear ye the rod. The voyce of God is in his rod; that speaks so loud from Heaven in many strokes, that the prophane sinners on earth are sometimes forced to hear and acknowledge it. As those Magicians were forced by the plain evidence of the fact to say (Ez. 8. 19.) This is the finger of God; So they must say, This is the voyce of God. He speaks to us, and speaks to purpose in these afflictions: The voyce of God in affliction, exceeds all the rhetoric and persuasions of mortall men. The cross is a schoole, in which they who are dull at hearing what God speaks to them in his word, are wonderfully quickened up by his rod. The words of the wife (faith Solomon) are goads. And surely these goads of affliction are pricking piercing words, for the promoting and putting on of a lazy soul in Gods worke. Job had desired God to speak with him, Elihu answers, Why dost thou desire more answers or directions from God? Hath not God spoken to thee in these sore and sicknesses, in these chastishments, with pain upon thy bed? Is God wanting in thy instruction? Hath he not clearly told thee his mind and thy duty? Hath he not written, yea engraven his will upon thy diseased flesh? What are the paines, the corruption, the consumption, the strange deformity, and sad transfiguration of thy body, but as so many voyces of God, speaking and speaking aloud to thee, repent and humble thy selfe? Therefore attend, hearken to and meditate upon the answers which he hath impressed or printed legibly upon thy head, face, and wrinkled...
led forehead. Thou haft his answer his own way, therefore be satisfied, and doe not stand desiring that God would answer thee after thy way, nor complaining because he doth not. And we may reply not only to obstinate sinners, but to many of the people of God, when they enquire what the mind of God is, or what he intends towards them. His providences give you many items and memorandums; which if you can spell out and read you may know his meaning. This lesson, the signification of the word offers us as the connection of the words offered in the former.

Thirdly, learn hence.

Man is a poor crazy creature subject to all diseases and infirmities.

Yea, he is not only subject to them, but he is the subject of them. His body is as it were a vessel of natural corruption, as his soul is a vessel of moral corruption. Man is called not only Adam, noting the matter of which he was made, earth, red earth; but he is called Enos, that is, sorrowful, sighing, groaning man, he is a pined and a pining man. He is also called Abel, vanity, a poor vain man; which two latter Titles have befallen man since man fell from God.

Fourthly, (which may check the grosse Atheisme of many.)

Observe.

Pain and sickness come not by chance, nor are we to stay in nature for the cause of their coming.

They come not at all by chance, nor doe they come altogether from natural causes. Nature hath somewhat to doe in their coming, but somewhat else much more, even so much more, that in respect of that, natural considerations may be quite shut out, and the whole cause ascribed to that. But what is that? Surely, nothing else but, and nothing less than, the will of God. He is pleased to give commission to pains and sicknesses, and then they come. Elihu would teach Job (what he owned before) that God was the sender and orderer of all his afflictions, as of the losses he had in his estate and children; so of the pains and sicknesses which he felt in his body. Moses tells the children of Israel, not only that sword and captivity, but the Pestilence, Consumptions, Fevers, and burning Agues are sent by God himself, (Deut. 28, 21, 22.)

What
What are diseases but the Lords Messengers? When he pleaseth he can trouble the temper and cause the humours of the body to corrupt. He can make them contend with one another to the death, let Physicians do what they can to quiet and pacifie them. Yea though some skilfull Physicians have kept their own bodies in so due a temper, and so exact a diet, that they could not see which way a disease could take hold of them, or have any advantage against them, yet sickness hath come upon them like an armed man, and carried them away to the grave.

Further, When Elihu faith of the sick man, the multitude of his bones are chafsted with strong paine.

Note.
No man is so strong, but the Lord is able to bring him down by pain and sickness.

He that is strong as an Oake, and hath (as it were) a body of braffe and sinews of iron; yet the Lord can make him as weak as water. The Lord hath strong pains for strong men, and can quickly turne our strength into weakness. Thus Hezekiah lamented in his sickness (Isa. 38. 13.) I reckoned till morning that as a Lion, so will he break all my bones. God can arme diseases with the strength of a Lion, who not only teareth the flesh, but breaketh the bones with his teeth. David faith (Psal. 39. 11.) When thou with rebukes doft correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth, surely every man is vanity.

The word there rendered beauty signifies desire, thou makest his desire, or that which is most desirable in him to fade away; we well translate beauty, because beauty draweth the desires of man after it, and is so much desired, yea lusted after by man. Now, as when the Lord doth but touch the body, he can make the beauty, so also the strength of it to consume away as a moth.

Sixty, whereas it is said, He is chafsted with pain upon his bed.

We learne.
The Lord can make those things easelesse and restlesss to us, which use to give us most ease and rest.

He that being up is weary, weary with walking, riding or labouring, hopeth to find ease in his bed, yet then doth pain deny him rest.
rest there, and filleth him (as Job complained, Chap. 7. 4.) with tossings too and from to the dawning of the day. The Lord can make the Stocks or a Rack easy to us, and our beds as uneasie to us as the Stocks or a Rack usuallie are.

Lastly, observe.

The purpose of God in chastening man with sickness, is to teach and instruct him, not vex and destroy him.

The Lord hath many designs upon man when he afflicts him, about all which he instructs him by affliction. He designes

First, To humble and break the stoutness of man's spirit; hence sicknesses and afflictions are called humiliations; and the same word signifies both to be afflicted and humbled.

Secondly, To make men taste how bitter a thing sin is; This is thy wickedness (saith the Lord of his former Judgements brought upon his people Israel (Jer. 4. 18.) Because it is bitter. Ye would not taste the evil or bitterness of sin by instruction, therefore I will teach you by affliction.

Thirdly, To put sorrowful sinfull man upon the search of his owne heart, and the finding out of the error of his wayes. While men are strong and healthfull, they seldom finde leisure for that worke. And therefore they are confined by sickness to their houses, to their chambers, yea to their beds, that they may attend it, and read over the whole book of their lives (Lam: 3. 39, 40.) Wherefore doth the living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin; let us search and try our wayes, and turne to the Lord. That's man's worke upon his bed; and 'tis God's aime in binding him to his bed, that he may have liberty for that worke.

Fourthly, Afflictions are design'd by God to bring man out of love with sin, yea to stirre up a holy hatred and revenge in him against it; as upon many other accounts, so upon this, because it rewardeth him so ill, and he finds such unavoury fruits of it. A little digging will discover sin to be the root of all those evill and bitter fruits, which we at any time are fed with in this world. Sin is the gall in our cup, and the gravel in our bread, and we are made to taste bitterness and finde trouble, that we may both know and acknowledge it to be so.

Fifthly, The purpose of God in afflicting us, is to set us a praying to and seeking after him. We seldom know our need.
of him, till we feele it. (Hos. 5. 15.) In their affliction they will seek me early; affliction pursues man upon supplication, yet every man who is afflicted, doth not presently seek God (many in their affliction mind not God, they seek to men, not to God, a crose without a Christ, never made any seek God) but affliction through the workings of the Spirit of Christ, is a means to bring the soule to God; and we see the effect of it at the beginning of the next Chapter in the same Prophet (Hos. 6. 1.) Come let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heale us, \\n
Sixthly, God is pleased to exercise us with crosses, for the exercise of our Graces, or to set grace aworke; Grace hath most business to doe when we are taken off from all worldly business, and are laid upon our bed, our sick-bed. Some worke is not done so well any where else, as there. And many graces worke best when 'tis worst with us; they would even stand still, and have nothing to doe, if God did not bring us into straights, or keep us for a season in them. In a sick-bed the Lord shews us, and we may find work enough for all our graces, especially for faith and patience, and submission of spirit to his worke and will. We may doe better worke (and doe it better) in sickness then in health.

Seventhly, God brings many upon their sick-beds, to teach them the worth of health, and make them thankfull for it. They who are seldom sick, are as seldom thankfull for their health, and scarce reckon that for a mercy, the want whereof, they have never felt. 'Tis rare that we prize what we have, till we have it not.

Eighthly, God exerciseth many with sickness, with a purpose to put men upon a holy purpose of improving their health better, and of doing more for God while 'tis well with them.

Lastly, no few are afflicted, that God may have an opportunity to doe his worke, and declare his power. God himself would be hindered of much glorious work, in restoring and recovering them to health, did he not chasen them upon sick beds. The question was put about the blind man (Joh. 9. 3, 4.) who did sin, this man or his Parents that he was born blind. Jesus answered neither hath this man sinned nor his Parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. If there had not been a blind man in the world, how could the power of God have been made manifest in giving sight to the blind? if some were not extremly

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torturingly sick, how would the power of God be seen in healing the sick, and rebuking their paine? For all these purposes, Man is chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine. We never profit by chattenings, till we answer the purposes of God in sending them, and unless we know what and which they are, we can never answer them. If we answer these nine touched upon, we shall either answer all, or, to be sure, we shall baulke or refuse none. Elihu having thus shewed us the sick man in paine, proceeds to shew us what further effect his paine and sickness wrought upon him.

Verf. 20. So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soule dainty meat.

This verse sheweth the second effect of sickness. The former was paine, This is loss of appetite, or nauseousness.

His life.

That is, his living body; We may call the sick mans body a living body, though it be hard to say whether we should number him among the living or the dead. We read life put for the body which liveth, or whereby it liveth. (Psal. 88. 3.) My soule (faith Hemam) is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave; that is, I am ready to dye, and my body to be buryed. He doth not say, he hath no great stomack to, but his life abhorreth bread.

The word here used is of a Syriack derivation; nor is it found in any where in Scripture but here. The sonne signifieth any thing that is filthy, excrementitious or uncleane; whence the verbe is rendered to abhorre, loath, or nauseate; because we abhorre those things which are filthy or uncleane. His life abhorreth bread.

That is common food. Sometimes bread is put for all kind of dainties, as David sayd to Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9. 10.) Thou shalt eat bread at my table. But because of that opposition in the text to dainties, by bread, we may here understand only ordinary food; His life abhorreth bread.

\[Y y\]
and his soule dainty meat.

The Hebrew is, Meat of desire. Not only such meat, as men usually desire for the wholesomeness of it, but such as curious palates desire for the pleasantness of it; such meat is here meant; Yea thirdly, such meat as the man had a desire to before his sickness for the suitableness of it to his owne taste and appetite, he then abhorreth.

His soule abhorreth dainty meat.

The turning of the stomack, and losse of appetite, are usuall symptomes of sickness; Almoft all sicknesses weaken the appetite, and some take it quite away, so that the patient not only hath no desire to, but loathes dainty meal, or meat of desire. This phrase or forme of speaking is used (Dan: 10. 3.) I (faith he) ate no pleasant bread, or no bread of desires (as we put in the margin) neither came fleshe nor wine in my mouth. Tis used againe (2 Chro: 32. 27.) Hezekiah made himselfe treasuries for silver and gold, &c. and all manner of pleasant jewells; we put in the Margin, for all jewells of desire. So (Amos 5. 11.) Pleasent vineyards, or vineyards of desire. It was the manner of the Hebrews to expresse pleasant by desirably, because pleasant things are much desired. His soule abhorreth meate of desire, or dainty meate.

Hence note.

First, 'Tis a mercy to taste our meat, or to take the comfort of what we eate.

Many have meat, but cannot taste it. That which giveth the best taste to our meat, is a taste of the goodness of God in it. (1 Pet: 2. 1.) If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. It is sweet to taste meat and the goodness of the Lord together.

Secondly, Note.

God can quickly make those things that are most desirable to us, dainty meat, meat of desire, loathsome to us.

Some abhor meat, because they have eaten of it long. The Jews did eate Manna and Quailes till they loathed them (Num: 11. 20.) Others loath meat, because they have eaten over-much. A third sort, loath some meat by a natural antipathy against it.

Fourthly,
Fourthly, Others loath wholesome meat out of a curiosity, because it is not dainty enough. Lastly, Sicknes causeth a loathing of all meate, even of the most dainty and desirable meate. And the Lord at any time can make that which was our desire, our loathing. We have a like description of a sick man (Ps. 107:18.) His soule abhorreth all manner of meat, and draweth neere unto the gates of death.

Thirdly, Note.

The best of Creature-comforts are but vaine comforts.

What can dainty meat doe a man good, when he is sick and ready to dye? Then gold and silver, lands and houses, which are the dainty meate of a covetous man, are loathsome to him. When a man is sick to death, his very riches are staples and taffles to him; wife and children, friends and acquaintance can yeild little comfort in that dark houre, yea they often prove milerable comforters: When we have most need of comfort, these things administer least or no comfort at all to us. Is it not our wildome then to get a stock of such comforts, as will hold and abide fresh with us, when all worldly comforts either leave us, or become taffles to us? Is it not good to get a store of that food, which how sick soever we are, our stomacks will never loath? yea the ficker we are, our soules will the more like hunger after, and feed the more heartily upon. The flesh of Christ is meat indeed (Joh. 6:55.) Feed upon him by faith, in health and in sickneffe, ye will never loath him. His flesh is the true meat of desires, such meat as will fill and fatten us, but never cloy us. A hungry craving appetite after Christ, and sweeter satisfaction in him are inseparable, and still the stronger is our appetite, the greater is our satisfaction. And (which is yet a greater happiness) our soules will have the strongest appetite, the most sharp-set stomacks after Christ, when, through bodily sickness, our stomacks cannot take down, but loath the very scent and sight of the most pleasant perishing meate, and delicious earthly dainties. Looke, that ye provide somewhat to eat, that will goe downe upon a sick-bed; your sick-bed meat is Christ; all other dainty food may be an abhorring to you.

Further, Not only are we to consider the sickness of the body, as the cause of this tattlesness and litesness after bread. But
we are to consider the sick man abhorring dainty meate, under the
hideings of Gods face, or in feares about his spirituall state; as
appeares by that which followeth, If there be a messenger with him,
an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightnesse,
or to set him right in his spirituall state, &c. The sick man for
want of that as well as for want of health, can taste no sweetnes in
the rarest dainties.

Hence note,

A sense of divine displeasure, or the hideing of divine favour
from the soule, renders all outward comforts comfortlesse to us.

If a man have never so much health, yet the appearances of di-
vine displeasure will make him sick of his most pleasant things.
Carnall men can eat and drink, and live upon pleasures, yea upon
the pleasures of sin, and goe on merrily with them a while, be-
cause they know not the meaning of the displeasure of God, nor
doe they know what the favour of God meaneth; they under-
stand not what they want, yea they flatter themselves that they
have enough, and are well enough, though they have nothing, and
are nothing, that is of any worth. But if God once awaken them
out of this dreame, and shew them their cursed condition, all
will be gall and wormwood to their taste, or as gravel between
their teeth. As the sense of divine favour makes bitter things
sweet, and sorrowfull things comfortable to us, the sorer herbs of
affliction dainties to us; So not only common but dainty meate, all
the cares and viands of this world will be not only tastles but bit-
ter to us when God frownes upon us. An earnest in the love and
favour of God is the good of all good things.

For the close of all, take these two Countells, upon the occasi-
on of these words.

First, Receive your bread and dainty meate with prayer and
thanksgiving; you may quickly else come to abhorre your bread,
yea and your dainties. The word and prayer both sanctifie and
sweeten all creature-enjoyments.

Secondly, Take heed of abusing your meate; ye may quickly
be brought to a loathing of it. When they who have given them-
selves up to luxury and intemperance lye upon their sick-beds
and find their stomacke turned from all their dainties, it will be
most grievous to them to consider how they have abused their
dainties
dainties to feed their lusts. As some who abuse the creatures are punished with the want of them, so others with an abhorrence and loathing of them.

So much for this second symptome of sickness, *His life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.* The third followeth, and appeareth in the general decay and languishment of the sick mans body.

**Vers. 21.** *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen, stick out.*

In this verse and the next, Elihu still insists upon his description of the sick mans condition, and in them he gives us two other sad effects or symptomes of his sickness.

First, The generall wall and consumption of the body (vers. 21.)

Secondly, The utmost perill of life (v. 22.)

Elihu describes the first effect of sickness (the first here but the third in order) by two things.

First, By the disapearing of that which used to be seene, and appeare very faire and beautifull; the visible part grows (as it were) invisible, *his flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen.*

Secondly, By the appearing of that which used not to be seene; his invisible parts (not so in their own nature, but as to their place, I say, his invisible parts) grow visible, *his bones which were not seen, stick out.* Thus with much elegancy he sets forth the sorrowfull and deplorable estate of the sick man.

*His flesh is consumed away.*

As if he had sayd, Before his sickness he was full of flesh, fair and faire, but falling into sickness, he falls away, and is worse, (as we say) to skin and bones; *his flesh is consumed.* Flesh, in Scripture, is taken two wayes.

First, Improperly, and Tropically.

Secondly, Literally or Properly.

In a Tropicall and Improper sense, *flesh* signifieth our sinfull corruption (Gal. 5. 17.) *The flesh evermore lusteth against the spirit,* that is, the unregenerate part in man against the regenerate.
These two are always contending and combating with one another in all those whom Christ hath conquered to himselfe. Happy are they that finde their flesh, in this sense, consuming away; and this is that which every man is studying (who knows what godliness means:) the consumption of this flesh, even the mortification of his lusts, of pride and earthliness, of wrath, envy, and unbelief.

Secondly, flesh by a figure is put for the whole natural body, consisting of many parts dissimilar to flesh. Thus the Psalmist complained in prayer; that, the Lord had given the flesh of his Saints, to the beasts of the earth (Psal. 79. 2.) that is, he had exposed their bodies, through the rage and cruelty of their enemies, to the teeth and bowells of savage and ravenous beasts.

Thirdly, flesh is also put for the whole man consisting both of soul and body. (Gen. 6. 12, 13.) The Lord saw that all flesh had corrupted their ways. That is, all men (who are made up of a body and soul) had corrupted their ways by letting loose and acting their sinful corruptions.

Fourthly, flesh is sometimes put for that which is best in man, his greatest natural perfection, whatsoever in him is lefse then grace, whatsoever is highest in him, below the spirit, is called flesh in Scripture. When Peter (1. Math. 16. 17.) had made that blessed confession which is the rock upon which the Church is built (thou art Christ the Son of the living God) presently Christ tells him flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, that is, the highest, and the most perfect piece of nature hath not taught thee this lesson; the Evangelist faith of all true believers (who have received this power (or priviledge) to become the sons of God) they are borne not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh (Joh. 1. 13.) that is, the best of the creature, contributes nothing to the bringing forth of new creatures, the sons of God.

Fifthly, flesh by a figure is put for all that in religion, or in the worship of God, which is outward, or open to the eye; whatsoever comes under any humane observation, is but the flesh of Religion, or the flesh of worship. In this sense the Apostle puts the question (Rom. 4. 1.) What shall we say then, that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? What he means by the flesh, he tells us in the next words, he was not justified by works, that is, not by any thing that did appear, nor by any thing done to him or done by him. He was not justified by Circumcision, or by
by the use of any externall rite, he was not justified by his own righteousness, or obedience to the Law. The same Apostle also calls the very worship of the Gospel, as to the outward part of it, flesh (Phil. 3. 3.) For we are the Circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. That is, in any outward work or privilege which we have in our Gospel state. All this flesh likewise ought to be consumed in our apprehensions, that is, we must make nothing of it, nor reckon it any thing in our account for justification in the sight of God or acceptance with him.

Secondly, Flesh properly taken is that integrall and similar part of the body, which is opposed to blood and bones, to veins and sinews. When Elihu saith his flesh is consumed, we are to understand it either in this proper sense, or in the second figurative sense before named, as flesh is put for the whole body; his flesh is consumed, that is, his flesh in opposition to his bones spoken of before, or his flesh that is his outward man.

Is consumed.

The Originall word signifies to wax old; for as when a man recovers from sickness, his flesh is said to returne like the flesh of a child. So when he is under the extremity of any sickness, his flesh, as it were, waxeth old, or withereth like the flesh of an old man. Thus it is translated (Lamen. 3. 4.) My flesh and my skin hath he made old; that is, though I am not old in yeares, or how young soever I am, yet God, by many sufferings, hath made me look like an old man; I am decayed and weake. David speaking of wicked worldly men, tells us, (Psal. 49. 14.) Their beauty shall consume in the grave; As death and the grave make a totall and final consumption of the beauty of bad men, that is, of all that splendour and bravery wherein they lived, while they lived in the body; so paines and sicknesses do exceedingly consume the body, and eate out the flesh. As a tyrannicall oppressor eates out the people under his government, in which sense this word is applied (Dan. 7. 25.) Or as a garment is worn out by time and using. The flesh is often in Scripture compared to a garment, and dying to uncloathing; because when we dye we put off the flesh. The garment of the flesh, that beautifull garment waxeth old and weares out apace on a sick bed. Sickness not only staineth and
and abateth the beauty of it, but wasteth it deeply, to that, as it followeth

it cannot be seen;

Or as Mr Broughton renders, his flesh wasteth away from sight, or he hath no flesh left to be seen.

Again, When it is said, his flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, some expound it thus: His flesh is so consumed away, that the seer withdraweth from it; or no man cares to see it, that is, the sick man is so discoloured and wan, that visiters and spectators start and are almost frighted to looke upon him. The flesh of man in a healthfull and flourishing condition, is a lovely spectacle, and draws beholdes, but the flesh of a very sick man is a gaftly spectacle and a regret to the beholder. We love not to see that which we doe not like. Beauty attracts, deformity withdrawes the eye. It is layd of Jesus Christ himselfe, that he was so deformed by his sufferings (Isa: 52. 14.) that many were astonishe'd at him (his vesture was so marred more then any man, and his forme more then the fons of men) and (Isa: 53. 3.) we bid as it were our faces from him, he was despised and we esteemed him not; that is, he was so diu-figured by sorrow, that no man cared to look upon him. Thus it is often with the sick. And this is a profitable and a probable senfe of the text in hand: His flesh is consumed away, and then he who before delighted to see it, is troubled at the sight of it, or is rather affrighted then pleased in seeing it.

There is yet a fourth reading, which further aggravates the sick mans consumption; His flesh is consumed in sight; that is, say some, his flesh doth consume so fast, that a man may almost see him consume; as we say of some plants, they grow so fast, that we may, almost, see them grow; so we may say of those that decline and fade much, we may see them consume, their flesh consumeth even to the eye or to view. He that lookes steadfastly upon them, may see them fade and wither like a flower, yea they seeme to fade by his looking or fixing his eye on them.

Hence note.

First, The flesh of man is a very fading and declining thing.

It quickly consumes and drips away in a disease; A violent fever or any other acute disease, dries up the spirits and drinkes up
up the moysture, and how soone doth such a man decay! and as the extremity of a disease, so extreme want of food or famine consumes the flesh. Hunger having nothing to eate, feeds upon the flesh of the hungry, till all be eaten up. We read (Lam: 4.8.) how rudely famine dealt with the flesh of those delicate Nazarites, who were purer then snow, whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then rubyes, their polishing was of Saphire; yet the next words tell us, Their visage is blaker then a coale, they are not knowne in the streets, their skin cleaveth to their bones: it is withered, it is become like a stick. And though a man escape sicknesse, and famine doth not eate up his flesh, yet time (that great eater) will, old age will waft what famine and sicknesse have not toucht. As the Prophet threatened, what the Caterpillar hath left, the Canker-worme shall devour; so what sicknesse leaves, time will certainly consume. Thus bodily flesh is every way liable to a consumption; and therefore the Prophet being commanded to cry, and putting the question, what shall I cry, had this answer, All flesh is grasse. (There indeed flesh is taken in the most comprehensive notion, as to all externalls; not only the flesh of the body, but all the riches, honours, and dignities of this world, come under the name of flesh there.) All flesh is grasse (Isa: 40. 6.) But why doth he call it grasse? 'Tis founded under a two-fold consideration. First, for the greenenesse and fairenesse of it, God hath put beauty upon this fadinge flesh, both for the comfort, and for the tryall of man; that flesh is faire as a flower, is matter of delight; and to abstract our thoughts or weane our hearts from that which is faire and delightfull, is matter of tryall. How hardly are we taken off from affecting flesh, our owne or others, while this grasse continues beautifull and greene! Secondly, Flesh is grasse, because soone gone (as it followeth in the Prophet) The grasse withereth and the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord (or his breath like a blaffing East winde) bloweth upon it; Which yet some expound more spiritually, of the Spirit of God discovering the vanity and mutability of all earthly things to the soule, for that presently causeth the gayest and best of them to wither or be as a withered flower before our eyes. In which sense David sayd (Psal.: 119. 6.) I have seen an end of all perfection. Take flesh in the largest sense, and 'tis a consuming thing; The fashion (or scheme) of the world passeth away, and so doth the fashion of all those
those perfections, or most perfect enjoyments, which are but of a worldly birth and extraction. Flesh under every forme is a fading thing, especially the flesh of the best-form'd face & body of man. Whence take these six inferences. If the flesh the fairest outside of man be a fading thing, then

First, Be not desirous, much less ambitious, to make a faire show in the flesh; for it may prove but a vaine show, and at last not so much as a shew. Flesh may so consume away, that it cannot be seen. When the Apollie tells us of some, who desire to make a faire show in the flesh (Gal: 6. 12.) he specially means it of those that brave it and boast themselves in the outward part of religion, and would appear much in the forme; 'Tis a most vaine thing to desire, to make a faire show in the flesh of spiritual things, as hypocrites and formalists doe; And 'tis a very vaine thing to desire to make a faire show in the flesh of corporall things, as proud and vaine-glorious men love to doe. Many desire to make a faire show in the flesh of their bodyes, they love to have faire faces, and faire skins, to be fairely drest and deckt, is a great part of their care. But take heed of desiring to make a faire show in this or in any thing that is called flesh. For when you have done all, flesh will be a nothing; And after you have bestowed much cost upon the flesh of this body, that it may be seen, a sickness may come and consume it, that it cannot be seen.

Secondly, Take heed of priding your selves in the flesh, when your flesh (possibly unsought by you) makes a faire shew; Though you have beauty, and the goodliest structure of body that ever was seen, though you have riches and honour, the highest built estate that ever was enjoyed, what have you to be proud of? will it not consume and moulder away? may it not melt like a snow-ball, or like wax before the fire? be not proud of any thing called flesh, how goodly a sight soever it is to the world, for in a little, in a very little time, there may be nothing of flesh left in sight. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen.

Thirdly, Be not over-carefull to provide for your flesh, the outward man, this body, or any thing that concerns it. As the Apollie utterly forbids us to make provision for the flesh, to fullfill the lusts thereof (Rom: 13. 14.) that is, those lusts that are exercised in the flesh; so, be not much carefull, nor at all unduly care-
carefull to make provision for your flesh, to satisfy the necessities of it; for'tis but a perishing thing. Be not carefull what you shall eate and drinke, and wherewith you shall be clothed, as Christ himselfe adviseth (Math: 6.) The flesh that you prepare for your flesh, is not more perishing then the flesh for which it is prepared. Meates for the belly and the belly for meates, but God shall destroy both it and them (1 Cor: 6. 13.) It will not be long before there shall be an end both of the meate that is eaten, and of eating meate.

Fourthly, If the flesh may soone be so consumed by the hand of God that it cannot be seen, then be not unwilling to wait and consume your flesh which is seen in working for God, or in doing good worke, which is the worke of God; your flesh may consume upon worse termes quickly, then working for God, why then should you be unwilling to consume it in Gods worke? Are not some so tender of their carkeffe, and their skin, that they are afraid (though that feare be their shame and sin) of taking too much paines in the worke of God, left they should dammage their bodyes, endanger their health, and consume their flesh? This flesh will wait with idleness, is it not better to wait it by industry in usefull services? The Apostle was willing to spend and be spent in the service of the Corinthians; That is, he was willing to spend not only his purse and his paines, but to be spent as to his bodyly strength, health and life. He cared not for his owne flesh, so he might be serviceable to their spirits, and promote their spirittuall good, (2 Cor: 12. 15.)

Fifthly, Be not unwilling to waste and consume your flesh in duty with God; as the flesh consumes in work for God, so in duty with God, in prayer and fasting and selfe-humbling, these are duties with God. Some are afraid of taking too much paines in these foule-workes with God, left they hurt their bodies, their flesh. We can never lay out our strength, or bring our flesh to a better market, we can never put it off at a higher rate (if it must be put off) then in wayes of communion with God. Yet let us remember we have a promise, that our bodyes shall thrive as well as our soules, even in those duties of communion with God, which are most expensive and severe to our flesh, prayer with fasting. (1Sa: 58. 61.) And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soule in drought, and make fat thy bones. Which though
it may have a more spiritual meaning, yet there is a truth in it as to the point in hand. Holy Fastings, which is a soul-fasting duty (as all agree) is under a gracious promise, that it shall also be a body-fasting, yea a soul-fasting duty. Now, though we have a good assurance, that while we are trading with God for the gain and encrease of our souls, our bodies shall not waste nor be losers, yet we should be ready to waste and wear off the flesh from our bodies for the gain and encrease of our souls.

Sixthly, Why should we be unwilling to offer our flesh to be consumed by the fury of men, or by the rage of flames in the cause of God, seeing it may ere long consume by sickness and not be seen? Why should we be afraid to let our flesh consume or rot in prisons, or by tortures for Christ, seeing a disease will doe it, and hath often done it? Thousands of the blessed Martyrs, and suffering Saints, have rejoiced they had flesh to consume when God called them to it. So some interpret that Scripture before mentioned (2 Cor. 12. 14.) where the Apostle professed, I am willing to be spent for you (how spent? as an offering or sacrifice by fire) in the service of your faith, and in bearing my wittnes to those truths of the Gospel which I have preached to you. And indeed, he in that sense, spent his flesh at the last, he suffered death, and let his flesh fall, in holding up and holding out the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is better that our flesh should be thus consumed (if God call us to it) then that we leave it to be consumed by age or sickness, by worms or rottenness. How freely should we offer up this flesh to so noble a consumption, seeing we cannot keepe it long from so mean a consumption, doe what we can?

Secondly, Note.

Sickness is a consumer; sickness is a consumer of all that will consume.

It consumes the body, and it consumes the purse, yea it consumes all our worldly comforts and concernsments, it consumes every thing but grace. We say, A time of sickness is a spending time; the usual reference of that expression, is to spirituals. In health we gather grace and lay up truths, which we spend in sickness. But though sickness be a spending time, yet, it is not (I am sure, it ought not to be) a wasting time to grace and spirituals.
Spirituals. A spending time it is, that is, a time wherein a godly man

may lay out a great deale of his spiritual stock and heavenly treasure, a great deale of faith and patience, a great deale of sweet contentation and self-submission to God. But sickness is not a wasting time to any of these graces or heavenly treasures; yea where grace is real and active, it is not only not waited or consumed, but encreased and improved, occasionally, by sickness; God having promised, that all things shall work together for good to them that love him (Rom. 8. 28.) will not suffer the best things of those that love him (their graces) to take hurt by the worth of bodyly sicknesses. Sickness doth only dammage the body, and deface the beauty of the flesh; and it quickly doth, as Elihu affitnme of his sick man in the text, His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be scene, yea, as it followeth.

And his bones that were not scene, stick out.

Flesh and bones are the two eminent materials of this faire and most regular building, the Body of man. The Bones of a healthy and strong man, are not scene because they are covered with flesh; they are only felt or perceived through their clothing, skin, and flesh. God hath put these very comely and beautiful garments as a covering upon our bones: but sickness pulls away these coverings, it pulls away the cloaths from our bones, and makes them appear, as it were, naked. When the fat is dript away, and the flesh is spent, the bones seeme to start out. We commonly say of a man that hath been consumed by a lingering sickness, He is a very Skeleton, he lookes like an Anatomy, which is nothing else but a pack of bones, the flesh is gone. Thus David mourned (Psal. 31. 10.) My life is spent with griefe, my yeares with sighing, my strength faileth because of mine iniquity: and my bones are consumed. The sin-sickness of a sensible soule consumes the bones, more than any bodyly sickness. This was not only the consuming but the breaking of David's bones (Psal. 51. 8.) And as his sorrow for his owne transgressions, so his sorrow for the afflictions of Sion, had the like effect in him (Psal. 102. 3, 4.) My days are consumed like smoke or into smoke, (they vanish like smoke) and my bones are burnt as a hearth. My heart is mitten, and withereth like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread: By reason of the voyce of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin. Some:
Some read this Text, *His bones are diminished*, leflened, wafted, or broken in pieces, as if the consumption reached not only his flesh but his bones too. That's a fierce disease which at once invadeth and wafteth the bones. The word which we render to *stick out*, significeth in the Syriack Idiom, the abating leflening or breaking of any thing into lesser parts or pieces. And so those words (*are not seen*) in the text (which according to our translation refer to the time of health, when a man is so fat and full fleshed, that his bones cannot be seen, scarcely felt, those words I say) are referred according to this translation to the time of sickness, which is supposed so to diminish and waft the bones, that by an ordinary image of Rhetorick they are said, not to be seen. *His bones are diminished, they are not seen.* We also render this word in that first propheticall word concerning our restoraying by Christ (Gen. 3. 15.) by bruising, *It (that is the woman's seed) shall bruife thy head (that is the Devill) and thou shalt bruife his heele.* When bones are bruifted, and as it were shuffled together, they cannot be seen in their proper places, or as once they were fixt by nature. This various reading doth not vary the generall sense of the Text; but only heighten and encrease it. We render fully and significantly, *his bones that were not seen, stick out.*

Hence note.

*There is no man so strong, there is nothing in man so strong that can stand out against the strength of sickness.*

Our bones are not made of brasse, sickness will diminish them, and pain mafter them.

Secondly, Whereas 'tis said, *His flesh (that was seen) is not seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out, or are seen.*

Observe.

*Sickness makes a wonderfull change in man."

It puts that out of sight which was seen, and it brings that in sight which was not seen; This holds true, not only as to that which is naturall in man, his flesh and bones, of which this text treats in the letter; but 'tis true also as to that which is morall and spirituall in man, his virtues and his vices, his graces, and his lufts or corruptions. How often is the flesh (in a morall sense) that is,
is, the outward profession of a hypocrite consumed in sickness, and no more seen; will the hypocrite always call upon God? (Job 27. 10.) He will not. He that doth all to be seen (that's the character of a hypocrite (Math. 6. 5.) will in a little time do such a little or rather such a nothing in Religion, that it cannot be seen at all. His profession is sick, when he is sick; and then also that which was not seen sticks out; the hypocrite covereth many of his corruptions, his impatience, murmuring, and unbelief, in a day of prosperity with the skin at left or fair shew of faith, but in aday of trouble those dead bones appear, and stick out. A day of sorrow, sickness, and trouble is a great discoverer; it occasions the appearance and sticking out of many base lusts that were not seen before. 'Tis so also in the better way with godly men, their corruptions that appeared upon them before, are abated, wafted, and consumed by affliction, and many of their graces which lay hid and unseen, stick out, and appear gloriously in a day of trouble, or upon a sick bed. Their patience & submission of spirit under the hand of God, their long-suffering and sweet self-renunciation to the will of God, which lay hid, shew themselves. Sickness and affliction make wonderful changes and discoveries both as to the outward and inward man; 'tis seldom seen or known either how good or how bad any man is, till he is in paine, or reduced to some extremity; till his very bones are vexed, or till, as Elihu further describes the sick man in the next verse.

Ver. 22. His soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to the destroyer.

When the disease is at the height (as Physitians speak) then the sick man's soul draweth nigh unto and is ready to goe downe into the grave. But doth the soul goe to the grave? I answer, the soul, here, as frequently in Scripture, is put for the person; as if he had said, the man draweth nigh to his grave; The soul being the noblest and most princely part of man, is honoured with the denomination of the whole man; or, because all the world is nothing to us (as Christ told his Disciples (Math. 16. 26.) if we lose our souls, therefore man is spoken of as if he were nothing, but a soul (Gen. 14. 19.) The King of Sodom said unto Abram, give me the souls, and take the goods to thy self, we translate, give
give me the persons, and put in the Margin, give me the souls; Thus 'tis said (Gen. 46. 27.) All the souls of the house of Jacob that came into Egypt were three score and ten. The Apotol's rule of obedience to Magistrates runs in this Straine, Let every soul (that is, let every man) be subject to the higher Powers (Rom. 13.) And I conceive the Apostol expresseth it so, because there ought to be an inward obedience to that, as to any other Ordinance of God; the soul must be subject as well as the body to the powers of this world, that is, there must be (though no subjectio of conscience, yet) a conscientious obedience unto Magistrates. Thus here, his soul that is, himself, the man draweth near

Unto the grave; to corruption, say some, to the pit, say others.

Both are joyned or meete in the grave, for that is the pit of corruption. The Greeks call the grave Flesh-eater, to draw nigh to the grave, imports such a prevalency of diseales as bring a man to the graves mouth, to the very point of death; and then (as we say) heis drawing on. Whither is a sick man drawing on? surely to his grave; David (Psal. 107. 18.) having described the condition of sick men, adds, they draw nigh unto the gates of death; Here (which is the same) Elihu saith, his soul draweth near to the grave.

Hence note.

Diseases and death are near one another.

A sick bed and a grave are not far distant; David speaking of himself and others in extreme danger of death by the cruell plotts and cunning snares of the enemy, hath a like expression (Psal. 141. 7.) Our bones are scattered at the graves mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth; as if he had said, we are so near death, that 'tis a miracle if we escape it. Though we are yet alive, yet we have the sentence of death in our selves, and are within sight of our graves. What David spake there of himself in comfort with others, Heman spake personally of himself (Psal. 88. 3.) My life draweth nigh unto the grave; We are always in our health drawing towards the grave, but in sickness we are drawing near unto it. There is but a little distance between any man and the grave, there is scarcely any distance at all be-
tween a man that is very sick and the grave. Now if the sick man be drawing near unto the grave, then

First, Let them that are sick remember the grave; 'tis our duty to be always remembring and meditating upon the grave in our health, much more should that be our remembrance & meditation, when we are sick, most of all when we are sick unto death, or ready to dye and drop into the grave.

Secondly, If the sick are drawing nere unto the grave, then let sick men draw near unto God; if ever you will draw near unto God, the living God, be sure to doe it upon the borders of death; 'tis good yea best to draw nigh unto God when we are well, and all is well with us, even at best in the world (Ps. 73. 25.) But when we are in danger or drawing nigh unto death, O how earnestly should we draw nigh unto God, in the acts of faith, and love; To whom should we goe (as Peter said to Christ, Joh. 6. 68.) in the appearances and approaches of temporall death, but unto him who hath the words of eternall life. It is high time for us to draw nigh unto God, when any of the comforts of this life are withdrawing from us, is it not more then high time therefore, to draw nigh to him, when life itself is withdrawing from us, and we drawing nigh to the grave! How miserable is their condition who have death near them, and God far from them. Though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet (as David professed he would not, Ps. 23. 4.) we need not feare any evil, while God is with us; but how will the very shadowes of death put us in feare, if God be not with us? and what confidence can we have of his being with us, if we are not acquainted with him, if we use not to draw neare to him?

Thirdly, If they that are sick draw near unto the grave, then it is good for such as come to visit their sick friends, wisely to mind them of the grave; when will a discourse with our friends of death and the grave be seasonable, if not when we see them dying and going to the grave? yet some, when they visit sick friends, will not speake a word of either; they fear it may haften death to hear of it, & that speaking of the grave may put them into it, then which I know no fear more foolish, or more to be feared. Yea some will forbide visiters to mention death, when their Relations lye sick, O doe not speak of death to my Husband, faith the Wife, &c. But remember it, if the sick are drawing near to the grave,
they that visit them should remember them of the grave, both in prayer and in conference; to speak of death cannot hurt the body, but the not speaking of it may hurt the soul, and hinder it from getting out of the snares both of spiritual and eternall death. Yet godly prudence and great caution is to be used about it; none should doe it bluntly, nor suddenly, but having by discreet intimation, first hinted to the sick man his danger of death, we should then by faithfull counsells prepare him for it, and by comfortable Scripture cordialls strengthen and arm his spirits against it. Such favoury and well manag'd discourses of death may (through the blessing of God) be a favour of eternall life to the sick man, and will not in the least prejudice his recovery from sickness, when his soul draweth near to the grave.

Arr and his life to the destroyers.

The Hebrew is, to those that kill, or to life destroyers. There is a difference among Interpreters, who are here intended by these Destroyers, to whom the sickman's life draweth near, or who are these life destroyers.

First, some thus, his life to the destroyers, that is, to his enemies that are ready to destroy him. But that's improper to the text, which speaking of sickness cannot intend any destroying enemy but the last enemy which is to be destroyed, death, or the antecedents and usuall attendants of it, sicknesses.

Secondly, by the destroyers others understand, Angells, who are commition'd and sent of God to cut the thread of life, and to take mortalls out of this world by mortall diseases; and so the destroying Angell in this verse stands in opposition to that comforting Angell spoken of in the next verse; if there be a messenger or an Angell, &c. That Angells have such a Ministry, is clear, (2 Sam. 24. 16.) Where (David having chosen to fall into the hands of God) an Angell is presently dispaucht to doe execution upon his people. And when the Angell stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the Angell that destroyed the people, it is enough, stay now thine hand, &c. That destroyer (so he is called, Exod. 12. 23.) who flew all the first borne of the Egyptians (Gods last and greatest plague upon them, his tenth plague) is by most interpreted to be an Angell, yea by some a good Angell, because appointed and
and directed by God to spare his people the Jewes, and to poure out his vengeance upon the Egyptians, his and their enemies. For most usually the wicked are plagued by good Angells, and the good, as Job in this book was, are afflicted by evill Angells. Howbeit that text say some (Psal. 78. 49.) leadeth us rather to believe that it was an evill Angell; He cast upon them (meaning the Egyptians) the fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending evill Angells among them. Yet possibly those Angells which destroyed the Egyptians, are called evill Angells, nor because they were so in their nature, but because they were Ministers of evill to that hard-hearted people. Which way soever we take it, there is a truth in it applicable to the Scripture here in hand. And so some expound that of Solomon (Prov. 17. 11.) An evill man secketh only rebellion, therefore a cruel Messenger shall be sent against him. The text may be renderd a cruel Angell, that is, an Angell with a Message of wrath and destruction shall be sent unto him; The Apostle (1 Cor. 10. 10.) speaking of those dreadful judgments, which God sent upon his people the Jewes in the Wilderneffe (such as we are like to find in these Gospel times, if we provoke him, for all those things are said so have happened unto them for Types or examples (ver. 11.) And there he gives us warning, neither murmuere ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. That is, by the Pestilence or Plague (as'tis expressed, Numb. 14. 12, 37.) which the Apostle Paul calleth a destroyer, because, doubtles it was execurced by some invisible destroyer, or Angell. The Devill, whom John in the Revelation (Chap. 9. 11.) calleth, the Angell of the bottomlesse pit, is there also set forth by this Title, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. The Devill is the Apollyon, the Abaddon, both which signifie a destroyer; yea the Devill (Heb. 2. 14.) is said to have the power of death, as if he were set over that sad work, and Lorded it over dyeing men; yet (let us know to our comfort) the Devill hath not the power of death as a Lord, or Judge, but only as an Executioner; thus the sick mans life may be said to draw nigh to the destroyer, that is to the destroying Angell, or to the messenger of death.

Thirdly, we may take the destroyers, not for persons sent to destroy, but for diseases, and sicknesses; these are destroyers. And thus
thus it may be said of a sick man, his life draweth nigh to the destroyers, that is, he is in the hand or under the power of such diseases, as probably will destroy him. That seems to be Mr. Broughton's understanding of the words, who renders, his soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to killing maladies. Whatever is a death-bringer, whatever is deadly or mortall to man, may be comprehended under this expression, The Destroyers. And so, these words, His life draweth nigh to the destroyers, may signify only thus much, he is deadly, or (as we commonly express it) mortally sick. There's no hopes of him, he is past recovery, the Physicians have given him over. Heman (Psal. 38. 3, 4, 5.) speaks to this sense and near in this language of himself. My soul is full of troubles: my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength. Free among the dead, like the slain that lye in the grave whom thou remembrest no more. Heman was alive, yet with respect either to the anguish of his soul, or the pains of his body, he looked upon himself as one free among the dead, that is, as a dead man, his life drew near to the destroyers. And hence

Fourthly, Others read the words not in an active sense, (as we) Destroyers, but in a passive, His life draweth nigh to those who are destroyed or dead. Dying men are so neere to, that they may be reckoned as dead men. That word of encouragement in the Prophet (Isa: 41. 14.) Which we render, Fear not thou worme Jacob, and ye men (or as we put in the Margin Few men) of Israel, is rendered by some others, Fear not thou worme Jacob, and ye that are dead of Israel, that is, who are (in your owne fearfull apprehensions or in the opinion of your proud and prepotent enemies) as dead men, or nigh unto death; or (as we may expound it by that of Paul concerning himselfe and his Fellow-Apostles, with respect to the continuall hazzard of their lives 1 Cor: 4. 9.) men, as it were, appointed unto death; yea, as the learned in the Hebrew language tell us, the word translated in the Prophet men, with the change but of one point, and that only in the position of it, signifieth properly, dead men. We find the word applied specially to wicked worldly men (Psal: 17. 14.) who are there called the hand of God (to afflict or take away the lives of Godly men) and are sayd to have their portion in this life; the word, I say, is applied to them, as implying, that how much soever.
foever they rejoice, either in the present enjoyments of this natural life, or in the hopes of a long natural life in this world, yet they always are within one point (or pricke with a pen which is the shortest imaginable space) of death. In which sence also St Paul speaking of the different state of the body now in this life and after the resurrection from the dead, faith (1 Cor: 15. 54.) When this mortal shall have put on immortality; that is, when we, who now live in dying bodies, or in bodies bearing the markes or tokens of death, and looking like dead men, shall have put on the beautifull and glorious robes of immortality, Then shall be brought to passe the saying that is written, Death shall be swallowed up in victory. Whereas now death which is ready enough to get the victory over healthy and strong men, is so ready to get the victory over weake and sicke men, that their life may very well be sayd (according to this fourth and last interpretation) to draw nigh to the destroyed, or those that are already dead. Thus if in stead of Death-Bringerers or destroyers we read Destroyed or those that have been brought to death, the meaning of Elihu in this passage is plain and easie; importing the sicke man to sicke, that there is scarce a step or but a point between him and those who are actually dead.

But whether we take the word in this passive sense, and translate The Destroyed, or in the active, as we, and translate destroyers, thereby understanding either Angels in speciall, or diseases in Generall sent by God to destroy or take away the life of the sicke man; which way soever of these, I say, we expound the word, it yeilds a cleare sence as to the scope of the text, and as to the truth of it, (upon the matter) the very same. His life draweth nigh to the destroyers.

Hence note.

First, Diseases are destroyers.

Either they themselves destroy when they come, or the destroyer comes with them. (Psal: 90. 3.) Thou turnest man to destruction and sayest, return ye children of men. 'Tis a Psalm penned by Moses lamenting the frailety of mankinde. He lived to see all Israel, whom under his hand and conduct God brought out of Egypt, dye, except that renowned two Caleb and Joshua; And therefore he having seene the great destruction of that peo-
ple for their murmuring and unbelief, for their ten-fold provocations in the wilderness, might say from his owne experience more then most men to that poynt of mans mortality. And as God turned that people to destruction, and sayd according to that irre-
covable sentence (Gen. 3. 19.) Returne ye children of men to
your originall and first materiall, dust; so he faith the same to
men every day, who as they are dust, so we see them returning to
their dust. Every disease, if so commision'd by God, is death,
and every paine (if he say it) the period of our lives.

Againe, Elihu is here speaking of a man whom the Lord is but
trying, teaching, and instructing upon his sick bed; yet he faiths,
His soule is drawing neere to the grave, and his life to the de-
stroyers.

Hence observe.

Those afflictions which are but for instruction, may look like those
which are for destruction.

When the Lord hath a purpose only to try a man, he often
acts towards him as if he would kill him. If any shall say, this is
hard, I answer; A ruffe horse must have a ruffe rider. Ruffe wood
will not cleave without a beetle and wedges. We put God to
use extremities, that he may bring us to a moderation. Our spi-
rits are often so ruffe and head-strong, that they must be kept in
with bit and bridle; they are so tough and knotty that there's no
working, no cleaving of them till the Lord sets his wedges to us,
and lays on with his beetle of heaviest and hardest afflictions;
In a word, we even compell him to bring us to deaths-doore,
that he may teach us to live.

Now seeing paines and sicknesse (of which Elihu speakes as
the way and means by which God speakes to sinfull man) are
accompanied with such dreadfull symptoms and effects, loathing
and loss of appetite, consumption of the fleth, and the breaking
of the dry bones, the soule drawing neere to the grave, and life
to the destroyers; seeing I say, there are such sad effects of sick-
ness, remember,

First, Health is worth the praying to God for.

Secondly, Health is worth the praising of God for; and that
considered, either, first, as continued, or, secondly, as restored.
'Tis a mercy not to be pained, not to be sicke; 'tis a more senci-
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ble, though not a greater mercy to be freed from paine, and recovered out of sickness. While we are kept free from paines and sicknesses, how thankfull should we be; and when we are freed from and brought out of the bonds of bodily paine and sicknesses, how soule-sicke, yea how dead are we if we are not thankfull!

Thirdly, Seeing paines and sicknesses are such sad afflictions; be wise and careful for the preservation of your health; doe not throw away your health upon a lust; doe not expose your selves to lasting paines and pining sicknesses, for the satisfying of a wanton sensual appetite. The health and strength of this frail body, are of more value then ten thousand of those vanishing delights. Yet how many are there, who run themselves to the graves mouth, and into the thickest thongs of those destroyers, for the taking up of such pitifull and perishing delights? who to please their flesh for a few moments in surfeiting, drunkenness, and wantonness, bring many dayes, yea moneths and yeares of paine and torment upon their flesh? yea, and not only shorten (I mean as to what they might probably have had by the course of nature) the number of their dayes, but suddenly end & extinguish them. It hath been sayd of old, Gluttony kills more men then the sword; that is, it casts them into killing diseases. Tis a maxime in warre; Starve your enemy if you can rather then fight him; cut his throat without a knife, destroy him without drawing a sword; that is, with hungry. Some are indeed destroyed with hunger, and hunger, if not relieved, will destroy any man! Yet surfeiting destroyeth more then hunger, and tis a more quicke and speedy destroyer. We have knowne many who have cut their owne throats, by cutting too much and too fast for their bellyes; Pampering the Body destroyeth more bodies then starving. Many while they draw nigh to their Tables, their soules (as Elihu here faith) are drawing neere to the grave, and their life to the destroyers. Therefore, remember and consider, O ye that are men given to appetite, (as Solomon calleth such, Pro. 23. 2.) or rather as the Hebrew elegancy there hath it, ye that are Masters of appetite, studying your Bellyes, till indeed ye are maftered by appetite, to you, I say, remember and consider, Health is more than meat, and life then dainty faire. All the content that intemperance can give you, cannot recompence you for the paines that sickness will give you;
you may have pleasure for an houre or two, and sickness for a moneth or two, for a yeare or two. And if all the pleasure we take in satisfying that which though it may be glutted, yet will not be satisfied, a lust, cannot recompence the paines that are found in a sick bed for a few dayes, moneths or yeares, how will it recompence any for those everlasting paines that are found in hell, where the damned shall be alwayses conversing with death and destruction, and yet never dye nor be destroyed.

Fourthly, Forasmuch as sickness is often accompanied with such grievous dolours and racking tortures, let the sick pray much that they may be armed with patience; who knows what tryals and extremities sickness may bring him to? Though the beginnings and first appearances of it are but small, like the cloud which first appeared to the servant of Elisha, only of a handbreadth, yea though it begin but with the little finger of the hand, yet as that little cloud did the whole face of the heaven, so this little distemper may over-spread the whole body, and put you to the exercise of all your patience: it may hang and encrave upon you, till it hath broken your bones, and consumed your flesh, and brought you to the graves mouth, therefore pray for patience.

Lastly, Let not the strong man glory in his strength, nor the healthy man in his health; sickness may come shortly, and then how strong soever any man is, downe he must, and lye by it. There's no wresting away sickness any way (if God send it and bid it come) but by wrestling with God (as Jacob did, Gen. 32.) in prayer. If you thinke to wrestle away bodily sickness by bodily strength and striving with it, you will be throwne and get the fall. Who can stand before a feaver, or a consumption, when they arrest us in the name of the Great King, and carry us prifoners to our beds? Therefore let no man glory in his strength, if any man doe, it shewes at presene this morall weakness; and his naturall weakness may quickly teach him another lesson, and spoyle his glorying.

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:
Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.
His flesh shall be fresher then a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth.
He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render to man his righteousness.

These words hold forth the third way by which God speaks or reveals himself to man, and recovers him out of his sin. As if Eliphaz had said; When God hath brought a man to his sickbed, and he yet continueth in his blindness, not perceiving either his own error, or the purpose and intention of God to him; If then besides all this God so order the matter, that in his merciful providence he provideth for his further instruction, and sends a special messenger (as he doth me to thee) an interpreter (which is a singular favour of God) to explain, and expound the meaning of his dealings with him, and what his owne condition is, to bring him to a true light and sense of his sin, and to set him upright in the sight of God, by the acts of faith and repentance; this soone altereth the case, and hereupon God is presently appeased towards him. Then he is gracious, and then many blessed fruits and effects of his grace doe follow, and are heaped on him. Here, therefore, we have a very illustrious instance of Gods loving kindness to poor sinfull man, recovering and fetching him backe (when he is as it were halfe dead) from the gates of death, restoring him both as to soule and body, putting him into a perfect (so farre as on this side heaven it may be called perfect) state, and giving him indeed what he can reasonably desire of him. In the context of these four verses, Consider
First, The instrument, or means by which God brings this about, and that is, by sending a messenger, or a choice interpreter to the sick mans bed, to counsel and advise him. Vers. 23. If there be a messenger with him, &c.

Secondly, We have here the motive, or first moving cause of this mercy, that is, the grace or free favour of God; then he will be gracious unto him; and faith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, that is, being gracious he will give forth this word for his deliverance. Then he is gracious to him, &c. (v. 24.)

Thirdly, We have here the meritorious Cause of this merciful deliverance; and that is a ransom; I have found a ransom, at the latter end of the 24th verse.

Fourthly, We have the speciall benefits of this deliverance, which are two-fold.

First, Respecting his body; He is delivered from the pit of death (v. 24.) And not only so, but he hath a life as new as when he began to live; His flesh shall be frefher then a childes; the days of youth shall returne to him againe, (v. 25.)

Secondly, We have the benefit respecting his soule, (v. 26.) He shall pray, and God shall be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render to man his righteousness.

Thus you have the parts and purpose of these words; I shall now proceed to the particulars.

If there be a messenger with him.

These words are Hypotheticall, or by way of supposition; if there be: noting, that it is not always so, every one hath not this mercy to have a messenger sent him; it's a speciall privilege granted by God to some; If there be

A messenger.

What or who is this messenger? The word in the Hebrew hath a three-fold signification; all which are insisted upon by interpreters upon this place.

First, It signifieth an Angel; Now, Angels properly taken are spirituall or incorporeal substanstes, whole both office and high dignity it is to attend about the throne of God, and to be sent forth upon his speciall service (Psal: 103, 20.) Bless the Lord ye his Angels that excell in strength, that doe his commandements,
and hearken to the voice of his word. God hath thousands and thousands of these servants ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him (Dan: 7. 10.)

Some flay upon this exposition, affirming that here we are to understand an Angel by nature; And hereupon ground the minis-
tring of Angels to those who are either sick in body, or troubled in mind. Yea the Popish writers would hence prove the inter-
cession of Angels for man, and mans invocation of Angels; but though the exposition be granted, yet it yeilds no ground for this Inference. For what though God should send an Angel to in-
struct and comfort a sick man, will it therefore follow that the sick man should pray to him, and so give him the honour which is due to God?

Secondly, The word is applied in particular to Jesus Christ, the uncreated Angel, or the creating Angel, the Lord of Angels, who, by way of eminency is called, The Angel of his presence, (I Isa: 63. 9.) and the (Angel or) messenger of the Covenant, (Mal: 3. 1.) He also was that Angel of whom the Lord spake to the children of Israel (Exod: 23. 20.) saying, Behold I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, he de Christo provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions (if you persist in them) for my name is in him, that is, he is of the same nature with my selfe, and with that nature he hath my name, Jehovah. Thus some carry it here, as if Elihu specially intended the ministration of Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, to the sick sinner, for his restoring both as to the health of soul and body. 'Tis true, Jesus Christ is the great Angel, or messenger, and he primarily and chiefly doth all the business for poor sinners; he is the messenger sent from God, and he is the interpreter of the mind of God, he came from the bosom of the father, and reveals the mysteries of heaven to us by his holy Spirit. He indeed is the one of a thousand, the chiefest of ten thousand, to shew unto man his uprightnes. Yet, I conceive, that in this place, not the Lord of Angels alone, but some Angel of the Lord is also intended. And therefore,

Thirdly, The word Angel is applicable to every Messenger; The Scripture gives it first to those that are sent by men about any errand or business (1 Sam: 23. 27.) But there came a messenger unto
unto Saul, saying, hast thee and come; for the Philistims have invaded the land. We read of an evill messenger (Prov. 13. 17.) who is either such a one as brings an evill message, or is himselfe evill (Isa. 14. 32.) What shall one then answer to the messengers of the Nation, the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poore of his people shall trust in it. And as it notes a messenger first by man, to a messenger sent by God. The ancient Prophets were in this sense the Angells of God, his messengers, and so are the Ministers of the Gospel at this day. The Epistles to the seaven Churches, are all directed to the Angells of the Churches, that is, to the severall Pastors or Ministers of the Churches respectively. And thus we may conclude, that by the messenger in this text, we are to understand any faithfull Minister of Christ, sent to convince, convert, or comfort a sick troubled soule. And, as was intimated before, we may very well gather up both these latter interpretations into one, that which applyeth it to Christ, and that which applyeth it to the Ministers of Christ. For so we have here both the author and the instrument of this comfort to the sick man. Jesu Christ is the chiefe messenger and comforter of poore sinners; and the Ministers of the Gospel are instruments in his hand, sent out by him for the perfecting of that worke. The word is applied to both.

(Matt. 3. 1.) Behold, I will send my messenger (or, my Angel) and he shall prepare the way before me. John the Baptift was Christs messenger, as Christ himselfe (an infallible interpreter) assures us (Math: 11. 10.) And presently it follows, The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; Behold, he shall come, faith the Lord of hosts. In the first part of the verse, John is called the Lords messenger, and in the latter part Christ is called the Lords messenger. Both were messengers, yet with a mighty difference; and therefore John the messenger of Christ, faith of Christ the messenger, (Math: 3. 11.) He that cometh after me is mightier then I, whose shoes I am not worthy to beare. And againe (John 1. 26.) He it is that coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. If there be a messenger.

Hence note.

First, The Ministers of Christ are the messengers of Christ.

Christ is the fathers messenger, and they are messengers sent out
out by Christ. As my father hath sent me, so send I you, said Christ to his Apostles (John 20.21.) And though that Title of Apostle, which signifies One sent, or a Messenger, be most properly attributed to those, who were immediately called and inspired by Christ, yet in an allayed fence it may be applied, commodiously enough, to any true Minister of the Gospel, for he also is sent; he hath both his mission and commission mediately from Christ. Yea the word Apostle is applied in common to all or any that are sent upon business (John 13.16.) He that is sent (let him be who he will or upon what occasion soever he is sent) is not greater then he that sends him.

So then, the Ministers of the Gospel are called the messengers of Christ; First, Because they are sent by Christ, and have a Commission from him. Secondly, They are his messengers because they are instructed by Christ, and carry forth his mind: they may not speak their own words, nor their own sense, but the words which they bring, is or ought to be, what they have received, or what Christ hath put into their mouthes, that's their duty. And the messengers of Christ are to speak his mind:

First, Plainly (1 Cor. 2.4.) In the demonstration of the Spirit:

Secondly, boldly, not flattering the persons, nor fearing the faces of men. Thirdly, They should speak authoritatively, though they beseech, and beg, and pray, yet they are to doe all as having a warrant for what they doe, and as being cloathed with power from on high. If any man speak (faith the Apostle, 1 Pet.4.11.) let him speak as the Oracles of God. As he is to speak the Oracles of God, so as the oracles of God. Some speak, who doe not speak the oracles of God, but their owne opinions. Others speak the oracles of God materially, that is, they deliver divine truths, yet they doe not speak them as the oracles of God, with that authority which becomes the Gospel; we say of some, They mar their tale in the telling; Though they report, or tell the mind of him that sent them, yet they spoyle it in reporting it; The Ministers of the Gospel spoyle their message, unlese they report it plainly, boldly, and with Authority.

Thirdly, If Ministers be the messengers of Christ, surely then, they are to be heard, and their message is to be received; if God sends a messenger to us, shall we not open the doore to him? if a friend send a messenger to us, he takes it very ill (and well: he...
he may) if we doe not. 'Tis below civility, 'tis an high affront to a man not to receive his message, what is it then to the most high God! How dreadful full is that woe which Christ pronounced against such as refuse either his messengers, or their message, (Math: 10. 14, 15.) Whosoever shall not receive you, nor heare your words; when ye depart out of that house or City, shake off the dust of your feete; Implying, that God would so shake them off, or esteeme them no more then the vilest dust. Yea (as another Gospel hath it (Mark 6. 11.) implying, that as they had not received the testimony which his messengers bare of him, so their dust should be kept as a testimony against them. And lest the mischiefe threatened them in this anigmatical or covert speech should not be understood, Christ himselfe expounds it in the next words, Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgement, then for that City.

Further, 'Tis not enough barely to receive Christs Messengers, they must be received as the Messengers of Christ. Such a reception the Apostle found among the Galatians, (Chap. 4. 14.) And my temptation (or daily affliction) which was in my fleshe, ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angell of God, even as Christ Jesus. And what is said of the Messenger, is to be understood also of his message, both are to be received as from Christ. How is that, you will say? Take it in these four words, First, when 'tis received gladly, (Acts 2. 4.) It should be the joy of our hearts (the Psalmit calls it the joyfull sound, P. 89. 15.) to hear a word from Christ. Secondly, when it is received reverently, and respectfull, as giving honour to the message and the Messenger for Christs sake. Thirdly, when 'tis received obedientially, as submitting to the word; elle your respectfull, and joyfull receiving the message of Christ is but a complement, or piece of Courtship. Fourthly, when their whole message is thus received, as Cornelius said to Peter (Acts 10. 33.) We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. We must receive not only those things that, live us well, but those things that are most crosse to our corrupt natures and interestes, whether of worldly profit or pleasure; this is to receive the Messengers and messages of Jesus Christ, as his. If there be a Messenger,
An Interpreter.

That's a second title, or Title given to the man sent to the sick \( \text{dulcuit inde } \) from a root signifying sweetness, or to sweeten. Some conceive the Latin word (\( \text{Mel} \)) for honey hath its original from it, because the message, or interpretation that comes from God should be sweet, as honey to us; David profealth, The word of God is sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb, (Psal. 19. 10.) As if he had said, 'tis sweeter to the soul then that which is sweetest to sense. Now, the messenger sent from God, is called an interpreter, because he is sent to interpret and declare the mind of God to his people. Mr. Broughton renders, A Teacher. The word interpreter may be taken three ways.

First, For any one that interpretheth tongues or languages. Thus 'tis said (Gen. 42. 23.) Joseph speak to his brethren by an interpreter, they ('tis like) did not understand the Egyptian language, and he either for shame, or to conceal himself the better, would not seem to understand theirs.

Secondly, There is an interpreter of mysteries as well as of languages. Many things spoken in our own language may need an interpreter more then the words of a strange language. We read (Prov. 1. 6.) of a Parable, and the interpretation of it. Parables are wise; but hard and dark sayings, they need an interpreter. The Gospel is a mystery, and he that can expound and declare the mysteries of the Gospel is an interpreter indeed.

Thirdly, The word interpreter is taken in a larger fence, for any person that interprest betwixt two, or that endeavour the settling of any matter in difference, either between God and man, or between man and man; (Isa. 43. 27.) Thy Teachers (we put in the Margin interpreters) have transgressed against me. As if he had said, they who as Mediators should have prayed for thee to me, and have declared my will to thee, are themselves depraved.

Further, We may distinguish of a threefold interpreter. First, a grammatical interpreter, whose business is to give the fence of words. Secondly, a logical interpreter, who gathers up the meaning, scope and mind of any sentence, or the purpose of man in what he speaketh. Thirdly, there is the divine or spirituall interpreter,
preacher, who labours to bring the truths of God, and the heart of man together. The Apostle having treated about prophecying concludes (1 Cor. 14. 25.) *And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth; as if the man that believed not, or one unlearned (for of such he speaks, ver. 24.) had laid, surely these men understand what is in my heart, for they have brought the truth of God, and my heart together, so that I must confess God is in them, that is, there is a divine wisdom or interpretation in them. When Ethon faith, If there be an interpreter, we are to understand him in this last sense; not of one that can interpret words, like a Grammarian, or give the scope and sense of words like a Logician, but of one that hath a divine skill to bring the truths of God home to the heart of man, that is, to convince & inform our ignorant conscience, and to comfort, relieve and support a troubled conscience. If there be an interpreter,*

Hence note.

The Ministers of Christ are the interpreters of the mind and good will of God toward poor sinners.

They interpret the mind of God as to peace and reconciliation, as to grace and salvation, as well as to duty and holiness of conversation. 'Tis the nicest and hardest thing in the world to interpret the mind of God right to a sinner, to bring his heart to a closing with the great truths, and promises of the Gospel; he that can do this skillfully is worthy the name of an interpreter. The Apostle faith of him who is but a babe in Christ and useth milke (that is, lives upon the lower and more easy principles of faith) he is unskillful in the word of righteousness (Heb. 5. 13.) that is, he knowes not how to make out and manmage for his own comfort the doctrine of free grace through the alone righteousness of Jesus Christ. And therefore, as first, God himself is, the author and fountain of this grace; as secondly, Jesus Christ is the purchaser or procurer of the fruits of this grace to sinners; as thirdly, the effectual worker of our hearts to receive this grace, as also the witness-bearer and sealer of it to our souls is the holy Spirit; as fourthly, the word of the Gospel is the Charter, and Covenant of this grace; so fifthly, the Ministers of Christ are the interpreters of this grace; and they are, or ought to be skillfull in this word of righte-
righteousness. Their skill and duty is first to explain what the Covenant is, and rightly to lay down how the sinners reconciliation unto God is wrought. Secondly, to make a suitable and seasonable application of it, or to bring it home to the souls and consciences of poor sinners, as they find their state to be. And as the Ministers of Christ are God's interpreters to his people, so they are the peoples interpreters unto God. They are the former, two ways: First, by opening the mind of God to his people; Secondly, by urging and pressing them to receive it both for their direction and consolation. They are the latter four ways: First, by laying open and spreading the peoples wants, and weaknesses before God. Secondly, by confessing their sins, and transgressions to God. Thirdly, by intreating the Lord for them, or by praying for mercy, pardon, and forgiveness in their behalf, for sins committed. Fourthly, by giving thanks in their name for mercies received. Thus they are first, God's mouth to the people in preaching & declaring the Gospel; Secondly, the peoples mouth to God in prayer and thanksgiving. And in both performe the worke and Office of an interpreter.

And if the Ministers of the Gospell are interpreters; Then,
First, Every Minifter must be acquainted with the mind of God. He must have skill in the mystery of the Gospel. How shall he be able to interpret the mind of God to sinners, who is not acquainted with the mind of God? We have the mind of Christ (saith the Apostle of himselfe and his fellow-labourers in the Gospel (i Cor. 2. 16.) and when he faith, we have the mind of Christ, his meaning is not only this, that they had the mind of Christ written in a book, but they had a clear understanding of it, and so were fitted to interpret it to others.

Secondly, As he must have the knowledge of the mystery, so he must have the tongue of the learned (Isa. 56. 4.) That he may be able to speak a word in season to him that is weary; that is, to the wounded, and troubled in conscience; This is the interpreter intended by Eлиhu. He is one that hath learned, and is taught of God. Humane learning, the knowledge of Arts, and Sciences, is good, and hath its use; but divine learning, or learning in divine things, that is to be divinely learned, (tis possible for one to have learning in divine things, and not to be divinely learned) is absolutely necessary to make him an interpreter. It is not

Ccc enough
enough to know divine things, but he must know them divinely, or by the union and teachings of the Spirit. The Apostle John (Rev: 10.8.) is commanded to eat the book; this eating of the book signifies the spiritual knowledge of divine truths; in this sense, we know no more then we eat, then we (as it were) turn into our own substance, that which is eaten becomes one with us; the mystery of the Gospel must be eaten by the interpreter of Gospel mysteries. A man cannot interpret the mind of God till he knows it; and he cannot know the mind of God, unlesse God himself reveals it; so the Apostle argueth (1 Cor. 2. from 12, to 16.) As no man knoweth the mind of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him, so the things of the spirit of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God, and he to whom the Spirit of God doth reveal them. And therefore though a man may have an ability to interpret the word of God, as tis an excellent book, a book full of admirable knowledge, he may (I say) have an ability to interpret it soundly by humane learning, yet no man can doe it savingly and convertingly, but by the help of the Spirit. (Psal. 25. 14.) The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant; he will shew it effectually, he will make them know it. Thus David prayed (Psal. 119. 18.) Lord open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy Law. Natural parts and humane learning, arts and languages may give us an understanding of the tenour and literal meaning of the Law of God; but none of these can open our eyes to behold the wonders of the Law, much lesse the wonders and mysteries of the Gospel. The opening of our eyes to behold these spiritual wonders is the Lords work, and it should be marvelous in our eyes. For this opening of the eye (and nothing without this) will make any man the most ignorant man among a thousand. An Interpreter

One among a thousand.

These words contain either a third higher Title, or the highest commendation of the former two. A messenger, an interpreter, even such a one as is one among a thousand; One is no number, and a thousand is put for the greatest number; then one among a thousand, or one of a thousand, implyeth that the one here spoken of is a very rare one; only he that is seldom seen, or found, is one among a thousand; Solomon saith (Eccle. 7. 24.) One man among
a thousand have I found, but a woman among all, those have I not found. There were very few wise or good men among many when he found but one among a thousand. He might find men in great number, but the number of those that deserved to be called men was very small, so small, that he faith he found but one among a thousand. So that here when Elihu calls the interpreter One among a thousand, he teacheth us that such a messenger, such an interpreter is rarely to be had, or being had is a very rare and excellent one. 'Tis a proverbial speech, with an hyperbole, to say of any man, he is one among a thousand; for though we are not to take it arithmetically or strictly, yet one being no number, must needs signify very few, or the smallest number, and a thousand being the greatest whole number must needs signify many, very many, or a great number. And therefore to say of this interpreter, he is one among a thousand, must needs import, that even among a thousand men, we can hardly find one who hath a faculty or a competency for this office, or is fit to be honoured and adorned with this title, An interpreter.

Hence note.

True and faithful interpreters of the mind of God are very rare.

He is a rare and choyce man that is pickt out of a thousand men. The faithful messengers and interpreters of the mind of Christ, are rare under a twofold notion; First, as being precious and of great worth and use. Such are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth; The minds of all men would be darke, and their manners corrupt, if God did not send out these interpreters to inlighten and to season them. Secondly, they are rare as not being every where to be had or met with; what is hardly had is highly prized. It is said (1 Sam. 3. 1.) The word of God was precious in those dayes, why? for the reason is added, there was no open vision, there were not such frequent manifestations of the mind of God, as had been formerly; there were few Prophets few Interpreters to be found in those dayes. The true and faithful messengers or interpreters of the mind of God, are rare at all times, in what numbers soever they appear, though they come like an Army by thousands, though (as is said, Psal. 68. 11.) God giving the word great be the company (we put in the Margin Army) of 3332 those
those that publish it, or (as the old translation hath it,) great be the Company of the Preachers. They are rare, also, because not to be had at some times and in many places. Look over the times or ages of the world, and you will find some of them were dark times, days of ignorance, there were few interpreters; look at any time or at this time over many parts and places of the world, and you shall find such interpreters are not to be found in the greatest part, in the most places of it. Not one to be had in some whole countries and huge tracts of the earth. Go to all the Heathen and Mahometan nations, and you shall not find one of these messengers, or interpreters; go to Greece, which anciently engrossed all knowledge, and was famous for all sorts of learning, yet an interpreter is scarcely to be found there in these days. Go to the popish nations, though they bear the name of Christ, and abound with learned men, men learned in the knowledge not only of common Arts and Sciences, but in divinity and the Scriptures; yet in the fence here spoken of they have not many interpreters, the most being such as pervert and wrest the Scriptures, and lead the people into error; rather the messengers of Antichrist, then of Christ; Satan's emissaries, then God's interpreters. So then, if we consider, that several parts and countries of the world are quite without, they have none; and others are filled with false teachers & interpreters of the word of God, which are worse then none, we must conclude an interpreter is one of a thousand.

Again, If we turn our eyes to those parts of the world, where there are many found, orthodox, faithful messengers and interpreters of the word of God (with which blessing this nation (above many, if I say not above all) hath been crowned for a hundred years together; England as Jerusalem of old (Isa. 21. 1.) may well be called a valley of vision, a seminary of seers, because of that abundance and variety of visions and divine revelations which God hath showered us with in these latter ages) yet (I say) even here as in all other the best reformed Protestant Churches and Christian nations, an interpreter may be called one of a thousand; and that in a twofold reference.

First, If we consider, the whole body of any reformed nation, Ministers are but few compared to all the people, they are hardly so much as one of a thousand, throughout that whole nation; there are but few who give themselves up to the work of the Ministry.
ministry. Few that dedicate themselves to Christ's service in publishing the Gospel, for the saving of souls; there is (I say) but one of a thousand that is dedicated to that work.

For First, Most are unwilling to meddle with that calling, because of the laboriousness of it; interpreters are they who labour in the word and doctrine, and not only so, but they must give a strict account to Christ of their labours. Some good men have declined the ministry, being terrified both with the weight of the work, and the strictness of the account, and doubtless (were we duly sensible) it might make the ablest Ministers tremble every hour of the day, to think what a burden of care and account lyeth upon them, who are set to watch over souls.

Secondly, Others will not enter into this calling, because the labour is great, and the account strict, so the reward, as from man, is small; it doth not lead to riches, and greatness in the World, comparatively with other callings; though there be a comfortable competence allowed to the Ministers of the Gospel, yet there is not much of the world to be expected by them, yea, they are charged not to look for much, or not to doe their work for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. (1 Pet. 5. 2.)

Thirdly, As the reward is small, so the opposition is great, Ministers are often persecuted, and reproached, and the more faithfull and diligent they are, the more they are opposeed and reproached. To preach the Gospel fully as it should be preacht, is to provoke thousands, and bring the World about our eares. No marvell then if the messengers and interpreters of it be not many, if they be but as one among a thousand. Thus you see what hinders the generallity of men from medling with that work. 'Tis but one among a thousand that will engage in a work upon these hard terms, or that pre-apprehending them, hath faith and self-denial enough to swallow and overcome them.

Again, Consider those that outwardly bear the name and Title of the Ministers of Christ, and you will find that among them, they who are true and faithfull to their trust, are upon the matter, but one among a thousand. As there are but few Ministers among many men, so there are but few Ministers among many that are true and right interpreters. Doe but take out of five forts from among them who pretend to be Ministers, and then it will soone appear that the interpreters in truth are but few among many of those that are so in Title.
Firstly, Take away all those, who thrust themselves boldly, or are admitted carelessly, or by mistake into the Ministry, who yet are ignorant, blind, ungifted, and so unable for the work.

Secondly, Take away those, who though they have gifts and abilities, yet are lazy, and slothful, such as will not take pains nor work in the work.

Thirdly, Take away those, who have gifts, and are industrious, yet are unsound (at least in many points) and erronious in their judgements, and so mislead and mis-guide those, whose guides and leaders they are.

Fourthly, Take away those, who though they are not unsound, and erronious, yet are prophane, and scandalous, pulling down that truth with one hand which they have set up with another, or building againe those sins by their practice, which they have destroyed by preaching, and so make themselves (as the Apostle speakes in a like case, Gal. 2. 18) transgressours; for as God justly calls such transgressours, because they have sinned against his word, so they make themselves transgressours, because they sin against their owne; even against the doctrine by which they have condemned those sins, which themselves live in.

Fifthly, Take away those, who though they are neither of these, neither ignorant, nor idle, nor unsound, nor scandalous, yet are but meere formall preachers, such as only speake words, deliver the out-side, and skin of the Gospel, but have no acquaintance with the marrow and power of it. Take away these five sorts from among Ministers, and surely this expression of Elihu will be but too much verified, The interpreter is but one among a thousand. Abstræct all that are ignorant, idle, unsound, scandalous, formall dispencers of the word, from those who are commonly called Ministers, and then, they who remaine will be very few, so few, that every one of them, may be reckoned, one among a thousand. And we shall be forced to say, that Elihu hath not layd without cause, whether we respect their excellency or their scarcity, that any faithfull messenger or interpreter is one among a thousand.

This is not spoken by Elihu here, nor ought it to be taken up by any of the most faithfull Ministers of Christ, to draw honour and respect upon themselves, or that their persons may be had in admiration who are faithfull; this were a pittifull designe of holding out
out such a truth; but it serves for this end, that the people of God may see, they have a blessing where any are faithfull; and may
learn how they ought to prize those faithfull messengers, whom
the Lord sends among them, yea how readily they should receive
the grace of God which is rendred in their ministry. These are
not only each of them, one messenger, or interpreter, but each one
of them is one of a thousand. A soule-convincing, converting, quick-
ning, comforting Minister of the Gospell is worth thousands, and
one among a thousand. The Prophet saith (Isa. 52. 7.) How
beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings, &c. By their
feet he meaneth their coming, feete being the instruments of their
coming to bring this glad tidings; yet when he saith, their feete
are beautifull, it may have a greater emphasis, for (the feete being
the lowest part of the structure of mans body) it may intend thus
much, that even that which is lowest and meanest in a messenger
of the Gospell, his feete weariest and wet, yea soule and dirty
with travel, have a beauty upon them; how much more his face
and countenance; for if the very feete of such news-bringers, of
such messengers, and interpreters, should be acceptable and lovel-
ly (for beauty is) to all men, how much more should their per-
sons and most of all their message and tidings be? And doube-
leffe, if men did but understand it, they would acknowledge, that
God hath committed such a treasury to them, as is better and
more beautifull, then all the gold and precious things of this
world, and would cry out, O what a mercy is it to have such a
News-bringer? and what Greedy News-mongers would they be? The one among a thousand would be more desirable than ma-
ny thousands of Gold and Silver.

Elihu having described the person, whom the Lord often makes
instrumentall for the restoring and comforting of the sick sinner,
calling him A messenger, an interpreter, one of a thousand (which
latter may be applicable to both the former) proceeds to shew
the business of this messenger, or interpreter, who is one of a
thousand, more expressely, or to set out what his worke is, surely
excellent, and glorious worke, even this.

To shew unto man his uprightness.

We are not to understand this shewing for a bare report of the-
thing; in which sense the Prophet complain'd; Lord who hath be-
lieved.
believed our report! (Isa: 53.1) that is, we have shewed good things to the world, but who hath believed us? The shewing spoken of by Elisha, is not a bare declaration of the matter to the ear, but an effectual, and powerfull impression of it upon the heart. Such a shewing as is spoken of at the 16th verse of this Chapter, then he openeth the ears of men; The Lord speakes so by his messengers, and interpreters, that he not only makes the care heare, but the heart too. The heart heares when we have a sense, and are under the power of what is heard. As before we had a spirituall interpreter, so here we have a spirituall shewing of his interpretation. Here's a heavenly messenger, and a heavenly message to the earthly man; To tell the earthly his righteousness, faith Mr Broughton.

Now, because of the pronoun, [his] his righteousness; It may be demanded whose righteousness he meanes? or, what this righteousness is, which the interpreter theveth.

First, Some expound it of Gods righteousness, and then the sense runs thus; God sendeth an Interpreter to shew unto man his righteousness, that is, his own right and just dealing with man; As if Elisha had sayd, Gods messenger shall convince this troubled man that God doth not wrong him, how much soever he doth afflict him, or that God is upright and faithful in his dealing with him. This David acknowledged (Psal: 119.75.) In faithfulness thou hast afflicted me; that's a good sense of the words, and very suitable to the purpose of Elisha, who was about to convince Job that his complainings were very sinful and uncomely, seeing God neither had nor would, nor, indeed, could doe him any wrong. God is faithfull, just, and right, yea, God is good and mercifull to man, when he corrects him soe. Mr Broughton gives this interpretation of his own translation; To tell the earthly his righteousness, that is, God his mercy. The righteousness of God is that by which he doth righteous things. This righteousness of God conHNts not only in his holines, in his love of that which is good, and in his hatred of evil, but also in his preservation of man according to his word of promise. 'Tis the righteousness of God, that through the death and intercession of his Son, he should save and heale the believing and repenting sick sinner.

Secondly, And more clearly (as I conceive) to the present scope of this place; the Antecedent to His, is the sick man; And then,
then, to shew unto man his uprightness, is to shew him his owne uprightnes.

But you will say; Is the messenger or interpreter, only to tell man how good he is, and what good he hath done? and so to flatter him into a good opinion of himselfe, or of his owne good deeds?

I answer; This shewing unto man his uprightness, may be taken

First, As implying the mans ignorance of that uprightness which he hath; or that he hath an uprightness, but doth not know nor understand that he hath it. 'Tis so sometimes with the sound godly man, as well as with the sick, when (though in bodly health, yet) he is discomposed and troubled in mind; For then though he hath an uprightness of heart, an integrity towards God, or (as Job speaks of himselfe) the root of the matter in him; that is, though he be truly converted and really godly, yet he feeth it not, such temptations of Satan and troubles of mind assault him, such clouds of doubt, and darkness are upon him, that he is not able to make out his owne state. In this case the faithful messenger or interpreter coming to him, and inquiring how it is with him, picks out this from him, that there is an uprightness, and an integrity of heart in him towards God, and that his state is good, though he cannot discern it. For as the life and state of grace, is always a secret to those who have it not; so 'tis often a secret to those that have it. Some men, never, few men always understand their own condition, and 'tis very hard to make them understand it. For as it is with many hypocrites, and with all presumptuous ones, you cannot beat them out of a good opinion of themselves; though they are stark naught, rotten at heart, and have nothing to salve themselves up with, but a little boldness and confidence, yet they will not be persuaded off from their false foundations, and deceitfull bottoms; they will be good in their owne eyes, upright in their owne opinion, and do not doubt but all's well with them, and will be well with them alwayes. Now, I say, as it is with some hypocrites, and all presumptuous ones, they thinke themselves to have an uprightness which they have not; so many are upright and sincere, who see it not, and 'tis a very hard worke, the hardest worke that the Ministers of the Gospel have to make them understand and see their owne uprightness.

Secondly,
Secondly, The word *uprightness*, and the shewing unto man his *uprightness* here spoken of, takes in the whole duty, ye and the whole priviledge and interest of a Godly man, or that which will be his *uprightness* and set him right both before God and his owne confidence. To shew unto man this his uprightness, is to shew him when he is right, and how he may be settled in a right state; in such a state as will be to him like Mount Sion which cannot be removed. Thus the uprightness of man comprehends the whole business both of faith and repentance, or all that which a sinner is called both to doe, and believe, for the repaying and mending of his lost and ruin'd state, for the putting and settling him in such a state as the Lord may owne him as his, and be gracious to him. This, whatsoever it is, is mans uprightness or righteousness, and the shewing unto man, this his uprightness is the bringing him word in the name of Christ, that God justifieth him from the guilt of all his sins, and accepteth him into his favour.

Hence observe.

*The great duty of the Ministers of the Gospel, is to cleare up to man, whether he be upright, or how he may stand upright with God.*

This observation takes in both parts of the exposition. To shew unto man how it is with him, what his present state, and condition is, and to shew unto man what he ought to be, or how he may be in a safe condition, this is the worke of that messenger and interpreter who is one among a thousand, this is a blessed worke, and thus it must be done.

First, Man is to be shewed the *uprightness* of his state, or that which must be and be had to make up the uprightness of his state, which is

*First, His first-repentance, or conversion to God. Fallen man can never come into a right state, till he returne to God from whom he fell. A mans sinfull state is a crooked, perverse, and wretched state; repentance or returning to God, is the bringing of a man right againe, it brings him to his uprightness, even to that state, wherein he was first made; Loe this have I found (Salaomon, Eccl: 7. 29.) that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions. Solalmon doth not discover the severall branches and streams of mans sinfullness, but the roote and spring of it he doth, the corruption of his nature by the fall.*
fall. For as he found that God made man upright, so mutable, subject to temptation, and as easily yielding to the temptation, as admitting himself to be tempted: and so, not resting in that way and means of happiness (as the Devil his tempter did not) which the wisdom and goodness of God had chalked out and allotted to him, but conceiving to himself a higher perfection, he then began and still continueth to seek out variety of means (called by Solomon, many inventions) as then to get more than he had, so now to regain some shadow at least of what he had. These inventions, are all those carnal shifts; whereby man hopes either to palliate his sin, or to pacifie his conscience. But all prove vaine inventions; there being no possibility now, for man to get out of sin, or to goe back to God, and so to his first estate, but by repentance; That's God's invention, and he hath concluded, that nothing without that shall bring man (the case of infants is another thing) to that state of uprightness, in which he was first made. And therefore the Apostle giving an account of his ministry, how he acted as a messenger, or an interpreter (He indeed was one among a thousand) faith (Acts 20, 20, 21.) I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, &c. testifying both to the Jews, &c., also to the Greekes, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; which is

The second thing wherein in this uprightness of mans state, doth consist. These two, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, were the summe of all those Sermons in which Paul gave counsel both to Jewes and Gentiles what to doe that they might be saved. And this is the worke of all Gospel Ministers in shewing unto man his uprightness. He that is converted, and believeth, he that turneth from sin, and taketh hold of Jesus Christ by faith for righteousness, is in a better state of uprightness, then when he was first made upright. The Prophet (Hab. 2, 4.) speaking of faith, and that which is opposite to it selfe-confidence, uteth this word, Behold his soule which is lifted up (namely in thoughts of any selfe or creature-sufficiency) is not upright in him. A proud soule is not an upright soule. What is pride? Surely this, for a man to thinke himselfe in a good condition, or that he is well enough, that he wants nothing; as it is sayd of the Church of Laodicea (Rev. 3, 17.) when yet he is empty and guilty, poor and peny-lesse in spiritualls, wanting

D d d 2 every
every thing, especially a right and fence of his poverty and wants; yet this is every mans thought of himselfe, till he is shewed what is indeed his uprightness. The naturall mans spirit is lifted up, not to God nor in God by faith and repentance, but in himselfe. The soule thus lifted up is not upright (faith the Prophet, and what faith he next? ) but the just shall live by his faith. As if he had saied: The man that lives by faith, or the man that believes, and so lieth on Christ, is upright and hath an uprightness which will hold him right, which the uprightness of creation did not. Then the whole matter of mans uprightness was in himselfe, and he was to stand upon his own bottom, having no promise of support. But now the maine matter of mans uprightness is out of himselfe, and besides, himselfe hath a promise to be supported in his uprightness.

Againe, When man is shewed his uprightness as to his state, which is his life of justification; then he must also be shewed his uprightness as to his way or course of life in sanctification, or holiness of conversation. The interpreter must not only bring man to Christ, but must tell him how he ought to walke in Christ. Man being set right, ought to goe right, or (as 'tis sayd, Psal. 50, 23.) To order his conversation aright. Mans uprightness in walking and working is an inseparable fruit of his uprightness in Being.

Thirdly, The business of the interpreter, is not only to bring the troubled soule to a true fence of sin, to a cleare light of Christ, and a suitable conversation, but to furnish him with weapons to resist Satans temptations, to shew him how to manage the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith, that he may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devill; as also to answer, resolve, and remove the doubts and scruples, that may arise in or are upon his owne conscience, and so to settle him in a sweet and comfortable dependance upon Christ by faith as his uprightness and righteousness, against all the feares which at any time assault his peace.

But some may say, Should not sinners be shewed their un-uprightness or unrighteousness, rather then their uprightness?
I answer; First, 'Tis a piece of our shewing man his uprightness, to shew him that he hath no uprightness. The Spirit convinceth, first, of sin, and then of righteousness (John 16. 8.) Secondly, I answer, a mans uprightness (according to the meaning of this Scripture) cannot be shewed him, but he must also be shewed his unrighteousness. Thirdly, I answer, The sick man here spoken of, may be supposed a man troubled in mind about his sins; and in that case the interpreters duty is to ease his mind by shewing him his uprightness in the way opened, rather then to burden his mind further by shewing him his sin or unrighteousness. And therefore lastly,

To clothe this point with a word of caution; When Elihu speakes of an uprightness to be shewed the troubled soule; 'Tis not, that the messenger who comes to relieve and comfort him, should use flattering words, and blow him up with a conceit of his owne good workes, and so tell him a story of his vertues or vertuous deeds. No, the uprightness chiefly intended here is the righteousness of Christ, in and by which we are reconcil'd to and made one with God. Nor can we ever attain to this till we are made sensible of our owne nothingness, till we are unhinged of selfe, and quite taken off from any bottoming upon our owne righteousness. Some, when they have trouble of conscience upon them, what doe they? they fly to their owne righteousness; And when they are sick, and ready to dye, how doe they prepare to stand right before God? they confess they have sinn'd, and done amiss, but they hope they have repented, and made amends for that; yea they can remember they have done such, and such, possibly, many good things, they have been just to all men, and charitable to the poore, they have heard the word, and been at many a good Sermon, they have prayed and fasted, &c. Thus they patch up the business, as if this were their only uprightness; whereas, indeed, their only uprightness is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We never see where our uprightness is, till we see there is nothing that makes us stand upright in the court of heaven, but only Christ our righteousness. This is the great duty of the messengers, and interpreters of Christ, to declare to man this righteousness for his uprightness. And that hence it is (as Elihu proceeds in the next verse to assure the sick man) that God is and will be gracious to him.
Vers. 24. Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransome.

These words hold out the general issue and fruit of the labours and good counsel of that messenger or Interpreter dealing with the sick man, and shewing him his uprightness.

There are three distinct interpretations which run quite through this verse, and they arise from a different apprehension about the antecedent in this pronoun [He] then he is gracious unto him. He; who is that? All the Popish interpreters refer it to the Guardian-Angel sent to attend on this sick man; Then he (the Angel) will be gracious, and he will say, deliver him. But as I then layd by that opinion that the messenger was an Angel properly taken, so I shall not stay upon that which is a consequent of it, here.

Secondly, Several of our Protestant interpreters referre this he, to the Messenger or Interpreter, to the Prophet or any spiritually wise and holy man, sent of God to assist and help the sick man in his distresse. Some are so positive in this opinion, that they deny the text any other reference; This is to be understood of the Messenger (faith one) and not of God. And I grant ‘tis suitable to the business of the messenger who comes to comfort and instruct the sick man, that he should pity and compassionate him in that disconsolate condition, and likewise pray for him, according to the tenour of these words in the text, or to the same effect; O Lord God, be gracious to him, and deliver him, let him not see downe to the pit, for the ransome sake which I have found. As if Elihu had sayd; When that faithful messenger shall have declared the benefits and grace of God to the afflicted man, then pitying his afflicted soule, he shall pray for him; O God deliver him from death and condemnation, from the pit, and from destruction, for I have found and showed him a ransome, by which his soule may be delivered, and his sins pardoned.

In the 10th Chapter of this Booke at the 27th verse, Job useth this word in his application to his friends, for their pitty to him, and more favourable dealing with him; Have pitty upon me, have pitty upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me. As if he had sayd, The hand of God presteth me sore, O let not your hand
hand be heavy upon me too. This exposition carrieth a great truth in it, and is not at all inconsistent with the letter of the text; yet I shall not insist upon it, but adhere rather to a third, which makes the antecedent to this [He] to be God himself.

Then he is gracious.

That is, when the messenger hath dealt with the sick man, when he hath opened his condition to him, and shewed him his uprightness, or how he may stand upright before God, or what his righteousness is before God, and hath brought his heart to an unfeigned sorrow for his sin, and to the actings of faith upon the promise; then God is gracious, and then he gives out the word for his restoring, and orders it to be presently dispatch'd away to him; saying, deliver him, unloose him, unbind him, let him not goe down into the pit, I have found a ransom. Taking this for the general sense of the Text, I shall proceed to open the particulars.

Then he will be gracious, or then, he will have mercy upon him, as Mr Broughton translates. Then and not before; till then the Lord lets his bones ake, and his heart tremble, till then he suffers him to be brought so low that he is reckoned among the dead, but then, though not before, he sheweth himself gracious unto him. When a poor man is reduced to the utmost extremity, then is God's opportunity, then is the season of mercy; and the Lord therefore lets us be at the lowest, that we may be the more sensible of his goodness in raising and lifting us up: The Lord suffers many (as Paul spake of himself, 2 Cor. 1. 9.) to have the sentence of death in themselves, that they may learn not to trust in themselves, but in him who raiseth the dead. We seldom give God either the glory of his power by trusting him, or of his goodness by thanking him for our deliverances, till we are brought to the last cast (as we say) or to such an exigent as leaves no visible means in probability, no nor of possibility to escape. And when 'tis thus with us, then he is gracious.

Secondly, Then he is gracious, that is, when the man is doubly humbled, when the man's heart is graciously broken, when the man is grown into an abhorrence of himself and of his sin, or loathes himself for his sin, as much as he loathed his meat; as 'tis said in the former verse; when his heart is thus taken quite off from all that is below in the world, and gathered up believingly;
to Jesus Christ in the word of promise; Then he is gracious.

The Original word hath many comfortable significations in it, yet all resolvable into this one, he is gracious. It signifies to pity, to have compassion, tenderly to regard, to bestow grace, to doe good, there is enough in the bowells of this word to bear up the spirit of the sickelt body, or of the most troubled soul. It is said (Gen. 6. 8.) Noah found grace (or favour) in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was the only man that held out the grace of God in that age, him only did God find perfect or upright in his Generation (Gen. 6. 9.) and Noah only was the man, that found grace or favour in the eyes of the Lord in that generation (Gen. 6. 8.) God was gracious to him and his, when the whole world perished by water. That proper name John is derived from this word; when God gave Zachary and Elizabeth a Son in their old age, he also directed how he would have him called, ye shall call his name John, which name (as we may well conceive) was assigned him either because God did very graciously and favourably bestow that gift upon his Parents in their old age, and so shewed them much favour (a child at any time is a great favour from God, especially in old age) or, secondly, because John was to open the Kingdom of Grace, to preach the Gospel, and to prepare the way for Christ, by whom grace and truth came. The Baptist was as it were the loop and button between the legall and the Gospel dispensation; therefore his name might well be called John. And there is frequent use in Scripture of the Adverb which comes from this Verb, to signify injuries received without desert or undeservedly. (Ps. 7. 4.) Yea, I have delivered him that without cause was mine enemy, or that was mine enemy gratis. And again (Psal. 35. 7.) For without cause have they hid for me their not in a pit, which without cause have they digged for my soul. Yet more, as the word signifies the doing of good (gratis) or when there is no desert; so any injury done gratis, or when no provocation hath been given the party so to doe. Now, as all the mischief which the wicked plot against or doe to the people of God is undeserved, and floweth meere from their malice, so all the good which God doth for his people is undeserved, and floweth purely from the fountaine of his free grace; or from his compassions, which faile not. And surely the Lord deserveth highest praises from man for any good he doth him, seeing what he doth is gratis, or undeserved. Further,
Further, this Hebrew word Chinnam answers the Greek word (δικαιος) rendered freely (Rom. 3. 24.) We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. How can unjust men deserve justification? Therefore Mr Beza translates, We are justified gratis, that is, by his grace.

Again, when it is said, then he (or, the Lord) is gracious, it may be taken two ways. First, as to be gracious implyeth the intrinsic grace of his nature, or that mercifulness and kindness which dwells in the heart of God, and which indeed is God, (for the graciousness of God is the gracious God) thus God is always and altogether gracious, he is infinitely and unceasingly gracious. Secondly, when it is said, he is gracious, it may note only the graciousness of his acts, and dispensations; thus, as I may say, the Lord is gracious (ad hinc et nunc) as he sees cause, at this time he is gracious and not at that time; that is, he puts forth acts of grace now, and not then. The Lord puts forth acts of grace, both according to the pleasure of his own will, without respect to any thing in man, as also without respecting what man is or doth, according to his pleasure. And thus we are chiefly to understand it here; then he is gracious. God is gracious in his nature always, and always alike gracious; but he is not always alike gracious in his dispensations, or in giving forth acts of grace; he is gracious to man according to his secret will as he pleaseth, but he is gracious according to his revealed will as man pleaseth him.

Hence observe, first.

The first cause and spring of all our mercies is the graciousness of God. Or, All our mercies flow out from the grace of God.

That's the fountain, yea that's the Ocean which feeds and fills all the Channels of mercy, which stream to us, as our happiness in this world, and for our everlasting happiness in the world which is to come. All is of grace fundamentally, or because the Lord is and will be for ever gracious. Thus the Lord spake to Moses (Exod. 33. 19.) I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. My mercy shall flow out, when, and to whom, and where I please. And the proclamation which he made of himselfe, in all his royal Titles runs in the same strain (Exod. 34. 6.) The Lord, the Lord God, mercifull, and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in grace.
goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity. If we consider God, first in doing us good; Secondly, in forgiving us the evill which we doe; Thirdly, in delivering us from the evills which we now suffer; Fourthly, in delivering us from the seare of future sufferings; all is from grace and from free grace. He doth us good through we are undeserving any good, that’s grace, yea, he doth us good though we are ill deserving and that’s more grace. He doth all for us through grace. First, in spiritualls, and Secondly, in temporallls; not only doe the good things of eternall life, but the good things of this present life flow from grace unto his own people. Not only the health of their souls, but the health of their bodyes, not only deliverance from hell, but deliverance from sickness also, flow from his free grace in Jesus Christ. Therefore of all their mercies and salvations (both as to the foundation and top-stone of them) the people of God must cry (as the Prophet Zachary (Chap. 4. 7.) foretells the people of God: should say that longed for deliverance, when that great mountaine should become a plain before Zerubbabel) grace, grace unto them: That is, grace hath begun them, and grace alone will maintaine, continue, and perfect what it hath begun. As there is nothing in us (except our misery) which moves the Lord to begin, so there is nothing in us (but our inability) which moves the Lord to perfect what he hath begun. He seeth we cannot, and therefore he will perfect what he hath begun, and all this he doth that he may exalt his own name, and perfect the praise of his free grace towards us.

More distinctly, that all comes from grace, or from the graciousness of God, may note these five things to us. First, not only that God doth all for his people freely, or without desert. But Secondly, that he doth all things willingly, or without constraint for his people. Thirdly, that he doth all things forwardly for his people. He doth very much unaskt and unsought, and he is not much askt or hardly drawne to doe any thing for his people. Though he hath said of some things, I will be sought unto, or inquired after that I may doe them for you, (Ezek. 36. 37.) yet his mercies are never forced nor wrested from him by intreaties, but flow from a principle of love, naturally, as water out of a fountain. Fourthly, he doth all rejoicingly, even with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. Mercy pleased him, and he is pleased with
occasions of shewing mercy, 'tis no burden to him to do us good; mercy proceeds from his nature, and therefore he delighteth in mercy (Mic. 7. 18.) yea, to be mercifull is his nature, and therefore he cannot but delight in it. Fifthly, graciousness being the very nature of God, implyeth that he will do us good liberally, and constantly, or that (as the Apostle James speaks) he giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; he doth not upbraid us with our poverty, who receive, nor doth he upbraid us with the riches of the gifts which himself bestoweth; And because they flow from his nature, therefore he doth not in the least empy himself, how much sooner he fills the creature with his gifts or goodness. Some men (upon the matter) even exhaust and undoe themselves by liberallity unto others; and they who give most, or have most to give, cannot always give. It is said in this Book, (Chap. 37. 11.) By watering, he wearied the thick cloud; that is, God commandeth the cloud to give raine so long, that it hath not a drop more to give, but is quite spent. Springs or fountaines are never wearied or spent with watering, because their waters come as freely and as fast as they goe; God is an everlasting spring of grace and goodness; He is not wearied, nor emptied by what he giveth out to, or doth for the creature, because all floweth from his naturall graciousnesse as from a fountaine.

Then he is gracious. I would urge the second reference of that word (then) a little further; it was shewed before, that it might refer, First, to the extremity of the sick man, Secondly, to the sick mans humiliation, or the right disposition of his spirit to receive renewed acts of grace, and favour from the Lord.

Hence observe, Secondly, God usually dispenceth or giveth out acts of grace when we repent; he legetus ille and turne from sin, when we believe and lay hold upon the promise; Then he is gracious.

It is said (Isa. 30. 18.) Therefore will the Lord wait that he puerit, tum &c. may be gracious. The Lord hath always a gracious disposition, Pile a gracious nature; he alwayes hath a store, and a stocke, a rich stocke and store of mercy by him; but he doth not alwayes give it forth; no, he waits to be gracious, that is, he waits till we are in

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a fit frame, till we are in a due temper to receive his grace. And because as to the dispensings of grace, God waits to be gracious; therefore many retard and hinder their owne good; they are not yet in a frame to receive; their vessel is not yet seasoned to hold mercy. The Lord waited to be gracious to David after his grievous falls, and therefore he did not give Nathan a Commission to say, Thy sin is done away, till Davids heart was broken, and had said (2 Sam. 12. 13.) I have sinned against the Lord; But when once that word fell from him, then Nathan declared how gracious the Lord was to him. As soon as David said, I have sinned (that's an act of repentance) presently, Nathan said, the Lord hath done away thy sin, that's an act of grace. When did Ephraim heare a word of comfort from God? The Prophet tells us (Jer. 31. 18, 19, 20.) I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himselfe, (that is, mourning over and bewraying his sin) saying, thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomned to the yoke. We have him there also praying, Turne me, O Lord, and I shall be turned, &c. Upon this, how graciously, how meltingly did the Lord speak? Is Ephraim my deare son? is he a pleasant child? since I spake against him, I doe earnestly remember him still, (or, in remembering I remember him) my bowells are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy on him. Now I will manifest my grace, and acquaint him with my goodnes. The Lord was very gracious to Saul afterwards Paul, he sent Ananias to him with a message of mercy, as to restore the sight of his bodyly eyes, so to assure him that he should be an instrument in the hand of Christ to open the eyes of many, and a chosen vessel to bear his name before the Gentiles and Kings and the Children of Israel, (Acts 9. 15.) But when was this message delivered him? the text tells us (v. 11.) For behold he prayeth; the man is in the dust, he is brought upon his knees, his spirit is broken; that word he prayeth, comprehends the whole worke of a gracious soule, as to his humiliation and returning to the Lord. In the parable of the prodigall Son, his father is represented abundantly gracious to him; but he did not signifie it, he did not send the ring, nor the rich robe to him, when he was abroad in a strange Country among harlots, drinking and wasting his estate, time and strength vainly; we read of no acts of grace to him then, but when, being pinched with famine and hunger, he came
to himself, and began to bethink himself of coming back to his fathers house; and that he had brought himself by his own folly to beggary, and want, and husks; when he was upon these terms, or resolves to goe home to his father, and call himselfe at his feet as unworthy the name or priviledge of a Son, then his father ran to meete him, fell on his neck and killed him, then he put on the ring, and cloathed him with the robe, then he killed the fattened calf, and made a feast for him. All which scene of mercy doth but hold out this one word in the text; Then he is gracious.

There are two sorts of gracious acts of God. First, some are acts of absolute grace, or of preventing grace; These are put forth upon and exercised towards the creature, before there is any the left preparation in the heart, or draw them out or invite the bestow- ing of them. Thus, the grace of God in election is absolutely free, there was no prevision of any qualification in man moving God to elect him. And so that wonderful act of grace (in which election first descends and discovers itselfe) effectual vocation, is absolutely free. God calls a sinner when he is in the heat and hurry of his evil ways, pursuing his lusts in the height of his pride, and in the hardness of his impenitent heart. Now, if when God first calleth a sinner there is nothing in him but sin, What can move God to call him but free grace? A third absolute act of grace is justification; God doth not justify a sinner for any thing that he finds or sees in us; As to us 'tis altogether free. He justifieth the ungodly (Rom: 4. 5.) when that wretched infant was in its blood (which expresseth a miserable uncleane polluted condition) then was a time of love (Ezek: 16. 8.) then was God gracious. What lovelinesse was in that infant (representing the best of men in that fallen natural estate) to draw out the love of God? nothing at all, yea she was altogether unlovely, yet then (faith God) thy time was the time of love, or then was the time of putting forth love in her conversion and vocation; Then, sayd another when thou wast in thy blood, live. And because the thing might seeme not only strange, but even impossible, that the heart of God should be towards such a wretched one for good, the word is doubled, yea I sayd unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live. These acts of absolute free grace are the glory of the Covenant of grace; for if the Covenant should hold our acts of grace only upon our pre-dispositions, when should we receive any act of grace?
The promise is not of this tenour, I will pardon them when their hearts are soft and tender; but, I will take away the heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh.

Yet Secondly (as to the point in hand) there are conditionall acts of grace, I may call them second acts of grace, or renewed acts of grace. For when after conversion we fall into sin, and by that evil heart of unbelief (remaining in a great measure unmortified) we depart from the living God (Heb. 3. 12.) God doth not give our fresh acts of grace, but upon repentance, and the renewings of our communion with him. Having once received grace, we being again helped and assisted by grace, act graciously, before God declares himselfe gracious to us. When a man is cast upon a sick bed for sin, (that's the case of many) the Lord will see repentance before he will raise him up again. (James 5. 15.)

The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and if he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him; that is, if he being cast upon a sick bed to correct or chasen him for the sin that he hath committed, shall humble himselfe, and seek the Lord by prayer, praying and calling for prayer; Then the sin committed shall be forgiven him, and the Lord will raise him up againe. 'Tis not the prayer of another that can obtaine deliverance for the sick, much lesse the forgiveness of his sins, if himselfe be prayer-lesse, and repentance-lesse. But while others pray for the sick mans bodily health, they praying also for his soules health, the Lord gives him repentance for his sin, and then a comfortable sight of pardon. So then before the Lord puts out these second acts of grace, he looks for and finds something in the creature yet still, that also is an effect of his grace both to them and in them. They, who have already received grace, must stir up their grace, and renew acts of grace (through grace) towards him, before he dispenses acts of grace towards them. And as consolation in this life, so that highest and last act of grace, salvation, in the life to come, is not belon'd upon any, till they are fitted. God calls and converts the worst of men, those that are in their filth, and mud, and mire, but he will not save a filthy person, he will have him first purged and prepared. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not enter into the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6. 9.) and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12. 14.) There is no eternall salvation without preparation; nor is there any promise of temporeal
rall salvation without it. When a man is sick to death (as in the text, salvation comes not, the Lord is not gracious till the sick man's spirit is humbled and set right; till the messenger hath shewed him, how he may stand upright before the Lord, and he hath embraced his message; then, and not till then he is gracious. And as in these words we have the occasion of this grace; so in the following words we have the publication of this grace; Then he is gracious.

And faith, Deliver him from going downe into the pit.

[And faith] that is, the Lord gives out an order presently, he gives out a warrant for the release of the sick man. When earthly Princes have once granted pardon to an offender, they say, deliver him; they signe a warrant for his deliverance out of prison, or they signe a pardon, and say, deliver him from death, when he is at the place of execution. Thus concerning this sick man, God faith, deliver him from going downe to the pit.

The word rendred deliver, signifys also to redeem, 'tis used in this forme no where else in all the Scripture. To free, deliver or redeem a man, intimates his person in hold, then will he say, deliver him. From what? there are as many sorts of deliverances, as there are of troubles, each particular strait, and trouble, hath a proportionable deliverance. There is deliverance, First, from captivity or bondage. Secondly, from want or poverty. Thirdly, from imminent sudden danger or peril by land or Sea. Fourthly, from sicknesses and diseases. Fifthly, from death; and that twofold: First, from temporall; Secondly, from eternall death. Here when he faith, deliver him, we may determine this deliverance by the latter words of the text, to be a deliverance from deadly sickness; deliver him from going downe to the pit; that is, deliver him from death; To goe downe to the pit, is often in Scripture put to signifie dying.

Further, The pit implies corruption, because in the pit or grave, the body corrupts. It is sayd indeed (Numb: 16. 30.) of that rebellious triumvirate, Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, they went downe alive into the pit, but they went downe to death, and ordinarily the dead only goe downe to the pit. This same phrase is used (Psal: 28. 1. Psal: 88. 4. Ezek: 31. 14. Ezek: 32. 18, 24, 29, 30;) That text is very remarkeable (Prov: 28. 17.)
He that offereth violence to the blood of another, he shall flee to the pit, let no man stay him: That is, The murderer, who in wrath and hatred, or upon private revenge destoyeth the life of any man, shall haften to destruction, either as chased and hurried by his owne fears like Cain and Judas, or as prosecuted by the justice of the Magistrate. And as he thus hafteth to the pit, so let no man stay him, that is, First, let no man conceal him; Secondly, let no man move for his impunity, or solicit his pardon; or if any doe, then Thirdly, let not the Magistrate grant his pardon: For the old univerfal Law tells him his duty (Gen. 4. 6.) He that sheddeth man’s blood, by man (that is, by the Magistrate commanding, and by his officers executing) shall his blood be fed. And as another Law hath it (Deut. 19. 13.) Thine eye shall not spare him, &c. The Magistrate who is in Gods stead, may not say of him, as here God doth of the sick man, Deliver him from going downe to the pit. His blood is ill spared who would not spare the blood of another.

But it may be questioned, for as much as the text faith only in general, deliver him, Into whose hands this warrant for his deliverance is delivered? or who is directed to deliver him? Master Broughton represents God speaking this to the sick mans disease, for thus he renders the text; Then he will have mercy upon him, and say, Spare him (O killing malady) from descending into the pit. God will speak thus to the disease (and there is a great elegance in it)spare him O killing malady. Diseases come and goe at Gods command; they hurt and they spare at his direction; As the Lords breath or word bloweth away the winds (Math. 8. 27.) The men marvelled, saying, Who is this that even the winds and the seas obey him? So the Lords breath bloweth away sickness; if he doe but speak to a disease, to a feaver, to an ague, to a dropzie, to a consumption, O killing malady, spare him, thou haft done enough (any disease might prevaiel to death, did not God say, spare him) hold thy hand, not a blow more, not a fit more O killing malady. Death it selfe, much more sickness, heareth the voyce of God. And it may be said to heare him, because it doth that, which they who have the power of hearing ought to doe; that is, it obeyeth or yeildeth to the voyce and command of God, & will no longer afflict the sick man. Diseases may be said to deliver a man from death, & the pit, when they depart from him. Yet, Secondly,
Secondly, I conceive this warrant for the deliverance of the sick man, is given out to the messenger or interpreter, to the one among a thousand, that visiteth him in his sickness. He having been with him, and dealt with his conscience, he having brought him into a good frame, the Lord is gracious, and in answer to his prayer, sets it upon his heart that he shall recover, and warrants him to tell him so, which is, declaratively, to deliver him from going down to the pit. This act of mans delivering the sick, is like that act of man pardoning the sinner (John 20. 23.) that is, 'tis ministerial or declarative, not original nor Authoritative. The interpreter doth not deliver him, but tells him God will. We have the Psalmist speaking thus after his supplication and prayer made to the Lord for a sick State or Nation or for a sick Church (that's his scope, Psal. 85.) Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee (v. 6.) Surely thou wilt, and he expresses his confidence, that God would (v. 8.) I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints. When he had prayed he would harken for news, or for a message from heaven, whether or no, the Lord would order him to speak peace to those for whom he had been praying, and say, deliver them from going down to the pit. Thus did the Prophet Habakkuk, I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon my tower, and see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved (Chap. 2. 1.) In the next verse, The Lord answered and said, write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. And what was the answer? Surely deliverance; for having said, in the end it shall speak and not lye (v. 3.) he concludes (v. 4.) The just shall live by his faith. Believing deliverance, he shall at last be delivered from the pit of captivity and live.

Here in the text we must suppose this messenger had prayed, and having prayed, he did not neglect his prayer, but was harkening what the Lord would say. Elihu was confident the Lord would give a gracious answer, though not by an immediate voice or revelation to his eare, yet by an assurance of the mercy given into his spirit. When that good king Hezekiah, was not only sick unto death, but had received an express message from the Lord, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live (2 Kings 20. 1.) Tis sayd at the 2d verse, He turned his face to the wall, and F F F prayed

Sequestrem illum fubebru et renunciare imperatum effi liberatio-nem. Bez: 
prayed unto the Lord, saying, &c. And at the 4th verse, The word of the Lord came to Isaiah the Prophet, saying, turne againe, and tell Hezekiah the Captain of my people; Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy teares, behold, I will heale thee, &c. Here God gave a word formally, and put it into the Prophets mouth, Goe deliver him from going downe to the pit. And though the Lord doth not thus now in such an explicite and open way, nor may we expect it, yet there is a virtuall saying of this word from the Lord, and that sometimes mightily impress upon the hearts of those who have prayed and fought unto him, for the sick man, whereby (not by an unground-ed vaine confidence, but by a scripturall holy confidence, comparing the promise with the mans condition) they are enabled to tell him, The Lord hath delivered thee from going downe to the pit. And he shall as certainly be delivered, as if the Lord had sent an expresse from heaven to tell him so. Then he is gracious to him, and faith, deliver him from going downe to the pit.

Hence obserue.

First, Death is a going to the pit, a going to destruction.

Thus it is ordinarily with all who dye, to the pit they goe. Many dye and goe downe to the bottomlesse pit; all who dye may be sayd to goe to the pit. To goe to the bottomlesse pit, is the circumlocution of eternall death, as to goe to the pit is the circumlocution of temporall death.

Secondly, Forasmuch as the man being sick the Lord gives out this word, deliver him from going downe to the pit.

Note.

Sicknesse hath in it a tendency unto death.

The sick stand as it were upon the borders of the grave. Some not only put death farre from them in health, but in their sickness; untiill they are even dead, they scarce thinke themselves dying. It is good for us in our health and best strength to be looking into the pit, and considering upon what grounds of comfort we can descend into the grave. How much more should we be thinking of and looking into the pit, when we are in a languishing and dying condition?

Thirdly, Observe.
The word and work of deliverance is from God alone; Then he will be gracious and say, deliver him from going downe to the pit.

God can, and God only can deliver from death; no creature in heaven or earth can speak this but by commission from God; none can open this secret till God interpret it. Deliverance is the Lords salvation; and the word of salvation from sickness, as well as of salvation from hell, comes out from the Lord.

But is it not said (Pro. 11. 4.) Righteousness delivereth from death.

I answer; when it is said, Righteousness delivereth from death, The meaning is, God delivereth the righteous from death. He delivereth them from the slaying and terror, from any that which is properly called the evil of corporall death; and he delivereth them wholly from the least touch or shadow of eternall death. And this righteousness which delivers from death is not our own, but the righteousness of Christ made ours by the appointment of God, and received as ours by faith. 'Tis neither any righteousness wrought in us, nor any righteousness wrought by us, but that righteousness which is wrought for us, which delivereth from death: and that delivereth us from death, because God faith of such a righteous person, deliver him, as often from temporall death, or going downe to the pit of the grave, so alwayes from eternall death, or going downe to the pit of hell.

Fourthly, In that this word deliver him, is given to the messenger.

Observe, God conveys deliverance and mercy to us by men like our selves.

He will have the creature beholding to the creature for his mercy, though mercy come freely and only from himselfe. God delivereth the sick and the sinner in such a method that we may owne, though not stay in his messengers, as the instruments of his favour. God who can doe all things by himselfe, will not doe many things but by means. He faith to the messenger, Deliver him from going downe to the pit.

You will say, How can a Minister or a Messenger deliver the sick from going downe to the pit?
I answer, (as was touched before) he delivers him by declaring to him the minde of God, by acquainting the sick with the promises of deliverance, and by prelifying him to believe and rest upon them; by assuring him that as God is able to performe the promise, so he is faithfull and willing to performe it; yea that he hath given some tokens for good that he will deliver him from going downe to the pit. Thus the worke of Gods free grace, mercy, and power, is oftentimes attributed to instruments and second causes, because they have their place and use in the bringing about the purposes of God for the good of his people. Heence some men are called Saviours; And Saviours shall come up on mount Zion (Obad: v. 21.) No man can save either from temporall or eternall destruction; He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death (P& 68. 20.) yet faith the Prophet, there shall come Saviours; that is, God will raise up worthy men; principall men (as another Prophet calleth them, Mic: 5.5.) who shall destroy Zions enemies. Thus Paul admonitheth Timothy, Take heed to thy selfe, and to thy doctrine, continue in them, for in so doing thou shalt save thy selfe and them that hear thee (1 Tim: 4. 16.) The Apostle James (Chap: 5. 20.) speakes the same thing; He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soule from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. And the same Apostle faith (as to the case in the text) at the 15th verse of the same Chapter; The prayer of faith shall save the sick, Though none can save, yet many are means of our salvation. And the Lord is pleased to honour those who are the means of any salvation, so farre, as to say, They save. It is indeed the duty of all to ascribe the all of every worke and piece of salvation and deliverance to God only. When the people stood wondering at Peter and John after they had healed the lame man, Peter answered (Acts 3. 12.) Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why looke ye so earnestly on us, as if we by our own power or holines had made this man to walke. The God of Abraham, &c. hath glorified his Son Jesus; As if they had said, Therefore doe ye also glorifie him, not us for delivering this lame man. Though God is pleased to put much honor upon man, by speaking of what himselfe doth; as if man had done it; yet he will not give the glory of what he doth so any man, nor may any take it. God faith to the messenger, deliver him from going downe to the pit.
but woe to that messenger who saith (when he is delivered) I have delivered him from going down to the pit.

Thus we see the spring of the sick man's recovery; it is from the graciousness of God, and we see the means of it; God gives a warrant to his messenger, saying, Deliver him from going down to the pit; but what is the procuring or meritorious cause of this deliverance? As the Text hath shewed us the first moving cause, The grace of God, so it sheweth us the meritorious cause, by which his deliverance is procured; things are so ordered in the Covenant of grace, that though the Lord acts with infinite freeness, yet he hath appointed and ordered a way in which alone he will doe, what he freely doth. This is expressed in the last clause of the verse,

For I have found a ransom:

But where did God find it? certainly in his own bosom, in his own heart; Jesus Christ came out of the bosom of the Father, there he was, God found him in and with himself; God did not find the ransom by chance, nor did he find it by advice and consultation with others, but he found it in himself; in his own infinite wisdom and goodness; that is, he contrived it, he invented it there. This rare, this most excellent thing, a ransom, is the Lord's own invention. I have found it, I know how to doe this man good, I know how to save him, and doe my own honour and Justice no hurt, no wrong: my honour is saved, my Justice is satisfied in doing it. I have found a ransom.

The word here rendered a ransom signifies in the Verb, to cover, or to hide that which before lay open, that it appeareth no more. Grace brings another face upon things, a new face, I may say, upon our souls. The covering of sin elegantly denotes the pardon of sin. And what reason have we to be thankful and rejoice, when sin (our soul durt and deformity) is covered? We have very foul faces (I mean outward conversations) and more foul souls, or inward inclinations, till the Lord is graciously pleased to put a covering upon them. If we cover our own sins we shall have no mercy, but if the Lord once cover our sins, he cannot deny us mercy, that being it self our greatest mercy, and the fruit of his great mercy. The Mercy-seat, so famous in the Mosaicall Pædology, is express by this word, which properly signifies a Covering.

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The Mercy-seat was it self a Covering of pure gold, laid over the Arke, in which Arke the Law was put (Exod. 25. 17. 21.) Thou shalt put the Mercy-seat above upon the Arke, and in the Arke shalt thou put the testimony that I shall give thee. And as the dimensions of the Arke were two Cubits and a halfe in length, and a Cubit and a half in breadth, so the same were the dimensions of the Mercy-seat; (Vers. 10. 17.) which figured that as the Mercy-seat fully covered the Arke wherein the Law was, so Christ should fully cover all our sins, which are transgressions of the Law. The righteousness of Christ is as long and as broad as the Law, and to our sins being covered with that shall never appeare against us. Therefore also from above this Mercy-seat between the two Cherubims (the Lord said (vers. 22.) I will meete thee, and I will commune with thee. There was a gracious manifextation of the presence of God above the Mercy-seat, because that typified Jesus Christ the true Propitiaty or ransome, covering and hiding out of the sight of God for ever all our defections iniquities and transgressions. And hence the same word which signifies expiation or redemption, signifieth also the procuring cause of our Redemption, here called (as also in the New Testament) A Ransome.

I have found a Ransome. A ransome is properly a price demanded for release out of bondage. And when the Captive is released, the price is paid. To be redeemed and to be ransomed is the same thing. (Isa. 35. 9, 10.) The redeemed shall passe there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall returne and come to Sion, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtaine joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Thus here, Deliver him (saith the Lord) from going downe to the pit; I am satisfied, I have found a price, a ransome. Both Law and Gospel meet in this; here is the Law, by which the man being humbled confesseth his own sin, and the wrath of God, due to it. Here is also the Gospel, by which he hath been taught to beleive, that his sins are pardoned, and the wrath of God turned away from him, for the ransome which Christ hath paid.

So then, 'tis not as popish Expositers tell us, I have found a ransome, that is, I have found the mans good workes, I have found his repentance, I have found his tears, his prayers, his almes. I now see that in him for which I may be propicious to him, and deliver
deliver him from the sickness under which he is detained; thus they generally make somewhat in man or done by man, his ransom, at least to have a share in it. The heart (as was shewed before) is prepared for deliverance, by the workings of faith and repentance. But the ransom upon which deliverance is given, is nothing at all wrought in us or by us. Woe to us not withstanding our prayers and repentance, our reformation and humiliations. To put these in place of a ransom, or to hope for deliverance from the pit upon their account is to pervert the whole Gospel.

Others give a better fence, yet not clear enough, thus, He hath humbled himself, and I am as well satisfied as if I had received a ransom, but I lay that by also. For when God faith I have found a ransom, we are to understand it of a real ransom, of full pay or satisfaction, not of a ransom by favour and acceptance. This satisfaction to the justice of God is only and wholly made by Jesus Christ, without any the least contribution from man. The perfect ransom which the Lord finds is the blood of his own Son, which is called the blood of the Covenant, because thereby the Covenant is confirmed, and all Covenant mercies assured to us. Upon this price or ransom God restores the sick sinner and pardons him, he heales both his body and his soul. And that Job had knowledge of this ransom as the only means of deliverance, appeares (Chap. 17. 3. 19. 25.) Deliver him, for I have found a ransom.

Hence Observe, First.

The redemption or deliverance of man by a ransom is the invention of God, and the invention of God only.

If all men on earth, yea, if all the Angells in Heaven had sat from the foundation of the world to this day, in counsell beating their brains, and debating this question, How man, sinful man might be delivered out of the band of the Law, or from that condemnatory sentence under which the Law had cast and detained him, with satisfaction, or without damage to the justice and righteous-nesses of God, they could never have found it out, nor any thing like it. This is God's own invention; or, if God had said to fallen man, I see thou art in a most pitiful condition, but sit down and consider how I may doe thee good, and not wrong my selfe, how I may relieve thee, and not dishonour my selfe, I will freely doe it. If God (I say) had given
given man a blank to write downe what he would have done to bring this about, he could never have found it out; but must have perished for ever in his sin. The thought of a ransom in this way had never entered into the heart either of men or Angells, if God himself had not revealed it. Therefore the Apostle Peter having spoken of the great diligence of the old Prophets searching into and inquiring about that great Mystery, the way and means of mans salvation, concludes (1 Epift. 1. 12.) which things the Angells desire to look into. The word there used notes a curious prying into that which hath some veyled or secret rarity in it. We may conceive the Apostle in that word alluding to the Cherubims, which by Gods command, to Moses, were made with their eyes looking downe to the Mercy-feat or propitiatory in the Holy of holies (Exod. 25. 20.) figuring the ransom in the Text, yet and expressed by the same Hebrew word. The living Angells doe that which those representative Angells seemed to doe, they look earnestly at the Mystery of our redemption made, or ransom given by Jesus Christ. There is such an exquisiteness in this invention, the deliverance of man by Christ, that the Angells desire to look into it, even as men desire to see rare inventions. And this exceedingly commends the wisdom of God in our redemption, that it was a secret to the very glorious Angells. They did not know it, but as it was made knowne to them; nor did God (as it seems) make it knowne to them firstly or immediately, but it was revealed to them, occasionally by the revelation of it first to the Church; as the Apostle doth more then intimate, (Eph. 3. 10.) To the intent, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, (that is the holy Angells) might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God. As if, had it not been for the light given to and spread abroad in the Church, the Angells had been in the dark to this day about that matter. And doubtless if the Angells did not gather up their knowledge of that mystery by the ministry of the Apostles preaching it to the world, in a way of information, yet by their contemplation of what was done in the Church, & of the goodness of God to the Church, they saw as in a glasse that manifold wisdom of God which before they saw not, or were ignorant of. Now if the holy Angells knew not this mystery, but as it was revealed, much lesse could man.

We (faith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.) speake wisdom among
among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the Princes of this world, that came to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, &c. which none of the Princes of this World know, (who use to be the most knowing men in the World,) for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. As if he had said, surely the Princes of the world would have adored, not reproached and crucified Christ, had they understood who he was, or the works which he came about. And therefore the Apostle calls it not only a mystery, but a great mystery, and that there is not the least question, but 'tis a great mystery.

(1 Tim. 3. 16.) Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh; this great mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God (Eph. 3. 9.) that is in the counsell and decree of God, hath been also some way or other revealed by God almost as soon as the world began; It was revealed to Adam by the promise of the woman's seed; and to Abraham by promise, that in his Seed all the Nations of the earth should be blest; It was revealed to the Church of the Jewes in Ceremonies and Prophecies, and it hath been revealed to the Church both of Jewes and Gentiles by the Spirit in the preaching of the word, ever since Christ paid this ransom to this day; and it had been hidden to this day, if the Lord had not revealed it; 'tis therefore the Lord's invention.

Let me add this by way of inference. We honour men that bring forth any rare invention. And if it be an invention which also produceth profit and advantage to mankind, how are the Authors of it admired, and their names recorded? All the inventions of the most refined wits in the world, are dull pieces to this invention, the redemption of man by Christ. And as there is the stamp of an infinite unchangeable wisdom upon it; so the profit which comes in by it to mankind is infinite and ineffableable. How then should we honour God, both for bringing this wonderful invention to light, and giving us the benefit of it freely? It had been great mercy if God had delivered us upon our seeking it out and proposall of a way to him; but he hath not only delivered us, but found out a way himself, and plotted how we might be delivered. What a glorious mercy is this! When Daniel saw how Daniel was insinured by his act or decree, he was extremely troubled, and (faith the Text, Dan. 6. 14.) he was sore displeased with
with himselfe, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he laboured (beating his braines and studying) till the going down of the Sun to deliver him; yet could not, but cast he was to the hungry Lions, only he told him, (vers. 16.) Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. Darius could not find a ransom, any means of deliverance for his servant and great Favourite Daniel. But when we had brought ourselves into a snare, and must have been cast to the Lions for ever, to be torne by them, the Lord brought forth this rare invention, a ransom, whereby we poor sinners are delivered out of the mouth of the roaring Lion, who goeth about continually to devour us.

Secondly, Inasmuch as deliverance is got by ransom.

Observe.
Our deliverance is costly.

Soules are precious, they are dear ware; Blood, and that the blood of Christ is their ransom; (Math. 20. 28. Rom. 3:2. 5. Eph. 1:7. Col. 1:14. Heb. 9:12. Rev. 5:9.) in comparison of which all the treasures of this world are trash, our Gold and Silver corruptible, and our very righteousness a corrupt thing. Deliverances are obtained three ways.

First, By power or plain force; thus Abraham delivered his Nephew Lot when he was carryed captive (Gen. 14:14.) He armed his trained servants, born in his house three hundred and eighteen, and rescued him. I may say, the Lord Jesus hath delivered us thus, even by force and power, he hath beaten all our enemies, and having broken and spoild principalties and powers, he made a fecew of them openly, triumphing over them in it; (his Crosse spoken of in the former verse) or in himselfe; that is, in his own personal power, not by any aide or foraigne assistance received from men or Angells.

Secondly, Deliverance is obtained by price or payment. When our friends or country-men are taken Captives by Turkes or others, we cannot send an Army to rescue them, but usually we doe it by ransom; we buy them againe out of the enemies hand, or out of bondage. Jesus Christ hath delivered us, not only by power, but by price; it was not (as hath been already shewed) by gold or silver, but by his own most precious blood, (1 Pet. 1:18.) Jesus Christ hath delivered us out of the foul destroying hand of Satan.
Satan by force, but he delivers us out of the sin-revengeing hand of his Father by price. Christ owed the Devil nothing (nor do we) but blowes, but having undertaken our cause, he owed his Father as much as our debt and deliverance from it amounted to, a vast summe, yet he had enough to answer it to the utmost farthing, and did, and so delivered us.

There is a third way of deliverance, and that is by supplication and intercession, which may be considered two ways, First, by our own prayers and supplications; Secondly, by the prayers and supplications of others; which prayers of others are properly called intercessions. The intercession of a man with man may deliver him from the wrath of a man. And the intercession of a man with God, hath wrought the temporall deliverance of some both persons, and Nations; and therefore when the Lord was resolved not to spare his people, he forbade the intercession of the Prophet (Jer. 14.11.) Pray not for this people for their good: And he professed (Jer. 15.1.) Though Moses and Samuel (those two mighty Advocates) stood before me (praying he means for them) yet my mind could not be towards this people, cast them out of my sight; In that God would not deliver his people upon their intercession, is an argument that he often doth. But 'tis the intercession of Christ alone which carryeth it with God (and that always carryeth it, for the Father always heareth him, that is, granteth his requests) for the deliverance of his people both from temporall, spiritual and eternall evils. This intercession of Christ is the fruit of his blood shed, or of the ransom paid down for us. For as his blood purchaseth our deliverance, so by his intercession it is given in or applied to us. We have the impertration of our pardon by Christ's sufferings, and the application of it, by Christ interceding for us. So then, we are delivered both by power, and price, and prayer, in severall and distinct respects; But the present text speaks of deliverance only by a price, I have found a ransom, I am well paid, faith God, for mans deliverance. This ransom every poor soul may plead before the Lord, for his deliverance both from sickness death and hell. He that hath nothing to offer to the Lord (as indeed the best have nothing of their own worth the offering, and if they offer any thing of their own, of how much worth euer it may seem to be, it will not passe nor be accepted, he' (I say) that hath nothing of his own to offer) yet may tell
him he shall be well paid, he may tell God, he shall have more by saving him, then by damming him. If he damne him he shall have but his own blood (the blood of a creature) for satisfaction; but if he save him, he shall have the blood of his Son, the blood of God, as a ransom for his salvation.

Thirdly, Observe.

Though the Gospel was not clearly and fully revealed in those elder times, yet it was then savingly revealed.

How doth the grace of God shine forth in mans deliverance by a ransom, in this Scripture; Here is nothing said of deliverance from sickness by medicines, but by a ransom; and if they knew that deliverance from a disease must come in by a ransom, how much more, that deliverance from damnation must come in that way? The old Patriarkes had the knowledge of Christ to come, and not only was there a knowledge of him to come in that nation and Church of the Jewes, but the light scattered abroad, the Land of Uz had it, Job had it, as hath appeared from severall passages of this Booke, Elihu had it as appeareth by this.

Fourthly, Observe.

Not only our eternal deliverances, but even our temporal deliverances and mercies, are purchased by the blood of Christ.

A beleever doth not eate a bit of bread, but he hath it by vertue of the purchase of Christ; Christ hath bought all good for us, and Christ hath bought us out of all evil. Christ hath not only purchase deliverance from hell, and salvation in heaven for us, but he hath purchase deliverance from a sick bed, and freedome from bondage to men for us. (Zech. 9. 11.) As for thee also (faith the Lord) by the blood of thy Covenant (that is, the Covenant which I have made with thee). I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein was no water; that is, from the Babylonish captivity. The Jewes were delivered from corporall slavery, as well as spirituall, by the blood of Jesus Christ, and so are the Covenant people of God to this day. The blood of the Covenant serves to all purposes, for the good things of this life, as well as of that which is to come. Nothing else can do us good to purpose, or deliver us from evil but the blood of Christ. (Ps. 49. 7, 8.) They that trust in their wealth, & boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none ef
of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a
ransome for him. In some cases, as Solomon saith, (Prov. 13. 8.)
The ransome of a mans life are his riches. As a mans riches doe
often endanger his life (all the faults of some men for which they
have suffered, as deep as death, hath been only this, they were rich)
so a man by his riches may redeem his forfeited or endangered
life, he may buy off the wrath of man, and so ransome his life by
his riches. But all the riches in the world cannot buy his life out
of the hand of sickness; though a man would, lay out all his sub-
stance, and spend all that he hath upon physicians (as the poor
woman in the Gospel did) yet that could not doe it. We need
the blood of Jesus Christ to help us out of a sick bed, and from
temperall sufferings as well as from hell and everlasting suffer-
ings. And the more spirituall any are, the more they have recourse
to the blood of Christ for all they would have, whether it be
freedome from this or that evil, or enjoyment of this or that
good.

Therefore, First, When we hear of a ransome let us remember
that we are all naturally captives. Here is a ransome for our souls
and a ransome for our bodies, we are ransomed from hell, and
ransomed from death, surely then, we are (through sin) made
captives to all these.

Secondly, In that the ransome is expressd by a word, that nores-
hiding or covering, it should mind us, that, Jesus Christ by his
blood (which is our ransome) hath covered all our bloody sins;
and surely the blood of our sins will appeare not only to our
shame, but to our confusion, unless the blood of Christ cover
them.

Thirdly, We may hence infer, The Lord shall be no loser by
saving the worst of sinners. His Son hath taken care for that, he
hath undertaken to see his Honour saved, and his Justice sat-
tisfied.

Fourthly, In all your outward afflictions and sicknesses, apply
to the blood of Christ for healing, for help and deli-
verance.

Fifthly, Being delivered from going down to the pit, from
death by sickness, blesse Christ for his blood. We are rescued from
the arrest of death, from Death's Sergeant, sickness, by the blood
of Christ. And remember that as Christ ransomes us from going
downe:
downe to the grave when we are sick, so Christ will ransom us from the power of the grave when we are dead. (Hosea 13. 14.) I will ransom them from the power of the grave. Which though it were primarily meant of the deliverance of the Jewes out of Babylon, where they seemed to be not only dead but buryed; yet the Apostle applyeth it clearly to the ransomimg of the body dead indeed and laid in the grave, by the power of Christ at the general resurrection (1 Cor. 15. 54.) For then shall be brought to passe that saying that is written, Death is swallowed up of victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy Victory. Yea Christ hath ransometh all those from going downe to the pit of hell, who take hold of his ransom by believing. See that you have an interest in this ransom, else you will never have deliverance from going downe to that pit. We read not all the Scripture over of any ransom to deliver thofe, who are once gone downe to that bottomlesse pit. They that are in the grave shall be ransometh and recovered by the power of Christ; but they that goe into hell shall never be ransometh from thence. Take hold of this ransometh that ye may have full deliverance, both from sickness leading to death here, and from hell which is the second death hereafter.
JOB. Chap. 33. Ver. 25, 26.

His flesh shall be fresher then a childes; he shall returne to the dayes of his youth.

He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness.

In these two verses Elihu proceeds, to shew the perfecting of the sick mans recovery, the foundation of which was layd in the Lords graciousness to him, spoken of in the former verse; and the declaration of it in that word or warrant, which went out from God to the messenger about his deliverance from going downe to the pit.

This mercy or recovery in the full extent of it, hath a two-fold respect; First, to his body; Secondly, to his soule.

The mercy as it respects his body, is layd downe in the 25th verse; His flesh shall be fresher then a childes; he shall returne as in the dayes of his youth.

The mercy which respects his soule, or the state of his inward man, is layd downe in the 26th verse; He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto him his righteousness.

In this recovery of his soule-state, we may further consider, First, the causes of it.

First; The Instrumentall cause, prayer; He shall pray unto God.

Secondly, The principall or efficient cause of it, together with the first moving cause, The kindness of God; He will be favourable unto him.

Secondly, The consequence of this his renewed soule-state; He shall see his face with joy.

Thirdly, The matter wherein this joyfull state doth consist, in the close of the 26th verse; For he will render to man his righteousness.

So much for the scope and parts of these two verses; which shew the blessed issue, which God gives this distressed and sick man from his afflictions and sorrowes.
Vers. 25. His flesh shall be fresher then a childes.

By freshe he meanes the naturall flesh of the body; this flesh shall be freshe, yea fresher, and not only fresher then it was before he fell sick in his man-hood, but then it was in his child-hood, fresher then a childes. The word which we render comparatively, וְשָׁקָה molli- tur, recreates, fresher, signifies to wax soft or tender. 'Tis no where read in the whole Bible but here. Grammarians say, it is compounded of an Hebrew word, which signifies to be green or flourishing (chap. 8. 16.) and of a Syriack word which signifies to increase and grow as a plant; we render it as noting the man mending apace (as some fick men upon recovery doe) in his strength and health. He shall be green-coloured, who before was pale and wan, he shall be full-fleshed, who before was fallen and leane; so that, when he faith, 'His flesh shall be fresher then a childes,' 'Tis an Elegant hyperbo- lical expression, to shew his perfect recovery from that mortal sicknes to health. 'As if he had sayd; God will restore him to, that there shall be no scarre, nor print, no drops, nor appearance of his for- mer disease scene upon him. We know how tender and soft, how delicate and fair, the flesh of a little child is, how sweeter his countenance is, how full of good blood his veines are, how healthy and strong: (as to his time) his whole body is. Thus it shall be with this sick man; 'His flesh shall be fresher then a childes; he shall be as if he were new-born, or entred a second time up-on the stage of this world. Our spiritual estate of renovation by Christ is set forth as a youthfull, or child-like state, as to the purity and perfection of it (Eph. 5. 27.) Christ shal present us to himselfe a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. The Church hath her sin-spots and wrinkles now in her militancy; but when Christ shall present the Church at last triumphanty to himselfe, then as himselfe was ever without spot or wrinkle, so shall the Church be. Her flesh shall indeed be fresher then a childes, being perfectly recovered out of her spiritual sicknes. And thus, in proportion, Elihu assures the penitent sick man, that, when his peace is renewed with God, and his spirit set right for God, his very flesh shall be without spot or wrinkle, fresher then a childes. The latter part of the verse beares the same sense.
He shall return as in the days of his youth.

That is, he shall not barely recover his health, and get upon his legs again (as we say) he shall not merely escape death and the grave, but he shall have an addition of bodily ability, he shall, as it were, be young again. As sickness makes a young man look old, so recovery from sickness makes the old man look young. That's to return to the days of his youth.

Hence Note; First.

Bodily beauty, health and strength are the Gift of God.

He gives them, and takes them away at pleasure, or having taken them away, he can give them back when he pleaseth. He kills and he makes alive, he bringeth downe to the Grave, and bringeth up, as Hannah sayd in her Song (1 Sam: 2. 6.) How low soever a man is brought by sickness, either proper or metaphorically, the Lord is able to raise him up againe. We read (v. 21.) in how pitifull a plight, the sick man was, how rather like a carcasse then a living man he lookt, His flesh was consumed, that it could not be seen, and his bones which were not seen, stood out; as much as to say, He was nothing but skin and bones; yet, when in that case all hopes were gone, and all natural helps sayled, it was no hard matter with God to cure him. When the skill of the Physician, and the virtue of medicines sayle, the power of God sayleth not. As it is in reference to those outward dangers and desperate exigents, which we meete with in this world by enemies and persecutors, when we look upon our selves as dead men, when all hope of deliverance seems past & gone, then the Lord alwayes can and often doth deliver. The Apostle gives us his experience of it (2 Cor: 1. 9, 10.) We had the sentence of death in our selves; he spake not thus in regard of sickness, but of trouble and persecution; As if he had sayd, The malice and wrath of our enemies was such, that we thought we should never escape, we had the sentence of death in our selves, but providence suffered it to be so, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God who sayleth the dead. As it is (I say) in such dangers, so in dangerous deadly sicknesses; when a poore creature hath the sentence of death in himselfe, when he makes no other reckoning but to dye, as good King Hezekiah sayd of himselfe in his sickness (Isa: 38. 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; yet then as in his case, so in many cases the Lord stretcheth forth a healing hand and takes the sick man up againe, to continue in the land of the living.

Secondly, From the way of expressing this, in allusion to a childe or a youth.

Note.

God he can quickly make the greatest changes in nature, either for the better or for the worse, He can turne youth into old age, and old age into youth.

That is, he can make a young or a healthy man weake as an old man, and an old or sickly man strong as a young man; and as it is with naturall, so with politickall bodies, so with persons, so with nations. A nation that is flourishing in its youth, heat, strength and glory, rich and full of peace and plenty, God can bring an oldness upon it, and cause it to decline every day. The Prophet speaks of the state of Israel in this notion (Hos. 7. 9.) Gray haires are here and there upon them, and they perceive it not; they thought themselves to be in a very youthfull flourishing condition (as a state) but the Lord brought gray haires; that is, they were decaying, withering, weakening, and became a decrepid nation; And when a nation is gray-hayred, old and withered, he can make it youthfull, he can recover the honour and power of it, and cause the dread of it to fall upon the neighbouring nations round about. He turns a land into a wilderness, which before was as the Garden of God; And he can change that land into a Garden of God which now is a desolate wilderness. The unchangeable Lord is visible and glorious in all these changes. The health and strength both of the body politick and naturall are at his dispose. He can bring a decay upon what is built, and repair what is decayed, whether in nations or persons. When the earthly house of this Tabernacle is ready to drop downe into the grave, and crumble into dust, God by a word speaking, repayreth it to as much beauty and strength, as when the first stone being layd, the top-stone was set up. When Naaman had once submitted to and obeyed the Prophets counsell, which at first he despised, & washed in Jorden, His flesh (faith the text, 2 Kings 5. 14.) came againe.
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 25.

again like unto the flesh of a little childe. The holy Psalmist charged his owne soule to praise the Lord, and all that was within him to bless his holy name (Psal: 103. 1, 5.) Who had satisfied his mouth with good things, so that his youth was renewed as the Eagle. This renovation of his youth may be understood three ways; First, as to his naturall state, or bodily strength. Secondly, as to his civill state, or worldly successes, as to his honour and kingly renowne. Thirdly, as to his spirituall state, or the hightning of his gifts, graces, and comforts. 'Tis probable, David had found a declension in all these, and at last through the goodness of God and his blessing upon him, the renewing of them all from that oldness to a youthfulness againe, like that of Eagles. We find the same allusion in the Prophet (Isa: 40. 31.) They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up as with Eagles wings. Some Naturalists say, the Eagle reneweth her strength by sucking blood when her stomack is too weake that shee cannot feed upon the flesh of her prey. Saints indeed renew their strength as the Eagle, while by faith they sucke the blood of Jesus Christ; and they get cure of their owne weakneses, while they believingly lay hold upon his strength.

Thirdly, We heard in the former verse of a divine warrant issued out for this mans recovery; Then he is gracious to him, and faith, deliver him. Here we have the warrant executed; His flesh shall be fresker then a childe.

Hence observe.
The commands and warrants of God are effectuall, they shall be obeyed and made good to man.

If God say, deliver him from a sick bed, he shall be delivered; I will worke (saith the Lord, Isa: 43. 13, 14.) and who shall let it? for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought downe all their Nobles, or barrs, as the margin reads it; I will have it done, I will breake all those Nobles who are as barrs in the way of my peoples deliverance. So when the Lord sends his warrant for the delivering of a sick man, he will break all those barrs and bands by which diseases and sicknesses hold him as a prisoner in his bed. Nothing can stand against the word of God: as by a word speaking he gave the creature a being, when it had none (The Lord only spake the word, Let there be light, let there be a firmament, &c. and it was

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(50) Thus also the word or warrant of God reneweth a well-being to those, with whom it is worst, or a comfortable life to those, who are compassed about with the sorrowes of death. The word of God prevaiiles over all, or is effectuall to every purpose (Psal: 33. 9.) He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.

Further, In this restoring of the sick, we have a shadow of the resurrection. The raising of a dying man from his bed, is like the raising of the dead from the grave. The spring of the yeare is a shadow of the resurrection, because then the earth returnes to her youth, and is fresh as a child. In winter all things are dead and desolate, their gloss and beauty is gone; but then cometh the spring and all revives againe, the face of the earth looks fresh, corn and grass, trees and plants flourish and put forth their buds and blossomes. Now, what the spring of the yeare is to the body of the earth, the same is the returne of health to the body of man; In both we have an exemplar of the resurrection, as also in the regeneration or new birth of the soule, by the power of the holy Ghost. For till then we are, like old sickly men, in the old man, yea we are dead. But no sooner doth the Spirit bring us forth by a second creation into the life of the new man, but we become in spirit fresh like Children, our youth returnes to us againe; that is, we returne to that statute wherein we were first created and set up by God in righteousness and true holiness; yea into a better and furer statute then that. Man through grace is not only as he was in the first day of his creation, but better; He returnes to the day of his youth, and receives such a youth as shall never decay into old age; yea the older he is in nature, the younger, that is, the stronger and more beautifull he shall be in grace. He shall (according to that promise, Psal: 92. 14.) still bring forth fruit in old age, he shall be fat and flourishing. This renewed youthfulness and flourishing condition of the restored sick man in spirituallls, is specially and fully set forth in the next verse.

For Elishu having shewed the recovery of the sick mans body, he proceeds to the recovery of his soule, which eminently returnes to the dayes of its youth, both in the puttings forth of or exercisig the grace of God received, and in receiving more grace, favour, and comfort from God, as will appeare in opening the words.

Ver. 26.
Ver. 26. He shall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy, for he will render to man his righteousness.

El'hu gave us, before, one means of the sick sinful man's recovery from his bodily and soul's sickness, that was the counsell and instruction given in by the messenger, the interpreter, one of a thousand. And here he sets downe another means by which he is restored to both, especially to the sweetness of both.

He shall pray unto God.

The word here used to pray, signifies not barely to pray, or ἄνυ multiplied put up requests to God; 'Tis a word with an emphasis, implying the multiplying of prayer, and that not the multiplying of prayer so much by number, as by weight; the pouring forth or multiplying of strong prayers, or, as it is sayd of Christ, In the days of his flesh (Heb: 5.7.) the offering up prayers and supplications, supplies with strong crying and tears. There may be a multiplying of Zeph. 3.10. weak insignificant words in the ears of God by prayer; But the faithfull people of God, through the Spirit, powre out many strong words in prayer (as Christ did in the days of his flesh) to him who is able to save them from death or danger, and give them life. When El'hu faith, He shall pray, he intends such prayers, even the urgency, importunity, or vehemency of the soul in prayer. When Isaac saw his wife Rebecca was long barren (he was forty yeaers old before he married, and many yeaers being elapsed in marriage, there was no appearance of Children) Then (faith the Text, Gen: 25. 21.) Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebecca his wife conceived. It cannot be imagined that Isaac being so holy and gracious a man, had not prayed for that mercy before: Doubtles he prayed that God would fullfill the promise to his father Abraham in giving him a childe: but when he saw the promise so long delayed, or stick so long in the birth, then he intreated the Lord (tis this word) he powred out many and strong prayers. The word is used againe concerning Manoah, after his wife had received a promise from the Lord of bearing a Son, afterwards called Samson (Judg: 13.8.) Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and sayd, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send,
send, come againe unto us, &c. Fearing they might not fully follow the instructions given his wife for the education of their son, he earnestly begged of the Lord further direction in that matter. That prophecy either of the Gentiles to be converted, or of the return of the dispersed Jews, expresseth them by this word (Zeph: 3, 10.) From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my suppliants shall come; even the daughter of my dispersed shall bring mine offerings. As if the Prophet had sayd; They shall spend themselves in supplications at their returne, they shall come with strong petitions, with mighty prayers; as making prayer their business. They shall not come with frozen affections and cold requests, but with hearts flaming up in the ardency of their desires, and urgency of their supplications to the Lord. That's the force of the word; He shall pray; As if Elihu had sayd, He shall not come with dead-hearted prayers and petitions, (as many doe in their sicknesses and sorrowes,) nor with a formal Lord have mercy upon me, and help me; but he shall make a business of it, he shall pray to purpose; he shall pray with his whole strength. In which fence the Lord bid Ananias goe to Saul, afterwards Paul (Acts 9, 11.) For behold he prayeth; intimating that he had never prayed all his dayes before; nor indeed had he (though being brought up a strict Pharisee, he was much in the forme of prayer) ever prayed in power before.

He shall pray.

Some understand this, He, relating to the messenger praying for the sick man, He shall pray, and God will be favourable to him. That's a truth, 'tis the worke and duty of the messenger to pray for, as well as advise the sick man. But I conceive rather the person here intended praying, is the sick man for himselfe, who after he hath been counselled, directed, and advised by the messenger what to doe, applyeth himselfe to the doing of it.

Further, Some, who agree that the sick man is the person praying, yet understand it of prayer after his recovery; who finding himself healed and strengthened prayeth unto God for grace, or for a right use of his health & strength. But I rather understand it of his prayer unto God in the time of his affliction; who when his sins and transgressions have been laid before him by the messenger, and his soule-sores searched to the bottome, and faithfully dealt with,
with, and so brought to a sight of himselfe, and of his sin, with the
sad effects of it visible upon this pained and consumptive body,
is then stirr'd to seek the Lord, and entreat his favour; He shall
pray unto God:

Hence Note.
Sicknesse is a prayer-season.

Prayer is a duty never out of season, yet at some times more in
season, and most in season in times of affliction; Is any man afflit-
ed, let him pray, (James 5. 13.) And among all afflictions the
affliction of sickness seemes to be a speciall season calling for this
duty. Therefore in the 14 verse of the same Chapter, as soon as
he had saide, is any man afflicted, let him pray, it followeth, is any
sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let
them pray over him; 'Tis high time for us when sick to look about
us, to call in prayer-aide, or helpe from others in prayer; yet
'tis not enough for the afflicted, or the sick to get others to pray
for them, they must pray for themselves: some put off the duty
of prayer to others, and think it sufficeth if they send bills to minis-
ters or move friends to pray for them. I know sickness indispo-
feth to prayer, bodily paine and weakness hinder continuance and
abiding in the duty; but that doth not excuse the sick from pray-
ing for themselves. To desire others to pray for us in bodily
sickness, and neglect in our selves is an ill symptom of a sick soul;
yea to desire others in that case to pray for us, when we have no
heart to pray for ourselves, is too cleare a prognostick that their
prayers will not profit us, nor be prevailing for us. Pharaoh, when
under those dreadful plagues, could send for Moses and Aaron
more then once, and said unto them, entreat the Lord for me,
(Exod. 9. 27, 28. Chap. 10. 16, 17.) But we read not that he
entreated the Lord for himself. Simon Magus when struck with
the terrible threatenings of Peter, said; Praye to the Lord for me;
that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. (Acts
8. 24.) But we read not that he prayed for himself. The prayers
of others are rarely beneficial to any, unless they either pray or have
a desire to pray for themselves. Elihu represents the sick man pray-
ing for himself, he shall pray

Unto God. There's the object of prayer.

Hence
Hence Note.

Prayer in sickness, and in all other cases must be directed unto God, and to him only.

Divine addressions are fit for none but God: For First, none are worthy of this honour but God; Prayer is so great a part of that honour and worship which is due to God, that it is often put for his whole worship. Mine house (faith the Lord, Isa. 56. 7.) shall be called an house of prayer for all Nations. Secondly, none can hear, that is, answer prayer but God; there is no help to be had but in him. As it is his glory to be prayed to, and such a glory as he will not part with to any other, so it is in vain to pray to any other. In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of Mountains (that is, from the greatest worldly Powers) truly in the Lord, our God is the salvation of Israel, (Jerem. 3. 23.) God only was David's Hills (Psal. 121. 1, 2.) I lift my eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help; what these hills were, himself explains in the next verse. My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth; Baals Priests called upon Baal, they cried Baal hear us, but faith the Text, there was neither voice, nor any that answered (1 Kings 18. 26.) It is not only sinfull, but senseless to pray to any other then God alone. That popish Doctrine of invocation to Saints and Angels, is not only a will-worship, but folly and doting.

Fourthly, He shall pray, &c.

Hence Observe.

If we would have any mercy from God, we must ask it.

God is ready to give, but he looks to be intreated, and he will be intreated: What God hath promised to doe for us, his doing of it must be obtained by prayer. Working prayer, worketh the promises to their issue; yet prayer worketh the prophecies, whether of salvation upon Sion, or ruine upon Babylon to their issue. Promises and prophecies are the express will of God, and shall certainly be fulfilled in their season; yet if we desire their full-filling, we must pray that he would full-full them; and 'tis a token for good that God is about to full-full them, when the hearts of his people are drawne out much in prayer for their full-filling. There are some mercies, in the promises, rightly called preventing

ing mercies, they come upon us before we ask; such is the mercy of our vocation, conversion or turning to God; we are naturally so far from praying while we are in the state of nature, that we are continually blaspheming or dishonouring the name of God; but, as for persons converted, (who are eminently called heirs of the promise,) of the good in the promise) if they will have any good promise, they must ask it. When the Prophet had declared many prophesies of good and great and glorious things which God would do for his people, he concludes with this direction from the Lord. (Ezek. 36. 37.) I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to doe it for them. As if the Lord had said, I will not doe these things unasked, as you look I should doe these things for you, so I look you should pray unto me that they may be done. A promise was made to Abraham (Gen. 22. 17.) that his seed should be multiplied as the Stars of Heaven; now might not Isaac his Son have said, God hath promised me children, what need I pray for them? but Isaac knew better, he knew that the promise was to be brought to the birth by prayer, therefore he entreated the Lord that he might have children.

Fifthly, from these words He shall pray compared with the next, and he (that is God) will be favourable to him.

Observe.

The Lord is ready to hear when we pray, ready to give when we ask.

As prayer is honourable and delightful to God, so, fruitfull to man. Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find (Matt. 7. 7.) He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him. Prayer shall not be lost, nor vanish into aire. There was never any faithful prayer lost; though the prayers of many have not been answered in kind, that is, they have not had the very thing they asked for; yet they have had an answer to their prayers; and though prayer be not always answered in our time, yet there is a time wherein all faithful prayers shall be answered; one age reaps the fruit of those prayers which another age hath sowne. The seed time is one age, the harvest in another. Latter Generations get good by the prayers of the former. Though we who pray see not the fruit of it, yet many shall find the fruit of it; and how

often
often doth the fruit of prayer appear presently, how often doth the answer come in upon the very putting up of the request? (Isa. 65. 24.) Before they call, I will answer, and while as they are yet speaking, I will hear. While the word is in their mouth, the mercy shall be put into their hand. While the Church (Acts 12. 5. 16.) was praying, Peter came in among them. As if God had said, there's your prayer. What the Prophet Elisa said (2 Kings 6. 33.) of the messenger sent to apprehend him; Is not the sound of his Master's feet behind him? The same may we say sometimes of this messenger holy and fervent prayer, is not the sound of the mercy prayed for at the very heels of it? Thus close doth Elihu put the sick man's prayer and the answer of God, he shall pray unto God,

And he will be favourable unto him.

That is, he shall have a gracious and a speedy answer; he will be favourable unto him, or, he will accept him, as Mr. Broughton renders: 'Tis a very comfortable word, it notes not only to wish well to, or to be at peace, but to be well pleased with another, yea to be delighted, and take pleasure in him.'Tis not barely, to be appeased and reconciled, to lay down wrath and displeasure conceived against a man, but it notes much sweetness of spirit towards him, and full content or complacency in him (Psal. 149. 4.) The Lord taketh pleasure in his people, (they are as the joy of his heart) he will beautify the meek with salvation; he will not only save them, but adorn them with salvation; they shall not only be delivered (after they have lain among the pots, Psal. 68. 13.) from the blackness and filth of their adversity, but they shall have a beauty put upon them, or (as it followeth in that Psalm) last cited) They shall be as the wings of a Dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. God will be favourable to them, that is, he will give them favours to wear for him, he will put marke of honour upon them, they shall not only be benifited, but beautified and crowned with salvation.

God expressed that highest favour and most indebted affection which he bare to his own Son, as serving him, by no better nor more emphaticall word then this (Isa. 42. 1.) Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth. What is, or can be more delightful to God then his Son? and what can be
be more comfortable to man, then to hear and know, that God delighteth in him, and bears favour to him (through his Son) with the same affection as he doth to his only begotten Son? He will be favourable unto him.

Whence note.

First, God is well pleased with, he is favourable to, and delight-ed in an humble sinner.

When a sinner is brought upon his knees and becomes a suppliant, when as he is laid low by affliction, so he lyeth low in prayer and supplication, then the Lord will be favourable to him, and shew his delighting in him. The Lord delighteth not in the strength of the horse, he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man (Ps. 147, 10, 11.) No man is favoured by God, because of his outward favour, because he hath a beautiful face, or strong clean limbs; yea nor only hath the Lord no pleasure in any man's legs, but not in any man's braines, how reaching for ever, nor in any man's wit, how quick for ever, nor in any man's judgment how deep for ever, nor in any man's tongue how eloquent or well spoken for ever, but the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy; in those that walk humbly with him, and call upon him. Let me (faith Christ to his Spouse, Cant. 2, 14.) hear thy voyce for it is sweet; he means it not of an artificial singing voyce, but of a spiritual praying voyce. That's the musick which the Church makes for Christ. Nothing is so tunable nor takes the care and heart of Christ, like the voyce of prayer and praise from a gracious heart. All the beauties and rarities both of persons and things are dull and flat, yea wearisome and loathsome to God in comparison of a gracious, honest, humble soul. Princes have their favourites (they are according to the language of this Text) favourable to some above many, either because they are beautiful and godly persons, or because they are men of excellent speech, prudence and comportment. All godly men are God's Favourites, he is favourable to them not only above many men in the world, but above all the men of this world, who have their portion in this life; And he therefore favours them, because they are the purchase of his Son, and the workmanship of his Spirit, convincing them of, and humbling them for their sins, as also creating them after God in righteousness and true holiness, Such shall be his favourites.
Secondly, Consider the coherence or dependance of these words, He shall call unto God; and he will be favourable unto him. Whereas, before, all his complainings and outcries fixed him in no stead, now being humbled effectually, and taking hold of the righteousness shewed and offered him by the Messenger of God, he no sooner makes suit to God but is heard.

Hence Note.

God first shows regard to the person, then to the offering, to prayers and services.

This truth may be understood two ways. First, in reference to the state of grace. When Abel and Cain brought their sacrifices or offerings, God had respect to Abel's more offering, but to Cain and his offering had no respect. (Gen. 4. 4.) Abel was in a state of grace, Cain was not; so the Apostle states their case, (Heb. 11. 4.) By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and what did he testify? Surely that his gifts were brought in faith, and were presented from a principle of grace, which Cain had not; and therefore God did not approvingly testify of his gifts. Till we close with God by faith, God doth not close with our services by acceptance. Secondly, as this is true in reference to the state of grace, so in reference to somewhat in the present actions or dispositions of those who are gracious. 'Tis possible for a godly man to act so sinfully, and to be so ill disposed to the frame of his heart, that God may seem to deny acceptance to his prayers, and services. David said, (Psal. 66. 18.) If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. And God told the Jews, his Covenant people, (Isa. 1. 15.) When ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Thus while they who have a state interest in Christ, walk unworthy of it, they are under the frowns of God, and his dis-acceptation of all their duties, till they renew their repentance and humble themselves. And I conceive this was the case of the sick man in the Text (in whom doubteless, he aimed at Job) whom Elihu granted to be a godly man, yet under great distemper of spirit, which must be healed & removed before he could so call upon or pray unto God, as he would be favourable to him, or give him testimony of his favour. Thus
we see, in both these references, how the person of a man must be respected and in favour before his prayers can. For as we can have no benefit by the intercession of Christ, till we accept his person, so God will not give us any benefit by our supplications, till himself accepteth our persons, which he doth only in Christ. Many would be saved by Christ, they would be pardoned and get to heaven, they would enjoy the benefits and privileges which he hath purchased for his people: they neglect Christ himself; nor doe they think of closing with his person. Now, I say, as unless we have respect to the person of Christ, and desire union with him, we have nothing to do with his benefits; so unless God hath respect to our persons, we get no benefit, no answer of our prayers.

Thirdly, Note.

*To have the favour of God, or to be accepted with him, is the top and summit of all desireable favours.*

'Tis the Alpha and Omega, the first and last of all other favours, to find God favourable to us; if God be favourable to us, it matters not much who frowns upon us, or what foul weather we meet with in this world. And, as to be in his favour should be the chief of all our desires, so to be allured of his favour should be the chief of all our studies and cares. (*2 Cor. 5:9*) Herein (faith the Apostle) we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him. The word notes to labour ambitiously; as if he had said, we labour as much for the favour of God, as ever any of the sons of ambition laboured for the favour of Princes, or regard with the Kings of this world. No man ever plotted or flatter'd and crouched so much to the Kings of the earth for favour, as we doe to God for favour; herein we labour. We make it our business to be accepted with him; if God once accept a man, you may turn him loose, he will shift for one. How compleately happy the condition of such a favourite is, will appeare yet further in opening the next clause of this verse.

*And he shall see his face with joy.*

When once God is favourable to a poor sinner, then he shall be used or dealt with like a favourite. Great Favourites stand in the presence of Princes, and frequently see their faces. Whomsoever
foever any man favours he freely admits to his presence, and takes
delight in his company. Thus Elihu speaks of God's Favourite,
He shall see his face with joy.

There is a twofold interpretation of these words, tending both
to the same spiritual fence.

First, Some by the Antecedent He, understand God himselfe,
and by his face the face of the weakest sick man; and so the sense
of this assertion, he shall see his face with joy, is plainly, this. God
will look cheerfully and smilingly upon the face of this poor sup-
pliant; God will look upon him, as we doe upon friends whom
we favour and have much respect for. Friends may see content
and joy shining in or stampd upon our faces, when we look them in
the face. The content which we take in seeing the face of an-
other is visible in the smiles and joyes of our own faces. As when
we look sourly, angrily, sorrowfully, sullenly upon a man, when
darkness is seen in our faces, and clouds gather in our brows, ready
to dissolve into a storme, this speaks we bear him no good will,
or rather that we bear him much displeasure. So when we looke
pleasantly upon a man, doth it not say, that we are highly pleased
with him? To be sure, when God is at peace with a repenting
sinner, he no longer frownes upon him, nor turns his face from
him as an enemy, but entertaines and welcomes him as a friend;
which is directly opposite to Jobs apprehension of God at the
16th verse of this Chapter, Behold he findeth occasions against me,
he counteth me for his enemy. This is a sweet soul-reviving and
ravishing truth. God beholds the face of his people with joy, he
beholds them smileingly, cheerfully, delightfully. David calls it
The light of God's countenance (Psal. 4. 6.)

Secondly, (and I rather conceive that to be the meaning of the
place ) most relate the He, to the sick man; who having been
upon his knees humbling himself before God, and finding God
favourable to him, he then seeth his face, that is, the face of God,
with joy. God fills his soule with a great deale of peace, comfort,
and sweetness in his approaches to him. Before, possibly, if he
did but think upon God, he was troubled as Asaph found (Psal.
77. 3.) I remembered God, and was troubled. To a man in great
trouble, especially in trouble of mind, the very thoughts of God
(who is our only help in trouble) may be troublesome; but when he
is set right and restored to the favour of God, or God being again
favou-
favourable unto him, he beholds his face with abundance of joy. Here are yet two things to be opened, or two Queries may be made and answered for the clearing of these words.

First, What is meant by the face of God; Secondly, what is meant by seeing his face.

To the former query, I answer; First, the face of God is the essential being or perfect Majesty of God, of which himself faith to Moses (Exod. 33. 23.) My face shall not be seen. Secondly, the good will and favour of God is his face (Ps. 80. 3.) Cause thy face to shine, (that is, be good to us) and we shall be saved. Thirdly, the face of God in Scripture is put for any manifestations of God to man. God manifested himself in wrath to some men, (Psal. 34. 16.) The face of the Lord is against them that do evil; That is, he is angry and greatly displeased with them. He manifested himself in love to others, and all such are said either (as in the Text) to see his face, or (as other Texts express it) to have his face shining upon them. God is a spirit, he hath no face properly; but as the face of a man is that, by which he is known (if a man hide his face we know not who he is, though we see all the other parts of his body, he is a concealed man) so that whatsoever it is, by which God is clearly known, that in Scripture language is called his face. And hence Thirdly, the worship and holy ordinances of God, are called the face of God (Gen. 4. 14.) because they are great manifestations of God, or because God is manifested in his Ordinances, in his word and worship, who and what he is. After a sick man, through the help of God, is recovered; he goes into the congregation to give thanks; and then he may be said to see the face of God, because there he exhibits the signs of his presence, & doth as it were shew his face. There as in a glas we behold the face of God, that is, the discoveries of his holiness, of his love & goodness; The face of God is seen in his works, as the Apostle teacheth us; (Rom. 1. 20.) The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and godhead: much more in his word and Ordinances, and above all in Jesus Christ is God seen and manifested. Jesus Christ is the face of God, the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, (Heb. 1. 3.) The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines to us in the face of Christ. Thus the face of God is beheld in
the face of Christ. There we may see how holy, how just, how good, and mercifull God is; all this glory of God appeareth to us in the face of Christ, who is the highest manifestation of God. Here in the Text by the face of God, we are to understand any demonstration of Gods favourable presence; in which fence of the word, Aaron was to bleffe the children of Israel (Numb. 6. 25.) The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. That is, the Lord manifest himself to thee in wayes of grace and peace, in favour and in mercy. David prayed in the same fitte (Psal. 67. 1.) God be mercifull to us, and bleffe us, and cause his face to shine upon us; that is, give us tokens and pledges of his favour.

Secondly, How see we the face of God? Doth not God tell Moses, No man can see my face and live. How then can the face of God be seene?

I answer; The face of God (which was touched before) as taken for the essence of God, or for his essentiaall glory, cannot be seene; That's too transcendent a glory for man to behold. What we see of God is but some ray or beaming out of light and glory from himselfe, we cannot see himselfe. The essentiaall or personall glory of God, is that face which cannot be seene, but the declarative glory of God is a face of God which may be clearly seene by faith in the light of his word and worikes. And to see the face of God, is nothing else but for a man to know in himselfe (as the Apostles word is in somewhat a parallel case, Heb. 10. 34.) that God is gracious to him, that is, to have an assurance of his favour, or a reflect act of faith about it. The holy Spirit sheweth us what God is, and what the things of God are (1 Cor. 2. 12.) We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God; that is, that we may be enlightened with the knowledge of the grace, goodness, and favour of God to us discovered in the Gospel. The Spirit sheweth us this blessed face of God, and we see it by the actings of our faith; all our visions of God in this life are visions of faith; upon whose wings all our intellectual powers soare aloft and are carried up to God. Faith is not only a worke of the will in content and application, but a worke of the understanding by assent and knowledge. Thus we see
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To be under the hidings of God's face, is the saddest effect of sin to a sensible or an awakened soul. David made a grievous complaint because of this, whatever the cause or occasion of it was, (Psal. 13. 1.) The absence of God from him (though possibly but for a short time) was so tedious to him, that he cried our, How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? Even Jesus Christ while he stood in the place of sinners, bare the hiding of his fathers face, as the summation of all those punishments which were due to and deserved by our sin. This pressed him more than all bodily sufferings, and made him cry out, while he hung upon the Cross, My God, my God (not why hast thou left me to be crucified, but) why hast thou forsaken me (Math: 27. 46.) Thirdly, God hideth his face from some, because the manifestations of it have not been received thankfully, nor improved rightly. We ought to give thanks for the light of the Sun shining in the ayre, and also doe our work in it; Is it any wonder if God cloud and eclipse the light of his countenance towards those, who neither prize it, nor improve it? If you would always see the face of God, then be ye always seene at the worke and in the ways of God.

Secondly, Observe.
It is the sole privilege of God's Favourites, or of those to whom he is favourable, to see his face.

As no man can see that face of God, his essentiaall presence, none but Godly men shall see this face of God, his comfortable or blessed-making presence. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb: 12. 14.) There is a two-fold vision or sight of God, and that negative assertion may be understood of either or of both. There's first, a vision of God on earth; thus we see his face, as was shewed before, in the actings of faith; For though the Apostle opposeth these two, faith and sight; we walke by faith, and not by sight (2 Cor: 5. 7.) yet faith hath its sight; we walke not by sight as the worldly men walke, who doe as they see, and make their eyes both the guide of their consciences, and the in-bringers of their comforts; we walke not by outward sight, nor doe we make conclusions how to guide our conversations, by what we see. We walke by faith, and that's the sight which we have of God while we are here on earth, which cannot possibly be with-

out holiness; faith being so great a part of our holiness, and (by drawing virtue from Christ daily) the maintainer of it all. Secondly, there is a sight of the face of God in glory. And if none can enter into glory but holy men, then no man without holiness can see the face of God there. Thus Christ faith of the Angells, They always behold the face of my father which is in heaven (Math: 18. 10.) Now we see the face of God darkly as in a glasse (1 Cor: 13. 12.) that is, in his word and works, in his ordinances and appointments; in these we have glimpses of the face of God, but we shall see him face to face; that is, as fully and comprehensively as creatures can; we can never comprehend God, but we shall have comprehensions of God so farre, as finite can take in the fruitions of Infinite. We shall see his face with joy.

Thirdly, Note. It is the greatest joy and happiness of man imaginable to see the face of God.

Any manifestation of God is a joyfull favour, and a full manifestation of him fills the heart with joy; Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us (faith David, Psal: 4. 6, 7.) thou hast put gladness in my heart more then in the time their corn and wine increased; As if he had said, I rejoice in thy favour more then worldlings doe in their best enjoyments. Shew us the father and it sufficeth us, sayd Philip (John 14. 8.) let us have but that favour, and we desire no more; we have enough, we can have no more, if we may but see the father. True joy stands not in any sights, nor in the sight of any thing here below, but in the sight of God above while we are below, and in a hope that we shall at last get above too, and there have an everlasting sight of him, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. We read in the Levitical Law, of the showbread, which was to be set in the holy place, upon a Table (Exod: 25. 30.) The Hebrew is, the bread of faces. There are two reasons of this denomination; First, Because that Bread did shew the gracious provision that God made for them all the way they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, or that he spread a Table for them in the wilderness where they had no harveft; To which the Prophet may allude (Jer: 2. 2.) I remember (faith the Lord)

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the kindness of thy youth, the love of thy espousals, when thou wentest after me in a land that was not thine; that is, when thou didst trust me for thy daily bread. Secondly, It was called the show-bread, to testify the special presence of God with them, and that his eye was always upon them, ready to do them good upon all occasions. This was the high privilege of the Jews then, they had the bread of faces; and this is the joy of the people of God now, that what ever good they have, it is the face of God to them; their bread is the bread of faces, and their wine is the wine of faces, &c. that is, they are a signification of the favour and love of God to them, or they look upon the love and favour of God manifested in those things, much more then upon the things themselves. Now if it be so great a mercy to have some manifestation of the face or favour of God, or that we are always in the sight and view of God; What will it be to us when we shall always abide in the presence of God, and see his face with joy?

Lastly, Note.

A justified person hath confidence to look up to and think of God; He doth it with joy; and that's the fruit of a well-grounded confidence.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is ( faith the Apostle, 2 Cor: 3. 17.) there is liberty, a liberty of address and approach to God, a liberty also of speech and prayer to God. True godliness hath much well regulated boldness with God; and as a Godly man ought with reverence, so he can with a well-grounded confidence look God in the face.

For he will render unto man his righteousness.

This latter part of the verse giveth an account of the ground of that joy which the sick man found in seeing the face of God. He shall see his face with joy ( faith Eliph.) for he ( that is, God) shall render unto man his righteousness.
this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, or he is not returned from his anger. Thirdly, The word is used to note man's return unto God by repentance (Deut. 30. 28.) We by sin turn away from God, and by repentance we return to him. Fourthly, It signifieth to return by way of requitall (Psal. 116. 12.) What shall I render unto the Lord (It is this word) or, what shall I return to the Lord for all his benefits? David was in an holy mute or maze, what testimony of thankfulness he should bring to the Lord. What shall I render? And in that sense it is attributed both to God and man; sometimes in relation to evil done, and then it notes to render punishment or revenge (Psal. 28. 4.) Render to them their desert, so the word is used by Joseph's brethren (Gen. 50. 15.) He will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him; they were jealous of their brothers love when their father was dead. And as it notes a return of evil done in way of revenge, so also a return of good done in way of reward, thus here.

He will render unto man.

It is an indefinite affertion, not to this or that man, but to man. With God there is no respect of persons, but he that worketh righteousness (let him be who he will) is accepted of him. To man, that is, to every man God will render his righteousness.

Righteousness is of two sorts; First, There is the righteousness of our sanctification, which consists; First, in our turning from or leaving to do evil; Secondly, in our doing good: this is a righteousness wrought by us and dwelling or inherent in us. The Hebrewes by this word often express that which we call almes or charity; and the reason is two-fold, why almes or acts of charity are expressed by that word which signifieth righteousness; First, because our charity or our almes must be given of those things that are rightly gotten. We must not doe unjustly that we may be charitable, nor wrong some to relieve others. Secondly, because charity and almes is a due or right to the poor that are in want; we call it charity, but it is a work of duty (Prov. 3. 27.) therefore it is well expressed by righteousness. He shall render unto man his righteousness or beneficence. We may take it in this large

large fence; for this also is a part of our sanctification. And when it is said, he will render unto man his righteousness, we are not to understand it of righteousness in kind, but of the reward or fruit of his righteousness. For here Elihu speaks of a person already righteous, or at least of him who had repented of and turned from his unrighteousness. So that, to return or render unto man his righteousness, is to return the mercy promised to those that are righteous. For as iniquity or unrighteousness is often put for the punishment of unrighteousness; so equity or righteousness is often put for the reward of righteousness, or for that which God according to his righteous promise returns unto a righteous person. Thus we may understand Elihu here. As if he had said, God dealt with this man before, as with a sinner, or he afflicted him for his sin; but now he will deal kindly with him as with a righteous person, and removing his affliction, and taking his hand off from him, he will render his righteousness to him, he will not reckon with him for any former unrighteousness.

From this notion of the word, Observe.

God usually deals with men as they are, and according to what they do.

If a godly man sin he shall smart for it; and if a sinner return and repent, God will shew him kindness. Though the mercy and kindness which God shews to a returning sinner, be not for his returnings or repentings, yet 'tis according to them. The favour which God sheweth any man is for Christ's sake, or for what Christ hath done and suffered; but it is according to what himself hath done or suffered. David experienced this himself. (Psal: 18, 20.) The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness, &c. That is, as I have been a righteous and just person, so the Lord hath dealt with me. And he gives the rule with respect to all others (v. 25.) With the upright thou wilt shew thyselfe upright, with the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure, &c. That is, Thou wilt be such to men in thy dispensations, as they are in their conversations and dispositions, in the frame and bent of their hearts and lives. And as it followeth (v. 27.) Thou wilt save the afflicted (or humble) people; but wilt bring downe high lookes; that is, those that are proud and high-minded. The Prophet holds out the same truth in way of direction (Isa: 3, 10.) Say ye to the righteous, it shall be
be well with him; for they shall eat of the fruit of their doings; that is, they shall have good for the good they have done, or according to the good which they have done. (Rom. 2. 10.) Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.

If any object; But may it not be ill with men that doe good and are good? doth the Lord alwayes render to man according to his righteounesse.

I answer; It is well at present with most that doe well; look over all the sons of men, and generally ye shall find that usually the better they are, the better they live.

Secondly, I answer; It shall be well with all that doe well in the issue, and for ever. This truth will abide to eternity; God will render unto man according to his righteounesse.

Secondly, We may take the word righteounesse, for the righteounesse of justification; Mr. Broughton inclines to that sense, He will restore unto man his justice. And presently adds by way of gloss; Justice is Christ; It is Christs Justice or righteounesse that is restored to man. Christ is indeed the Lord our righteounesse (Jer. 23. 6.) And thus several others of the learned expound these words. He will render unto man his righteounesse; That is, he will bestow upon him or restore to him righteounesse in Christ; he will account him righteous, though he hath no righteounesse of his owne which will hold in Gods account. Elihu, I grant, calleth it Mans righteounesse, his righteounesse; yet we may well understand him calling it so, not because it is wrought by, but because it is imputed to or bestowed upon mans his righteounesse. That is ours which is freely given us, so is righteounesse in justification by faith in Christ. We have no righteounesse wrought in us or by us, for that purpose; but we have a righteounesse wrought for us, and freely bestowed upon us, for that purpose, which is therefore truely called mans righteounesse.

But some may question; how can it be sayd, that God doth render or return to man this righteounesse, that is, the righteounesse of justification? Can this righteounesse be lost? can a person justified fall out of a justified state?

I answer; The righteounesses of justification (which is true alfo of the righteounesse of sanctification) as to the substance and being of it cannot be lost; But it may be lost as to the comfortable
ble enjoyments and fruits of it, or as to our apprehension of it; And the Lord is saied to returne to man the righteousnes of his justification, not as if the grace it selfe were lost, or taken away from him, but because the sight and sense of it, the sweetness and joy of it, the workings and effects of it having been lost, are now restored to him againe. When the Lord by his Spirit gives the soule a cleare and fresh evidence of it, or reneweth the testimony of his Spirit with our spirits, that our sins are forgiven, and that we are justified, beloved, and accepted in Christ, then the Lord is saied to render unto man his righteousnes; otherwise, neither the faith, by which this righteousness is applied, nor the righteousness itselfe which is applied to us by faith, is at any time lost or removed. Only in this sense, as in many other Scriptures, so in this, the Lord is saied to render unto man his righteousness, both of sanctification and justification. For, when a believer through sin hath blotted his own evidences, and God hath left him under the darkness of his own spirit, for his negligent, unwatchfull & unworthy walking, or when the Lord hideth his face, to try him what he will doe, whether he will trust in his name while he walketh in darkness and seeth no light, when, I say, after withdrawals for either of these reasons, or for any other the Lord gives him in a renewed evidence of his love, then he is saied to render unto man his righteousness. It is in this case as with a man that labours under some strong and dangerous diseaunce, which taketh away his fences, and leaves him halfe dead; we say, the man is gone, yet he recovers, his speech returnes, and his spirits revive, and then we say, his life is rendered to him, or he is brought back from the grave, we have fetched him againe; not that his life was quite taken away (for he was not a carcasse in that condition, a body without a soule) but his life was, for that time, withdrawn, there was no appearance of it, no sensible breathing, no motion, no vital visible operation. Thus we may conceive what is meant by the rendering unto man his righteousness.

Hence observe.

First, A justified person is a righteous person.

He hath a clothing of righteousness; that which we call his righteousness, is not properly but impudently his. It is not a clothing of his owne making, but made for him and bestowed freely upon
Secondly, Observe.

A justified person under great afflictions and temptations often loogeth the comfortable sight and sense of his owne righteousness.

And so may look upon himselfe as an unrighteous person, as having no righteousness, or as being unreconciled & unjustified. For, as many bold sinners & hypocrites presume they have a righteousness when they have none, and boast themselves to be in the number of the justified when they are not. So many an afflicted and tempted soule, who is indeed justified in the sight of God, may be unjustified in his owne. Great afflictions have an appearance of divine displeasure, which stands most opposite to justification. As affliction is a kinde of darkness, so it often leaves the soule in much darkness. And he that is in the dark is full of feare, he is apt to question his state, whether he hath any thing of God in him or no. For though it be not good for a Christian alwayes to begin to live, he should come to a point, and labour for a certainty; yet some are brought to such a pass that their former evidences and experiences are even dead and lye prostrate, and they constrained to begin a new reckoning about their spirituall estate, or, as it were, to begin againe to live.

Thirdly, Note.

Mans righteousness or justification, is as lost to him when he wants the evidence, that is, the comfort, sweetness, and peace of it.

When his soul-state is so ravel’d and intangled, that he can make nothing of it, then his righteousness is as lost. Those things which appear not, are to us as if they were not. Not to know what we have, is a degree of not having. When grace doth not act or is not used, we are sayd in Scripture to lack grace, or to have none. (2 Pet. 1. 9.) But he that lacketh these things is blind, and can-
not see afar off. The whole context carrieth it of believers, who are in a state of grace, who yet not using grace are said to lack it, and are called blinde, as not able to see afar off; how it was with them when the work of conversion first began, &c to have upon the matter forgotten that they were ever purged from their old sins. That is, they act as a man that hath never had any acquaintance with God, or knew so much as the meaning of repentance from dead works. He, in the Gospel, who had but one talent and did not use it, is said to have none, From him that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath (Matt: 25. 29.) 'Tis a strange expression to say, that shall be taken away from a man which he hath not; yet the idle servant is said not to have that one talent which he had, because he did not use it, but laid it by as a dead stocke. Now, as in reference unto the grace of sanctification in us, when we doe not act, we are said to lack it, or not to have it, so in reference to the peace of justification, when we have not the comfort of it, we are said to be without it. And therefore when peace is restored to the soule, righteousness or justification is restored also.

Further, from the connexion of these words, He shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness.

Note. Fourthly.

When the sight of our righteousness or justified state in Christ returns to us, our comforts return.

We may be justified or in a justified state, and not rejoice. But if we know we are in a state of justification, we cannot but rejoice. It will make a man rejoice to purpose, when he seeth the righteousness of justification is clearly his (Isa: 45. 25.) Surely shall one say in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: One shall say this: He shall not only have righteousness in the Lord, but he shall say he hath; that is, he shall be able to make it out; he shall have the sight of it upon his spirit, and then as it followeth in the Prophet; In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory. When they are able to say this, then they shall not only rejoice but glory. Gloriing is the height of joy, or joy is in its full strength. The Apostle saith (Rom: 14. 17.) The kingdom of God is not meat and drink (What is it then?) but righteousness (and what else?) peace and joy in the holy Ghost... Righte-
Righteousness brings in peace, that's the first fruit; The warre is ended, the controversy determined between God and the soule, and when once peace is entred, joy will follow. It is usuall to make triumphs, when, a formerly broken, peace is made between two nations. When Abimilech sent commissioners to make a covenant of peace with Isaac, the holy Story faith (Gen. 26. 30.) He made them a feast, and they did eate and drinke. Surely when God sends his holy Spirit to speake peace to a troubled soule (against whom his terrors have been set in array (as Job sayd in his own case, Chap: 6. 4.) and the arrows of the Almighty within him have drunke up his spirit ) he (I say) having his peace thus restored to him, cannot but have the joy of the Lord restored to him, as David prayed his night (Psal: 51. 12.) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; That is, shew me that I am justified, that my sin is pardoned; this will bring back into my bosome the joy of thy salvation, and my drooping soule shall be not only refreshed but feasted as with marrow and fatnes. Joy is a certaine consequent upon the sight of our justification; Yea joy is not only a consequent, but a fruit and effect of it; joy floweth out of the nature of it; nor is it ever interrupted, or suspended, but upon the hiding of righteousness out of our sight. And therefore joy returnes unfayleably when the Lord is pleased thus to render unto man his righteousness.
JOB. Chap. 33. Verf. 27, 28, 29, 30.

He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not:

He will deliver his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,

To bring back his soule from the pit, and to be enlightened with the light of the living.

We had the blessed issue of the Lords dealing with the sick sinner in the former verse. Now, in the two first verses of this context, we have the same case and issue put in general with reference to any man. And in the two latter, Elihu recapitulates or summes up the whole matter, and then applyeth it to Job personally and particularly in the three last verses of the Chapter.

He looketh upon men, &c.

The word notes a strict beholding and fixing both of the outward and inward eye, that of the mind, with that of the body. This here, after the manner of men, attributed to God; He marks and animadverts upon men, how it is with them, or how they stand disposed and affected.

Yet there is a difference among interpreters, who is the antecedent to the word He. He looketh upon men. The doubt or question is to whom this relative pronoun, He hath respect; whether to God or to the sick man lately spoken of.

Some understand it chiefly of the sick man recovered, He looketh upon men; That is, the sick man looketh upon those about him; and faith, I have sinned and perverted that which is right. As if being raised from his sick bed, he should raise himselfe up, to give glory to God by confessing and acknowledging before men, that he had sinned in perverting the rule of righteousness given him to walke by, and had found by dear-bought experience, that it profited him not. The Italian translator faith, He afterwards shall
shall turne himselfe towards man, and say, &c. That is, he shall preach Gods grace to sinfull man, and propose himselfe an example of it, magnifying the grace of God to him, and acknowledging his owne vileness. They who insist upon this exposition render the 28th verfe, as the continued speech of the sick man, making it out to this effect, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, yet he hath delivered, or will deliver my soule from going into the pit, and my life shall see the light.

It must be granted, that to look upon or behold man is in Scripture, a descriptif periphrasis or circumlocution, expressing a man recovered from some dangerous & deadly sickness. And therefore when Hezekiah thought his sickness was to death, and his case desperate; He thus bemoaned himselfe (Hsa. 38.11.) I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. But, faith Elisha, the sick man being perfectly recovered, talks with and looks upon men; And the first discourse he issueth, is a confession of repentance for his iniquity; I have sinned, I have perverted that which was right, and it profitteth me: And his next is a confession of praise for his recovery; He hath delivered, or I am assured he will deliver my soule from going downe to the pit, and my life shall see the light. This is a profitable exposition; and much insisted upon by some very learned interpreters, and therefore I shall make a little improvement of it by this briefe observation.

It is our duty, being recovered from sickness; to confess and make knowne the goodness of God, and our sinfullness to those that are about us.

There is a three-fold confession; First, of faith, that we believe what God hath revealed and promised to doe for us. Secondly, of prayer, that we thankfully acknowledge what God hath done for us according to his promise. Thirdly, of repentance, that we are heartily sorrowfull for and bewayle, what we have done against the command of God. We should be ashamed to sin before men, but let us not be ashamed to confess our sinfullness, and (in some cases) our speciall sins before men. Though we neither impose nor extort particular confessions from men (as the Papitlts doe) yet it is good for men who have been under the afflicting hand of God, and have had great experience of his mercy in raising them up,
up, to declare what God hath done both for soule and body, that others may be bettered by their experiences.

But I shall not stay upon this, because our translation (which is cleare and safe) runs another way, making the antecedent to this he, to be God; He, that is, God looketh upon men, and faith, If any say, I have sinned, and have perverted that which is right, and it profired me not, Then (as it followeth) He will deliver him from going downe to the pit, and his life shall see the light. The fence of the context in Generall, is plaine; God looketh upon men, and if he seek them penitent, he will have mercy upon them, and deliver them, or give them that which is better then bodily deliverance. More diligently.

He looketh upon men.

It is the work of God at all times to look upon men; and he looketh so upon all men, as if he had but one man to look upon. His look upon men is not a bare look, but a considering, and an observing look. He so looks upon men, that he looks through them. He looks upon them, and takes notice what they are, how it is with them, what they are doing, and at what they are driving. He looks upon them to consider both the frame of their hearts, and the course of their lives; yea his looking is an expecting: he so looketh upon man, as looking for somewhat from man, or as desiring to see somewhat in him. Though God hath no need of us, nor of any thing we can doe, yet he looketh, waiteth, or hath an expectation, of somewhat to be done by us. He looketh upon sick men, to see how they take it; with what patience they beare affliction, what the workings of their hearts are, what their repentings, what the actings of their faith; such things as these the Lord looketh for from most men, mostly from men under the rod, under sad & sorrowfull dispensations. And the words following shew what it is expressly which the Lord looketh for. Yet before I open them, note in generall.

God loves to see occasion of doing good to man.

What we love to doe, we love the opportunities of doing it. The Lord is good, and he loveth to doe good, and therefore he is exprested as one troubled when he wants, & as one pleased when he hath the occasions of doing it. We may take up that fence, eminently
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 27.

ently from that most patheticall wish (Psal. 81. 13, 14, 15, 16.)

O that my people had hearkned unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I should since have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries, The haters of the Lord, should have submitted themselves, but their time should have endured for ever: I should have fed them also with the finest of the wheate, &c. As if the Lord had sayd, How glad should I have been if my people had been but fully qualified to give me occasion of removing all evill from them, and of doing them all manner of good. The holy Prophet speakes the heart of God in the same readiness (Hab. 30. 18.) Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you.

As if he had sayd, The Lord expects your reformation, that he may not proceed in rigour against you, or as some conceive rather, he only delayeth his putting an end to your troubles, till ye are humbled, expecting a seasonable time to shew you that mercy, in bestowing of which he will exalt and advance his owne name and honour, when once he seeth you fittted and duly prepared to receive it. The Lord (faith David, Psal. 14. 2.) looked downe from heaven upon all the children of men, to see if there were any did understand and seek God. There he is represented looking downe from heaven to see if any did understand, as here, he looketh upon men to see if any doe repent, saying, I have sinned, &c. The Lord often, yea always looketh downe upon Nations, Cities and people, to see if any have a right understanding of him, or a will with upright affections to him. The Lord at this day is looing upon the sick, and looking upon the sound, to see if there are any, who are going on faithfully in a right way, or repenting that they have gone wrong. He looketh upon men; And if any say,

I have sinned, &c.

In this latter part of the verse, we have the matter expressed which the Lord looketh upon men for, 'tis repentance and godly sorrow for sin; If any say, I have sinned; That is, if any repent. When the Lord faith, If any say, I have sinned, he doth not mean it of a bare saying so, but, if any say so, laying his sin to heart; if any say so from a true sense of the evill of sin; if any say so burden'd with sin, and tainting the bitterness of it; if any shall say, I have sinned, and say it thus, then &c. The word which we translate
flate sinned, notes a mistake of our ayme or way; As if it had been
sayd; If any man say, I have gone besides the line, and done be-
sides the rule. Sin is in all men a miffing of the mark, and a step-
ning out of the right path; it is also in very many, as 'tis expressed in
the next clausel, a perverting of that which is right. If any say,
I have sinned,

and perverted that which is right.

The word implyeth more then ordinary sinning, more then sins
of infirmity, which arise from ignorance and mistake, even those
which are committed with a relolvedness of spirit, and purpose
of heart; or they imply not those sins which a man falls into un-
advisedly and unawares, but those which he commits upon deli-
beration, and in the eye of the Law, that shewing him plainly what
is right, and that he ought not to pervert it. So then in strictness
of sense, to pervert that which is right, is to be willingly, yea wil-
fully unrighteous. The Church making a graduall confession of
her sin by three steps, puts this word in the midst (Psal: 106. 6.)
We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity ('tis
this word) or done that which is crooked and perverse) we have
done wickedly. Cain, the first man born, sinned thus (Gen: 4.13.)
My punishment is greater then I can beare (so we render) or (as
we put in the margin) mine iniquity is greater then can be for-
given. Cains sin was a perverseness, he knew he perverted that which
was right in slaying his brother. So that, here we have the con-
feffion of sin, with the aggravation of it, a notorious sin. The peni-
tent person doth not only say, I have sinned, but I have sinned
greatly, or I have perverted that which was right. To sin, and to
pervert that which is right, are materially the same; only the lat-
ter intimates the manner how a sin is committed, namely, when
we would not be ruled by the Law, but accommodate the Law
(as if it were a leaden or lesbian rule) to serve our lufts; to per-
verting that which was right, that we might countenance and em-
bolden our selves in doing wrong. If any aske

What is right? Surely, right is First, The Law, Secondly, that
which is done according to Law. The statuts of God are right,
rejoycing the heart (Psal: 19. 8.) The word of God is right, and
the rule of right, yea it is a ruling right. To pervert that which is
right, or to pervert the law of righteousness, is to act against the
light
light and convictions of conscience which will be our Judge.
One of the lateine interpreters useth a harsh and coarse word to Pecovati et re-
presse this by; yet full and proper to the scope; I have tortifed &m tortificae-
vi. Cajeit: Pravaricati
which was right. Another ren-
ders it, I have prevaricated from that which was right. Our word
furni probitae
which was right.

Hence note.
First, Sin must be confessed. The Lord looks for it. He looketh
upon men to see whether any will say, I have sinned.

He will have their sin out of their own mouths. When Nathan
brought the parable home to David and sayd, Thou art the man,
he presently fell into confession, I have sinned (2 Sam: 12.13.)

But some may say, Is this confession of sin sufficient to say, I
have sinned.

I answer; First, a general confession of sin, or that we have sin-
ned is not sufficient, unless we are also willing and ready to con-
fess before the Lord all our particular sins. Some are ready
enough to say, they have sinned, who yet will scarce be brought
to acknowledge any particular sin; yea many say, they are great sin-
ners, who know not how or in what they have sinned, nor what it
is to sin. Therefore barely to say, I have sinned, is not a Gospel
confession of sin. I answer. Secondly, Though a general confes-
sion is only expressed in this and many other Scriptures, yet a spe-
cial confession is intended. The prodigal Son (Luke 15.19.)
sayd, I will return to my father, and I will say to my father, I have
sinned against heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to
be called thy Son. He did not enumerate the particular evil acts
he had committed and was guilty of, yet doubtlesse he had them
as a burden upon his heart, and was willing to unburden himself
of them, one by one, in a hearty and heart-afflicting confession.
The publican (Luke 18.13.) stood a far off, and durft not lift
up his eyes to heaven, but only sayd, God be mercifull to me a fin-
er. He struck at all his sins, though he did not by name touch any
one of them. He that faith (knowing what he faith) I have sinned,
will not hide any one of his sins; And he that indeed and
truth confesseth any one, will cover none of his sins. Those sins
may be pardoned which are not expressly confessed, but if we

M m m
conceal or hide any sin, and will not bring it forth in confession, we cannot, in faith, expect the pardon of it.

Again, Consider the time or season when the Lord looked for this confession; It was a time of trouble and affliction, of paine and sorrow, the man was sick, or but in a way of recovery out of his sickness.

Hence note.

*Times of affliction are speciall times of confession and repentance.*

Confession of sin must not be omitted (especially not neglected) in our most comfortable days, much lesse in a day of trouble. A sad and troubled state calls us aloud to a gracious sadness of heart, to the search of our hearts and lives, which are preparatory to repentance and Godly sorrow. Usually in prosperity men will not be at leisure to search their hearts, and take notice of their sins. Therefore the Lord draweth them to confession by drawing them from the world, by laying them upon their sick beds, or by bringing them into straites. And as when affliction is upon persons or families, then is a speciall time to confess personall and family sins; so to confess national sins, is most reasonable when affliction hath seized upon kingdoms and nations. The want and neglect of that publicke confession and sorrow in such a day is mightily aggravated, and most severely threatned. ( Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14.) God looketh and loveth to heare every man, saying, and a whole nation, as one man, saying in a day of sorrow and trouble, *I have sinned, and perverted that which was right.*

From the latter words, *I have perverted that which was right* or the Law.

Note, First.

*The law of God is the rule of righteousness; a right rule.*

All rightness and righteousness is comprehended in it, and measured by it.

Secondly, Learne.

*Sin is a perverting of that which is right.*

Every ( the least ) sin is so in some degree, though here, possibly, sins are intended of any, even of the highest degree. The Apostle
Chap. 33. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 27.

Apostle defining sin, calleth it (1 John 3. 4.) A transgression of the Law; and if so, it must needs be a perverting of that which is right: For what is or can be right, if the rule of righteousness be not. What the Apostle spake to Elymas (Acts 13. 10.) Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord, the ways of every sin, and the more sinfull any sin is, by so much the more doth it pervert that which is right. Some sinners are said to make void the law of God, to pervert it, as if they would quite subvert and disannull it. David remembers God of such, and desires him to look to themberetimes (Psal: 119. 126.) It is time for thee to work, for they have made void thy law; That is, they have done their best, or worst, rather, their utmost to make it void, and of no force. 'Tis not in the power of all the powers of the world, to vacate recind or null one tittle of the law of God, heaven and earth shall pass away before that, yet many attempt it, yea some doe that which will be found and interpreted a making void of the law of God, who thinke themselves great zelotes for, or very zealous of the law. That will be the case of many, especially, of all will-worshippers.

Againe, Consider though the person here spoken of had not only sinned, but perverted that which was right, that is, sinned perversly, yet upon confession the Lord deals graciously with him.

Hence Note.

The free grace of God extends to the pardon of the greatest sins, even sins of perversness.

Where sin aboundeth, Grace aboundeth much more (Rom: 5. 20.) whether the abounding of sin be taken in the number of it, or in the weight of it, that is, in the greatness and aggravations of it, Grace hath its suitable super-abounding. (Num: 23. 21.) When Balaam would shew that the people of Israel were a people impenetrable by his curses, he faith, The Lord hath seen no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. The word there used is of a different root from this in the text, but the sense is the same, implying, if the Lord had seen perverseness in Israel, it would have laid them open to a curse; yet sins made up of perverseness are within the compas of a pardon. There is no sin excepted from pardon, but that which at once resueth and despieth it, the sin against
the holy Ghost (Math. 12. 31.) This should not encourage any to sin perversely, only it is a comfort to those who have. They who have sinned perversely, or who have perverseness mingled with their sin, should not cast off the hope of pardon, but woe to those who sin perversely, (that is, against the light of their owne consciences) upon hopes of pardon. Such persons have no true hope (they may have much presumption) that they shall be pardoned. They who having sinned perversely, confess it, have good ground to pray for pardon, but they who goe on sinning perversely, have no ground (while they doe so) to hope for it. This text speaks of a person confessing and bewailing that he hath sinned perversely, not of a person purposing to sin so, as appears further in the last clause of the verse; If any say, I have sinned and perverted that which is right.

And it profiterb me not.

Here's another point of confession, we must not only confess that we have sinned, but the fruitlessness of sin, or that sin profiteth not: There are two renderings, and so two several explications of these words.

The word signifieth most properly that which is equal; And hence some give the sense thus, (which carrieth in it an eminent work of repentance) I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and have not that which is equal; That is, Though I am greatly afflicted, and my sorrows lye heavy upon me, yet they are not equal to my sinning, or perverse dealings with the Lord. I have not received as I was worthy, or according to my ill deservings. The Septuagint speak thus; God hath not made a strict inquisition for my sin. My iniquity is not charged upon me to the utmost.

Whence observe.

First, The punishment of sin in this life is not equal to sin.

As all the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory of the next life (Rom. 8. 18.) so neither are they comparable with the sins of this life. When a man is under very
very sore affliction, chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine: So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat: yet he must confess, his sufferings are lesse than his sin.
The Church of the Jews acknowledged this as to that great affliction, their captivity in Babylon (Ezra 9.13.) After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that our God hath punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve, &c. It was no little punishment which that people endured, yet they confessed it was lesse then their iniquity. The least sin is so great, that no punishment which man is capable of in this life can equall it; nor can that in the life to come equall it as to present degree, but only by the everlastingness of its duration.

Secondly, Note.
A soul truly humbled is ready to confess to the glory of God, that his punishment and suffering is lesse then his sin.

As a godly man doth not thinke any sin little, so he doth not thinke any affliction great compared with his sin. Cain said, My punishment is greater then I can beare; but he did not say, it was greater then his sin. How hotsoever the furnace of divine wrath is heated, yet sinners must acknowledge there is sparing mercy in it; and that God might have made it seven times hotter, and therefore hath afflicted them lesse then their sin. As a godly man is ready to acknowledge his mercy more then he hath deserved (Gen. 32.10.) I (said Jacob,) am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, as if he had said, I am lesse in my good actings then any of thy actings towards me for good have been: So he is ready to say, his greatest afflictions or evills which he suffereth are lesse then his sins, or then the evills which he hath done.

Secondly, The word signifieth to profit, so we translate; And Verbum non as it profiteat me non. Other Scriptures comply with this sense (He- expono, profuit; non fit mihi conducible quod pec-\(\text{c}a\)-\(\text{c}\)am. Mordecai, the Jew sitting at the Kings gate? Thus
Thus here, faith the sick man, I have sinned, And it profited me not, or I have got nothing by it: And when he faith, it profited me not; we are to expound it by a usuall figure in Scripture, whereby more is intended then is expressed, so that, it profiseth me not, is, it had been very detrimentall, dangerous, and deadly to me. I feel and smart under the sad issues of my sin, my perverting that which was right hath done me (though I have had but my right) much wrong. I have sinned, and it profited me not.

Hence note.

First, Sin pretends profit and advantage to a sinner.

There is no temptation comes without a bait. Though some sin purely for sins sake; yet it is rare that sin cometh without the offer of a bribe, and profit is one of the greatest both baits and bribes that the Devill puts upon the hook of temptation, when he fisheth for soules. You shall get by it, faith that deceiver. But the repenting soule, can truly say, it profited me not; I had thought to have gotten by my sin, it promised me very faire, but I have got nothing but blows. The temptation with which the Devill assaulted our first parents was of this kinde; He told the woman of profit, she and her husband should gaine knowledge by it, (that's a noble gaine) They should be as Gods knowing good and evil, there's all profit imaginable in such a knowledge. Christ himselfe who was God and perfectly knew good and evil, was also tempted with profit (Math: 4, 8, 9.) The devill shewed him all the dominions of the world (and those not with bare walls, but ready hung and furnished) and the glory of them, and said unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall downe and worship me. If our head and the heire of all things was tempted with profit, how much more poor we! No marvaile if Satan provide him Agents to say to us as they are represented (Pro: 1, 13.) Come, saith in your lot among us, we will all have one purse, or a joynt stock in this wicked trade; What they hoped to get by it, is told us in the next words; We shall find all precious substance, and fill our houses with spoyle. We shall get enough, and you shall share with us if you will but come and goe with us. We see what sin promiseth; But what doth the sinner find? himselfe answers, It profited me not.

Hence
Hence learme.

There is nothing gotten by sin, no good is gotten by it.

The Apoftle puts the question to sinners (Rom: 6. 21.) What fruit had ye then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? Caft up your account, and tell us what you find at the foot of it. Possibly some may say, we have gotten hundreds and thousands, we have gotten howies and lands, our barnes are full of corne, our fields of cattel, and our bags are full of treasure. But is it profit to have house and land, gold and filver come in by fin? Let that Scripture anfwer (Math: 16. 26.) What is a man profited if he flall gain the whole world and loffe his own soule? But some may say, they that are in Chrift cannot loose their soules by fin. I anfwer; First, though they that are in Chrift cannot be such sinful soules, as to fin away their soules, though they cannot fin at such a rate, nor in such a height as to loose their soules who have indeed found Chrift, or rather who are found of him, and planted in him; yet the dammage which every fin unrepented of and unpardoned puts man to is the loffe of his soule. Secondly, suppose a finner repenteth, what hath he got by fin, but the forrows of repentance. And though no man fhall have caufe to repent of true repentance for fin, yet no man fhall have caufe to boast of the penny-worth he hath had by fin which hath occasion'd the forrows of that repentance. One hours communion with God in wayes of holines is better then all the profits and pleasures which any man hath got while he was committing that fin, or running any course of fin, whereof he now repenteth. At the beft fin dishonours God, troubles our confciences, and breaks our peace; at the beft nothing is got by fin which is worth the having; at worst the soule is loft by it, which of all things we have is moft worth the having.

Thirdly, Note.

Sin is exceeding dangerous and destructive to man.

Some would fin for the pleasures and carnal contentments which are found in fin, though they knew they should make no earnings, or get no profit by it, yea though they knew they should be and dye beggers by it. Once more, if this were all, that they should loose heaven by it, or if the meaning of loofing their soules were
were only this, that their souls should be no more, they would easily venture it. But there is an affirmative in the negative, and when, 'tis said, sin profiteth not, the meaning is, it brings trouble and renders us miserable for ever; 

**Fool's** (that is, all sinfull men, saith the Spirit of God, Psal: 107. 17.) because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities are afflicted; and all such among these fools, as dye in their sin are damned; and who is able to summe up the dammage of damnation?

**Fourthly, Learne.**

**Sinners shall be forced at last to confesse that there is no profit in sin.**

True penitents confesse it willingly now; and impenitents shall confesse it at last, whether they will or no; they shall have such a conviction of the evil of sin by their sufferings, as will make them say, what hath pride profited me? and what hath envy profited me? what hath malice and wrath profited me? And what hath the fraudulent deceiving of my neighbour profited me? this will be the cry of sinners to all eternity. Oh what hath sin profited us? That which is the willing confession of a gracious repentant here, will be the forced confession of damned impenitents for ever hereafter. This will be a bitter repentance. Hell is and will be full of the words of repentance, but no fruit of repentance shall be found there. The damned shall not find either amendment in themselves, or mercy from God. This will be the confession of all sinners at last (as of those that repent and are saved, so of those who repent when damned) we have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it hath not profited us. And when once man hath made this hearty confession to God of his sin and folly, then God maketh him a gracious promise of deliverance and mercy, as appears in the tenour of the next verse.

**Ver. 28. He will deliver his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.**

There is a two-fold reading of this 28th verse, as was shewed in opening the former. For whereas that 27th verse is understood by some as the humble confession of the sick man recovered, and so read in this forme; He looketh upon men and saith, I have sinned and
and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; then, this 28th verse is rendered to make up that fence, as a thankfull acknowledgment of his recovery, He hath delivered my soule from going into the pit, and my life seeth the light. Thus, as we had his confession of repentance in the verse fore-going, I have sinned, &c. so here we have his confession of praise and thankfulness; He hath delivered my soule from going into the pit; Mr Broughton translates tiamuetic vereto this fence; He saved my soule from going into the pit, that my foule confession life doth see the light. Thus the sick man being restored breaks out into thanksgiving; The Lord in mercy hath freed me from death, hell, and the grave; I need not feare Satans accusations; my body enjoys the light of the world, and my soule the light of Gods countem. Merc: nance shining upon me, which is better then life. But because our owne reading is clearer in the originall text, and holds out the scope of the context fully enough, therefore I shall prosecute that only.

He will deliver his soule from going into the pit.

The words are an affliction of the favour and goodness of God to the penitent sick man; He (that is, God) looketh upon men, and if he beare any saying, I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profited me not, if he make such an humble and gracious confession, this will be the issue; the Lord will deliver his soule from going into the pit. At the 18th verse, we had words of the same import; He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. And againe, at the 24th verse, Deliver him from going downe to the pit. To be delivered from the pit (as was there shewed) is to be delivered from death. And the word soule (as was then likewise expounded) is put for the person; As if it were sayd; He will deliver him; the penitent man from death; and that both from temporall death, the death of the body, and from eternall death, the destruction of body and soule; or he will deliver him first from the pit of the grave; and secondly, from the pit of hell. He will deliver his soule from the pit.

And his life shall see the light.

That is, he shall live to see the light; To see the light, is a circumloction of life; As if it had been sayd, He shall recover out of his deadly sickness, and behold the light of the Sun, as living men Pined:
men doe. Thus David prayed (Psal: 56. 13.) That he might walk before God in the light of the living. And thus the wicked man is threatened with eternall death (Psal: 49. 19.) He shall go to the generation of his fathers, they shall never see light; That is, they shall never enjoy life, but be shut up in a perpetuall night of death, or in the night of perpetuall death.

Secondly, When tis sayd, his life shall see the light, we may understand it, not only for a bare returne to life, or that he shall live, but that he shall live comfortably and prosperously, he shall lead a happy life. To see the light, is to live and rejoyce; light is pleasant, it is comfortable to behold the Sun, as Solomon speaks. To see light, comprehends all the comforts of this life, and of that to come, which is called, the inheritance of the Saints in light, (Col: 1. 12.) For as darkness is put not only for death, but for all the troubles of this life, and the torments of the next; so light is put both for life, and for all the comforts of this and the next life. All the blessings of this temporeal life, and the perfect blessedness of eternall life, are comprehended in light. So that when tis sayd, his life shall see the light, the fence riseth thus high; He shall be happy forever; so extensive is the favour of God to repenting persons, that time is too narrow for it; everlasting light shall be their portion. From the former branch of the words thus opened, He will deliver him from the pit.

Observe.

All our deliverances are of God.

As there is none can deliver like God, so none can deliver but God. If he gives out the word that such a man shall goe to the pit, it is not in the power and skill of all the Princes and Phisicians in the world, to save or stay him from it. And how low and desperate soever any mans condition is, if God say the word, he is deliver’d and reprieved from going downe into the pit.

Secondly, From the connexion with the former verse, the sick man having made this confession, I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it provifeth me not, the Lord presently delivers him, &c.

Observe.

God is ready to deliver, humble praying and believing sinners.

That.
That command hath a promise joined to it (Psal. 50. 15.) Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver. The 107th Psalm speaks this quite through, where we find many sorts of perishing persons, crying unto God, and God delivering them from perishing when they cried. As when sin cryeth God will afflict, so when sinners cry, God will relieve them in or bring them out of their affliction.

From the latter branch, His life shall see the light.

Note.

Natural life, and light are a great blessing.

God promiseth much when he promiseth life and light; The light of this life is no small mercy, how much greater is the light of spiritual life? But who can conceive how great a mercy the light of eternal life is! yet all this God speaketh to the humble and believing sinner, when he faith, His life shall see the light.

Secondly, Comparing the two parts of this text together, He will deliver him from going downe to the pit, and his life shall see the light.

Observe.

The mercy of God to humble sinners, is a compleat mercy.

Here is not only deliverance from evil, but the bestowing of good; it is much to be kept from going downe into the pit, but it is more to see light, the light of comfort here, and the light of glory hereafter. The mercy of God to his people is great in temporals, greater in spirituals, greatest in eternals. The benefit of redemption (to shew the fullness of it) is set forth two wayes; First, by our freedome from evil; Secondly, by our enjoyment of good. (John 3. 16.) God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whatsoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. He shall not perish (that is, he shall be delivered from going downe to the pit) he shall have everlasting life; that is (as the text speaketh) his life shall see the light.

Elihu having at large drawne a description or narration of the whole proceeding of God with sinfull man in all the parts and particulars of it, gives a briefe of all that he sayd, in the two next verses.

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Ver. 29. *Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with man;*

Ver. 30. *To bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*

As the Apostle after he had discoursed at large, about the dignity of Christ's Priest-hood, gathers up all together (Heb. 8. 1.) Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: we have such an high Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: So Elihu having spoken much of the several ways, by which God revealeth himselfe to man, and works him to a light of his sin, and penitentiall sorrow for it, recollects and sumnes up all in these words.

*Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, &c.*

In these two verses, we may take notice, chiefly of two things.

First, The frequency of Gods dealing thus with man (v. 29th. *Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes.*

Secondly, The designe and purpose of God in doing so;

That he may bring back his soule from the pit, and be enlightened with the light of the living.

*Lo, all this worketh God oftentimes with man.*

Here's the application of the former Doctrine; Elihu preseth his hearers with it, and bids them lay it to heart; As if he had sayd, *I have not been speaking of things in the clouds, but of what is really and daily acted among the children of men, Lo (or behold) all these things.* There are four speciall significations in Scripture of this word, *Lo,* or *behold,* and they may all four meete in this place.

First, It imports some new unheard-of and wonderfull thing (Isa. 7. 14.) *Lo, or behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son.* That a virgin should bring forth a son, is a wonder of wonders, a wonder so much above the course and power of Nature, so much beyond the compasse & comprehension of reason, that men and Angels have reason to be astonished at it.

Secondly, 'Tis prefixed, to shew some extraordinary impulse or readiness of spirit for action. Thus Christ speaketh in that other
other noble prophecy of him (Psalm 40.7.) Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book, it is written of me; I delight to doe thy will O my God: yeathy Law is within my heart. Lo, I come, that is, I am ready to come, I am preft upon the work, I am under the pressure and command of my own spirit, as well as under thy appointment and decree to undertake, and finish that worke of man’s redemption.

Thirdly, It frequently implyeth matter worthy of weight and deepest consideration. That’s useful and remarkeable which is thus prefaced. Thus Solomons speaking of the field of the flotfull man, faith (Proverbs 24. 31.) Lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken downe: As if he had fayd, Marke, this is a thing to be attended, the fluggards field is full of thorns; that is, in a spiritual fence, flotfull hearts are full of lusts and vanities. In this language the Church invites all to consider the Glorious excellencies of God (Isaiah 29.9.) Lo, this is our God. And thus Christ speaks of the woman whom he had healed on the Sabbath day (Luke 13.16.) And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from her infirmity on the Sabbath day? As if he had fayd, Pray consider the cafe and speake your minde.

Fourthly, 'Tis often used in a way of strong afcertainment, and affirmation, intimation of the certainty of what is spoken (Genesis 1.29.) And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed.

And againe (Genesis 12.11.) It came to passe, when he was come neere to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarah his wife, Behold, now, I know that thou art a faire woman to look upon. (Read Psalm 132.6. Ezekiel 30.9. Luke 1.32.)

In the present text it may have all these intendmentes; for is it not a wonderfull thing, that God should be gracious to poore creatures? is it not strange that he should take so much paines with, and exercise so much patience towards them? Secondly, Lo, God worketh all these things! He is ready to doe them, he waiteth to be gracious, or to magnifie his grace in doing them. Thirdly, Lo, God worketh all these things; is not this a matter of great consideration, ought we not to sit downe and weigh it well? Fourthly, Lo, all these things worketh God; certainly God hath and will work all these things; this is a truth out of all question, a truth of which
which there is no doubt to be made: As the Apostle faith (1 Tim: 3. 16.) Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifest in the flesh; so I may say without controversy, great is this mystery of God's manifesting himself to frailty flesh, and doing all these things here spoken of, awakening the consciences of men by dreams, and working upon them by grievous sicknesses, sending an interpreter one of a thousand to declare unto man his uprightness, and at last delivering his soul from going downe into the pit. Lo, all these things worketh God.

There is somewhat peculiar in that expression, he worketh. The native sense of the word, implyeth; First, a willing work: not forced or constrained. Secondly, a full and compleat work, not an essay or offer, not a work begun only, but carried on to perfection. The wicked are called workers of iniquity. (Psal: 5. 5.) because they are free and ready to sin, they have a strong tyde and bent of spirit to doe evil, and they doe it not to halves but throughly; they doe not only begin or nibble at the baite a little (as a good man often doth) but greedily swallow it downe hooke and all; they are fully in it, and doe it fully; they make a worke of it; and so are workers of iniquity. The Lord doth good, as the wicked doe evil; All these things worketh God. He worketh them willingly, he worketh them compleatly, (Isa: 26. 12.) Lord thou wilt ordaine peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our workes in us; Thou art the Author and finisher of them. We are invited (Psal: 46. 8.) to come and behold the workes of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. The building workes, and the desolating workes of God, whether respecting persons or nations, are perfect workes. Lo, all these things worketh God.

Hence note.

What ever good we see wrought among or for the children of men, God is the worker of it.

As he over-ruleth the evill which is done, and both sendeth and ordereth the evill which is suffered; so he is the worker of all the good that is done. God worketh it all either immediately by himselfe, or mediately by second causes; and what instrument soever is set a worke, yet the worke as to the matter and manner of it, as also to the resulf and issue of it, is the Lords. He was the worker
worker of all that hath been spoken of in the former context; though we read of a messenger, of an interpreter, yet the work was God's. 'Tis sayd (Gen: 39. 22.) The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand, all the prisoners that were in the prison, and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. Not that he did everything, with his own hand in the prison, but he gave the rule, and ordered all that was done. Much more may I say of the Lord; whatsoever is done in the world, especially among his people, God is the doer of it. All goes through his hand. Lo, all these things worketh God.

Further, From the prefix, Lo:

Observe.
The workes and dealings of God with men are wonderfull; those especially which he worketh for the humbling of a sinner, and for the delivering of a soule from going downe to the pit.

The breaking of the heart, the raying of it by faith, the renewing of its peace and comfort, are wonderfull works of God. And the reason why we wonder no more at them, is, because we consider so little of them.

Hence againe from the word, Lo,

Note.
The workes of God are to be deeply considered, to be stayed upon.

We must not passe them by lightly, whether they be towards our selves or others, God hath made his wonderfull works to be remembered (faith David, Psal: 111. 4.) or to be considered, that's the designe of God in his works, he hath made them for that end, that they should be remembered, and attended to, or they are such as cannot but be remembered; they leave their marks and memorialls behind them. God sets such a stamp of his power, wisdom, justice, and goodness upon his workes, that they will not be forgotten. And as his outward providential workes, are such, so his spirituall workes are much more such. The godly-wise understand them so, they have a criticaall eye in discerning those invisible workes of God with a poore soule, in reducing him from sin, and bringing him to himselfe. David calleth all the godly to the consideration of those workes in his owne case (Psal: 66. 26.) Come and heare all ye that fear God, and I will declare what
he hath done for my soul. What God doth for our bodies is very considerable, but what he hath done for our souls can never be enough considered nor admired. *Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*

The originall is, twice, thrice, so we put in the margin, and render it often-times, in the text. Some expound it, of those three distinct wayes, in which God dealeth with man, before described. The Septuagint are express for that; *All these things worketh the strong God three wayes with man,* Which the Scholia exemplifies in the three wayes here noted by *Elihu.* First, awaking him by dreames and visions; Secondly, troubling him by sicknesses and afflictions; Thirdly, teaching him by Prophets and Interpreters. Yet, I conceive, the text doth not strictly recapitulate those three several wayes before spoken of, in these words, twice, thrice, but only shewes us that God useth all these wayes or any other, as his wifdome shall thinke fit, many times, or oftentimes for the producing of those blessed effects.

*Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*

*Twice, thrice,* is a double certain number, put for any single uncertain number; And it only teacheth or assureth us, that God debateth with the sons of men in all or any of these wayes oftentimes, or more then once. If they doe not answer his call or purpose (which they seldom doe) at the first; he calleth againe and againe, twice or thrice, or often-times, that is as often as he seeth it good, needfull or expedient to doe it. And we may suppose that *Elihu* useth this number twice, or thrice; in allusion to the customes of men; whether civil Magistrates or Churches, who when they deal with others about any fault committed or offence given, they doe not take them at the very first default, but warne and admonish them twice or thrice, or send them (as the case may require) several Citations to appeare, and either to acknowledge their guilt, or acquit themselves of it.

*These things worketh God twice or thrice.*

And remember, it is but twice or thrice; which speech though it may be well rendred (as we say) oftentimes, yet it is not very often; once is no number, twice is the least number, and thrice is but a small
small number, two or three witnesses are the least number of witnes-
ses that can be admitted in any business. That, the Lord will
do this, twice or thrice proves that he will doe it severall times,
men shall have meanes, and frequent meanes, but twice or thrice,
may not be very often, much lesse always; there is a stint, and a
cart. Aquin: determinate number in the breast of God; and that we might not
expect to have his patience lengthned out always to us, 'tis put
into the smallest numbers, All these things worketh God twice or
thrice,

with man.

The word by which man is here expressed, is, no ordinary word, \( \text{non quique} \) libes viri importat, sed ut plurimum nobilis;
lem illustrem, vel alia va rationes fidelissi-
lem. Bold:

First, Personally or individually, that is, he worketh thus of-
tentimes with the same man, God is put to renew his actings more
then once with one and the same man, because he will not bow
nor obey at first.

Secondly, We may take this word man specially as implying
several men, or men of all sorts, as well as any one man of a sort.
That manner of speaking is frequent in the old Testament (Job 1.
4.) And his sons went and feasted in their houses, man his day, or
every one his day. So (Jon: 1. 7.) And they sayd, every one to
his fellow, or man to his fellow, so here God worketh these things
oftentimes with man, that is, with severall men, as seemeth good
to him. The speech is distributive. For though we are not to un-
derstand it so largely, as if God dealt thus with every particular
man, yet he deales thus with many men, even with as many as
himselfe pleaseth, or hath purposed. Lo, All these things worketh
God oftentimes with man.

Hence note.

Such is the goodness of God, that though man is not wrought up-
on presently, or at the first, yet he will come a second or a third
time
time to carry his worke through with him.

'Tis a mercy that God will speake once, or use any means once with us, 'tis mercy that he will speake any one word in any one way, to bring us off from sin; 'tis mercy that he will send one vision, or one affliction, to awaken us out of our security, or one messenger to instruct us once in our duty; but when the Lord is pleased to use severall means, and those severall means, severall times, how doth the abundant mercy and graciousness of God appear in this! And as the mercy of God in generall, so the patience of God in speciall appeareth abundantly in it. The Lord waits to be gracious, he waits the working of this or that means, of a second and third means, and he waits the working of them all over againe and againe, or oftentimes; here is patience with long-sufferance.

Secondly, Observe.

God will perfect his worke, and bring it to an issue with infallible man.

God would not give over working to humble Job, till he had fully humbled him; And this made Job almost amazed at God's dealing with him (Chap. 7. 17, 18, 19.) What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment? Job seemed much troubled at this intancy of God with him, and therefore expostulated in the next words, How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow downe my spittle? But, for all his crying, God would not depart from him, nor let him alone for a morning, no not for a moment till he had finished his worke and accomplished his will both in him and upon him; till he had brought his heart into a due frame and temper under his mighty hand. If once or twice will not doe it, he will doe it thrice; The Lord is not weary either of working or waiting; God is a rocke (faith Moses Deur: 32. 4.) and his worke is perfect; and of all his worke, that of grace is most perfect. His visible providentiall works are perfect or shall be before he hath done with them, or put his last hand to them, but his invisible spirituall worke are most perfect; as God worketh often to bring man out of the state of sin to grace; so he will not cease working till grace be perfected, he will worke till that worke is wrought to
to the height, till the top-stone of it is set up, or as the Apostle phrafeth it (Eph: 4. 13.) Till we all come to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Though a man hath been once truly humbled, yet God humbles him againe, that he may be humbled gradually as well as truly to his own mind. They that are humbled by affliction, may need more afflictions to humble them. The same meanes by which faith and repentance are wrought at first, doe also encreafe and strengthen faith and repentance. Those meanes by which a man is at first purged, are very proper for his further purging (John 15. 2.) Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. As no man can be a true branch (hypocrites and formalifts are branches only in appearance and profession, they were never truly purged, now, I say, as no man can be a true branch) till he is purged, fo God purgeth those who are true fruit-bearing branches more and more, that they may bring forth more fruit. And the means by which he purgeth them, that is, mortifieth their corruptions, seldom reach this blessed effect at once or twice working, and therefore the Lord is even constrained to worke these things twice, thrice, or oftentimes, else the worke would not be brought to the intended issue.

Thirdly, In that it is sayd, All these things worketh God oftentimes, not alwayes.

Observe.

Man should make haste to answer the call of God, and come up to what he requireth of him.

For though God worke these things oftentimes, yet no man knowes how oft he will worke, and we may all know, he will not worke alwayes. 'Tis a high and dangerous presumption to deferre at any time upon hopes that God will work at another time, because in some cases he workes oftentimes. Remember (as was shewed before in opening the words) this thrice is the least number of often, as twice is the least number of any; two or three are the least number that makes a Church-assembly (Math. 18. 20.) The Prophet faith (Amos 2. 4.) For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turne away the punishment thereof, implying that if men multiply their transgressions, God will ne

O 0 0 2 alwayes
always give them means of repentance, but powre out wrath upon them; So Elihu faith, God worketh twice and thrice; but if men will sin three or foure times, where is their warrant that God will pardon or passe by their sins? The Prophet did not binde up the mercy of God precisely to two or three transgressions, but if men sin without bounds, he shewes they have no ground to expect God should be mercifull. One of the Jewi#h Rabbins (as some expound him,) concludes peremptorily, If man sin twice or thrice God will spare, but if foure times God will punish. We do not circumscribe the grace of God to a speciall number, and possibly that Rabbin did not intend it so, but only that all should take heed they doe not abuse the grace of God. That God multiplyeth pardon, or (as we render, Isa. 55. 7.) Pardoneth abundantly, is no security for any man to sin abundantly, or to multiply transgressions. My spirit shall not alwayes strive with man (faith the Lord, Gen. 6. 3.) I have striven long already, and I will yet strive longer, even an hundred and twenty yeares, but I will not strive alwayes, God gave Jezebel a space to repent (Rev. 2. 21.) but when she repented not, he did not promise her a new space to repent in, but threatened her with wrath to the utmo#st if she repented not. There is a frequency in the worke of God to reduce sinners, but not a perpetuity. And as in this verfe Elihu reports this frequency of his worke, so in the next he reports that to be the designe of it,

Ver#. 30. To bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

This verfe (I say,) sheweth the purpose of God in working twice, thrice, or oftentimes with man. This purpose (as was touched before,) is two-fold. First, to free and deliver him from evill, the worst of evills, a horrible pit. Secondly, to estate him in and give him possession of not only that which is good, but beft of all, the light of the living. Nor is this purpose of God a bare desire (that's often fruitlesse and successlesse) but a strong or settled resolution, to bring back the sick mans soule from the pit. And Elihu (we may suppose) spake thus, as to preffe Job to hasten the worke of his repentance; so to put him in hope (upon consideration of this designe of God in afflicting him,) that he should be
be delivered from his afflictions, and have not only his life continued, but the comforts of it restored to him. As if he had saied, Be not afraid, doe not look upon thy condition as hopelesse, or that the humiliation of thy selfe will be fruitlesse, for I dare assure thee, God hath gracious purposes and intendant towards thee in working these things.

And here we have a two-fold gracious purpose of God expressed; First, to deliver him from evil; to bring back his soule from the pit. Secondly, to doe him good, or to bestow positive blessings upon him (as was shewed at the 28th verfe) even to be enlightened with the light of the living: As if he had saied, God in all this aymes only at mans good, that his sin unrepent of be not his death and destruction, and that under a fence of Divine favour towards him, he may lead a comfortable life here, and be happy forever.

To bring back his soule from the pit.

It is saied at the 28th verfe, He will deliver his soule from going into the pit; in both places the pit is the same.

But seeing the Lord there promised to deliver his soule from going into the pit, how is he saied here, to bring back his soule from the pit? A man being delivered from going to the pit, cannot be saied to be brought back from the pit.

I answer in two things; the words renderd to bring back his soule from the pit, may be read thus; to tumne away his soule from the pit; that is, to preverse him from death. So the Hebrew word is used (Chap. 15. 13.) as also (Mal: 26.) He walked with me in peace and equity, and did tumne away many from iniquity. If we take that rendering of the word, then the expressions in both places beare the same fence. But taking it according to our reading, in which to bring back his soule from the pit, sounds, as if the man had been in the pit already; and it may well be saied so, because a man in great affliction, whether of soule or body, is, as it were, dead, or buried alive. For as when God converts a sinner, he (upon the matter) brings him back from hell; so when he delivers him from any grievous sickness, he doth (upon the matter) bring him back from the grave. Heman in spirittual afflictions and soule-desertions, the terrours of the Lord being upon him, called himselfe free among the dead; like the flaine that lye in the grave,
whom: God remembereth no more, and they are cut off from thy hand, (Psal. 88, 5.) They that are near the pit of death, are not, much, improperly, called dead, and they that being in such a desperate case are kept from going downe to the pit, are not, much, improperly sayd to be-brought back from the pit, or pulled out of it. In which fence we may keep to our owne reading; and so to bring back his soule from the pit, notes only the extreme danger wherein he was, whether spirittuall or temporall, and Gods graciousness in delivering him from it.

Hence note.

When God restores a man out of any desperate condition, whether of soule or body, he gives him a new life, he brings him in one respect back from the grave, and in another from hell.

As a sick man, he is brought from the grave, and as a sinner he is brought from hell. Great deliverances are a kind of new creation; And fresh blessings are to us as fresh beings. Take these two inferences from it.

First, How should they, who have been under great outward afflictions, praise the Lord when they are delivered! They who having had the sentence of death in themselves, should look upon themselves when restored, as men raised from the dead. And how should sinners praise the Lord, when he hath reconciled them to himselfe, and pardoned their sins. In doing this for them, he delivereth them from wrath, from hell, and from eternall death. Let such praise the name of the Lord, and say, as in the text, He hath delivered our soules from the pit.

Secondly, Let such live unto God, having received a new life from God: They that have received a new temporall life from God, ought to dedicate it unto God; how much more they that have received new spirittuall life? They that have received it indeed, cannot but dedicate it unto God. This negative mercy calls alonse for all that we are or have to be given up to God, but that positive mercy which followeth, calleth yet lowder for it.

And to be enlightned with the light of the living.

Take it for temporall, spirittuall, or eternall life, all these ends are accomplished in those mercifull worke of God to poore sinners; some restraine the text to the light of this temporall life, others
others enlarge it to the light of spiritual and eternal life. We are enlightened with the light of the living, when the comforts of this life are restored, much more are they, who are restored to the comforts of their spiritual life, and to the hope of eternal life.

By the living, we are not to understand those who are barely on this side the grave, and yet breath in the ayre; or who have only a weak shadowed spiritual life, which they scarce know of or perceive. The living here are they that live comfortably and prosperously, both as to outward and inward. Thus it is said in that prophecy of Christ (Psal: 72, 13.) He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised. Christ lives to purpose, he lives as a Prince, in power and dignity, yea he is the Prince of life. It was more then a sensitive or rational life which David's faith was assured of, when he said (Psal: 118, 17.) I shall not die but live; his meaning was, I shall live honourably and triumphantly, declaring (with joy) the works of the Lord. Thus here, To be enlightened with the light of the living, is, to enjoy a comfortable life, or to live happily.

Hence note.

A troubled state is a dark state, sickness and sorrow, whether inward or outward, are darkness.

They are darkened with the darkness of the dead, whose life is wrapped up in anguish and sorrow.

Secondly, Note.

The designe and purpose of God in all his ordinances, and provisions towards his people is for their good.

All that hath been said before, emptieth itself into these sayings, To keep back his soul from the pit, and to be enlightened with the light of the living. The Lord hath no eye in these works to his owne gaine, but mans good. The Lord doth not willingly grieve, nor afflict the children of men (Lam: 3, 35.) He taketh no pleasure in it abstractly considered, nor doth he look for any profit by it: Much lesse doth he it (as it follows, v. 36.) meereely to crush under his feete all the prisoners of the earth. All that he expects by it as to himselfe is to be glorified by all (for himselfe is above all,
all, and therefore designeth himselfe in all) yet the glory which God hath by man is only the manifestation of his glory, not any addition to it. The benefit which God aymes at in afflicting man returns to man. He would have man bettered by affliction, and as soone as man is bettered by affliction, every thing shall goe better with him, and he shall be delivered from affliction. (Rom: 8. 28.) All things worke together for the good of them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And as all things worke together for the good of them, who are the called according to his purpose, so it is the purpose of God that all things should worke together for their good, and that is not a successless purpose. Indeed every rod upon the backs of the wicked hath a voyce in it, to call them from the pit of death and destruction, and to be enlightened with the light of the living; but God makes this call effectuall to all his elect, none of whom shall perish with the world. So that a godly man should be so farre from judging himselfe dealt with as an enemy (as Job in his extremity did) when he is most sorely afflicted, that indeed he may see the love and fatherly care of God in it. All the providentiall dispencations of God worke to glorious ends. Sometimes for the outward good of his people in this life, always for good as to their spiritual and eternall life.

Therefore, lay aside hard thoughts of God whatsoever hard things he is a doing, or you are suffering. The wayes in which God leads us, may possibly be very darke, yet they run to this poynt, to keep us from the pit of darkness, and that we may be enlightened with the light of the living.

Thirdly, Note.

Man would under himselfe both for here and for ever, if God did not worke wonderfully for him, and powerfully keep him from destruction.

All these things God worketh twice and thrice, to keep our soules from the pit; man left to himselfe would run headlong upon mischief in this world, & upon eternall misery in the world to come. Nothing but the hand of God can hold man from ruining himselfe. The heart of man is so set upon sin, that he will rather loose his soule, then leave his lust; and will rather dye then that shall. 'Tis as easie to stay the motion of the Sun, or to turne back
back the course of nature, as to stay or turne back the naturall motion or course of the heart in sinning. An almighty power must doe the latter as well as the former. So that if the Lord did not put forth more then mercy, even mercy clothed with power, no man could be saved; should God will us never so well, and tell us what good he hath laid up for us, if we will but believe and obey him; should he tell us he hath riches of mercy, and that every one who will come shall have his share, yet we should never have any, if left to our owne chusing. 'Tis a worke therefore both of mercy and power which keepes us from the pit. God had much adoe to keepe Lot from being consumed in Sodome. He had warning to be gone, yet he was loth to goe; The text faith (Gen: 19.16.) While Lot lingerd the men layd hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being mercifull to him, and they brought him forth, and set him without the City; else probably he had lingerd till he had perished. Surely if God did not thrust sinners out of the Sodome of this world (as we say,) by head and shoulders, they would perish in it and with it. How wonderfull is the goodnesse of God who doth all these things, not only to keep poore creatures from going downe to the pit, both temporally, and eternally, but also that they may be enlightened with the light of the living.
JOB. Chap. 33. Verf. 31, 32, 33.

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I will speak. If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee. If not, hearken unto me; hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

These three verses contain the Epilogue or conclusion of Elihu's first address to Job. In which we may consider these three things.

First, He persuadeth him to a due attention and silent consideration, both of what he had sayd, or should say further. (v. 31.) Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, &c.

Secondly, He gives him liberty, and faire leave to reply, if he should please to what he hath already spoken (v. 32.) If thou hast any thing to say answer me, speake. To which concession or invitation he adds a very friendly and an ingenuous reason in the close of the verse; For I desire to justify thee.

Thirdly, He professeth his owne readiness to proceed and speak further with him, or to carry on this discourse, in case Job had nothing to reply. (v. 33d.) If not hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdome.

Verf. 31. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.

In this verse Elihu calls for a two-fold attention; First, to those things he had already spoken. Secondly, to those things which he was yet to speake. What he had already spoken, he desir'd him to consider and make reply if he pleased, as is cleare (v. 32.) and as to what he had yet further to say, he desir'd his attention and submission, as it followeth (v. 33.) If not hearken unto me, hold thy peace.

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.

Here are two words of attention, marke, and hearken, and both very significant ones: The word rendred mark, signifieth to attend,
tend, with utmost diligence; it it sometimes rendred by heark-que fit cum uinge. (Isa: 32. 3.) The eyes of them that see shall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear shall hearken; that is, they who here-tofore, through the just judgement of God for their willfull shut-ting their eyes and eares, inseeing did see but not perceive, and in hearing did heare but not understand (Isa: 6.10.29.10. compared with Matth: 13.14.) shall at last see clearely and attend diligently to the will of God delivered to them; yea it seemes to note some speciall gesture, as the lifting up of the eare to heare. For as there is a lifting up of the voyce in the zealous speaker, so of the eare in the diligent hearer. To marke is to heare and ob-serve, to heare and lay to heart the things which are spoken, Mark well, O Job,

and hearken.

That's a word of a large extent, to hearken is more then to heare; it takes in not only, first the worke of the eare, but se-condly, the worke of the minde; 'tis hearing, first, with under-standing; secondly, with beleevings; yea thirdly, it takes in the worke of the whole man in obeying, or submitting to what is spoken. Thus God sayd to Adam (Gen: 3. 17.) Because thou hast hearkned unto the voyce of thy wife, that is, because thou hast obeyed her voyce, and done the thing she perswadde thee to; After hearkning comes doing. Lastly, it includes also a worke of the affections; hearkning is with delighting, that which we hearken to we are pleased with; 'tis (like good musick) sweet unto us; in this compasse and extent we may expound these words, Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me. And these words, especially the former of the two, rendred marke, are often used in Scripture, when the people of God desire and begge that he would take no-tice of and attend unto their prayer. Thus David more then once (Ps: 5. 2.) Hearken unto the voyce of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray (Psal: 66. 19.) but verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voyce of my prayer (Psal: 130. 2.) Lord heare my voyce, let thine eare be attentive to the voyce of my suppli-cation. Now, as when we desire that God would heare our pray-er, we desire that he would be very attentive to our prayer, and not only so, but doe what we pray for, and that our prayers may be welcome, acceptable, and delightfull to him; so when we are sayd
to marke and hearken to what is spoken to us, all the powers of our inward man, the understanding, will and affections are at worke in hearing.

Hence etc.

He that will profit by hearing must be an attentive hearer.

He must mark and hearken, a fruitfull hearer doth more then heare, he markes; not only is his eare at worke, but his minde, his heart, his whole soule is, as it were, transformed into an eare, or is active at his eare. There are many, and it were well there were more hearers of the word, but there are few markers of the word, many come to Sermons, yet but few hearken unto Sermons; every hearer is not a marker, not a harkner to what he heareth, and not being so, he can scarcely be called a hearer; for they only that are markers shall attaine that mark of which the Apostle speaks (Phil. 3.14.) I preffe toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What is our mark in hearing? is it not salvation by Christ, and glory with him? Now unlesse we are markers, we never praffle towards, much leffe attaine that mark, the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me,

hold thy peace, and I will speake.

'Tis but one word in the Hebrew which we translate, hold thy peace, and it signifieth properly to dig or plow the ground, and by a metaphor to thinke of, or to meditate, because thoughts goe deep in the soule, a man doth, as it were, plow up his own spirit, while he is meditating or thinking seriously (Prov. 3.29.) Devise not evil, or (it is this word) plow not up evil; that's a bad soyle indeed, to be plowing up. They that plow evil, shall sow the wind, and (except they repent) reape the whirlwind. The prophet exhorting Ephraim to break up their fallow ground and sow in righteousnesses, that they might reap mercy (Hos. 10.12.) reproves them (v. 13.) for a very unprofitable piece of husbandry, by this word, ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lyes, that is, ye have platted, devised, and contrived wicked things, and ye have fared accordingly. Now as the word signifieth to meditate, by a metaphor, from digging or plowing; so by the figure antiphrasis or contrary speaking,
ing, it signifies to forbear doing or speaking, to sit still, or as we render it here, to hold our peace, and say nothing. (Isa: 41.1.)

Keep silence before me, O islands. (Psal: 50.3.) Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; that is, he will speak aloud. Elihu bespeaks Job in the affirmative, hold thy peace, be silent.

Some conceive Job began to interrupt Elihu, or gave some token of dislike, while he was discoursing; as if he had received his speech with disgust, and not only inwardly stomacked at it. But did not forbear to discover it by some significant gesture or frowne, and that Elihu perceiving this, desired him to hold his peace; As if he had said, If you desire to reap any benefit by what I speak, be patient, and do not interrupt me. But I conceive there was no such height nor heate of spirit in Job at that time; He began now to be sedate and quiet enough, being somewhat convinced of his former error and intemperance of speech.

But some may say; was it not an over-bold part in Elihu a young man to impose silence upon Job; or to bid him hold his peace?

I answer; Elihu doth not bid Job hold his peace, either, first, as if he had seene him unwilling to let him speake, or would not heare him any more; Job was a very patient hearer; he heard his friends patiently, and he had heard Elihu too with silence and patience, yea though Elihu offered him leave, yea almost provoked him to speake (v. 5.) yet he did not but gave him scope to speake out. Nor did Elihu speake this, secondly, as if he sighted Job, or thought him a man unable to anfwer him, or speake to purpose, for presently in the next verse he desireth him againe to speake. Nor thirdly, as if he had such high thoughts of his owne wisdom, and loved so much to heare himselfe speake (as some men doe) that he cared not to heare others, but would engroffe all the discourse. Nor was it, fourthly, because he saw such an affectation in Job to speake, that he needed (as the Apostle speake of some, Tit: 1. 11.) to have his mouth lopt. It was not upon any of these or such like reasons, that Elihu desired Job to hold his peace; but it was either first, that himselfe might speake more clearly, and carry his matter through to his understanding; or secondly, that he might set the matter more home upon his conscience, and move him to consider yet more seriously what he had said.
sayd; of the various ways of Gods dealing with man to humble his soule, and bring him neerer to himselfe; or lastly, that Job might perceive and take notice, that he was the man aimed at in all the foregoing parable. As if he had sayd, Sit downe quietly, and consider with thy selfe, whether all this discourse hath tended, or whether or no thou art not the man intended in it. As Christ when he had spoken that parable of theower concluded (Math: 13. 9.) He that hath an eare to heare, let him heare; that is, let him take it home to himselfe; or as Christ concludes his Epistles to the seven Churches in the second and third Chapters of the Revelation, with, He that hath an eare, let him heare what the Spirit saith to the Churches; so doth Elihu to Job in speciall, Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me, hold thy peace.


If any would know yet more distinctly what Elihu meant when he bid Job hold his peace? I answer,

First, Negatively, not a bare silence, or saying nothing, but affirmatively, when he sayth, hold thy peace; it might note these two things.

First, That he would have him much in the worke of consideration, or to forbear speaking, that he might be more in meditating, and weighing, and laying things to heart; he would have him bring what he had spoken to the ballance of the Sanctuary, and then to his owne heart. A man is never more busy then when he thus holds his peace.

Secondly, When he sayth, hold thy peace, it might note that he desired his submission to the counsel given or to be given him; He would have him bridde his tongue, in token that his spirit was bridled. He would have Jobs silence say, speake on, I will say nothing, let the truth of God reign and rule over me by thy word. What Samuel answered to the Lord himselfe (1 Sam: 3. 10.) Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth; that should we answer to those who speak to us from the Lord; speak ye, we will heare and hold our peace: or we should say with good Cornelius, when Peter came to him (Acts 10. 33.) We are all here present before God, to heare all things that are commanded thee of God. When a man holds his peace (upon these termes) 'tis a signe he layeth downe.
downe his owne wisdome, and his will, he doth not stand upon
his pantofloes (as we say,) nor abound in his owne fence, but is
ready to be delivered or call into the mould of any holy and
wholesome doctrine which shall be delivered unto him. They
are in the fittest frame to hold the truth which others speak,
who can withhold themselves from speaking.

Further, There is a two-fold holding of the peace. First, at the
works of God, or at what God doth (Lev. 10. 3.) when God had
smitten the two sons of Aaron dead with fire from heaven, Aaron
held his peace; that is, he did not murmur at, nor contradict what
God had done. That also was Davids temper (Psal. 39. 9.)
I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou Lord didst it.
The Prophet Jeremy describes an humbled soule in the same po-
ture (Lam. 3. 28.) He fitteth alone and keepeth silence, because
he hath borne it upon him. When God layeth his yoke or crofe
upon us, tis our duty to be silent and submit (Zach. 2. 13.) Be
silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy
habitation, that is, the Lord begins to worke, therefore let all
men, or men of all sorts and degrees be quiet and say nothing
either discontentedly or complainingly. In all these Scriptures,
holding our peace is called for and commanded or shewed at the
workes of God.

Secondly, There is a holding of our peace at the word of
God, or at what God speaketh. Thus tis when not only the tongue
but the heart is silent, and every thought is brought into subje-
tion or captivity to the obedience of Christ. The heart of man of-
ten speaks much, and is very clamorous, when he faith nothing
with his tongue. That's to hold our peace indeed, when the
heart is quiet, let God say or doe what he will: Tis not more
our duty to resist the Devil, that is, all his hellish whisperings
and temptations to the doing of evil, then tis to submit to God
in all his speakings and dispensations. Elihu speaking in the name
of the Lord, faithfully adviseth Job in this fence, to hold his
peace.

Hence learne.

We ought to submit and keep silence when the truth of God is
spoken. Or, when the minde of God is brought unto us, there
must be no replying but obeying, no disputing but submitting.
They have learned much, who know how and when to say no-	hing.
thing. Solomon faith (Eccl. 3.6.) There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; but this kind of silence is in season at all times. We ought always to be silent thus, that is, always submit to the minde of God. We need to be minded of this, because the pride and over-weening of man is great. We have need to put a bridle upon our tongues, much more upon our hearts; it is hard to bring our wills and our understandings under; we are apt to strive and struggle when truth comes neere us; yea to kick at it, when it comes very neere and home to us, though indeed the neerer it comes the better, nor can it ever come too neere. The Apostle James apprehended this when he gave that admonition (Chap. i. 21.) Receive with meeknesse, the ingrav'd word, which is able to save your soules: Meeknesse is that grace which moderates anger; a passionate or fierce spirit, receiveth not the word, but riseth up against it, turnes not to it but upon it; and, which is worst of all, turnes it to evill, not to good, turnes light into darkness; and so the word of life becomes a favour of death for want of a due submission to it. Therefore hearken, and hold your peace when the word of God is spoken. Do not say it is but the word of man, because delivered by man; God speaks in and by his faithfull Messengers; ye oppose the authority of the living God, not a mortall dying creature, when you reject the word. And remember, it is not only our duty but our liberty to give up ourselves prisoners to the truths of God; we are never so free as when bound by it or to it. And as we should hold our peace at or submit to all the truths of God in all cases, so especially in these three.

First, When we are reproved for our sins in practice; then we should not stand excusing what we have done, but repent of it.

Secondly, When we are shewed our errour in opinion; then we should not stand disputing, and arguing for what we hold, but recant it. 'Tis time to hold our peace, when once it appeares to us, that we doe not hold the truth. To erre is common to man, but to persever in an errour, to the defence and patronage of it, is more then inhumane, devilish.

Thirdly, We should hold our peace when our duty is plain before us; then we should not stand questioning it, but doe it. whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe (Saiith Solomon, Eccl: 9.10).
that is, whatsoever appeares to be a duty) doe it with all thy might. Hold thy tongue, but doe not withhold thy hand when once thy hand hath found what must be done. Elihu at this time was dealing with Job upon all these three points; He told him his sin, that he had been too querulous and impatient, he shewed him his error, that he had been too bold with God, because innocent towards men; And he pressed him to duty, both that, and how he ought to humble himself before the Lord. The Apostle treating about that great point of justification, tells us God will at last cause all men to hold their peace. (Rom. 3. 19.) Now we know that what things soever the law faith, it faith to them who are under the law, that every month may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God; that is, man will have nothing to say, but sit downe silent, and hold his peace, or only say, I am nothing, I have deserved nothing but death and condemnation, when he once understands the holinesse and strictness of the law, together with the unholiness and looseness of his owne heart and life.

I hence note.

It speaks yea proclames a gracious prudence, to know how and when to hold our peace and say nothing.

When men insist upon their owne conceit and reason, when they logick it unduely with God or men, and will needs seeme to know more then the word teacheth them, what doe they but give evidence against themselves, that as yet they know nothing as the word teacheth, or as they ought to know, and themselves least of all? Tis pride and presumption, not prudence and understanding which opens such mens mouths. We never profit by what we heare, till (in the fence opened) we have learned to hold our peace. The counsel which Elihu gave Job, was to hold his peace; yet he laid no constraint upon him to refraine necessary speaking, but put him upon it in the next verse.

Ver. 32. If thou hast any thing to say, answer me; speake for I desire to justify thee.

Left Elihu should be interpreted to have taken too much upon him, or to have denied Job his liberty of speaking, when he sayd,
sayd, hold thy peace; he here calls him to speake: This is a full-proofe, that his intent was not to barre him from speaking, but only that he should forbear unnecessary speaking. As if he had sayd, Now that I have gone thus farre, if I have spoken any thing that thou art unsatisfied in, and dost desire I should expaine my selfe about: Speake thy minde freely; for though I have more to say, yet I will not hinder thee from saying what thou canst fairly say for thy selfe, neither will I over-burthen thy memory, with too much at once; therefore come now and answer if thou wilt, or canst to what is already spoken.

The Hebrew is, If thou hast words answer me; that is, if thou hast arguments to defend thy selfe with, or to oppose me; if thou hast such words ready, as have the weight of reason or authority in them to mainaine thy cause, bring them forth, I am not afraid of what thou canst object; neither am I unwilling to heare thy defence.

Some expound Elihu speaking ironically, at least Rhetorically, If thou hast any thing to say answer me, speake and spare not. As if he had sayd, Possibly thou canst let all right, and shew me where I am wrong. Possibly thou thinkest I have spoken amisse, when I sayd, In this thou art not righteous, goe to them, shew me my mistake, or wherein I have misapprehended thee, make it good if thou art able against my assertion, that thou art just and righteous, even in that wherein I have endeavoured to detect thy unrighteousnesse: Possibly thou mayst bring me to be of thy opinion, and then surely I shall justify thee, and retract my censure of thee. Rhetoricians call this an Artificiall prohibition, by acession, or the admitting of another to doe that, which they know, he cannot doe when he hath done his utmost, or (as we say) hath left no stone unturn'd to doe it.

But I conceive, Elihu speake plainly to Job, and did not like a subtle Orator, put him upon impossibles, but like a sincere friend, soberly and seriously invited him to doe and say, as much as was possible in his owne defence. If thou hast any thing to say, answer me.

Hence note.

Wise men though they have more to speake, and purpose to speake more, yet are willing that others should speake too.

Though they can speake still, yet they are ready to sit still
and heare. _The most prudent speakers, are also patient hearers._

_Elihu_ when he began to speake (_Chap. 32. 18, 19._) compared himselfe to a full bottle, he was even burdened with his owne conceptions. _I am full of matter (sayd he there) the spirit within me constraineth me; Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles._ And though he had not halfe emptied himselfe, yet he could stop his vessel and containe himselfe. _Answer me, I will heare._ Though _Elihu_ was warme in his worke, labouring tooth and nayle to convince and humble _Job_, and shew him wherein he had exceeded and offended, though he was teaching him to give glory to God, and to abhorre himselfe (as at first he did) repenting in dust and ashes, yet he was unwilling to determine till he had heard him speake, if he had any thing to speake, and a minde to speake it.

_Hence note._

"_I is but equall to give him leave to speake for himselfe," with whom we are unsatisfied._

_How else can we either get satisfaction, or give an account why we remaine unsatisfied? We must not condemne any man in haft; nor judge him till we have heard him._ _Necessary stops are no delays._ They may procure not only a better but a spee-dier issue of our business, especially in matters of controvertie. _Politicians have a rule, Take time and you may doe any thing._ To make haft flowly is the surest way of making haft. Many a journeying man had rid more miles in a day, if he had not rid too fast. They who will doe all at once, or in a breath, often loose their breath, but seldom doe any thing, that's worth the doing. And as hastinesse hinders us in doing, so it altogether unites us for cenfuring. Time brings forth truth; a sentence deferred, may afterwards be given, but when it is once given, it cannot be recalled; therefore it is good before we cenfure, to heare every man out; If this moderation and wel-tempered ingenuity were exercis'd in all our controverses with others, it would be a great helpe to the ending of controverses. And we should either see no reason to condemne many, or condemne them with more rea-son, had we patience to heare them. But when first, we will not heare an anwser, or when secondly; we suppress our opposites with power and violence, whom we cannot answer or convince by

_Q q q 2_ argu-
argument; or thirdly, when we interpret what they say in answer to the worst sense; or fourthly, when we are glad to finde any weakness or insufficiency in their answers, and are so hasty to condemn, that we will not give them leave to recollect their thoughts, or thinke better on't to mend their answers, and explain their meaning, either by speech or writing; it is impossible breaches should be healed, & differences reconciled, or that ever we should come to a cleare & full understanding of one another. This offer made by Elihu to Job is a good pattern, and shewes us how to deale with brethren in all such cases: and that which followeth sheweth the best, and noblest ground of such amicable condiscensions, even a willingness not only to agree with but to embrace those from whom we differ. That's the generall sense of what Elihu affirueth Job, and would have him confident of in the next words.

For I desire to justifie thee.

As if he had sayd; I have not spoken all or any of these things to thee, because I would conquer thee, nor doe I now provoke or invite thee to speake, because I have a mind to lye at catch, or entangle thee in thy answers; for I tell thee, my heart and my ayme in this overture, is, I (heartily) desire to justifie thee.

The word whereby Elihu expresseth this desire, signifieth more then a bare desire.

It notes, first, an earnest desire, or strength of desire.

Secondly, A pleasing desire, or delightfull desire.

The highest act of desire is delight; delight is the intention and strength of affection, or desire at rest. As if Elihu had sayd, I have not spoken out of ill will to thee, or desire of victory over thee, nor would any thing be more welcome newes to my soule, then to see just cause of justifying thee; it doth not please me at all to prove that thou art not just, it would extremely please me, even ravish my heart with joy if thou couldst prove thy selfe or thy cause so just and sanctifie, that nothing could be blamed or reproved in either. I desire to justifie thee.

That is, not only to judge thee a godly man, or a man fearing God (which I already doe) but to judge that thou haft in all things both done and spoken well, which as yet I doe not, nor can, unlesse
unless thou showest me better reason for it then hitherto thou hast done. To justify another is for the ways applied in Scripture; as was shewed more largely at the second verse of the former Chapter.

First and chiefly 'tis applied or attributed to God himself (Rom. 8. 33.) It is God that justifieth. God puts man into a state of justification, he justifieth his person so fully, that none can (of right) lay any thing to his charge, much less condemn him upon any charge laid against him.

Secondly, Man justifieth God (Luke 7. 29, 30.) And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. God himself who is the Judge of all men, is condemned by many men; and when things are at worst, he always hath some to justify him. Man justifieth God when he honoureth God, taking his part, and owning both his power and his righteousness in whatsoever he doth. It is impossible God should be unjust, and God is pleased to say, we justify him, when we maintain his ways as just and righteous.

Thirdly, Man justifieth himself, when he is either lifted up proudly in the thoughts of what he is or hath done well (Luke 18. 11.) or when he upon good grounds can maintain that to be well done which he hath done.

Fourthly, Man justifieth man, when he either consents to, or approves of what he hath done or spoken, whether it be good or bad; he that approves of a man justifies him, though the man be unjust. (Prov. 17. 15.) He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination unto the Lord. Let a man be never so wicked, and doe never so wickedly, come through ignorance of his wickedness, and others through love to and liking of his wickedness, (being such themselves) will approve of him, and give him their good word. But (as Christ speaks, Math. 11. 19.) Wisdome is justified of her children; that is, the true lovers and followers of wisdome, having a right knowledge and estimation of her worth, will stand by her, and speake for her, when lighted by the blind and unknowing world. And as this is true of declarative wisdome, so especially of Christ, who is essential wisdome. His children highly prize and justify him, while the world condemns and condemns him. In this fourth sense Elihu is to be understood here, I desire to justify thee; that
is, to give testimony unto thee, or subscribe thy certificate, that thou art worthy of commendation. Though Elihu was a man of a very warme and keene spirit, full of fire, and mettle, yet he discovered a very honest bent, and a well governed intention towards Job; in saying, I desire to justify thee; for 'tis as if he had said: It would not please me at all to see cause of further cenure, but it would please me fully to see cause of approving and acquitting thee. Therefore doe but state thy cause and make out the merits of it, and I shall yield so soon as I see cause. So then, Elihu did not carry himself in this business, first, as a party, or as one that had taken a side, and was resolved to hold it (as some doe) right or wrong, because he had appeared in it. Nor Secondly, was he hurried by passion, or intertemperance of spirit. Nor Thirdly, was he hood-winkt by prejudice, or fore-stalled by his opinion against the person. Nor Fourthly, was he engaged by love to contention or hope of victory. Nor Fifthly, was he purposed to suppress the smother or keepe downe the truth. Nor Sixthly, had he any desire to asperse Job, and make him appear black. Nor Seventhly, had he a mind to grieve the man, or burthen him with accusations; but declared a cleare candor and much melting compassion towards his afflicted Antagonist, hungering and thirsting, yet even longing for a just occasion to justify him.

Some, I grant, expound this word justifie, as used here by Elihu in a very bare and barren sense, as if it implied only thus much, I will doe thee right, or I have no mind to doe thee wrong; but surely the word is much more fruitful, and beares the signification of a great willingness in Elihu to render Job as faire as possibly he could, or as his cause would beare to all the world; he waited to understand so much of him and by him, as might enable him to say, he had neither spoken nor done any thing amisse.

Hence note, First.
A good man is glad to see any man's cause or case prove good, or better then he thought it.

The Apostle giving severall Characters of Gospell love or charity, faith (1 Cor. 13, 6.) It rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyneth in the truth. As charity rejoyneth not in the doing of iniquity, so neither doth it, when others are found to have done iniquity. But it rejoyneth much, when any who are either suspected or charged
charged with iniquity, are upon due tryall found cleare and acquitted. "Paul wilhed that all who heard him had been not only almost but altogether such as he; except his bonds, (Acts 26, 29.) It is a great argument that a man is good and just, when he heartily witheth that he who hath given occasion to others to think ill of him, may at last appeare better then they thought him.

Secondly note.

A good man seekes not victory but truth, and the good of those he deals with.

When he contends earnestly with others, he desires as earnestly that truth may gaine by that contention. Where a spirit of strife & uncharitableness possesseth the minds of many men, they love to be vexing & trampling upon those they deale with, rather then helping and enforming them. This evil spirit is the familiar of this age; That which the Apostle spake (Phil. 1, 15.) of not a few who had the name of Gospel Ministers (some preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will; the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely) the same may be said of many disputers and polemical writers; they doe it enviously, they doe it out of love to strife and contention, not out of love either to truth or to those with whom they contend and strive; this is a bad spirit, a spirit far unlike that which ruled in Elihus, who wished that the sharpest reprobations he gave Job, might end in his justification. There should be such a spirit in man contending with man, as there is in God contending with man; who doth not thunder against sinners, because he would have them perish, or delighteth in their destruction; but doth it, first, to awaken them; secondly, to humble them; thirdly, to convert them; fourthly, to justify them; and lastly, to save them for ever. I write not these things (faith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4, 14.) to blame you, but as my beloved sons I warne you. As if he had said, I intend not to asperse you, or throw dirt upon you, but only advise you to wipe off the dirt that is cast upon you, or to keep yourselves out of the dirt. I would either be a means to cleanse you, or provoke you to preserve your selves cleane.

Note Thirdly.

It is our duty to justify those whom we oppose, when they can cleane themselves.
Chap. 33. An Explication upon the Book of Job. Ver. 33.

As Elihu spake very ingeniously, so not at all beyond his duty; we should be glad when they whom we have suspected or charged appear fair, or better than we suspected: he that doth so must be justified: as we must not hold the truth of God, so we must not hold the credit of our neighbour in unrighteousness. We should have three ends in dealing and debating with others. First, to convince them of their errors and sins. Secondly, to recover them out of sin and error. Thirdly, to acquit them in what they appear and can approve themselves not to have sinned or erred. Elihu aimed at and attained the first and second in his debate with Job; and it would have been a greater contentment to him, if (there being no need of those two) he had seen cause only to have done the third. Speak (said he) for I desire to justify thee.

Ver. 33. If not, hearken unto me; hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

Elihu having desired Job to speake, and he either refusing or having nothing to say, he re-assumed and re-inforced his former counsell.

Hearken unto me, hold thy peace.

These words were opened, (v. 31.) therefore I need not stay upon them here; if not, hearken &c., and indeed what should they doe but hear and submit, who have nothing to answer or reply? especially when so gainfull an overture is made them for their encouragement to hear, as Elihu made Job in the next words, which are also the laft of this discourse.

And I shall teach thee wisdom.

Elihu may seeme to take much upon him, and shew himself very confident, when he thus undertook and promised to teach Job wisdom; yet doubtlesse the ground of his confidence was not in himselfe, but in Gods assistance; and in Jobs humble silence. As if he had said, I see thou wilt not speake, but heare, hear then, and I shall teach thee wisdom; for God (I hope) will be with us in this matter, and both open my mouth to speake, and thine ears to hear that which is wisdom indeed; having given thee a heart to receive instruction,
instruction, he will instruct thee to profit, and make thee wise to know thy duty and do it, by my ministry, though a weak and unworthy instrument in his hand.

I shall teach thee wisdom. The word which we render to teach διδάσκω in Kal in another conjugation signifies to learne; and the Newe signifieth a leader, or governor. As that first letter Aleph in the Hebrew Alphabet is the leading letter to all that follow, so a Teacher should be a leader, he should goe before those that heare him, by good example as well as by wholesome doctrine. Be thou an example of the Believers, faith the Apostle Timothy (1 Epist. 4. 12) who was set up in the Church of Ephesus a Teacher and an Instrueter.

Further, when Elihu faith, I will teach thee wisdom; his meaning is, I shall acquaint thee with that which may make thee wise, or I shall shew thee wherein true wisdom doth consist. And that consists chiefly in these two things. First, in the knowledge of our selves; Secondly, in the knowledge of God; As if Elihu had said, I doubt not but I shall make thee know more fully what thou art, as also who God is. And it plainly appears in the close, that Job got a fuller light in both by what Elihu said to him. He got a fuller soul-fight of the sovereignty and highnesse of God, and a deeper humiliation in the sight of his own sinfullness and vilenesse. He that hath learned and is in the power of these two lessones, is questionless a wise man; and he that faithfully teacheth these two lessones doth not at all over-rate his doctrine if he call it wisdom, nor doth he put too high a tide upon his paines and endeavours, if he faith to his Auditors or Schollars, I will teach or have taught you wisdom.

Lastly, When Elihu said, I will teach thee wisdom; we must not conceive that he looked upon Job as unwise or ignorant; Elihu knew well enough he had not to doe with a child or an idiot, but with a man of knowledge, with a man who was skilfull in the word of righteousnesse, whose senses (as the Apostle expresseth it, Heb. 5. 14.) were exercised to discern both good and evil. His meaning then, when he said I will teach thee wisdom, was only this, I will teach thee to be wiser and more knowing in some necessary truths, then as yet thou art, or at least, hast appeared to be. Or we may give his fence in the language of the Apostle, (2 Cor. 1. 24.) I will teach thee wisdom, not as having dominion over thy faith, but as a helper of thy joy.

Hence
Hence note, First.

There are none so wise, none so holy, but they may learn more

wisdom, to be yet more holy.

'Tis out of question, he was never good, who thinks he can be
no better; nor doth he yet know anything aright, who, saith he
needs know no more. It is very sad (which is the case of many,
2 Tim. 3. 7.) to be ever learning, and never able to come to the
knowledge of the truth: Yet they who (through grace) have been
enabled to come to the knowledge of the truth must be ever
learning; and the more any man doth know, the more he seeth
his need, and the more willing he is, to be taught and know more.
The fear of God that is wisdom, saith Job, (Chap. 28. 28.) and
to depart from evil, is understanding; and God testified of Job
that he feared him, and eschewed evil, in the first verse of this
Book; now if to wise, to good a man as Job might learn wise-
dome, let none think themselves too wise or too good to

learn.

Secondly, Note.

True wisdom consists in the true knowledge of our selves, and of

God.

This was the theame or subject upon which Elihu insisted, he
was not teaching Job humane, philosophicall, or naturall wisdom,
but heavenly and divine wisdom; the greatest meere naturall
Philosophers in the world (which title sounds them, lovers of
wisdom) were meere strangers to that, which we call true wisdom;
and (as the Apostle chargeth them, Rom. 1. 21, 22.) became
vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, pro-

fessing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Thirdly, Note.

There is nothing worth the learning or knowing, but that which

makes us truly wise.

For that only sheweth us the way to be truly happy. 'Tis our
wisdom to work for a right end, and that work can never attaine
its end but by the choyce of right means. Through desire (saith
Solomon, Prov. 18. 1.) a man having separated himself, seeketh
and intermedleth with all wisdome. The desire of all things (Tay
Naturallists)
Naturalists) especially of all men runs out to good. And the better any man is, the better is that good which he desireth, yea if any man be truly good he desireth that which is best; for the enjoyment of God wherein alone happiness doth consist, is his ultimate and highest end. But what doth he to reach this end? Solomon points us to two things: First, he separateth himselfe from all those lets and impediments which stop up the way, or lye croffe to his desire. Secondly, He seeketh and intermediate with all wisdome, with all real and substantiall widsome, (as the word there used signifieth) for he knoweth that nothing but such widsome, actcd in wise ways, is proper and successfull for the promoting of that noble end. Now if nothing but widsome can lead us to that end, what is there worth the learning or knowing except that which makes us wise?

Fourthly, From that frame of spirit which Elihu observed in Job,

Note.

They that are humble and meek are fittest to learne widsome.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (Jam. 4. 6.) The humble soule hath received grace already, and that grace received is the way to all grace. (Psal. 25. 9.) The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way. The way of God is widsome, and they whom God teacheth shall undoubtedly learne it.

Lastly,

To teach spirituall widsome, or to teach man how to be spirituall wise, is the best lesson that can be taught.

They are blessed Masters who make such Schollars. The whole discourse of Elihu is about spirituall widsome, not about the widsome of the world which God will destroy; not how to climb the pinnacles of honour, and get high in the world, not how to gather riches, and to lade our selves with thick clay; it was not how to be great or rich, but it was how to be holy and humble, how to give glory to God, and be fitted for glory with God; these were the lessons of widsome which Elihu taught Job, and these
these are lessons chiefly to be taught and learned by every man, who undertakes to be a teacher, or desires to be a learner. Thus 
Elihu hath concluded his first discourse with a promise to teach 
Job wisdome, and how well he performed and made good his 
promise, will appeare, to his praise, in opening the following 
Chapters.
Furthermore, Elihu answered and said.

Heare my words, O ye wise men, and give ear to me, ye that have knowledge.

For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

Let us chuse to us judgement: let us know among our selves what is good.

The former Chapter concluded Elihu's first discourse with Job: and we may well suppose that he had made some pause; to try whether Job would give him an answer, as he had invited him to doe. But perceiving him silent, and forbearing to speak; he himselfe proceeds to this second speech.

In which we may consider:

First, His Preface, in the four first verses.

Secondly, His charge or accusation brought against Job, from the 5th verse inclusively to the 15th Exclusively.

Thirdly, We have the refutation of what Job said of himselfe, and seem'd to charge upon God; this is prosecuted with much variety from the 16th to the 30th verse of this Chapter.

In the four last verses, Elihu gathers up the strength of all he had sayd, and makes his Conclusion.

The four verses now under hand, are a Preface to this second undertaking of Elihu with Job: In which we have

First, His transition from what he had said, to what he was about to say, in the first verse; Furthermore.

Secondly, We have his address or application to those about him for audience and diligent attention to what he had to say,
in the 2d and 3d verses; *Heare O ye wise men, &c.*

Thirdly, We have his motion; and the motion which he makes, is, that the whole procedure of the business might be both faire and friendly, as also judicious and just; or that they might to the utmost endeavour after a right understanding and discerning of the matter before them: *v. 4. Let us chase to our selves judgemen, &c.*

*Vers. 1. Furthermore, Elihu answered and said, or, and Elihu answered and said.*

It may here be questioned, by what propriety of speech it can be said that *Elihu answered, seeing Job made no reply to what he had sayd before.*

To this query, I say, First, that in Scripture both the beginning of a speech, and the continuance of it, where nothing hath been interposed, is called an answer; we find it so frequently in the Gospel (Matt. 11. 25.) *Then Jesus answered and said; there was no question, no discourse antecedent, yet it is called an answer. The like is observable in the 17th of Mathew, v. 4. and John 2. 18.*

Secondly, We may resolve the doubt thus; though *Job said nothing now to which Elihu made answer; yet he had said much which was yet unanswered, altogether unanswered by Elihu; therefore Elihu might say, that he proceeded to answer the many matters of *Jobs former speech, to which as yet he had given no answer. This may suffice to shew how or why that which he sayd further, was an answer, let us now consider what Elihu answered and said.*

*Vers. 2. Heare my words, O ye wise men, and give care to me ye that have knowledge.*

As if he had said, I will not be my owne Judge in this matter, I referre it to the judgement of wise and knowing men, let them determine it.

We may here take notice; First, of the character given the persons to whom *Elihu spake, or did address his speech, they were wise men, men that had knowledge.*

Secondly, We may take notice of the earnestness of his exhortation or admonition, to mind what he had to say, *Give ear,*
O ye wise men, O ye men that have knowledge.

For the clearing of these words, we must enquire, first, who is a wise man? Who, a man that hath knowledge? A wise man in distinction to a man that hath knowledge, is a man of mature judgement, of clear understanding, and solid prudence, in the managing either of discourses or actions. A man of knowledge is one that hath improved his understanding by study, reading, or long experience. Some men are wise, who yet have not much knowledge; and some have a great deal of knowledge, who have very little wisdom. Now Elihu speaks to his auditory, as consisting or made up both of wise and knowing men; O ye wise men, that have great understanding and judgement; and, O ye men of knowledge, that have attained to learning and skill in all things knowable, hearken my words and give ear. Here was a choice and select auditory, wise men, and men of knowledge.

Secondly, It may be queried, whom Elihu intends by these wise men, and men that had knowledge?

Some conceive, he takes in all that were present at that long and solemn conference between Job and his friends; and that he deciphers the whole Company under these titles of wise and knowing men, inviting them all to attend what he had to say, they being so well fitted to judge what he had to say; It is not good to give flattering titles to men, but it is good to give them winning titles, such as may gain them upon others for their good.

Yet I rather conceive, that Elihu speaks more specially to some that were there present; namely, to Job's three friends, who had had the matter in hand before, and now stood out: to these men he now turns himself, and bends his discourse, saying, Heare O ye wise men: hearken ye that have knowledge; that is, ye Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad, who have all this while engaged with Job, give me leave to speake a few words in your eares, and I pray attend unto me.

Thirdly, Supposing that they, specially, were the wise and knowing men to whom he spake. It may be questioned againe, under what notion he called them wise and knowing men.

Some say, he called them so Iironically, putting a close or secret scorn upon them; As if he had sayd, Heare me, O ye wise men, and hearken, O ye knowing men, ye that for years and age should be indeed knowing and wise men; and are so in the reputation EJ
of others, as well as by your owne profession and pretention; Ye who come from farre to undertake this weighty works, the comforting and counselling of this your afflicted friend, see now how well you have acquired your selves, and answered the expectation raised both of you and by you. Have ye not comforted him fairly, and counselled him wisely? Doe ye not see how short you are of your owne proposals? and how ill you have handled the matter, he remaining as farre from conviction, satisfaction, or consolation, as when you first began with him? Thus some carry the fence, but I shall not stay upon it, nor doe I conceive that Elihu spake Ironically, but plainly, and in good earnest, not only calling them wise and knowing men, but judging and believing they were so. Of these he beggs audience.

Heare and give eare.

To hear is a natural act; a man that hath ears cannot chuse but hear ( unleas he stop them ) when anything is spoken: but to give eare, is, as I may say, an artificiall act, a studied act, yea a spirituall act, when the matter spoken of is spirituall. Elihu doth not call for a bare hearing of words, but for a studious hearing of the matter which should be presented to them; hear and give eare; or as the Elegancy of the Hebrew may be rendred, ear my words: for the word which we render to give eare, signifies also the ear, ear my words. We say of a thing that we desire another would reach to us, pray hand it hither, putting the denomination of the Organ or Instrument upon the act; so by a like Elegancy, it is here said, Ear my words; that is, hear studioully and diligently, with an holy art and skill. As there is an art in speaking, so there is a great, if not a greater art in hearing; ear my words, or, give eare to me ye men that have knowledge.

From the Consideration of the parties here spoken to, wise and knowing men.

Note.
The wise, and knowing, are to heare as well as speake.

They that are wise, need more wisdome, and they that are knowing, may improve their knowledge by hearing; They who know many, yea inoft truths, may yet know more truths; and if any know all truths, they may yet know every truth more. This caused
caused the Apostle to professe (2 Pet: 1. 12.) I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. As the ignorant ought to heare that they may know, so they who have knowledge, ought to heare, that they may be more knowing; as they that are fools, ought to heare that they may be wise; so they that are wise ought to heare that they may be yet wiser. (Prov: 1. 5.) A wise man will heare, and will encrease learning. Solomon having sayd in the former verfe, that he spake these Proverbs, To give subtlety to the simple, to the young men knowledge and discretion; lett any should say, if your Proverbs or wise sentences are so plaine and easie, that the simple may found them, and young men comprehend them, then what profit shall wise and learned men get by reading or hearing them? Shall not they loose their labour and mispend their time in the study of them? No, faith he, the greatest Clerkes and ripeft wits may gather instruction from them, as well as the simple vulgar, and greener heads. Their depth will not drown a lambe, and they are deep enough to swim a Leviathan. And therefore as a wise man will heare, that is, is willing to heare, that he may encrease learning; so let not the wisefte thinke themselves too wise to heare, for they may encrease their learning, how learned fovere they are. And as the wisefte may learn new day, fo they that are truely wise, doe leames every hearing day, as the fame Solomon tells us (Prov: 9. 8.) Give instruction to a wise man; and he will be yet wiser. They are the most foolish of all men, who thinke themselves so wise that they need no more instruction, and so knowing that they need learn no more knowledge. The word of God it is fittet for all sorts and fizes of men, it is for the ignorant, and for the knowing; it is for the foolish, and for the wise; it is milk for babes, and strong meate for men; it is for them that are out of the Church to bring them in; and for those that are within the Church to build them up (Eph: 4. 13.) Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the meafure of the height of the fulneff of Chrift; till we are wise and knowing to perfeflion, and fullneff of stature (which will not be on this fide glory) we have need to give eare, and heare, for the perfecting of our knowledge, and the hightning of our fhature.

Againe, These wise men were called to heare and give eare,
not only that they might learn and encrease knowledge by what was spoken, but to judge aright of what was spoken; for this was not so much the hearing of a Sermon (as I may say,) as of a dispute, or the debate of a Controversie; and therefore wise men were desired to heare it, that they might be able to judge, and give their opinion, (as 'tis sayd in the 4th verse.) Let us chuse to our selves judgement, and know among our selves what is good.

Hence note, Secondly.
We had need to heare and give eare, or to heare diligently, before we judge either of things or persons.

Though we may judge rightly of that we have not heard, or of that which we have heard slightly, yet we are not right Judges of any matter till we have heard it. 'Tis possible to hit upon a right judgement blind-fold; but Judges must not be blind, nor judge blind-fold. To judge right, not knowing it to be so, shall have no better reward then a wrong judgement. Yea, they that are called to judge, must both heare and give eare, else they may quickly give wrong judgement. Again, Eliehu is speaking here to wise and good men, yet how straitly doth he exhort them? Hear and give eare.

Hence note.
Good men are often dull of hearing, and had need to be put forward.

Chrift tells his Disciples that many are judicially so, and we know that all are naturally so (Math. 13. 15.) and the Apostle tells the Hebrews they were so (Chap. 5. 11.) where treating of Chrift called of God, an high Priest after the order of Melchisedeck, he concludes, of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. But how did their dullness of hearing make those things hard to be spoken or uttered? may it not be easie enough for a man to utter that which others are dull to heare? I answer, the Apostles meaning seemes to be this? It was hard for him to utter or expound them so, as they might perceive the cleare truth of those great mysteries, because their internal eare, or apprehending faculty was weake and dull. There is a fluple in the eare of man, and 'tis hard to pull it out. When any one speakes to purpose, 'tis the duty of those that are present
present to heare: and yet he that speakes had need to invite and preffe all to heare, yea to heare and give eare: The words of the wise are goads to provoke and pricke us on to heare the truth, as well as nayles to fasten it. (Eccle. 12. 11.) Elihu having called wise men to heare or eare his words, sheweth the use or force of the eare in the next verse.

Vers. 3. For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

In this verse Elihu gives the reason why he so earnestly exhorted them to heare and give ear; The ear tryeth words, that is, by the hearing of the ear, words are tried. It is the office of the eare to convey words to the understanding, that so a judgement may be made of them; before they are either received or rejected.

The word which we translate to try, signifies to try as gold is ἀρτί pericula. tried in the fire; the eare is, as it were, a furnace wherein words are tried, the ear will discover whether what is sayd be dross or pure metal. The Prophet (Zach. 13. 9.) speaketh of a third part of men that should be brought thorow the fire and tried; as the fire of affliction and persecution tryeth persons, so man hath a fire and a touchstone in his eare which tryeth words. The ear is given not only to heare a sound of words, not only to understand the general meaning of words what they signifie in any language, but the eare is given to try the sense and soundness of words. And when Elihu faith words, speaking indefinitely, he includeth all words of one sort or other; it tryeth good words, and it tryeth bad words; it tryeth heavenly words, and it tryeth earthly words; it tryeth natural words, and it tryeth spiritual words, the truth or falsity of words are brought to tryall, at the barre and tribunall of the eare. But in what manner or after what similitude doth the eare try words? The answer followeth.

as the mouth tasteth meat.

In the 12th Chapter we had the same expression, and therefore I shall not stay upon it here. Only there the sentence is made up by a particle Copulative; The ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth meat. Here by a particle of likeness; The ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat. There is a faire analogy or
proportion, between the eare and the mouth, in discriminating their proper objects. Hearing and tasting, are two of those five excellent usefull senses which God hath planted in the nature of man, the other three are seeing, smelling, feeling. Here we have a comparision between two of the five senses; look what the mouth is to meat, the same is the ear to words. In the mouth the sense of tasting is placed as a Judge to discern between good and bad, savory and unsavory meates; and the ear of a man which receiveth words, is accompanied with an understanding, whereby we apprehend what is true, what is false, what is to be approved, and what refused. And the comparision runs yet more clearly, while we consider, that as the food which the mouth receiveth is prepared for the helpe of our natural or bodily life, so the words of instruction which the ears receiveth are prepared for the food of our soules, and the maintaining of our spiritual life.

Some conceive the comparision is not here made between the two senses of tasting and hearing, but that both are compared to those wise and knowing men spoken of, and to whom appeale is made in the former verfe. For as all the senses are not fitted to judge of words and meates, but only the eare and palate; so all men are not fit nor capable to judge of weighty matters and profound questions, but only wise and knowing men. And so according to this interpretation, both or either of these sensitive faculties, and both or either of their properties, are alike compared to wise and learned men, who are able not only to understand the sound of words, but also exercise a judgement upon them, both to discern and determine what there is of truth and right in them. Hence that saying of the Ancient, *Wisdom is a savory knowledge*. Wise men tait and favour the things which they know. He surely was a wise man who sayd of the word of God (Jer. 15. 16.) *Thy words were found, and I did eate them, and Thy word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart*. *Heare, O ye wise men, and give ear to me ye that have knowledge; the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat; that is, as the ear of a man tryeth words, and as the mouth of a man doth taste meat; so wise and knowing men try and taste that which is spoken and heard. Thus both these sensitive faculties, their properties and powers are compared to wise men, who doe not only heare the voyce of him that speaketh, but sit downe to consider it. The mouth having taken meat and chawed
chawed it, tafts it, and makes a judgement of it; Thus wise men deal with all they hear; so that, look what these two natural faculties doe with naturall things; with words naturally spoken, with meat naturally eaten; the same, they who are wise and knowing do to what is spoken spiritually and rationally, they try and judge it.

But I conceive, we need not insist strictly upon this; For whether we compare these two senses in their severall operations to wise men, or whether we compare them in their operations one with another, yet (according to the sense of our translation) the meaning of Eliahu is the same, namely, that those wise men to whom he spake, should not only hear but try what they heard, because they had received a power so to do; for the ear trieth words, even as the mouth tasteth meat.

There is a twofold ear, there is an outward ear, and an inward ear: And so twofold tryall: The outward ear trieth words of what signification they are, whether they are as we say good English, or Latin, &c. It trieth them also as to their grammatical sense, or the construction of what is spoken in the letter: The inward ear or understanding trieth them as to their logical sense, scope and tendency, as to their use, and force in the matter they are spoken to. Both ways the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat; only with this difference, that the tryall which the mouth makes is meerly sensitive, and both begun and perfected in the mouth; but the tryall which the ear makes is chiefly intellectual, it is begun at the ear, but perfected by the understanding. It is the mind which judgeth, the ear only brings in the report of things to the mind.

Hence Note.

First, The sense of hearing is a great mercy, and of great use to mankind.

The ear is the chiefe Gate or inler to the soul; nor were our eares given only for an Ornament to the head, but for the enriching and bettering of the heart. The naturally rational ear given to heare and try words is a mercy; but when a spiritually rational ear is given with it to heare and try words, that's a mercy indeed. Solomon faith (Prov. 29. 12.) The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them. These natural senses are of Gods own creation, and the use of them his blessing, yet
yet common to all mankind good and bad; but the spiritual senses of seeing and hearing, are a special privilege promised to the elect, and a fruit of Gospel grace. (Isa. 35. 5.) Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopp'd. He meaneth it not either only or chiefly of the bodily eyes and ears (though Christ wrought miracles upon them, and healed both the blind and deaf in the days of his flesh) but of the eyes and ears of the soul, which are often darke and stop'd while the other are free enough in the exercise of their several faculties. The seeing eye, which both Solomon and Isaiah intend, is the eye which so seeth as that it followeth the good which it seeth; and that's their hearing ear which believeth and obeyeth what it heareth. A superficial seeing eye is a blind eye, and a formal hearing ear is a deaf ear in the sight and account of God. We say it is the symptom of some distemper or growing disease upon the body, when the palate doth not rellish meat; surely it argueth a diseased and sick soul, when we have no mind to heare nor find rellish in the word of God.

Secondly, Note.

Words are not to be received nor submitted to, nor beleev'd as true, till they are tried.

Itching eares are bad, (2 Tim. 4. 3.) Trying eares are good. You will not swallow your meat till you have chewed and tasted it; nor should you swallow words, till you have tried them; why else have we eares to heare? why are we trusted with reason to judge things with? or with rules to judge them by? There is no greater Tyranny in the World, then to command a man to beleev (by an implicit faith) as others beleev; or to impose our opinions and assertions upon those that hear them, and not to give them liberty to try them. This is to be at once (as the Apostle James expreseth it, (Chap. 3. 1.) many Masters, or many Masters where we should not be one.

But some will say, when the Word of God is preached, is that to be tryed by men? have we a liberty to take that into considera- tion or to take and refuse it as we are perswaded in our own judg- ments?

I answer, The word of God is not to be brought to the barre nor to be tryed by man. The word of God is our Judge, therefor
fore ought not to be judged by us; the word of God is perfect, and how can we that are imperfect judge that which is perfect. The word of God is truth, and all men are liars; we are not therefore to judge the word of God, nor try that. Yet when any man speaks of or from the word of God, we are to try what he speaks; that is, whether what he speaks be according to the word of God, and his doctrine or interpretation grounded on the Text. Every one that speaks about spiritual things professeth he brings the word of God, and it must be tried whether he doth so or no. It is a truth to which all are to submit (without dispute) by believing that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, to wash away their sins with his blood. This is the word of God: yet when this truth is Preached, we may consider whether it be managed according to the word of God or no. This great doctrine, which contains the summe of the Gospel, may have such things mingled with it, as are not to be received for the word of God. Some in the primitive time thought and taught that there was no salvation by Christ unlesse they still kept the ceremoniall Law and were circumcised; though they held that fundamental truth, that Christ dyed to save sinners; yet when they came to the explication of it, they destroyed it by urging a necessity of continuing the ceremoniall Law: whereas others judged rightly that faith only, without the use of any Jewish ceremony, purifieth the heart. Therefore a counsell of spiritual and godly wise men was called to consider of this matter. (Acts 15. 6.) What to doe? not to try the Word of God, but to try which of those two different opinions was according to the Word of God. Thus when we hear a Sermon, though the Word of God and Christ crucified be the generall subject of it, and that is not to be tryed, but received by faith and obeyed; yet what is spoken upon it and delivered about it is the mind of God in the Scripture, that is to be tryed. (1 Cor. 2. 15.) He that is spiritual, tryeth or judgeth all things. And againe (1 Cor. 14. 20.) the Apostle gives this counsell about prophesying, Let one or two speak, and let the others judge; what? the Word of God, no! but whether they speak according to the word of God, or no; in this sense every one must judge for himselfe, we must not take all for granted, but try what we heare by the eare, as we doe what we eat by the mouth.

Thirdly,
Thirdly, Note.

A spiritually judicious and considerate man will take time to judge of things that are spoken, as the palate doth of meates that are eaten.

The ear tryeth words as the mouth tasteth meat; God hath given man a faculty for that end, and he is to use his faculty. We commonly say, Look before you leape. Surely then we should look before we eate, and prove all things whether they are good or no, before we (electively) hold that which is good. (1 Thes. 5. 21.) The noble Bereans received the word with all readiness of mind; yet they would make no more haste then good speed to receive it, for (as the Text faith, Acts 17. 11.) They searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so.

Fourthly, Here are two Organs of sense spoken of, the ear and the mouth, both are of great use to man, but one of them, the ear, is of a more frequent and noble use. Beasts have both mouths and ears; but because theirs is only a sensitive life, they make more use of their mouths then of their eares. Whereas man whose life is rational, yea and spiritual, too, must or ought to make more use of his ears then of his mouth.

How doth this reprove all those who are more in trying meats, then in trying words? or more for tasting, then they are for hearing? It was a complaint of some in the former age, that they made themselves like brutish beasts, which having both those powers of hearing and tasting, have yet no regard to hearing, but are all for feeding and eating. They carry it like beasts, and are more brutish then a beast, who employ their mouths more then their ears. A beast is made in that low forme, to live to eat, and worke, and so to dye; man is of a higher forme, next to that of Angells, and for him to spend his time in eating and drinking, as if his worke lay at his mouth, not at his ear, is to degrade himself and lead a brutish life. The Apostle brings in such bruits speaking thus, (1 Cor. 15. 32.) Let us eat and drink for to morrow we shall dye; not a word of using their eares: they lay not, come let us hear the word of God, let us seek bread for our soules, but come, let us eat and drink; now for a man to be so much in eating, as to neglect hearing and meditating, what doth he but make himselfe like a beast of the earth, who should be like the Angells
Angels in Heaven, daily rising up to a spiritual and heavenly life; God lifts us up to Heaven (as I may say) by the ears. Our eares were not given us only to heare delightfull sounds, or to commune one with another about the affairs of this life; the use of the eare is yet more noble, even to helpe us in the receiving of all saving and sanctifying knowledge. Faith comes by hearing, (Rom. 15.17.) and so doth every grace, both as to the implantation and growth of it, till we come to glory. Therefore consider how you use this excellent sense of hearing, and how you improve in spirituals by what you have heard. We were made after the Image of God in knowledge and righteousness, and it should be the great designe of our lives to get this image renewed; and that is done at the eare, 'tis wrought by hearing; faith, repentance, and every grace come in and are wrought at the eare. Some scoffe at this latter age, calling it a hearing age, not a working age; we (say they) are much for ear-work, little for hand-work; all for Preaching, nothing for doing; nor can this reproach be quite wiped off, seeing with our plenty of Preaching, there is so little practising; as if men had turned all the members of their body into eares, and were nothing but hearing. To doe nothing but heare, or to heare and doe nothing, to heare much and act little, is a high provocation. To have a swel'd head and a feeble hand is the disease of Religion. Yet let not voluptuous Epicures who are all for the palate and belly-cheere think to excuse themselves, for not hearing, or for seldom hearing, because some who hear much are found doing little, or seldom do what they hear: for as these shall be condemned by the word which they have heard and not done, so shall these for not hearing the word which would have moved them what to doe. It hath been anciently said, The belly hath no ears, nor will they either mind hearing, or mind what they hear, who mind their bellies (not for hunger and the support of strength but) for drunkennesse or surfeit. When a voluptuous person desired Cato that he might live with him: No, said Cato, I like not your society, I doe not love to converse with a man who useth his mouth more then his eares; who is busied more to please his taste in eating and drinking, then to enrich his understanding by hearing and discoursing. The Apostle (Tit. 1.12.) calles the Cretians evil.
evill beasts, flow bellies. They were not slow to fill their bellies, but their full bellies (their belly being their God, as he told some among the Philippians, Chap. 3. 19.) made them slow, yea reprobate to every good word and worke. Solomon gives man a great charge when he faith (Prov. 23. 23.) Buy truth, and sell it not. The mart for those most precious commodities grace and truth, is kept (not at the belly, but) at the eare; there we buy without money, and without price both grace and truth; to get these is to be wise merchants. The best market we can make, the best trade we can drive is with and at our eares: The eare tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat. And from this Elihu infers.

Ver. 4. Let us chuse to our selves judgment; let us know among our selves what is good.

This verse contains the second request which Elihu made to Job's friends; The summe of it is, that they might proceed judiciously and fairly in the cause before them. As if he had said, Seeing it is the office of the eare to try words, as the mouth tasteth meat; let us see what we can do with our eares towards the determination of this matter. Job hath often wished to find one with whom he might debate and try this cause in judgment; let us give him his wish, and having thoroughly weighed the matter and merits of his cause, let us see what justice will award him. Let us chuse to our selves judgment, &c.

Let us chuse.

To elect or chuse is the worke of the will. And to chuse what is good, what is right, is a gracious work of a renewed will; as God's Election of us from Eternity, so our Election of God and the things of God at any time, is a very gracious worke.

This affirmative act, To chuse to us judgement, seemes to imply a negative, the rejecting or laying aside of whatsoever is contrary to or a hindrance of Judgement; that is, the laying aside, First, of all animosities or undue heates of spirit; Secondly, of all prejudices and undue preposessions; Thirdly, of all groundlesse suspicions and jealousies of the person we have to deal with; we can never chuse judgement, till we are cleare of all these.

The original word rendered to chuse, signifies in the nounce, a
young man, a man in the flower of his age, in the best of his life, when his breasts (as Job spake at the twentieth Chapter) are full of milke, and his bones of marrow; and the reason is given, because our younger time is our chusing time, as to our way in this world; it should be so much more for heaven, or the things of another world. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, faith Solomon (Eccl: 12.1.) Some render those words expressly, In the days of thy elections or chusings; As if he had said, Remember to chuse God in thy chusing days, when thou chuest thy calling in which to live, when thou chuest a wife, with whom to spend thy life, then be sure and remember above all things to chuse God. When Moses was a young man, he was famous for this Choice (Heb: 11.25, 26.) He chose the reproach of Christ rather then the riches of Egypt; when he had all the riches and honours of Egypt presented to him, and courting him on the one side, and the reproach of Christ, affliction, poverty, disgrace, threatening him on the other side, he chose these rather; who would think that man wise who should chuse the reproach of Christ (in appearance nothing but dirt and dross,) before the riches of Egypt? yet Moses never shewed his wisdome and learning so much in all the learning of the Egyptians, as he did in that Choice.

Let us chuse Judgement.

Judgement may be taken two wayes; First, for the act of enquiry, let us discoursre and debate this matter, to find out what is just; Judgement is the result or sentence given upon hearing and debate. And most properly a right sentence is Judgement; and that by Judgement Elihu means a right sentence, appears clearly from the next words.

And let us know among our selves what is good.

Let us know, that is, let us try by the ear what shall be spoken, that we may come to a right knowledge, to a right gust or taste of what is good. There is a two-fold knowledge; First, of simple intelligence, when we know any thing as it is precisely in its owne nature, true or false, good or evill; Secondly, of approbation, when we conclude what we know, to be true or good. We may take in both here, especially the latter; It being (doubtless)
the desire of 

And when he faith, That we may know what is good; we may understand it either Comparatively or Positively; that we may know what is good; is, first, that we may know good from evill; Secondly, that we may know among good things, what is better, yea, what is best; let us not only distinguish between good and bad, but between good and better, better and best. The reason of man is able to put a difference, not only between wheat and tares, but if you bring him several samples of wheat, or other graine, he is able to judge which is the better, which is best; a knowing man will judge to two pence in a bushell which is best; so in all other commodities we not only judge between that which is good, and that which is stark nought, but when we have many parcels and particulars of any kinde before us good and usefull, we judge which is the best, which the principall.

Thus in spirittualls, we are not only to judge of things so farre as to know good from evill (which yet is a very good piece of knowledge; for many put darknes for light, and light for darknes; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, as the Prophet complained (Isa. 5. 20.) that is, they huddle all things together in a Chaos of confusion) but it should be our care to know good from good, yea to know what excells among things that are excellent. Tis well when we know truth from falfhood, but we should labour to know which among truths is the most precious truth. Paul having spoken of what was good, yea of the best gifts, faith, Yet I will shew you a more excellent way (1 Cor. 12. 31.) As if he had sayd, This is a good way you are in, the exercize of the best gifts, but here's a more excellent way, the exercize of grace. Thus here I take good, not so much Positively as Comparatively, Let us know what is good, that is, what is best, and what is best of all.

Let us chuse to our selves Judgement: and know among our selves that which is good.

First, In that he faith, Let us chuse to our selves Judgement.

Observe.

We must consider deliberately and maturely before we pass Judgement.
Judgement is a choice thing, and must be made upon choyce; it is not to be snatch'd up hastily, but duly chosen. They that are upon the choyce either of things or persons, should be much in Consideration. How uncomely (besides unrighteous) is it, to judge men or matters rashly, to be hurried on to election with passion, or to judge upon hearsay and Conjectures? This is not to chuse Judgement, but to snatch it up: to chuse Judgement is to doe it with mature deliberation; there must be much weighing, else properly no judging; rash judgement is usually wrong judgement; and that layeth us open to another judgement, Judge not that ye be not judged, is Christ's warning (Math: 7. 1.) that is, doe not judge hastily, or harshly, doe not judge rashly nor rigidly, much leffe falsely, for if you do you shall be judged righteously (indeed) as to your case, but not comfortably as to your condition. They who will not chuse Judgement, doe, in the issue, chuse Judgement; that is, not using deliberation in Judgement, they draw deservedly upon themselves a judgement of condemnation.

Secondly, Taking it more generally, Let us chuse to our selves Judgement, or that which is right.

Note.
It is not enough for us to doe Judgement, or that which is right, but we must chuse it.

'Tis a worke of no accetpation with God to doe that which is just, unleffe we chuse it as well as doe it, that is, unleffe our hearts close with it, and pitch upon it. Solomon (Prov: 1. 29.) chargeth the simple for not chusing what was good; they did not chuse the feare of the Lord. By the feare of the Lord, he meanes the true worship of the Lord, or any worke of obedience, by which we testify a holy feare of him; possibly they might doe the feare of the Lord; possibly they worshipped the Lord, they prayed to him, and heard his word, but they did not chuse the feare of the Lord; they did not sit downe and judge that best, or most necessary, but tooke it up by accident, or by custome, or for company, because they saw others doe it. It will not turne to our account to be found doing good, unleffe we chuse to our selves that which is good. Our elections are more eyed by God, then our actions, and the setting of our hearts, then the work of our hands. Thirdly,
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Verf. 4:

Thirdly, From the latter branch, Let us know among our selves what is good.

Note.
First, There's nothing worth our knowing, but that which is good.

Whatsoever hath a morall, or a spirituall good in it, is worthy to be knowne; the truths, the workes, the wayes of God, are the most desirable good things to be studied and knowne (Psalm 4. 6.) There are many will say, who will shew us any good? What's their good? Corne, wine, oyle, gold, silver, houses, lands, &c. these are their good, and these are all their good; but though a godly man knoweth that these are good things, and blesseth God for any portion in them; yet that which he calleth his good, and the good, is of a higher nature; we commonly call worldly things our goods, but we mis-call them if we call them our good. The favour of God is our good, grace is our good, faith and hope and righteousness are good above all, God himselfe is good, and to know and enjoy him in Christ through the Spirit is our chieuest good here, and will be all our good hereafter. Let us know what is good.

From the Comparative sense of the words, Let us know what is good, that is, if there be a better to be had let us know that.

Observe.

It is not enough for us to have the knowledge of good things, but among good things the best are to be sought out, to be knowne, and attained to.

This was a speciall branch of the Apostles prayer for the Philippians (Phil. 1. 10.) That ye may approve the things that are excellent; or the things that differ in excellency; some are contented to sit downe in the lowest forme of Christs Schoole; if they have but any thing which they may call good, or true, right and sincere, they looke no further; any thing satisfieth them, which will serve turne to keep them from perilling; they have no holy aspirings, nor godly covetous desires after the best things, and the best of the best. God is willing and hath promised to give us not only good things, but the best things (Psalm 81. 16.) He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat,
and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee; 'tis a mercy to have wheat, but the finest of the wheat, and honey out of the rock, not ordinary honey, but the best honey, the purest honey, are greater mercies. We, by our sins, deserve that God should (as the Prophet speaks, Isa. 30. 20.) give us the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction; that is, either that he should give us adversity in stead of bread, and affliction in stead of water, or that he should feed us with the coarsest bread, with husks and bran, and give us bitter waters, the waters of Marah to drink, yet he in mercy gives us pleasant bread, and well-tasted water; yea were we better, he would give us the best bread, the finest of the wheat, and our cup should be sweeter to us then the sweetest honey. The reason why we have not of the best, is because we are no better. Yea, God now gives us not only good things, but the best of good things, even himselfe, his Son and Spirit, who are best of all (O how excellent is this loving kindness!) therefore let us not only look after good things, but the best of good things, to honour God, and lift up his name to the highest in this world; Let us labour to know and doe the best things; and give God our best services and purest praises, even the male of our flocke, the first-borne, the strength of our whole soules. To these highest attainments, Elihu periwades those wise and knowing men, promising to joyne with them in that search; Come let us beat out the business with diligence, that we may at last choose Judgement, and know among our selves what is good, what is best.
JOB. Chap. 34. Verf. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgement.

Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.

What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?

which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himselfe with God.

The Preface hath been dispatcht; the context of these five verses contains the whole charge, or bill of complaint, drawn up by Elihu against Job, consisting of many particulars. This charge is double; the first part whereof is contained in the 5th and 6th verses; the second in the 7th, 8th and 9th verses. In the first charge he all edge the four things against Job; two in the 5th verse, and two in the 6th; The two things alleged against him in the 5th verse are.

First, That Job insisted too much upon his owne righteousness, Job hath said, I am righteous.

Secondly, That he reflected too boldly upon the righteousness of God, yea that upon the matter, he had accused God of unrighteousness, or injustice, God hath taken away my judgement.

Verf. 5. For Job hath said, I am righteous.

That’s the first charge, Job hath said; Elihu gathers up, and collects those passages of Job’s complaint, which he found most faulty, and layeth them (as we say) in his dith; Job hath said; we may well remember, and he cannot deny it, for he hath said it, not once only, but often, not lightly, but seriously and affectingly, I am just, or righteous; that is, I have sufficiently shewed my innocence, and the equity of my cause, but I am not permitted to declare and
and hold it forth in such a way as I would, before my Judge; yea, the Lord proceedeth with me, not in the ordinary way of justice, but, being above law, afflicits me, at his pleasure, though I am innocent. This is the summe of what Job said, as often as he hath sayd, I am righteous.

The first particle which we render for, imports, the clearness and truth of the charge; there is no avothing the matter of fact; It will fall upon him, let him take it off and answer it if he can, or as well as he can. For Job hath sayd, I am righteous.

But it may be questioned, where said he this?

For answer, I shall doe two things.

First, Shew from what passages in Jobs former answers this charge may be made good, or at least made up.

Secondly, I shall shew in what fence Job sayd this, and how Elihu and Job doe either agree, or differ in the thing.

To the first, where said Job, I am righteous?

I answer, We find not this direct assercion in termes, or in so many words, but what he spake in severall places amounts to it; (Chap. 13. 18.) Behold, now I have ordered my cause, I know I shall be justified, (Chap. 23. 10.) But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. (Chap. 27. 6.) My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it goe; and he insifted at large upon this poynet, his vindication from all unrighteousness throughout the whole 31th Chapter. There we find him making frequent imprecations (v. 5, 6, 7.) If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity; If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands, then &c. In all which and many other passages of that Chapter, Job spake highly of his owne innocency, and said in effect, I am righteous: His other friends had taken notice of this before; Eliphaz hit him with it (Chap. 4. 17.) while he put those questions; Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his maker? And so did Bildad (Chap. 8. 6.) If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. Nor was Zophar behind with him (Chap. 11. 4.) Thou hast sayd, my doctrine is pure, I am cleanse in thine eyes.

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Secondly, in what sense did he speak this? For answer, when Job said, I am righteous, we must consider a two-fold righteousness; First, a perfect absolute righteousness, and that may be two-fold; First, the righteousness of justification, which is an imputed righteousness; Secondly, the righteousness of sanctification, which is an in-wrought or inherent righteousness; this latter is not absolute, or perfect in degree, while we abide in this life; yet it is daily growing up to perfection, and shall at last attain a perfect growth. If any say; Why then doth God call us to a perfection of sanctification in this life, if it be not attainable in this life? I answer, he doth it, first, to shew how holy he is; Secondly, to shew how holy we ought to be; Thirdly, he doth it, that we might run to Christ, who is the Lord our righteousness; and who is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: we being altogether short of righteousness; and short in righteousness, may go to him, and have a compleat and perfect righteousness. Now besides this absolute righteousness of justification, which is attainable here, and of sanctification, which is not attainable here, but shall be hereafter, there is a comparatively perfect righteousness of sanctification, the righteousness of uprightness, and sincerity, when we strive to the uttermost, to please God in all things by doing good, and can say, we do not please ourselves in any way of doing evil.

It should seeme that Elihu and Job did not well agree about the definition of justice or righteousness. Job intending either civill righteousness towards men, or a righteousness imputed freely by God; but Elihu understood him of absolute perfect person-all righteousness, which no man attaines unto in this life. For when Job is charged with saying, I am righteous, he said it either as a justified person, or as a sanctified person. In the former sense, he might say he was perfectly righteous, and in the latter he sayd he was so, as to the sincerity and uprightness of his heart with God, and this he might say of himselfe without fault or blame; for God himselfe had sayd of him (Ch. 1. 7.) that he was a man perfect, and upright.

I grant Job seemes to say, (though he said it not, with that aime or intention, yet he seemes to say,) that he was even absolutely righteous, not only as justified but sanctified, while he said, (Chap. 31. 7, 8.) If there be any blot cleaving to my hands, if my
steps have gone out of the way, or my heart been deceived, &c.

This gave Elihu occasion to charge him, with saying, I am righteous; he did not charge him with saying so, as justified through the free grace of God, nor did he charge him for saying so as to his sincerity, but he charged him in these two respects.

First, Because he spake so much of the righteousness of his way, and of his workes; for though it were true he was righteous in the fence by him intended, yet because he made it his business, and spent a large discourse to tell the world, how good, how just, and how holy a man he had been, this was more then became him in that condition.

Secondly, Elihu checkt him for saying so, because (though he were fully righteous as justified and sincerely righteous as sanctified) he complained of his afflictions, as if God might not lay his hand heavy upon him, no nor touch a righteous person with an afflicting hand; or as if he and all other righteous persons, ought to passe all their days in peace, and have an exemption from the cross. Whereas one great reason why God afflicted him so sorely, was to make it knowne to all the world in his example, that meereley upon his owne prerogative and sovereignty, he both may and will when he pleaseth, afflict the most innocent person in the world. Yea, the intent of Elihu in urging and burdening Job with these sayings, was to convince him, that though he was a child of God, and had walked before him in righteousness and true holines, yet he ought to humble himselfe and bare with meekness and patience the sorest visitations of God. And that therefore he should not have pleaded his owne integrity, to priviledge him from affliction, nor have sayd, why doe I suffer, seeing I am righteous?

Hence note.

First, That, as it is altogether sinfull for any man to say, I am altogether without sin; (for 1 John 1. 8.) If we say we have no sin, there is no truth in us; and he who faith (in that sence) I am righteous, doth but declare his owne unrighteousness to speake much of our owne righteousness and goodness (though we are both good and righteous) is evil and very blameable. For whereas Job said, I am righteous, he should rather have left others to say it, he should have been satisfied that he was so without saying so; and though it cannot be denied that Job was extreamly urged to

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it (as hath been shewed more then once in opening this Booke) and it had been but necessary for him to say it once or twice in his owne defence, yet because he sayd it fo often, it drew, and that deservedly, this ceniture or charge upon him.

Hence take this corolary or inference.

If to speake much of our owne righteousness be displeasing, then how abominable is it to be proud of it or trust upon it?

There is nothing more pleasing to God, then to see man walking in wayes of righteousness, nor is there any thing more displeasing unto God, then to see a man lifted up with or leaning upon his owne righteousness. If we make our owne righteousness our staffe, God will make it our rod. And though he is farre from scourging us because we are righteous, yet he will correct us if we proclaime our owne righteousness, yea if we thinke it much, or thinke much of it. We must have a very great occasion when at any time we beare witness to our owne righteousness, and goodnes; but if the heart be lifted up in pride, or trust, at all, upon it, this renders man odious in the sight of God. God saved Noah out of that common deluge, in which the old world perished; For (faith the Lord, Gen: 7. 1.) the have I seene righteous before me in this generation. Noah was righteous before God, and was saved when others perished; but surely had he vainely boastted or unneceffarily voted himselfe righteous before men, he had perished as well as others. It comes much to one and the same account with God, whether men be openly unrighteous, or whether (without a just cause and call) they open their righteousness before men.

Secondly, Note.

How righteous soever we are in life, yea though we are righteous by faith, (which is our righteousness unto life) yet we must not plead that for our freedome from afflictions.

We may plead the righteousness of faith against condemnation, but not against correction; if any man be in Christ, he shall never be condemned; but though a man be in Christ, and justified by the highest acts of faith in the blood of the Covenant, yet he may be severely corrected. This was (I conceive) the principal scope and intent of Elisha in charging Job thus, even to convince
vince him, that though he was a faithfull servant of God, and of
a very unstained conversation among men, yet he must not thinke
himselfe above the croffe, but quietly and meekly submit to it.
Job spake sometimes fully to that poynct, He destroyeth the righteous
and the wicked, if the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the
tryall of the innocent (Chap. 9. 23,) yet at other times he for-
got himselfe; and therefore he was (justly as to his present case,
and profitably as to the future issue) remembred of it by this
plaine and home-dealer Elihu. Job hath said I am righteous,

*And God hath taken away my Judgement:*

As if he had sayd, Once thou didn't say, God destroyeth the perfect and the wicked, but now thou seemest to say, thou art greatly wrong'd, and thy Judgement quite taken away, because being a righteous man thou art thus afflicted.

Mr. Broughton renders, But the Omnipotent keeps back my right. As Judgement is right fully given, so there is but little difference between keeping back our right, and taking it away; therefore the word signifies not only to take away, or cause to decline, to divert and subvert, but to keep back or withhold any thing in any kind, as Mr. Broughton translates expressly. This is the thing (faith Elihu) which Job hath said, God hath taken away or kept back my Judgement.

But where did Job say this? he said it (Chap. 27. 2.) As the Lord liveth, who hath taken away my Judgement, and the Almighty who hath vexed my soule. Bildad charged Job with it (Chap. 8. 3.) while he put this question to him, Dost God pervert Judgement? or the Almighty pervert Justice? Implying that Job had spoken words reflecting upon the Justice and Judgement of God, in taking away his Judgement.

But you will say, What is Judgement? and what is it to take away Judgement? or how is a man's Judgement taken away?

I answer: There is a three-fold notion of Judgement in Scripture.

First, Judgement is the result or issue of a man's reason about any matter or question propounded to him. God sometimes takes away man's Judgement in that sense, and then he becomes a fool, and unable to judge. 'Tis a dreadfull judgement when God thus takes away man's judgemen, and gives him up to a Reprobate
(or an unjudicious) mind, as he did the old Gentiles (Rom. 1. 28.) for then he will quickly doe those things which are not convenient; not being able to distinguish nor discontinue between true or false; he must needs put light for darkness, bitter for sweet, sweet for bitter; Elihu doth not represent Job complaining that God had taken away his judgement in this notion. Secondly, Judgement is any angry dispensation or wrath powred out or executed upon persons, nations, or Churches; if judgement begin at the house of God, (that is, if trouble or wrath begin at the Church of God) what will the end of these be that obey not the Gospel? (1 Pet. 4. 17.) Davids Song consisted of two parts (Psal. 101.1.) judgement was one of them, I will sing of mercy and judgement. This notion of judgement is every where found in Scripture, yet neither is this the notion of it in this Scripture. God had not thus taken away Jobs judgement; he begg'd indeed that God would take away this his judgement, and it was the matter of his complaint, because he did not take it away.

Thirdly, Judgement is right done or right due; right due, is judgement due; right done, is judgement done. Thus David prayed (Psal. 72. 1.) Give the King thy Judgements O God, and thy righteousness to the Kings for; that is, give him an understanding to doe right, or to give every man his right. To doe this is a thing so desirable in all men, especially in Kings and Princes, that when God, at Gibeah sent young King Solomon a blanke from heaven, and bid him aske what he would, he asked only this (1 Kings 3.9.) Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discontinue between good and bad. This is properly the judgement intended here. Job complained, God hath taken away my judgement; that is, my right, or hath not done me right.

But how is Judgement taken away? I shall answer it in three things. First, When right is quite subverted, and over-throwne. This the Prophet elegantly expresseth and reproverth (Amos 6. 12.) Ye have turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into Hemlock. Right done is sweeter and wholesome, but right denied is bitter as Gall, and banefull like Hemlock.

Secondly, When Judgement is defer'd, flopped, or delayed, then
then 'tis taken away for a time. To have judgement long delayed, is always next degree to the denial of it, and sometimes delayed is more crucciating and grievous then a denial.

Thirdly, A mans judgement is sayd to be taken away, when the ground, or cause, of God's proceeding with him in judgement, is hid, or unmanifiest; Judgement, as to us, is not, when the reason of it doth not appear to us, or when we see not the reason of it. To feel Judgement and not to see the cause of it, turnes it into a torment; we say commonly, Things that appeare not, are as if they were not. When the reason or ground of our sufferings is not understood, 'tis as if we suffered without any ground of reason.

When Job complained, God hath taken away my Judgement, we are not to understand him, as if Elihu intended it in the first or grozest sense, that God had subverted his judgement, or had done him wrong. Elihu could not suspect he had any such blasphemous opinion of God; for, that had fulfilled the Devil's prophecy of him; He will curse thee to thy face. But when he sayd, God hath taken away my Judgement; he meant it according to the two latter interpretations, either that God deferred long to restore him, and answer his prayer, or that God had hid from him the reason of his dealing with him, so that he could not make it out, how, or why he was so sorely and grievously handled. Job knew well his own innocency, but he did not well consider Gods sovereignty, which alone answers enough for him, how much soever he in this world afflicts the innocent. And therefore for as much as God held him long in that sad condition, and in the meantime hid his judgement, or the reason of it from him, this was Job's grievance, and the burden of it pressed him to cry out, God hath taken away my Judgement. In this he was too bold with God, and therefore he justly fell under this cenfure of Elihu: As if he had sayd, It doth not at all become thee, O Job, as a creature, as a man, much lesse as a new creature, or as a godly man, to cry out (as thou hast done) that God hath taken away thy Judgement; because he doth not give thee an account, nor tell thee, why he judgeth thee; therefore humble thy selfe that ever thou hast sayd (and take heed thou say it no more) God hath taken away my Judgement.

Hence note...

First,
First, God sometimes lets the goodness of his most precious servants lie in the dark.

He goeth unusually ways with many of his choicest servants; he doth not always declare their right, nor deal with them according to the ordinary rule, in giving good to them that are good, (as not always evil to them that are evil, the Lord is at his liberty in these present distributions, he is supreme, and hath power over all flesh) and so keepes their judgement in the clouds, or a secret to himselfe.

Secondly, Note.
The Lord sometimes is pleased to defer and delay to doe his servants right.

And thus he takes away their Judgement. Though he hath a purpose to give it them, yet he doth not presently give it them; at last he will make even with all men, each man shall have his judgement; he will reward every one according to his workes, and the righteous, shall (without doubt) have a good reward.

Thirdly, Note.
When God doth either hide or defer the judgement of a godly man, it doth very much affect, yea, and afflicts his heart.

We are usually much afflicted with any dark dispensation upon many accounts, especially upon this, because it makes us obnoxious to every man's censure. When God takes away our judgement, we fall under the hard judgements of men; and to lie under the ill opinions of men unvindicated or unrighted, is no easie burden. We have that promise (Psal. 37. 6.) He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the noonday. The righteousness and judgement of a good man may be in a mid-night darkness as to man, and till that be brought to the light of other mens knowledge, himselfe hath, sometimes, little light of comfort.

Fourthly, Note.
It is sinfull to complain, and to be troubled, as if God had not done us right, because we see it not done, or because he deferrs to doe it.
In this Job was most faulty, he uttered many passionate speeches about what God had done, because things were not brought to an issue, nor his condition stated and cleared up, either to the world, or to himselfe; This troubled him more then the extremity of his paine, or the greateft of his troubles. How flittely Job stood upon it, that his Judgement was taken away, will appear yet further in the next words, which Elihu makes further matter of accusation.

_VER. 6._ _Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression._

In this verse we have two other parts of the Inditement brought against Job, neere of the fame nature with the former; wherein he yet more vehemently urgeth his owne integrity, and cryeth out both of the greatness and causelesness (on his part) of his present sufferings. More distinftly Elihu in this verse chargeth him.

First, That he did over-eagerly maintaine his owne cause, _Should I lie against my right?_  
Secondly, That he spake of God as dealing over-harshly with him; _My wound is incurable without transgression; These things (faith Elihu) thou haft also sayd._

_Should I lie against my right?_

We read the words as a Question; others read them as a direct proposition; _There is a lie in judging me, or, There is a lie In judicando e- against my right_; The word which we here tranlate right, is the fame which we tranlate Judgement in the former verse. And when he faith, _There is a lie against my right_; It is as if he had plainly sayd, _I am falsely charged, I am wrongfully accused, I am not such a man as I am supposed, nor have I done those things where- of I am suspected_. Every false accusation brought against a man, is a lie against his right.

Secondly, Others read it thus, _I shall make liers against my right_; that is, whosoever stands up to prove any thing against me, as you have done, sayyng, _I am wicked, unrighteous, or hypocriti- cal, I shall be able to prove him a lier_. But neither the Grammati- cal signification of the words will fairely beare this fence, nor doth it well correspond with the former verse.

XXX

Thirdly, Item Chald:
Thirdly, Thus; I lie in my Judgement; that is, I am deceived in it, or I saye of it. To lie in Scripture, is to faile, or to frustrate the hope of another. Some inffit much upon this sence; as if he had sayd, I come short of that which I looked for as my right or Judgement; in this sence the word is often applied to things, but not to person's, as some of the learned conclude upon this place. (Isa: 58. 11.) Thou shalt be like a spring of water, whose waters faile not; we put in the margin, lie not, or deceive not. 'Tis a promise made to those who keepe a true faith, and keepe it truely, God will be to them as a spring whose waters lie not. All our fresh springs are or should be in God, and he is a spring whose waters are always fresh. No man ever came to him for matter, and was frustrated of his expectation. Thus also the word is used (Hab: 3. 17.) Although the labour of the Olive shall faile; that is, though when you come to the Olive tree, you find no Olives there, nor see any hope of a drop of oyle in your whole Olive-yard, yet you may still rejoice in the Lord, he is able to annoynt and fill you always with the oyle of gladness. Thus Job is conceived complaining here of his deceived hopes, much in that sence as God himselfe in the Prophet (Isa: 5. 7.) is sayd to be deceived. He looked for judgement, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry. I (faith Job) looked for better things, I looked for light, but behold darkness, I looked to be acquitted, but behold I am hardly thought of and cenfured on every hand, I am quite disappointed, matters fall out and are otherwise then I did expect.

Fourthly, I lie in my right; is thus expounded, I am thought to lie, while I maintaine my right, or say I am righteous; I am judged a lyar, for saying I have walked in the truth.

All these readings of the text are given from the affirmative translation.

But we, as also several others tranlate by an interrogation, intimating the heat and earnestness of his spirit, in wiping off this aspersions; Should I lie against my right? I should not, I will not. As if Eliph had sayd; Job hath insisted so much upon his owne righteousness, and right, that he will not be taken off from it upon any terms, may he hath said, what? Should I knowing my selfe to be innocent (because of this cry against me) cry guilty to this indietment; and so betray my owne innocency, or give away my right? Job
Job stands so much upon his owne righteousness, that if he should but acknowledge himselfe faulty, he thinkes he should lie, or wrong him- 
selfe by speaking against his knowledge and conscience. And indeed 
Job ( Chap. 27. 4, 5, 6. ) spake fully to this effect, That it would 
be a wrong to or a lie against himselfe, if he should not stand up 
to the uttermost in his owne right, and defend his innocency; 
and 'tis probable Elihu hits at that paflage, while he chargeth him 
with this passionate expostulation, What! Should I lie against my 
right? Would you have me fay as you fay, and so beare false wit- 
tness, or be a false witness against my felfe? What ever comes of 
it, I will not doe that. I will not lie against my right, nor let goe 
my integrity; I will not in civility to any other mans understanding 
of me, subscribe to my owne wrong, or fay I am, what I am 
not, or have done what I have not. Elihu brings this as a strong 
prooffe of the height of Jobs spirit, as if to confeffe his fault were 
to fall below himselfe, yea to belie himselfe; Should I lie against 
my right?

Hence note.

First, To acknowledge we have done that, which we have not 
done, or that we are what we are not, is to lie against our owne 
right, or to wrong our felves.

As many lie, by speaking more good of themselves then is true, 
or by denying that evill which in truth they are guilty of; so he 
that submitts to that guilt which he is free from, or confeffeth 
more evill of himselfe then is true, lieth against his owne soule. 
So did that Amalekite ( 2 Sam: 1. 10. compared with 2 Sam: 31. 
4. ) charge himselfe falsely with killing Saul in hope of a reward 
from David for his good newes. As no man ought to lie against 
another, much leffe against himselfe; And as that man doth wick- 
edly bele hisfelfe, who faith he is better then he is, ( for that's 
horrible hypocrisy; all such God will unmask one time or other, 
who thus cover themselves with lyes, and fay ( like thofe in the
Prophet ) they have dreamed when they have scene nothing, but 
the vaine phantasies of their owne braines, nor felt any thing but the 
preffumption of their false hearts; Now ( I fay ) as he doth wick- 
edly bele himselfe who faith he is better then he is) fo for any 
man to deny that good which God hath done for him, or wrought 
in him, or what he hath done or wrought in the feare and power

X x x 2
of God, is a dangerous way of denying and belying his owne right.

Hence secondly note.

No man ought to admit any charge against himselfe, wherein he is not guilty.

It is not in our liberty to give up our owne integrity, we may not give up the righteousness and innocency of others to a false witness, if we can detect it, much lesse our owne. Let no man lie against his right. It is our affliction only to be wronged by others, but 'tis our sin to wrong either others, or our selves. Yet.

Thirdly, Note.

We may quickly over-act in standing upon our own right.

That caution of Solomon (Eccl: 7. 16.) seemes to carry this observation in it. Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self over-wise: Why shouldst thou destroy thy selfe. Some expound this precept as a rule of policy, advising all to a moderation in the practife of (that wherein there can be, indeed, no excessse) true piety and religion; as if it were a duty to study and comport our selves to a kind of neutrality and indifference in the things of God, lest we expose our selves to the wrath and rage of men, who cannot beare it with patience to see any that are better or do better then themselves. But I conceive the Spirit of God in Solomon, was farre from breathing any such cold blast, to nip either the buddings or highest growths of godlinesse; and that he would not at all abate any in the practife of holinesse, but intends one of or all these three things. First, to take men off from any opinionativeness, about what they judge to be righteous and themselves righteous in doing it, willing them to take advice, and not to lean to their own understanding, nor to rest in their own dictates as infallible; or Secondly, when he faith, Be not righteous overmuch, his meaning is, doe not exact the utmost of others which the Law in the rigour of it will allow; he that will not remit any thing of his right, is not only over-righteous, but may soon doe wrong; or Thirdly, when he faith, be not over-righteous, as he would not have men stand strictly upon their right with others, so he would not have them speak much of their own righteousness; but rather sometimes take blame to themselves, then (which was Jobs cafe) 
proclaim themselves altogether blameless. As we are not to betray our innocency, so not give a shadow of any boasting in it. We seldom lose by saying little of our selves. And in most cases we should rather trust God (who hath promised he will doe it, Psal. 37. 6.) to bring forth our righteousness as the light, then be over-industrious in bringing it to light, or in bringing it out of that darkness with which it lyeth obscured, either by or among men. As we ought never to lye against our right, so it may not be convenient at some times to speak all the truth of it which we can. This at least was Job's fault, and it will be any man who doth like Job, yea though he should be (which few have been or are like to be) under as great sufferings as Job. The greatness whereof he aggravated to the height in the next words, with which Elihu chargeth him.

My wound is incurable without transgression.

An incurable wound is the worst of wounds, and though to be wounded without transgression is best for him that receives it, yet it is worst for him that gives it. My wound is incurable.

The Hebrew is, my arrow; the arrow is a wounding weapon, and in this Text 'tis put for the wound itself. Job complained (Chap. 6. 4.) The arrows of the Almighty drink up my spirits; There are arrows of two sorts, and answerably there are wounds of two sorts. There are first externall, secondly, internall arrows; God shooteth his arrows both into the flesh, and spirit; the former make a wounded body, the latter a wounded soule. Job may intend both; for he received wounds in both; his flesh was wounded, and all that belong'd to flesh, his estate, his credit and good name were wounded, his soule and spirit were wounded also, the arrows of God were shot thick at him, and hit him from head to foot. The Archers (as dying Jacob said of Joseph, Gen. 49. 23; Gravissima est 24.) sorely grieved him, they [all] shot at him, and (one of them Sagittarius also) Satan) hated him; but though his bow (as to the maine) abode quie transgress

in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; yet he cried out as if there had been no helpe, no healing, no hope for him. My wound

Is incurable.

The word which we render incurable, signifies not only what is very

Hanc sagittar

Elihu vocat

ULR i.e.gra-
very dolorous, or grievous, but mischievous, mortal, and deadly.

And from this word man is called Enosh in the Hebrew, to shew how infirme and fraile he is, sin having given him a wound which is incurable, by any thing but the blood of Jesus Christ. Job felt his wounds, and he spake of them, as a man swallowed up with desperation, and expected no cure of his present sad condition; My wound is incurable, and he concluded with that which is yet harder, My wound is incurable.

Without transgression.

Mr. Broughton translates, My stroak is sore without trespasse. Job in saying his wound was incurable, shewed a defect in his faith, but in saying it was incurable without transgression, he seemed to shew his defect in truth. For surely had there not been transgression in him, there had never been a wound upon him; God had never so much as broken our skin but for sin; Man had never felt so much as the scratch of a pins poynct by the hand of God, if he had not once prevaricated and Apostatiz'd from God. We owe all our sorrows to our sins, all our woundings to our transgressions. How then doth Job say, My wound is incurable without transgression? The word here used is not usually put to signifie sin in generall (though some take it so) but some speciall kind of sin, & that of more then an ordinary degree, a sin with a malignity, a provoking sin; As if the meaning of Elish were, that he heard Job say, Though his sin were not great, though it were not any rebellion against light, nor dangerous Apostacy, though his were a very curable sin, yet his wound was altogether incurable; his wound was great, though his sin was little. Now, because Justice doth usually apportion the punishment infricted both to the nature and measure of the sin committed, therefore Elish takes it (and he had too much occasion to doe so) as a great reflection upon the justice of God, when he heard Job thus bemoaning himself, My wound is incurable without transgression. To receive the least wound without transgression, is a great wound to justice, how greatly then doth he wound the Justice of God, who faith he hath received a great, yea an incurable wound without transgression.

But where spake Job these words, when said he, My wound is incurable without transgression, (we must bring in that, Job hath said,
said, to every one of these charges) I answer, Job spake of the arrows of God (Chap. 6.4.) and that they were incurable, he faith in other words (Chap. 16.13.) His arrows compass me round about; he cleaveth my reins asunder; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. When a man’s reins are cleft in sunder with an arrow, and his gall powred on the ground, his wound is incurable.

But where did he say, My wound is incurable without transgression; Elihu might collect that from (Chap. 9.17.) He breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplyeth my wounds without cause; and from (Chap. 16.16, 17.) My face is foul with weeping, &c. not for any injustice in my hands. While Mary wafhed the feete of Christ with her teares (Luke 7.38.) she might be sayd to foule her owne face with her teares. Teares, which (in a qualified sense, or as a token of true repentance) wash and cleanse the foule, doe yet blubber and disfigure the face. My face (faith Job) is foul with weeping, though my hands are not foul with sinning, or any evill doing. This was, in effect to say what Elihu here censureth him for saying, My wound is incurable without transgression.

Hence note.

First, God hath his arrows, he can wound us when and where he pleaseth.

He shooteth and mistleth not his marke. He hath a quiver full of deadly arrows; take heed bow ye provoke him. Job had a whole quiver of arrows emptied upon him for triall, for the exercise of his patience. Woe to those upon whom God emptieth his quivers in vengeance. (Psal. 7.11,12,13.) God is angry with the wicked everyday; if he turne not, he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death, he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

Secondly, Note.

The wounds which God makes cannot be healed by any medicines but his owne.

Job’s wound was incurable, there was no balm for him in the Gilead of this world, no Physician there. And therefore the Lord bids
bids Egypt, in Icone, seeke healing there (Jer: 46. 11.) Go up into Gilead and take balmes, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vaine shalt thou use many medicines, for thou shalt not be cured. Who can heale where God will wound? (Psal: 38. 2, 3.) Thine arrows stick fast in me, there is no soundness in my flesh; even David complained that the wounds which the arrows of God had made in him were incurable. Why is my paine perpetuall (said the Prophet, Jer: 15. 18.) and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb to help him, yet could he not heale you, nor cure you of your wounds. (Hos: 5. 13.) God gives states or bodyes politick such wounds, as all the medicines and means in the world cannot helpe; They may goe to the Assyrian, and send to king Jareb, to this and that power; They may call a whole collidge of State-Physicians or deepelt politicians for counsel and advice, yet neither one nor other can be a healer to them. Therefore in the next Chapter (v. 1.) the Church concluded upon another course, and a better address, then either to the Assyrian, or to king Jareb, Come let us returne unto the Lord, for he hath torne, and he will heale us; only the Lord who gives the wound can heale the wound; the same hand which smites us must cure us, else our wound is incurable.

Thirdly, Note.

To complaine of our wounds as incurable, or past cure, is an argument of our unbeliefe.

Tis good for us even to despaine of help from creatures, and to say the least wounded (if but the scratch of a pin) is incurable by all the art, means, and medicines which this world can administer, but to say our wound (though never so deep, dangerous, and deadly) is absolutely incurable, is our sin. While we ruine our selves (that is, while we provoke God to ruine us, yet) there is hope in God; O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy selfe, but in me is thine helpe (Hos: 13. 9.) despaine as much as you will of creatures helpe, but still hope in God.

Thirdly, In that he faith, My wound is incurable without transgression.

Note.

The
The Lord may, and doth take liberty to afflict those grievously, who have not sinned greatly.

There is no man liveth and sinneth not, yet every man is not (in strict sense) a sinner, that is, a great sinner, a rebel, a worker of iniquity; yet the Lord when 'tis needful giveth them great wounds, who have not (comparatively) sinned greatly. Though no sin should be little in our eye, yet there are degrees of sin, and some are less than others in the eye both of God and man. Elihu chargeth Job, not as saying he had no sin, but because he complained his wounds were great, though his sins were not; or that there was not a due proportion between his offence and his punishment, his sins and his sufferings.

Hence note, Fourthly. Though the Lord taketh liberty to afflict those greatly that have not sinned greatly, yet they must not take liberty to complain of the greatness of their afflictions, how littlesoever their sins have been.

A gracious heart lookes upon the least of his mercies, as greater than the greatest of his good deservings, and upon the greatest of his sufferings, as less than the least of his ill deservings or demerits. And surely (besides that liberty which God hath, as he is supreme, and sovereign, to afflict whom he will, and in what degree he will we must know, that the least sin deserves the greatest wound. An evill thought deserves all the evill that can be heaped upon us. Whosoever we suffer on this side hell is less then the least of our sins. And therefore if we have reason to confess our little sins great, and our greatest wounds little, compared with our little sins; how much more should we confess our great sufferings little, compared with our great sins, as the Church did (Ezra 9. 13.) After all that is come upon us (our long and hard bondage in Babylon) for our evill deeds, and for our great trespass, thou O Lord, hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve.

Further, from the whole verse, in that Elihu chargeth Job with these several sayings.

Observe, First. A good mans sayings are often worse then his meanings.
Elihu rebuketh his speeches, not his spirits; his words though in some respect true, yet were dangerous, and because not well explained by himselfe, scandalous to others. But his heart was not treacherous, nor the bent of his mind wrong; in uttering them, evil men may speake good words, but tis with a bad heart; good men sometimes speake bad and offensive words, yet with honest hearts; and when their minds are serene, and they cleared from those clouds of perturbation, which have darkned them, they (as Job) are ready to recant them, and repent of them.

Secondly, Note.

*It is an high offence to intimate any thing which doth in the least intrench upon the Justice, and righteousness of God.*

To say, God hath taken away our judgement, may call downe judgements; To say, we are wounded without transgression, is a great transgression; and the reason, why it is so, is plaine, because such sayings, tell the world, that we suffer, if not quite without desert, yet more then we deserve; and what is this but to justifie our selves, and lay blame upon God, then which (as was shewed at the 2d verse of the 32d Chapter) nothing is more derogatory to God, or more blame-worthy in man.

Thirdly, Note.

*If we speak amisse, or indiscreetly about the dealings of God with us, we may thank our selves if we are hardly censured, and soundly chidden for it.*

Though Job's heart was honest, yet his tongue was intemperate, and he too bold with God; and you see how God stir'd up the spirit of Elihu to lay it home to him, and bring him upon his knees for it. They who vent unwarrantable speeches, must not thinke much if they meet with sharpe reprooses and cutting censures. Tongue-faults seldome escape without tongue-lathes; and 'tis a mercy to meete with them from a faithfull friend; Their lashing and cutting tongues prove healing tongues; *(Psal: 141. 5.)*

Fourthly, Note.

*Every speaker is at the mercy of his hearers.*

No man knows what gloffe his words may have put upon them when...
when once uttered. Here are four sayings brought against Job, yet Job never spoke any of them expressly, or in so many words, but such collections were made (indeed they were, as not false, so not favourable collections) from what he had spoken. And he had but a poor remedy left, to say he did not mean them so. Take heed what you speak, words are usually judged as others understand them, not as you mean them. Indeed charity doth always incline to the best construction; and will not interpret that ill, which may bear a better interpretation. But who knoweth whether his words shall always meet with a charitable interpreter, our words do not often meet with just and equal ones. Nothing, indeed, is more common with uncourteous hearers, then to misconstrue those they hear, or to judge of what is spoken rather as it may be taken to the speaker's hurt and defamation, then their own profit or instruction. And therefore though I would advise every hearer to use as much charity as may be; yet I would also advise every speaker to leave as little as may be to the charity of his hearers.

Thus much of the first part of the charge in these four sayings. In the three verses following, Elihu prosecutes the charge, and stands in admiration, as here at the sayings of Job, so there of his doings.
What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?
which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.
For he hath said, it profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himselfe with God.

These three verses contain the second charge or accusation, which Elihu had drawne up against Job. And in it we may distinctly consider; First, the forme of it; Secondly, the matter of it.

The forme of it is by way of question; what man is like Job?
The matter of it consists of three heads.

First, That he was a man of a scornfull spirit towards others, or that he had subjected himselfe to the scorn of others; What man is like Job, which drinketh up scorning like water?
Secondly, Elihu chargeth him, as having fellowship with men of a vaine and offensive conversation (v. 8th) which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.
Thirdly, He chargeth him (which is indeed the ground of the former) That he was a man, not only of unfound, but of blasphemous principles and opinions (v. 9th) For he hath said, it profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himselfe with God. This 9th verse is the proofe of the eighth; For some might enquire, How doth it appeare, that Job goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men? Elihu answers, It appeareth by his words, or from his owne mouth; For he hath said, it profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himselfe with God. And if a man once judge that there is no profit in the wayes of God, he thereby declares his consent to the wayes of the wicked. That's the summe of the charge, and these the parts of it.

Ver. 7. What man is like Job?

The word rendered man, doth not signifie every ordinary man, but a great or wise man, a famous or a powerfull man. What great
or wife man is like Job? Possibly some may be found among the
dregs of the people or among the common sort like himselfe,
but among men of honour and reputation for wisdome, surely,
there are none to be found like him. Yet some take it (out of
the strictness of the original word) for a man of the lowest or
meanest condition; What man is like Job? that is, no man, no
not of the meanest degree is like him. And so the question may
be carried under a threefold notion.

First, As a vilifying question, What man is like Job? Who is
there that hath but the name and face of a man that would doe
or speak things as he? Job, in this matter, is worse than any man,
then the world of men. He acts and speaks at a lower rate of
prudence and piety then many; if not then any of the lowest among
the sons of men.

Secondly, We may look upon it as an angry passionate que-
ston, a question carrying in it highest indignation; What man is
like Job? who so vaine, rash, foolish and inconsiderate as he? I
have scarce the patience to speake or think of him.

Thirdly, We may take it as an admiring question; What man
is like Job? It is a thing unheard of, even a stupendious prodigie,
that a man should be or doe as Job. All sorts of men abstaine
from or decline, yea scorn scorne scorning (tis a thing so unbecom-
ing man) but chiefly they that are great, noble and honourable, such
as Job hath been in his time, yet he is turned scorne. As if he
had sayd, Who hath heard the like? was there ever such a man
heard of, who either used such scornfull language against others,
or layd himselfe so open to the scorne and contempt of others!
What man is like Job,

Who drinketh up scorne like water?

That's matter of admiration; Elihu might have found out ma-
ny other matters, wherein Job had no fellow, no parallel, scarce
any like him in the world; who so afflicted, so humbled, so broken,
so defersst by his owne relations, so vexed with friends and com-
forters like Job? But he doth not put the question upon his suf-
ferings, but upon his sin; What man is like Job, who drinketh up
scorne, &c. Drinking is here used metaphorically, and so like-
wife are eating, devouring, and swallowing up often used in Scrip-
ture, to denote that which is done to be done with much greedi-
ness,
ness, and with a kind of delight. And whereas there is a three-fold measure or degree of drinking; First, soberly, or for necessity: Secondly, plentifully or for moderate delight; Thirdly, excessively, or for drunkenness, and the satisfying of a lust. This third seemeth to be here intended, even an excessive drinking of scorn, till he was as a drunken or mad-man with it, or (as we say) mad drunke; For the text saith, What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorniing. He doth not only taft it a little, and sip at the scorners cup, but drinks it up to a drop, or to the bottom. He drinketh up scorniing.

And that's a strange kind of drink, one of the worst if not altogether the worst of Nature's brewing. Scorniing may be taken two ways, either passively or actively; some take it in a passive signification; What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorniing like water? that is, who is so scorned, or who subjecteth himself to the scorn of men as he hath done. What wise or discreet man did ever lay himself to naked, so open to contempt as he? or who like him would render himself ridiculous, such a laughing stock to all his hearers, who are but rational and understanding men? It cannot be denied (nor doth Elisha in speaking thus coarsely of him deny it) but that Job, moved doubtless by the holy Ghost, had spoken many excellent things, full of divine light and learning; yet moved with passion, he spake sometimes much amiss, and is charged for it, as if like a shameless person, he had proffered himselfe, by lavish and intemperate language to the lash of every tongue.

Secondly, Scorniing may be taken actively; What man is like Job, who drinketh scorniing like water? That is, where shall we find such a scorrer, who hath uttered so many reproachfull speeches, as Job? He drinketh scorniing, as if he thought he could never fill himselfe enough with scorniing. This interpretation may have a double reference.

First, To his friends, who it seemes, were very sensible that he put scorn upon them. Zophar complaineth of it (Chap. 11. 3.) When thou mockest shall no man make thee ashamed; As if he had said, when thou hast mocked and derided us, shall we let thee alone, and say nothing? shall we suffer our selves to be abused and passe it by in silence? ought we not to tell thee of it, and re-
buke thee for it openly, and to thy face, that thou mayest see thy error and be ashamed of it?

Secondly, (which is yet higher, and I judge too high) his scorning is referred by some to the dealings and providences of God, as if he had spoken of them with a kind of scorning, at least with that irreverence, and lightness of spirit, which Eliphas did early and earnestly admonish him of (Chap. 5. 17.) *Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, and which the Apostle calls The exhortation, which speaketh unto us as unto children* (Heb. 12. 5.) *My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.* Thus also Elihu may in a qualified sense be understood charging Job with drinking up scorning like water. As if upon the whole matter he had said, *Job hast drank scorne till he is almost drunken with it, at least, he is so full of it, that he powres it out upon every one that comes near him, and which is worst of all, he speaks so unbecomingly, that we shall not much wrong him, if we say he hath spoken or acted despieingly (which is a degree of speaking or acting scornfully) concerning the chastenings of God upon him.*

Further, When 'tis said, *He drinketh scorning like water.*

It may imply three things; First, the frequency of his scorning, he doth it commonly, he is at scorning as often as at drinking; Secondly, the content which he was supposed to take in scorning, *water cooleth and refresheth the heated and wearied body.* Thirdly, it may note the easiness or naturalness of it to him. To drinke is natural to man, it puts him to no paines nor study. We say proverbially of that which a man doth without trouble; He doth it as easily as he drinks. But of this word drinking and drinking like water, the reader may see more upon those words (Chap. 15. 16.) *Man drinketh iniquity like water.*

Once more, whereas *Elihu saith of Job, He drinketh scorning like water.*

Some have made a critical observation or distinction about it; *Elihu doth not say, he drinketh scorning like wine, but like water; They who are provoked or led on to sin by the delight and sweetness which they find in sin, are said to drink it like wine (Prov. 4. 17.) They drink the wine of violence; or they drink violence.*
violence like wine. It goeth downe sweetly and pleasantly; But (say they) such as sin, not out of pleasure but out of will or out of an affected maliciousness, are said to drink iniquity like water, which hath little pleasure in it, little sweetness or taste in it. There's small favour in water comparatively to wine and other delicate or delicious liquors. So that (according to this notion) they drink iniquity like water, who sin for sin's sake. And indeed some are so delighted in sin itself, that they will sin in that which yeilds them no delight. The very act of doing evil is more contentfull to them, then any fruit or consequent of it. But we need not stay in this nicety, the general sense falls hard enough upon Job, to drink scorning like water, is to be much and often in scorning. Water is the cheapest liquor, and of most common use; every man can goe to the price of that which costs nothing (in most places) but the labour of taking it up. What man is like Job, that drinketh scorning like water?

Taking the words in a passive sense, as Job was a person scorned and drunk in the scornes of men poured upon him, as the earth drinketh in water.

Note.

*He behaveth himselfe unlike a man, that layeth himselfe open to, and readily admits the scorne of men.*

It is an affliction to be scorned by others; But it is a sin to render our selves a scorn to others, and not to be fencible of it.

Secondly, (which I rather adhere to) taking the active sense, he is charged with speaking scornfully to his friends, or of the dealings of God with him; how farre this charge might reach Job, hath been touch't a little already; and will be cleared yet further before the close of the whole matter brought against him in this context. But in the mean time, from the general sense of the words (not concluding Job broadly such a one)

Observe.

Scorners are the vilest sort of men.

What man is like Job, who drinketh scorning? Not to doe good is sinful, but either to scorn that which is good or those that are good is farre more sinful. That man is gone his furthest length, or ascended to the highest step of sin, who turneth scorne, or gives
gives himself a liberty to scorn others. The first words of David (Psalm 1:1) Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. Here are three degrees of sinning; walking, standing, sitting. He that sitteth in the seat of the scornful, or hath commenced scorner, hath taken the highest degree, and is the chief Graduate in the Schooles of sin. And as to fit in the seat of the scornful, is the highest degree of sinning, so they that are got into that seat, care not how long they sit in it, yea, are hardly ever got out of it. So much that chiding question or expostulation of Solomon doth fully import (Proverbs 1:22) Ye scorner, how long will ye delight in scorning? As if he had sayd, When shall it once be? will ye never have done, nor give over that trade? Scorner are therefore the worst of men, because they determine the best both of things and men (Proverbs 21:24) Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath. Scorner are the children of pride. A proud spirit vents itself in scorning. Pride doth not appear so much in apparel, in gay clothes and new fangled fashions (all which are often used as flags of pride and vanity) nor doth pride appear so much in praising our selves (though there it appeareth much) as it doth in scorning others. Proud scorner is his name. And as the scorner is a proud despiser of others, so a quarrelsome contender with others, and till he is separated from men, there is nothing but separation, no peace among men (Proverbs 22:10) Cast out the scorner, and contention shall goe out; yea strife and reproach shall cease; which plainly intimateth, that strife cannot goe out till the scorner be cast out. And therefore Solomon (Proverbs 24:9) calleth the scorner an abomination to man. Thus the Scripture sets the scorner among sinners of the chiefest rank and first form. I may say, he is of the first three, if not the first of that three. Therefore take heed how ye drink scorning, especially take heed it be not your mornings draught; for as it comes from the heart, so it will fly up into your head, and unfit you for any good works, at least, that day.

Again, from the similitude here used, to drink up scorning like water, which (as hath been shewed) holds out the readiness and connaturallness of an action unto him that is charged with it.

Note.

The more easily any one sinneth, the greater is his sin.

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It is best to come hardly off in sinning, and when it goeth hardly downe; Many sin as easily as they eat or drink. They eat up my people as bread, ( faith God, Psal. 14. 4. ) that is ( as we say ) they make no bones of it; there's nothing sticks in their throats, nor troubles their conscience. Where sin lives altogether unmortified in any man (it doth so in every meere naturall or unregenerate man) 'tis no more to him to sin, than it is either to live, or to care and drink for the maintaining of life. But they shall feel foreft paines for sinning, who have finned with greatest ease; they shall drinke damage by scorning like Gall and Wormewood, who have drunke scorning like water. Elihu having thus taxed Job with scorning at good men, proceeds to tax him with over-much freedome and familiarity with evil men.

Ver. 8. Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

As if he had sayd, you may know what he is, by the company he keeps.

He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, or he associates and puts him selfe into the society of the workers of iniquity. Elihu doth not say, he dwelleth among the workers of iniquity; The best man in the world may dwell among bad men; Lot dwelt in Sodome. We must goe out of the world, if we will not be among the wicked; the world is every where full of the workers of iniquity. But ( faith he ) he goeth in company with them. Which intimates the actvenes of his spirit with them; yea the election of his spirit, or that he chose their company. Though a good man may be in the company of the wicked, yet he doth not choose their company; He is not of their body of their society or gang. A wicked man doth not content himselfe to be among the ordinary sort of sinners, he is for, and beft likes the worst of sinners, workers of iniquity. All are sinners naturally, but some are sinners artificially; they study sin, they contrive and plot mischief; They devise iniquity upon their beds, faith one Scripture; They weave the spiers webb, faith another. Here's artificiall sinning. The Greekes call such, sin-workers, and crafts-men in evil. I have had occasion to speake of these from other passages of this Booke. Here Elihu to highten the charge against Job, faith, He goeth in company with
And walketh with wicked men.

As our holiness is expressed by walking with God, so our sinfulness by walking with wicked men. To walk with God is all the commendation of Enoch, who was so holy on earth that God took him up to Heaven, (Gen. 5. 22.) He had this testimony (faith the Apostle, Heb. 11. 15.) before his translation, that he pleased God. To walk with God, is to please God, or to give up our selves wholly to God. Can two walk together except they be agreed? is the Prophets question, (Amos 3. 3.) They who walk together are supposed to have one will, as they are seen to have one way. What God willeth they will, and what God willeth not, they will not who walk with him. To walk with wicked men implyeth an agreement with them, and a conformity to them, as being of their fraternity, company and livery. They that walk with wicked men, declare their familiarity with them; or that their mind and manners are the same. The Apostle tells the Corinthians (1 Cor. 3. 2.) Whereas there is among you envying, strife and divisions, are ye not carnall and walk as men, that is, as men in their natural and sinfull condition walk. Though ye are spirituall in your state, yet ye act as carnall men. Now, as it is sinful for a godly man to walke as a man, or according to man, (as our Margin hath it, for he should walk as God) so it is much more sinfull to walk with wicked men, or according to the worst of men. Thus the Apostle describes the conversation of the Ephesians before conversion. (Eph. 22.) And you had he quickened who were dead in sins and trespasses, in which sometime ye walked according to the course of this World. That is, according to the tide, current and streame of the times and places wherein ye lived. Man naturally Qua iuâ non doth not walk where he ought to goe, but where he seeth the most goe. He is led by the worst of examples (such are the examples of the most or of the many) rather then by the best of rules. It is our duty, and it should be our delight to walk with those who delight in the Law and in the way of God. David faith of his deceitfull friend, but reall enemy, (Psal. 55. 14.) We walked into the house of God in company. As if he had said, time was when he and I were as if he had been I, both of us but one, in that one thing necessary.
cessary, the worship and service of God. It is a good argument, that man hath an heart for God, who walks with good men in the ways of God. To converse much with or to be much in the company of good men, is a probable sign of goodnesse; but when we walke with them to the house and worship of God, or converse with them in the duties of holinesse, this is a great (though no infallible) argument of goodnesse. And to be sure to walk with evill men, especially to joyne with them in doing evill is an argument that the man is evill. Therefore Elihu may seeme to bring a demonstracion against Job's godlinesse (that he intended it not so I shal thew afterwards, but, I say, he seemes to say so) while he faith, Job walketh with wicked men.

The Hebrew Phrafe used in the Text is more then (as we express) wicked men, we may render it men of wickednesse; the Scripture calleth those men so who are (as it were) transformed into wickednesse, or formed up of wickednesse. As some men are so witty, that we call them men of wit, and others so judicious that we call them men of judgment, as some are so skilfull and cunning, that we call them men of skill and cunning; so some are so wicked, that the Scripture calls them men of wickednesse; even with these very dregs of mankind, it seemes Job conforted. He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walke thin wicked men.

But here it may be questioned, was it indeed so with Job, or was Job such a man as he is expressly charged to be both in this and the former verse? Did Elihu judge him a scorners, a companion of the workers of iniquity, and a walker with men of wickednesse? Doubtlesse, that's not Elihu's scope or intention; nor could he imagine that Job, in strict sense, was either a scorner of good men, or chose the company of wicked men. And surely all that knew Job could certifie (upon their knowledge) that he was a man of a gracious spirit and unblemish'd life; that he loved good men and sweetly conversed with them, and therefore was farre from closing with debyst companions, or men of a profligate spirit. Why then doth Elihu speake thus? or spake he the words of truth and sobriety while he spake thus?

I answer, this forme of speaking doth not alwayes import a likeness of conversation and disposition, as sometimes it doth, (Prov. i. 11, 15.) Come with us, and cast in thy lot among us; let
let us all have one purse. My son, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path; that is, do not hearken to the call of those workers of iniquity. Here in the Text to goe in company with the workers of iniquity, and to walke with wicked men, notes only the doing or speaking that which carryeth some likenesse to them, not a being altogether like them. A man is said to goe and walke with others, when he speaks or doth that which seems to fuite and favour their principles, opinions or practices, though in truth they are the abhorrence of his soul. Eliphu durft not, could not asser directly and properly that Job, who was a man famous for piety in the dayes of his prosperity, and who in his affliction had not the least degree of ability or opportunity for it, walked with wicked men: But because in the anguish of his soul he spake sometimes intemperately of the dealings of God (which is the guile, spirit, and common language, in such cases, of wicked and ungodly men) therefore he chargeth him as symbolizing or complying with men of wickednesse. So that when Eliphu faith, he goeth with wicked men, he doth not accuse him for keeping bad company in his prosperity; but with speaking hardly of God in his aduersitie, as ungodly men use to doe, when they are under his hand. He doth not say, thou upon such and such a day kept evill company and conversed with men of wickednesse; but you have spoken much like the wicked in the day of your calamity. That this was his scope appears plainly by the proofof this charge, which is also a new charge (vers. 9.) For he hath said, it profiteh a man nothing that he should delight himself with God. Eliphu doth not say, Job walkeh with wicked men, for we have seen him in their company, and he hath been as vain and wicked as they. But his proofof that Job walked with the wicked was from his words; For he hath said it profiteh a man nothing, &c. This is the language of the wicked, thus they use to speak about the wayes of God; and Job hath spoken thus; therefore, What man is like Job that drinketh scornful like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walkeh with wicked men. I need not stay here to shew how great an evill it is to keepe evill company, for that was not the sin which Job was accused of. Yet from the letter of the Text,
Note first.

To associate with wicked men, or to chuse wicked men for our company, is the mark of a wicked man.

A godly man may be among wicked men, but he doth not chuse their company. He while with them is as Lot was in Sodom, his righteous soul is vexed. A godly man is among wicked men, as his graces are among his corruptions; as his humility is with his pride, his faith with his unbeliefe, these are all in his soul at once, but his faith doth at times strive against his unbeliefe, his humility opposeth his pride, his grace of self-denial, resists his self-seeking, his meekness his passions, and his patience the unquietness of spirit. A godly man is pained in the company of wicked men, as David was (Psal: 120. 5.) Woe is me that I sojourn in Mechech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar. David was there but he did not delight to be there. To associate with the wicked is proper to the wicked. The Apostle gives that caution (Eph: 5. 11.) Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Seeing the works of darkness are unfruitfull of any good, it must needs be bad to have fellowship with them. As we must not at all joyn with wicked men in spirituall communion or Church-fellowship (2 Cor: 6. 14.) Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what communion hath light with darkness, and Christ with Belial, &c. Come out from among them, and touch no unclean thing. So we should have as little civil communion or fellowship with them as we can; and when we are necessitated to have civil communion with them, we must utterly avoyd all sinfull communion with them, that is, communion with them in their sins. It is both a shame to Gospel profession and a great offence to the sincere professors of the Gospel, when they who profess it are much in the company of the workers of iniquity, and walke with wicked men.

Secondly, From the matter of the charge,

Observe.

While godly men behave themselves like wicked men, they may be saide to go in company with them.

This heavy charge falls justly upon them whether they deeme themselves in their affliction (as Job in some sort did) like
like the wicked, or in the days of their fulness and prosperity. If we speake or doe like wicked men, we have our amends in our hands if we are numbred with them, though we are not really of their number. Some good men when they have got much of the world about them make but an ill use of it. Are wicked rich men proud? so are they in a great measure, you may see vanity in their houses, and superfluity upon their tables, as if they also were making provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Now if a godly man, when he hath the abundance of this world makes himselfe more unfit for the next world; is he not in this like the wicked? or if when God layeth him low, he be full of complainings and have risings of heart against the dealings of God, what is this but to do like the wicked, who in their straits quarrell with God, & blaspheme his name? (Isa. 8. ult.) When they are hungry and hard beset, they curse their God and their King. Thus the wicked doe; and it was the Devil's plot to make Job so too; and because in the extremity of his sufferings he spake such things as favour'd of a murmuring spirit, Elihu taxeth him as walking with wicked men. For as when wicked men act and speake like good men, it may be sayd they goe in the company with the godly, and walke with the workers of righteousness, though they are starke nought all the while, being (as the Apostle gives their character, Tit. 1. 16.) Abominable, disobedient, and unto every good worke reprobate; So some good men under temptation act and speake like the wicked, yet reitaine their goodness, and are as to the generall state of their persons, and bent of their hearts, acceptable, obedient, and enclined to every good worke. It will doe the wicked no good at last, that they have thus gone in company with the good; but it is very sinfull for and hurtfull to good men, to goe in company or walk with wicked men, though it be but (as Elihu makes his profe of it against Job) only in using their Sibboleth, or speaking a language like theirs.

Verf. 9. For he hath sayd, it propheth a man nothing that he should delight himselfe with God.

I shall, First, open the words a little, and then, Secondly, inquire, (as of the former) how Job might fall under this accusation.
"He hath sayd, it profiteth a man nothing."

That is, a man shall get nothing, or have no advantage by it. As Christ saith (Mark 8. 36.) what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? But what was this trade which Elihu accuseth Job to have called unprofitable? Surely that which of all others is most profitable. It profiteth a man nothing

that he should delight himselfe with God.

This goes deep; Elihu doth not tax him with saying it profiteth a man nothing to doe this or that good, which God commandeth, but (which is more) that he should delight himselfe with God.

The word rendred to delight, hath a three-fold signification, and all very full to this point and text.

First, To run, which is the speed of our pace. Thus the Septuagint render it, Although he run with God (Cant: 1. 4.) By reason of the favour of thy good oynments, therefore doe the virgins love thee, draw us and we will run after thee. To run is more then to walk. To walk with God, notes our observance of all holy duties, but to run the way of Gods commandements, notes us zealous in them and for them. To run requires not only an honest heart, but a large one; and therefore David sayd (Psal: 119. 32.) I will run the way of thy commandements, when thou shalt enlarge my heart. Thou (faith Elihu to Job) hast sayd, (according to this reading of the word) it shall not profit a man though he run with God, though he make never so much speed in his work and wayes; though he be (besides faithfull and upright) forward and active for God.

Secondly, The word signifieth To have or be of the same will or mind with another. Thus also some render it here; It profiteth not a man, though he will with God, or be of the same mind with God. The Apostle exhorts (Phil: 2. 5.) Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. To will is an internall motion; to run an externall; How faileth a man may run with God in outward actings, yet, possibly, he doth not will with God at all, nor hath a mind conformable to the mind of God. The hypocrite is thus set out (Psal: 50. 18, 19.) When thou sawest a thief, thou con-
consentedst with him, &c. Thou hadst a mind to be a thiefe as well as he. One wicked man minds and wills the same things with another, and all godly men will the same things with God. Yet (faith Job) it shall not profit a man, though he have the same will with God, or though he willeth the same good things which God himselfe willeth.

Thirdly, The word (according to our translation) signifieth more then barely to will, it takes in the affections and joyes of the soule. He that delighteth in God, hath sweet content and complacency in God, he not only approves of all the sayings and doings of God, he not only followeth his counsell, and his conduct, but is highly pleased and fully satisfied in God. Delight is the rest of the soule. When we delight in God, and find every act of obedience our joy and our song, our meat and our drink, then the heart is wound up to the highest pitch of holiness. And therefore as his heart is fallen downe to the lowest pitch of unholiness, who sayth, it profireth a man nothing to serve God, so is his much more who faith, What shall it profit a man though he delight in God?

But here againe it may be queried, Where did Job say, that it should profit a man nothing though he delight himselfe with God? If you read his discourse all over, he never spake these words directly or explicitely, they are the language of hell. But Job had spoken words, which (unless taken in a very favourable construction) might beare this censure. He spake thus, in a manner, while he at once justified himselfe so much, and cryed out as much of the hard dealings of God with him. And while in many passages of this Booke he denieth that the godly have a present reward in this life, and also affirmeth that many wicked men enjoy outward prosperity, and passe unpunished. These speeches might easily be interpreted (by common and carnal men especially) that, Job thought it an unprofitable thing to delight in God. For if all things in this life come alike to all, to the godly, and to the wicked, what doth it profit a man (as to this life) that he should delight himselfe in God? who among the sons of men (that knoweth of no profit beyond this life) can delight himselfe in that, which brings no profit? Job also sayd (Chap. 9, 22.) God destroys the wicked and the righteous, that is, he affliceth the good as much as the bad, this was a principle which he held out all along.

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Now
Vedetur principium unde ad omnia peccata feruntur improbi approbae, est enim precum fides non tam etiam futuri sed et hujus vitae magni incitamentum ad obsequium.

Coc: Now because the Scripture saith, *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is,* and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him (Heb. 11. 6.) and (1 Tim. 4. 8.) *Godliness is profitable for all things,* having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; (which Scriptures though not extant when Job lived, yet the truth contained in them was) *Elihu might well be led into this apprehension,* that Job had brought up an ill report upon the ways of God, as (in this life) unprofitable unto man. But though Job spake thus, yet he was farre from speaking this to justify such an opinion, that there is no profit for a man to delight himselfe with God. His meaning was only this, that a man may want temporall present profit, notwithstanding his delighting in God. He was full and possitive enough, that they who now delight in God, besides the present inward peace and profit which they find and feele, shall hereafter be crowned with everlasting rewards and delights. Job should indeed have been more in justifying God, more in setting forth the present profitableness of his ways in the practise of an holy life; And because he was so sparing in this poynr, and infisted so often upon the afflictions of the people of God, *Elihu chargeth him with saying, It profiteth a man nothing to delight himselfe with God.*

Hence note; First.

*It is our duty, and the summe of all holy duties to delight ourselves in God.*

The very spirit of holiness consists in this; There is (as I may call it) a body of holiness; but if you would have the spirit of holiness (as by distillation we take the spirits of any liquor, or of any thing that liquor and moytiture hath in it, if, I say, we would have the spirits of holiness) tis delighting in God. For as tis the spirit of sinfullness to delight in sin; so the spirit of Godliness is to delight in God.

Note.

Secondly, *To account the service of God unprofitable, is wickedness bordering upon blasphemy.*

Job himselfe is now charged with that, which he charged upon the wicked (Chap. 21. 15.) *What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have that we pray unto him?*
This grand prophane ftre the Prophet rebukes (Mal: 3.14.) To have said, It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is there that we have kept his ordinances? Thus the carnal heart, which would faine free or keepe it felfe from keeping the ordinances of God, is ready to queftion, whether there be any profit in keeping them. And while fuch feeme only to put the queftion, they indeed conclude, that there is no profit in keeping them; yet the truth is, the very keeping the ordinances of God, as it is an act of obedience to him, and of communion with him is very profitable, though we should have no visible nor fenfible profit by it. In keeping the commandements of God, there is great reward (Psal: 19.11.) that is, the keeping of them is a reward, as well as a reward is promised to those that keep them. The Reader may consult this poynt further, at the 15th verfe of the 21th Chapter.

Note, Thirdly.

Good men sometimes speake worse then they meane.

Job never thought it was no profit to serve God, yet he had let fall words which might beare that gloffe. As wicked men often speakes better then they meane; They have golden words in their mouths, when there is nothing but dross in their hearts; their words are smoother then oyle, yet they are drawne swords; their words sound well, while they wound deep; (now as a carnal man speakes often better than he means, and sometime speakes purpofely the beft when he means worth) so a godly man speakes sometimes worse than he means, or he may speake ill when he intends nothing but good. Holy David, (which comes up fully to the ferice of what Job is taxed for saying here) fayd (and what could he speak more unholyly) (Psal: 73.15.) Verily I have cleansed my heart in vaine, &c. What language was here? would one think to heare David foule his mouth with fuch words as these? would one think, that fuch a word could have dropt from the mouth of David, whose mouth used to drop like an honey-comb, & whose lips were wont to be like a tree of life feeding many? yet David in temptation, that is, in great affliction (for he there complains that he was chaffen every morning) spake thus with his tongue to the griefe of his heart a little after. The tongue is an unruly member, (as the Apostle James faith, Chap: 3.8.) The tongue can no man tame; we need a great command upon the heart to

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bridle the tongue, and tame that unruly beast. Many a good man hath been over-borne with his tongue. That little member hath sometimes cruelly both soul and body very sorely. Job's tongue fell heavily upon him.

Observe.

Fourthly, Inconsiderate words render us obnoxious to severest censures.

Thou hast said, It profiteth a man nothing to delight himselfe in God, is a very severe censure; And though Job did not deserve it fully, yet he might have expressed himselfe more commodiously and profitably. Just consequences from what we say, may be charged upon us as our sayings. Indeed to wier-draw words or straine consequences from them, is very unchristian. Some deal to with the holy Scriptures ( 2 Pet: 3. 16.) WRESTING them to their owne destruction; They torture and stretch them upon the tenter to their owne hurt. And to wrest a mans words, or as the Prophet speakes ( Isa: 29. 21.) To make a man an offender for a word, is an act of great uncharitableness towards man, and to God an high offence. (Not but that a man may be an offender for his words; nor can a man be more truly an offender for any words, then when he speakes reproachfully or sleekly of the workes of God.) But when men speak such words as are reall offences, and yeild foule consequences, fairly, they must beare the burden. And that was Job's case here.

But some may say, If Job never spake these words in termes, nor any words like them, with such an intent, why doth he suffer Elihu to accuse him, and not take off his accusation, nor give a word of answer for himselfe? Why did he not vindicate himselfe, or make his Apology?

I answer, and my answer shall be the last note from this context.

A godly man will rather beare more blame then he deserveth, then stand to excuse himselfe when he hath deserved any blame.

Job replyed no more, spake no more, but to shew that he yeilded to what was sayd, and submitted to this dispensation of God in-sending Elihu to charge him thus. He tooke more upon him then he had sayd, lest he should seeme to justifie any thing that he
he had sayd amiss. (Chap. 40. 5.) Once have I spoken, but I will not answer: yea twice, but I will proceed no further. As if he had sayd, I will make no more pleas for my selfe, nor excuses, I will cry guiltie to the whole matter of my charge, though I might cleare and discharge my selfe of much of it. How far was the spirit of Job from theirs, who though charged with that only which they have directly done, or spoken, yet stand it out in pleading their excuse, and will never fall downe before reproves, though what they have done or spoken amiss, be so plaine, that it needs no profe.

We should be carefull to speake and doe such things as are not subject to reproofe, but when through ignorance or rashnes we have run into an error, either of speech or practice, we should be so humble as to subject our selves to reproofe, and take it well that we are rebuked for any evil. As it doubles an offence to undertake the defence of it, to not to defend an offence abateth and lesseth it. And as he who goeth about to cover his fault by finding out arguments and pleas for it, sheweth that he hath a will or purpose to continue in it; so he that is silent, and hath not a word to say for it, gives a good testimony both of his sorrow that he ever committed it, and of his resolution never to commit it any more. They are highly to be commended who live unblameably, and they deserve no small commendation, who being sensible of their owne sayling, can patientely beare the blame of it, without replying upon their reprovers.
Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding: far be it from God, that he should doe wickednesse, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

Elihu having done with Job's charge for several unwarrantable sayings in the former context, begins his refutation here, and directs his speech.

First, To Job's friends, speaking to them from the 10th to the 16th verse.

Secondly, To Job himselfe, from the 16th verse of this Chapter to the 34th.

In the two verses now read, we have two generall points.

First, A vehement deniall of any unrighteousnesse in God, (v. 10.)

Secondly, A strong proofe or demonstration, that there is no unrighteousnesse in God, at the 11th verse. He enters this confusion of Job, or the vindication of the honour of God from what Job had sayd, with an inviting Preface.

Ver. 10. Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding.

Elihu like a cunning Orator often stirr'd up his auditors to attention, and made frequent insinuations to winde himselfe and what he had to say into their good opinion. Here he bespake not the promiscuous multitude or common sort of hearers, but wise men, or men of understanding, such as are most fit to judge the weight and strength of those arguments and reasons, by which any point is proved and confirmed.

Hearken unto me, ye men of understanding.

The Hebrew is, ye men of heart, so the Margin hath it; As the heart is the principle of natural life, so the principles & powers of
of the rational life are often ascribed to the heart. Job told his friends (Chap. 12. 3.) I have a heart (we render, I have an understanding) as well as you; and in good Authors a hearty man signifies not only a man of courage, or a man of spirit, but a man of knowledge and understanding, a man more than ordinarily wise, a man of the highest Elevation for wisdom, is called a hearty man. Naturalists have ascribed the moving of several passions, to several internal parts of the body; laughter (say they) riseth from the spleen, anger from the Gall, love from the liver, but to the heart they give more than a passion, understanding, which is the noblest faculty of reason. Here Elihu calls upon men of heart, or of understanding to hearken to him.

Hence note.

First, The best may need to have their attentions quickened.

Some will not heare at all, they are like the deaf, adder (Psal. 48. 4, 5.) that stoppeth her eare, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely; The Prophet reproves such (Jer. 6. 10.) To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may heare, behold their eare is uncircumcised and they cannot hearken; behold, the word of the Lord is to them a reproach, they have no delight in it; they cannot hearken, that is, they will not; or they cannot hearken, that is spiritually and obedientially, though they have a natural, yet they have not a gracious ear, as the same Prophet (Chap. 11. 6, 7, 8.) upbraided them; yet they obeyed not, nor enclined their eare. This full deafness the Lord complained of also, (Psal. 81. 8.) Hearre O my people, (faith God,) and at the 11 verse, My people would not hearken to my voice; Now as bad men will not heare at all to purpose; so the best seldome hear so well or to so good purpose as they ought and might. Men of heart or of understanding are sometimes slow of hearing, and may need to have their eare awakened.

Secondly, note.

It is an incouragement in speaking to have understanding hearers.

When a people have not only eares, but hearts to heare, then the word is heard indeed. We may suppose understanding men will probably prove the best hearers; the Prophet was in hope,
to find it so, though he failed of his hopes. (Jer. 5.4.) Surely these are poor, they are foolish (men of low parts, and thin intellectual) for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me to the great men and will speak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord, (they are wise surely and understanding) yet he was disappointed in his recourse to them, as it followeth in the same verse, but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds. There is a natural wisdom which hindereth the hearing of the word, therefore the Apostle faith; Not many wise men after the flesh are called, that is, savvily called; the word hath its full effect upon few of them, they are not prevailed with to believe and obey; they are called, but they come not. Though wisdom be an advantage to profitable hearing, yet all natural wise men do not hear profitably, nor indeed can any, by all the wisdom of nature.

Thirdly, note.

A man without understanding is a heartless man.

Headless men are heartless men. It is said (Hos. 7.11.) Ephraim is like a silly dove without a heart. All the people of God are or should be innocent doves, like doves for innocency and gracious simplicity; but how unbecoming is it that any of them should be doves for silliness or silly doves without a heart; that is without any spirit or courage for God, and the things or ways of God. To be without a heart is to be without a due apprehension of the mind of God, or any true conformity thereunto; 'tis to have no knowledge either to do good, or to be good; all such are silly doves without a heart, without understanding, and all such are yet unfit and unprepared hearers. Hearken to me ye men of understanding,

Farre be it from God that he should doe wickedly.

The Septuagint turn the fence of the words into another channel; as if Elihu spake here in his own vindication, and not in Gods; and so they render the Text personally of Elihu; Farre be it from me that I should do wickedly before God; or that I should pervert justice before the Almighty; as if Elihu had said; I am now to speake before God, or in Gods presence; God being my witness,
The word rendered God forbid is often used in Scripture, implying the greatest detestation and utter abhorrence of that which is extremly offensive to us; the root of it signifies any thing that is profane, filthy, or polluted; because all profane things and persons are farre from God, that is, such as he utterly abhorreth. Further, the verbe signifies as to pollute, or to proffane, so to offer violence, to wound and kill unjustly or murtherrously; which fence completheth fully with the businesse in hand. Job had complained that his innocency, at least that he being innocent, was sorely afflicted and wounded, and lay as it were weeping in his gore and blood. Hereupon Elihu stands up to vindicate the righteousnesse and justice of God, Farre be it from God, &c. When a Judge doth unrighteously he offereth violence to the Law, and viciates that chal Virgin Justice, committed to his care and keeping. All acts of injustice are therefore farre from God, even the abomination of his soul, because polluted and filthy in themselves, as also such as pollute and defile all those that use them.

Thus
Thus Abraham spake to God (Gen. 18. 23, 25.) Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked, that be farre from thee, &c. He spake of it with indignation as a thing most unworthy of God, to wrap up good and bad in the same common calamity. When all Joseph's brethren as one man (Gen. 44. 17.) offered to become his prisoners, God forbid (said he) that I should doe so, ye shall not all suffer for one man's fault; let that be farre from me, he that is found in fault only shall be my prisoner. Thus Elisha would remove the remotest suspicion of unrighteousness from God when he faith, farre be it from God that he should doe wickedness.

Hence note. 
We should reject all unworthy thoughts of God with indignation and detestation.

The Apostle shewed a spirit full of this fire (Rom. 3. 5, 6.) Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) that is, natural or carnall men are apt to think so, but God forbid, or, let it not be once named by those who name (that is, profess) the name of God. If every one who nameth the name of Christ must depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2. 19.) woe to those who say that Christ himself closeth with any iniquity. As God himself puts all evil farre from him, so should we put the least thought of it farre from God. What can be more unjust then to have so much as the shadow of a thought that God doth any injustice! away with such blasphemous suggestions, can he who is the very rule of righteousness doe unrighteously? To throw this dirt into the face of God hath as much absurdity and irrationality as blasphemy in it. None but they who know not God, can have such apprehensions of him. To doe wickednesse is farre from God, and therefore let man be farre, even as farre as the east is from the west, from saying or thinking that he doth any. Farre be it from God

That he should doe wickedness.

The Text is, farre be it from God from wickedness, we render that he should doe wickedness. The word signifies wickedness of the worst sort; that wickednesse which does not only break the Law (so every the least sin doth) but slights it, and denyeth it any
any reverence or regard. It is farre from a godly man to sin at this rate, to doe wickednesse. Then, O how farre is it from God that he should doe wickedness,

And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

Elihu useth two Titles or Names of God, First, the Strong God, the mighty God. Secondly, Almighty, the Allsufficient God; farre be it from the Allsufficient that he should doe any iniquity. He that hath all things in his power, and can command Heaven and Earth, heart and hand, he that is able to supply all deficiencies in the creature by his allsufficiency, farre be it from this Almighty God that he should commit iniquity towards man. Strength without goodness is always unprofitable, and often hurtfull. Goodness without strength is very unusefull because so weake. But where both strength and goodness meere and center in the same person, as he is able to doe much good, so he hath no will to doe evil or offer injury to others. How then should the Allsufficient commit iniquity?

The word rendered iniquity signifes any crookedness or perver
tness, any distortion of right and justice. Now right or justice is distorted many ways, chiefly these five.

First, by a flat denyall of it. Secondly, by a tedious delaying of it. Thirdly, by punishing where there is no fault. Fourthly, by not rewarding where there is desert. Fifthly, Justice, or right is distorted, by giving the same or a-like award to those who are unlike, or ( in their acts or deserts, whether good or bad ) not the same. To doe any of these perverse or crooked things is the doing of iniquity, or the perverting of Justice. All these Elihu removeth farre from God, while he faith, Farre be it from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. God will not, cannot commit iniquity, either by denying or delaying justice, either by not punishing or rewarding where there is cause, or by dealing out alike to those in whose doing and dispositions there is an utter unlikeness. Farre be it from the Almighty, that he should commit any of these iniquities.

Hence note.

First, To doe any act of injustice is wickednesse.

Elihu taxed Job, for complaining of Gods Justice ( v. 9.) And here
here he faith, *Far be it from God, that he should doe wickednesse.*
Injustice is wickednesse against God, who commandeth us to be just, and it is wickednesse against man, who is always wronged by injustice.

Secondly, As to that particular which Elihu chargeth Job with.

**Note.**

*If the Lord should not reward those that serve him, and delight in him, he were unrighteous.***

(Heb: 6. 10.) *God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love; He is not unrighteous to forget it, that is, not to recompence it; by forgetting it, he doth not meane the letting of it slip out of his mind, but the not making a due returne to it, or the not giving it a just reward. It is unrighteousnesse in God not to reward those who serve him, because he hath promised to reward them. Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him (Isa: 3. 10.)* The promises run to it, all the Scripture over; and as it would be unrighteousnesse in God not to reward those that do well; so not to pardon them that have done ill when they confess their evil deeds, because he hath promised to pardon them; and therefore the Scripture faith (1 John 1. 9.) *If we confess our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins. The Scripture doth not say, he is mercifull to forgive us our sins, (though mercy act to the highest in the forgivenes of sin) but he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins; and the reason why the Scripture faith so, is because forgivenes of sin (in case of confession) is under a promisse. To come short of our promisses, is to be unrighteous; promisses are bonds upon the promiser, and oblige to performance.*

**Thirdly, Note.**

*The strong God, the mighty God, neither doth nor can doe any unrighteousnesse or iniquity.*

I say, he neither doth nor can doe iniquity. God can doe no iniquity, because in him there is none. *He is my rocke (saith David, Psal: 92. 15.) and there is no unrighteousnesse in him. As none can doe righteousnesse, but they that are righteous, so he that neither is nor can be unrighteous, cannot doe any unrighteousnesse. That in the Psalme is very considerable, that while he faith, There*
is no unrighteousness in God, he immediately before said, He is my rock; implying that God can no more be moved or removed from doing righteously, then a rocke can be removed out of its place. We find Moses also giving God the same attribute, when he spake of his indeclamableness in justice (Deut: 32. 4.) He is a rocke, his worke is perfet, all his wayes are judgement. The wayes of God are not all judgement, as Judgement is opposed to mercy; some of his wayes are mercy, and others of them are judgement; but all his wayes are judgement, as Judgement is opposed to injustice or unrighteousnesse, that's the signification of judgement, when Moses faith, All his wayes are judgement, he is a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. The Apostle puts this denying question with much vehemency (Rom: 9. 14.) What shall we say then, is there unrighteousnesse with God? God forbid. And 'tis very considerable that the Apostle put this question with so much abhorrence, presently after he had spoken of that Act of God which is so much quarrelled at by the sons of men, as unrighteous and unjust; Esau have I hated, and Jacob have I loved, and that, when they had done neither good nor evill (v. 11.) What (say some) will God doe thus? will he hate or love, before ever men doe good or evill? yea, such acts of love and hatred, of election and rejection are gone out from God: And because Paul foresaw, that men (according to their narrow apprehension) would be ready to say, surely God is not right in this; therefore he subjoynes, What shall we say then? is there unrighteousnesse in God? As if he had sayd, I know some men will be ready enough to say so, and thinke they have reason enough to say so; They all must needs say so, who measure God by their shallow braines, (such are the deepest braines compared with God) and therefore Arminius, with his followers, (that they may avoyd this difficulty) carry the interpretation of this Scripture to another point; as if it had nothing to doe with the eternall purpose of God concerning man, but only respected his dealings with them about temporall, or his dealing out temporall to them. I urge that text because it hath occasion'd (through mans corruption) great contending and quarrelling about the righteousness of God; yea some have presumed, there can be no maintaining that opinion of the absolute decree, without fastening unrighteousnesse upon God. But the Apostle by the Spirit foreseeing this fleshly objection,
tion, hath forelayed, and prevented it, concluding, *O man, who
are thou, that repliest against God, shall the clay contend with the
potter, &c.*

Now, as in this act of eternal Election, so in all providential acts, the Lord is infinitely unmoveably and unspottedly just and righteous; he not only doth righteous things, but he cannot doe any thing that is unrighteous. And this seeming impotency is the reall power of God, and his most glorious perfection. For, as 'tis from the weakness of man that he can doe iniquity, so 'tis from the power of God that he cannot. That God cannot lye, that he cannot doe any unworthy thing, is an argument of his omnipotence. God can no more doe iniquity, then he can cease to be God; his righteousness, his justice is himselfe; the Justice of God is the just God, the righteousness of God, is the righteous God; he hath not only a principle of righteousness in him, as man may have, and every Godly man truely hath, but he is righteous-
ness. A Heathen Poet had this apprehension of his Idol Gods; *They love not unrighteousnesse, but honour Justice.* But Jehovah the true, the living God, doth more than affectionately love and honour Justice, He is is essentially Just. That man who is in a state of righteousness, loves to be doing and will doe righteous acts; things and persons are in their working as they are in their being; *He that doth righteousness is righteous,* (1 John 3. 7.) God is righteous, infinitely righteous, in his being, or nature, therefore he cannot but doe that which is righteous; to doe an unrighteous act were to offer violence to himselfe, to destroy himselfe.

Againe, God doth not worke by a rule without him, as men doe (and therefore men often goe beside the rule, and doe amisse, or act unrighteously, because the rule is one thing, and they are another, the rule is without them) but God himselfe is the very rule of all things, and hence it followeth undeniably, that every thing is righteous and just which he doth, even because he doth it; 'tis enough to prove that right which is done, if we can prove God hath done it. The proud Monarch Nebuchadnezzar, was at last brought to this confession (Dan. 4. 34, 35.) *At the end of the dayes* (namely, of his seven yeares banishment to the beasts) *I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most high, &c.* *Who doth according to his will* (there is the rule with him) *in the Army of*
of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, what doest thou? Which is true upon a double account; First, as to his sovereignty and dominion, he is supreme Lord, and none can give him a check or countermand; who may say unto him, what doest thou? Secondly, with respect to his righteousness. As he can do what he will; so he will do nothing, yea he can do nothing but what is right, or what he may; who can say unto him, thou hast done amiss? Who can see a fault, in any of his works? If God hath done a thing, there is no query to be put about it whether be right or no? for he is righteousnesse it self.

Abraham useth another argument to shew that God can doe no unrighteousnesse (Gen. 18. 25.) Shall not the Judge of all the earth doe right? God (faith he) is the Judge of all men, therefore he neither will nor can doe wrong to any man. Abraham did not plead there, as if he doubted that God might goe wrong, unleffe he by his interceflion did take him off; but he brings an argument whereby he was assured that God would doe right, yea could not but doe right. He is the Judge of all the earth. So (Rom. 3. 6.) asfoone as the Apostle had sayd, Is God unrighteous that takes vengeance? I speak as a man; he subjoynes, God forbid, how then shall God judge the world? God is Judge of all the world, and the universality of his power puts him above all possibility of error in the exercise of his power. The very reason why God doth not, cannot exercise his power beyond or beside the limits of justice, is because his power is altogether unlimited.

Fourthly, Elihu here speakes of God under the notion of a Judge; Shall he doe wickedly? Shall he commit iniquity?

Hence note.

It is an abomination for Judges to doe unjustly.

Judges have justice, as it were, in their keeping, they have the charge of justice; is it not an abomination for the keepers or protectors of Justice to violate it! Elihu having thus denied unrighteousnesse or any iniquity in God, proceeds to the proofe of it. To deny had been enough in this matter; but he gives a demonstration; as severall have been held out already in prosecuting the former observation, so the following text holds out another.
For the works of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his waye.

As if he had laid, God doth every man right, therefore he is righteous, and there is no iniquity in him. Eliehu having denied any unrighteousness to be in God, here sheweth how he exerciseth righteousness.

The works of a man shall he render to him.

The work of a man is here put for the reward, issue, or fruit of his work; God doth not render every man’s work to him in kind, that is, the thing itself which he hath done, but the work in its result and reward. That which God returneth to a man according to his work, may be called a reward in a fourfold respect. First, because it hath in it the benefit of a reward to the worker. Secondly, because it is given in answer to the work done. Thirdly, because God hath given his people leave, yea a command to believe and wait for good fruit to themselves, when they do good works. Fourthly, because it is proportion’d to the work or duty performed. For as good is returned for good, so great good is returned for great good done. Though the greatest good that ever was or can be done by a mere creature doth not deserve (by any intrinsic worth) the least good at the hand of God. Thus saith the Spirit (Rev. 14. 13.) Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from hence forth they rest from their labours, and their works follow them; not the works which they did, but that which is by promise due to them for those works. The Prophet assures us (Isa. 32. 17.) The work of righteousness is peace; we cannot understand it as a direct predication, but peace is the fruit or issue of the works of righteousness, or as the latter part of the verse clearly expounds it, The effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance for ever. Which as it is most true of the righteousness of Christ, who is our peace (Ephes. 2. 14.) and our Peacemaker through the blood of his cross (Col. 1. 20.) So it is true of mans righteousness, the work whereof is (by promise) crowned with the blessings of peace, both spiritual and corporal, temporal and eternal. The work of a man shall
Shall he render unto him.

The word signifies a full retribution, it signifies also, in the
Noune, peace; because when accounts are fully returned or ren-
dred all is tinted and quiet; when a man upon account is dischar-
ged, he hath a quietus est, that is an acquittance wherein he may
be quiet; none can legally molest or trouble him. That which
God will returne to all men, they must and shall rest in, though
that which he will render to man for his evill works unrepented
of, will give him no rest.

*The work of a man shall he render unto him.*

The word is very generall; he doth not say this, that, or tro-
ther worke, but the work, which is as much as an univerfall, every
work of a man, his good works, and his bad works, his open works,
and his secret works, his great and lesser works, there is not the
least graine of a mans work, that shall be unanswered or un-re-
turned to him; and, when the Text faith the work of a man &c.
we are not to take works in an exclusive sense, either first, as to
words, as if God would render to man his works, but not his
words; mans words will come to an account as well as his works;
they must be answered for whether good or bad. (Math. 12. 36,
37.) For every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall give ac-
count thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be
justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned; that is, it shall
be rendered to thee according to thy words, or as thy words have
been, so it shall be with thee. Nor secondly, are we to take the
works of a man, exclusively, or in opposition to his thoughts; as if
God would render to man what he hath acted outwardly, but not
what he hath acted inwardly, or would passe by his thoughts. We
must give an account of our thoughts, which are the spring of our
works as well as of our words, which are the publishers and pro-
claimers of them. God shall bring every work (faith Solomon,
Eccl. 12. 14.) to judgment, and every secret thing, the most secret
whispers of the tongue, and the most secret plottings, contrivings;
devisings, designings, yea the simple and single thoughts of the
heart. These are not only the moulds and principles of every
work, but every one of these is a work, and all of them the whole
work of the inner man; whose work, or what is wrought there, is
chiefly
chiefly, as well as only, under the inspection and eye of God.

Againe, *The work of a man shall he render unto him,* &c. He doth not say the works of another man shall he render to any man, but the work of a man shall he render to him; he that doth the work shall have the reward; the works of one man shall not be rendered to another, but every mans own works shall. As the faith of another man shall not help us, if we have no faith; *Abrahams faith* (who had a mighty faith) will doe us no good, if we have no faith of our own, so the good works of another man shall doe us no good, if we have none of our own. And as not the good works, so the evill works of others, shall not be rendered to us. The hurtfull works of others shall not hurt us, if we doe no hurt. I grant we may partake of the evill works of others, yea, we may make other mens works our own, either by conftenting to them before they are done, or by approving them after they are done, or by not reproving them, when we have opportunity. In these and many other cases, we may make other mens evill works our own; and so farre as other mens works are our own, God shall render them also unto us: Hence that caution given by the Apostle to Timothy (1 Tim. 5.22.) *Lay hands sudainly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep thy self pure.* They that partake (in any of those wayes mentioned before, or in any other way) of any mens sins may also quickly partake of his punishment. Thus John heard a voyce from Heaven (Rev. 18.4.) saying *come out of her (that is, out of Babylon) my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Not only is that work ours which we doe, but that also may be ours, by participation, which others do. And by what title forever a work becomes any mans, *the worke of the man shall God render unto him.*

*And he will cause every man to find according to his wayes.*

This latter part of the verse contains the same thing with the former in another cloathing of words.

Some read the Text thus, *and he will find every man in his way;* let man goe in what way he will, God will meet with him. That's a truth, God will meet or find a man in a good way to incourage guide, affift and reward him. And God will meet or find a man in evill way, to stop, oppose and punish him. *God will find every*
every man in his way, and man shall find God to him according as
the way is wherein he findeth him.

We render very well, and fully to the sense, he will cause every
man to find according to his way.

I find an Interpreter over-curiously distinguishing between a Cajetanus.
mans work and his way, which doubtfull here, in effect, are the
same, yet there may be a gradual difference; work being taken
for this or that particular act, and way, for a continued course ei-
ther good or evill.

Again, The way of a man may be considered in association
with his ends. Every man goeth such or such a way for some speci-
all end; no man takes a step in any way without a purpose, nor
doeth any wise or good man take a step in any way without a good
purpose. Yet there is (finitis operis) an end or issue of the work,
as also (finitis operantis) an end proposed by the worker. And
oftentimes that proves to be the end of a work which was not the
end proposed by the worker. The end of a mans work or way,
proves sometimes better and sometimes worser then he proposed.
Possibly a man may not find according to that end of his way and
work which he intended not, whether good or evill. But assured-
ly whatsoever good or evill end a man proposeth to himself, when
he enters upon his work or way, God will cause him to find accor-
dingly. So that when Eliphus saith, God will cause every man to find
according to his way, he intimates, that God will not only render
to man according to the matter of his work, or outward path of his
way, but well considereth every mans scope and intendment, or
what he would have his work issue in, and causeth him to find as
he findeth that to be. As the end which man proposeth to him-
selve, hath a great influence upon his way, so upon his account
with God about it. This is a good sense. God will cause every
man to find according to his way, both as his way is taken for the
matter or course of his actions, as also for the scope and design of
them.

Hence Observe, First.

Every man shall have according to what he hath done.

Our receivings will be according to our layings out, whether
good or evill. God is so farre from doing any man wrong, that
every man shall have his due reward. (Psal. 62. 12.) Also to
C c c c 2

Thee
thee O Lord belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his work. And left any should hope to escape the evill which at least some of their evill works deserve by the secrecy of them, that hope is quite dashed because God is the searcher and seer not only of our works but of our hearts (Prov. 24. 12.) Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it, and he that keepeth the soul, doth not he know it? (what followes?) and shall not he render to every man according to his works? Solomon speaks in that place of such as make excuses to shift themselves off from acts of charity; they will say, we know not whether it be so with him or no; possibly he may not be in such want as he pretendeth. Take heed, of these cloaks of covetousnesse, and pitifull pleas to save your purses from shewing pity to the poor, for (saith Solomon) Will not God search it out, and render to every man according to his works? The holy Scripture abounds in this point. Read Jer. 32. 19. Exek. 33. 10. Rom. 2. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 22. 12.

But some may say, how doth God render to every man his work? Is it not said He justifieth the ungodly (Rom. 4. 5.) Are the works of an ungodly man renderd to him, when he is justifieth?

I answer, it is one thing what God will do through free grace, and another what he will deale out in strictnesse of Justice. The Apostle speaks in that place of the free grace of God to sinners, not of his Justice against sinners. Secondly, though God justifieth the ungodly, yet he never justifieth ungodlinesse; or, though he justifieth a man who hath done many evill works, yea all whose works are evill, yet he never justifieth nor rewardeth the work of an evill man. Thirdly, God acts according to justice and righteousness where he justifieth the ungodly; he doth not shew favour to the ungodly in his own wrong. Acts of grace from God are not opposite to his Justice, much lesse doe they contradict or overthrow it. He doth not justifie an ungodly man in himselfe, or meerly considered in his ungodlinesse, but he justifieth him in the righteousness of another, even of Jesus Christ, who hath given full satisfaction to the Justice of God with respect to the ungodly whom he justifieth.Lastly, we may say, that God renders the work of an ungodly man to him when he justifieth him; for though then he hath not done, nor ever can doe any works which deserve the
the justification of his person; yet God doth render to him, according to that present work of faith in closing with the promise and the work of Christ's righteousness therein rendered to him, and applied by him for his justification.

Further, that other Scripture seems to ly in the way of this observation (Psal. 103. 10.) He hath not dealt with us after our sins, or rewarded us according to our iniquities. How then doth God render every man his work?

I answer as before; Acts of mercy do not cross acts of justice. When the Lord doth not deal with any man according to his sins, it is because he hath freely pardoned his sins; and he doth not reward a man according to his iniquity, because his iniquities are done away; thus he deals with all his own people, who are received to favour through Jesus Christ; but no wicked man, no impenitent person in the world, shall have cause to say, that God hath not dealt with him according to his sin, or hath not rewarded him according to his iniquity. There may be some present lapses of justice, through the patience of God to wicked men; their works are not always presently rendered into their bosomes, but they shall: God will render to every man according to his work, one way or other, one time or other; The full rendering to all men according to their works will be at the great day; in this world the godly do not sometimes receive according to their good works, nor doe the wicked according to their evil works; Good men are often rewarded with shame and reproach, with want and poverty, with banishment and imprisonment, with tortures and with death in this present world; but the Lord will have a time to render to them according to their works, though at no time for their works; so look upon wicked men, and their works, they goe often unpunished at the present, yea many of them prosper greatly (as I have had occasion to shew more then once in opening this Book) they have their good things, many good things in this life, but the time will come when God will render to the wicked their work, and they shall be forced to say, that he hath caused them to find according to their ways. Take two or three inferences from this general truth.

If God will render the work of a man to him; Then

First, Godly men have great encouragement to doe good, yea to abound in doing good works. That's the Apostle's argument
men: (1 Cor: 15. 58.) Be ye steadfast and unmoveable in the worke of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord; that is, the Lord will render to every man his labour. Hence also that of Solomon (Eccl: 11. 1.) Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many dayes. Chrities done in faith as an holy offering to God, produce a sure encrease. To give with a right heart to the poore, is the best way of growing rich. For God will render to man according to that work. And as it may incourage to doe good, so to doe it against all discouragements. We must not only doe good when the Sun shines, when it is faire weather with us, and all men applaud us; but though men frowne and scorne, though (which Solomon reports as one of the great vanities of this world, Eccl: 4. 4.) For a right worke, a man be envied of his neighbour; let us not hold our hand from doing good, though we are opposed and check'd, though we are traduced and flandered, though we are mis-interpreted and have the foulest glories put upon our fairest workes, though men call our zeale madness and our circumfpeft walking hypocrite, yea though we are percieued and suffer the worst of evills, though men cast stones at us (as they did at Christ for his good workes) yet let us not be deterred from doing good. For howsoever men deal with us, or what rendrings soever we find from the world, yet God will render to us both according to the rightnesse of our worke done, and according to the uprightness of our hearts in doing it. Let this provoke us not only to doe the Lords worke, but to doe it with much patience, and perseverance, for in due time we shall rape if we faint not; where there hath been sowing, there will be reaping; and where the seed time hath been with tears, the harvest or reaping time shall be with joy.

Secondly, This is a dreadfull doctrine to evill workers; Some (as the Apostle calls the Cretians, out of their owne Prophet) are evill beasts, sloow bellyes; and as they are slothfull, or sloow bellyes at doing good: so they are very free and forward, very quicke, lively, and nimble beasts in doing evill. O how should evill workers tremble at this Scripture, To every man will God render according to his worke, as a cup of cold water given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall not be loft, but have a reward, and the giver fully payd for it; (Math: 10. 42.) so not any the least evill worke, impenitently continued in, shall be unpunished. Further,
Further, God will not render to man according to the opinion he hath of himselfe. (A bad man and the worst of his works may be good in his owne conceit; He may flatter himselfe in his owne eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful, Psal: 36. 2.) But God will render unto man according to what his works are in truth.

Secondly, God will not render to man according to the thoughts which others have of him and of his work(some are high in the opinion not only of the world, but of some Good men, they have a name to be alive while they are dead, and their works dead workes) but God will render to man according to that cleare, certaine, and infallible knowledge, which himselfe (by whom actions are weighed, 1 Sam: 2. 3.) hath of them.

Thirdly, God will not render to man according to his good meanings, when his works are evil; many will confesse they have done amisse, but they had good intendments in it. A right end will not excuse us, if our way be wrong; There is no pleading of meanings against commandements; nor will sincerity of intentions, cover the deformity and irregularity of actions. The Apostle pronounceth a fearefull doome against those who sayd (Rom: 3. 8.) Let us doe evill that good may come, whose damnation is just.

Fourthly, As God will not render according to a mans good ends, if his worke be evil; so remember, God will not render to man according to his good works, if his ends are bad. Therefore, consider your end when you enter your way, and begin your worke. (Pro: 21. 27.) The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; how much more when he bringeth it with an evil mind; that is, when he hath some bad end in doing it; A wicked mans sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord at the beft, but much more when he hath base designes in his sacrifices or holy services. Herod sayd to the wise men (Math: 3. 8.) Goe and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him bring me word againe, that I may come and worship him also: It was a good worke to enquire after Chrift, and worship him, but his end was to destroy him. Jezebel pretended a holy fast, but her end was to feast her selfe with revenge upon innocent Naboth. The best workes of hypocrites will have an ill returne, because they doe them with an evill mind. There are three sorts of good workes, which will never turne to a good account. First,
First, Those good works which are done but for a season; temporary good workes, or the good workes of temporary professors, such as are described (Math: 13.5.7.) by the 2d and 3d grounds, who bring forth for a while, but afterwards fall away; such good workes (I say) shall not have a good reward. If your goodness be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew passeth away, it will doe you no good. 

He that endureth to the end shall be saved, and none but he (Math: 10.22.) Christ exhorts the Church (Rev: 3.11.) Hold that fast which then hast, that no man take thy crowne. They loose the good workes they have done, who hold not out in doing them. It will not advantage us to begin in the Spirit, if we end in the flesh.

Secondly, Those good works which are trusted to, or boasted of, will never make a good returne. Though a man should continue doing good all the dayes of his life, yet if he buildeth his hope upon it, his hope shall be cut off, and his trust (that is, what he trusteth to) shall be a spiders web (that is, weake like that, because like that, woven out of his owne bowels) he shall leaue upon his house, but it shall not stand, he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure (Job 8.14,15.) you and your workes will perish togethers, if you depend upon your workes. Good workes trusted to, are as dangerous to the soule, as evill workes persevered in.

Thirdly, Those good workes which are done for base ends, to serve men, or to compasse a worldly interest, shall have no reward from God, but that, which shall be upon every soule that sinneth and repenteth not, anguish and tribulation.
Elihu proceedeth in the proofe of this point, (the vindication of the righteousness of God) with a strong asseveration.


There is a mighty force of affirmation, in the original words, we may parallel them, with those asertive speeches frequently used by our Saviour Jesus Christ in the Gospel, Amen, Amen, Veri- noli assertively, verily I say unto you; Yea surely, is as much as verily, verily; as if Elihu had sayd, There is no question to be made of what I affirm, that God is righteous, or will not doe wickedly; as the Apostle writ to Timothy about the great mystery of the Gospel, God manifested in the flesh, (1 Tim: 3. 16.) without controversy great (or, as the word imports, confessedly on all hands, great) is the mystery of Godliness; so here Elihu might speak to Job, This is a truth beyond dispute or controversy, an unquestionable truth, and such a truth that, if once confessed, will quickly determine all the Questions, which are depending between you and me. There are some Master-truths, ruling truths; such a one is this in the text, Yea surely, or undoubtedly, God will not doe wickedly.

Hence note.

It becomes us to grow up into highest confidences, about the truths of God, especially about the truth and justice of God.

We should not be as meteors hanging in the ayre, speaking with hesitation, possibly it is so, peradventure it is true; but (as the Apostle directs the Colossians, Chap. 2. 3.) We must labour to grow up unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding; as there is a full assurance of faith in believing, & of hope in waiting or expecting, so also of understanding in apprehending the things of God. We should be (in a sense) Masters of truth; and then D d d d
we are so indeed, when truth hath fully mattered us, and prevailed upon both our judgement and affections, and we are led captive by light to the love and obedience of it. We have cause to bewail those (much more have they cause to bewail themselves) who are but Scepticks or Questionests in Religion, never coming to a point, nor able (after a due making up of their thoughts) to say, Thus it is, and by this we will abide, as Eliphu did in the then present case, delivering himselfe confidently, yea surely, or verily, verily,

God will not doe wickedly.

To cleare the meaning in this Negative assertion, we must take in the highest affirmatives of the holiness and Justice, of the righteousness, truth, and faithfulness of God; For it sounds like a flat and low commendation of God, to say, he will not doe wickedly; for so it may be said of every honest man, He will not doe wickedly; but seeing in this Negative commendation given by man to God (as in all the Negative commandments given by God to man) all affirmatives are to be understood; what can be said more to or more found out his praise and glory then this?

God will not doe wickedly?

The word here used for doing wickedly, signifies two things; First, to pronounce any person wicked; and Secondly, to doe any thing which is wicked; both these often meete together. For in many cases to pronounce a person wicked, is to doe a wicked thing; he that condemneth a just person, pronounceth him wicked, and what thing can be done more wickedly then that? Some take the word in that sense here, as a deniall that God either hath done, or ever will condemn the innocent. There are two things wherein men doe very wickedly, with respect to the persons of men, both which the Lord abhorres. First, when they condemn the innocent. Secondly, when they acquitt or cleare the guilty. The former way of doing wickedly, is chiefly removed from God here by Eliphu, as the latter is directly and expressely by himselfe (Exod. 34. 7.) The Lord, the Lord, &c. that will by no means cleare the guilty. To pronounce a guilty person innocent, or an innocent person guilty, if ignorantly done, is a great piece of weakness, and if knowingly done, is a great piece of wickednesse.
Yet, because the latter part of the verse speaks particularly to clear God from wrong Judgement, therefore, I conceive, we may better expound this former part of it more largely, as a general denial of any evil act whatsoever, done by God. Surely God will not doe wickedly,

*Neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement.*

The Almighty, who hath power to doe what he will, hath no will to doe this evil. He will not pervert Judgement. The word*TMY* deortquae-signifies both to pervert and subvert, as also to bow, wrest, or put out of order, to mingle or blend those things together, which should be for ever separated, or, as we say, to mingle heaven and earth, yea heaven and hell together; to doe they who mingle good and ill, right and wrong together. To pervert Judgement, is, to doe all this, for then (which Abraham affirmed himselfe was farre from God, Gen. 18. 25.) *The righteous are as the wicked,* that is, the righteous fare as ill as the wicked, or the wicked fare as well as the righteous. But *the Almighty will not pervert Judgement,* that is, the right which belongs to any man, and therefore, he will doe every man right. We had the same position in ternes (Chap. 8. 3d) and we have had this whole verse equivalently in the 10th of this Chapter, where Elihu sayd, *Far be it from God, that he should doe wickednesse, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.* Here, only one verse intervening, Elihu reports and repeats the same matter againe; but it is no needlestke or vaine repetition, for which Christ reproved the prayer of the Heathens (Math. 6. 7.) there are many repetitions in Scripture, but not one vaine one; how often soever the same truth is repeated there, it hath its weight and use, not only as it is still a truth, but as it is a truth repeated. And therefore I shall give a threefold reason why this truth is here againe repeated, which will also lead us to a fuller improvement of it.

First, Because this truth is (as it were) the hinge upon which the whole controversy between Job and Elihu is turned. Job was unsatisfied because he was so ill handled, and therefore Elihu tells him often that God is righteous, and that he will not wrong any man. Hereby giving Job to understand, that God had done him nothing, or done nothing to him, but right. Such grand sway- ing controlling truths should be often, and can scarce be too often repeated.
Secondly, Elihu repeated this again, because 'tis such a truth, as no man can too much, no nor enough weigh and consider the value and worth of it. Now, that which cannot be too often nor too much thought of, cannot (if rules of prudence be observed) be too much or too often spoken of. There is scarce any man who hath not sometimes at least indirectly and obliquely some hard thoughts of the proceedings of God, either in reference to himself or to others; Nor is there any thing that we have more temptations about, then that, surely, we are not in all things rightly dealt with, and that the dispositions of God are not to even, as they might. These sinfull suspicions are dayly moving and fluctuating in the heart of man, and therefore this opposite principle ought to be fastened and fixed there to the utmost, that the will and works of God are all just and righteouse, yea that his will is the rule of all righteous workings; or, that as whatsoever is done in this world, is done by the dispose of God, so God (though the thing be evil and unjust) is just and good in the dispose of it. Therefore unless we resist or contradict the will of God, we must say, whatsoever comes to passe, comes righteously to passe, because it comes to passe by the determinate will and counsell of God.

Thirdly, Elihu repeates this assertion, that he might the more commodiously make his transition or passage to the matter following, and prosecute it with greater success. And therefore I shall not stay longer upon those words, only.

Note.
First, This great truth, that God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement, convinceth those, not only of injusticiousnesse, but of wickednesse, who, though they are ready to acknowledge in generall, God is just, yet as to those particular providences, which concern them, or wherewith themselves are pinch't, doe not, cannot acquiesce and rest in the will of God, with freedome and satisfaction. That which is just should not displease us, though (in its selfe) it be very bitter and unpleasant to us.

Secondly, This truth is a ground of comfort to all the people of God, who are under heavy pressures from this evill world, or who receive little reward or encouragement (as to sense) from the good hand of God. Such are apt to say with the kingly Prophet
Verily in vaine have we cleansed our heart, and washed our hands in innocency, for all the day long have we been plagued, and clafhened every morning. David was under a temptation when he was under hatches, he could hardly perceive it worth the while to take paines in cleansing and washing either heart or hand while God was so constant and frequent in correcting and chaftening him with so heavy a hand. Yet David soone after recovered out of this temptation, and concluded the Psalm, with this particular assurance, (v. 28.) It is good for me to draw neere to God, as he had begun it (v. 1.) with a generall assurance, Truely God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a cleane heart. God is good to those who have a cleane heart, even when they are in the greatest sufferance of evill, and therefore they who are cleane hearted, have no reason at any time to say, nor shall they long say, they have cleansed their heart in vaine. Though now they smart, yet in due season they shall be well rewarded for their washing. The Judgements of God are such, as no judiciadepit-man can fully comprehend, such as no man can justly reprehend. The Almighty will not pervert Judgement.

Those foure things which caufe men to pervert Judgement, are at the furthest distance, or remove from God; whereof the first is envie at the good condition of others. The second is groundlesse and unreasonable love or hatred of their persons. The third is feare of frownes from those that are great, or feare of after-claps; Many are deterr'd from giving but a just measure, either of reward to good men, or punishment to evil men, left themselves should receive hard measure from those who like neither. The fourth is hope of gaine, or their private advantage. For as some pervert Judgement for bribes already received, so others for bribes promised, or upon expectation of some future favours. Now God (I say) is infinitely above these foure, and all other imaginable by-recepts, upon which Judgement is perverted every day, by the sons of men. God is above all envy, yea above all that hatred or love which perverts Judgement; he is above all feare of evill, and hope of good. God hath nothing to feare, seeing none can reach him, much lesse hurt him; neither hath he any thing at all to hope for, seeing he is in the full possession of all happiness and bleffednesse, that is, of himselfe. Why then, or upon what account should the Almighty pervert Judge-
Judgement? So that, if at any time, we have any unbecoming thoughts of the Justice of God, either that he afflicts the good without reason, or prospers the wicked against it; all this ariseth from our ignorance, or the shortness of our sight. We have not a full or perfect prospect of things, we see but a little way backward, we are not wise to compare what's past with what's present, nor can we at all infallibly foresee any thing future, or discern what shall be. Whereas God at once hath all things before him, he seeth what is past as well as what is present, and what shall be hereafter, as well as what hath been, and so the compleatness and indefectibility of his owne Justice in all. And when we in the great day shall see all the works of God in the world brought and presented together as in one view, we shall then say from the evidence of sight, as now we ought from the evidence of faith, that the Almighty hath not in any one thing perverted Judgment. And therefore the Apostle doth most excellently and appositely call that day, The day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God (Rom: 2. 5.)

Elihu having strongly asserter'd, with a yea surely, that, the Almighty will not pervert Judgment, yet stayeth not in a bare (though so strong an) asserterion, (which he might) but gives us the prooe and confirmation of it; as he hath denied that God will, so he proveth by undeniable arguments, that God will not doe wickedly, that the Almighty will not pervert Judgment. And this he doth in the next or 13th verse, and the two that follow.

Ver. 13. Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world?

These words, (as was intimated before) are an argument proving that God neither hath nor can doe wrong; That (as to the cafe in hand) he had not done Job wrong, yea, that, (as to all cafes) he can wrong no man. This argument is grounded upon the sovereignty, supremacy, or absolute authority of God over all men. The summe and force of it may be gathered up into this forme.

He cannot doe injustice to any, who of right hath an absolute power arising from and residing in himselfe to doe what he will with or towards all men.

But
But God hath such a power, Therefore he cannot doe any-injustice. That, God hath such an absolute power arising from and residing in himselfe Elisha proves by a kind of Challenge.

Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?

Produce the man, let him shew his face, if he dareth. It is an expression of the same importance with that of the Apostle (Rom. 8. 33.) Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect? let us see the man, let us see the devill, that shall so lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect, as to prevail in his Charge; tis also like that other triumphant query, in the same Chapter (v. 31.) If God be with us, who can be against us? That is, who can be so against us as to hurt us, or carry the day against us? Thus here; Who hath given him a Charge over the world? let us see who; As if he had sayd, Are there any above God, from whom he deriveth his power? Or have any committed the Government of the earth to him as his trust and charge, for the management whereof he is to be accountable unto them? Surely no. And if no, then either God is just, or all the world must be in confusion or under oppression without any redresse or remedy. Mr. Broughton renders, Who before him looked to the earth? We say, Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? The ordinary signification of the word, is to visit, and that.

First, In a way of favour, to see what others want (so we visit the poore) or how they doe, so we usually visit the sick, and sometimes those that are well in health.

Secondly, It signifieth to visit in a way of judgement, or to punith those that have done amisse. Thus the Lord threatens to visit (that is, to punish) the iniquity of the fathers upon the children (Exod. 20. 5.)

Thirdly, The word signifieth to command, to issue our orders, to give a charge. This signification of the word is very frequent both in Scripture, and in dayly use. Visitors (we know) have power of Government; yea they have power over Governours to order and give them a charge, that they doe, or to examine whether they have done the duty of their place. In this latter sense, we render it here, Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? And so we read it (2 Chron. 36. 23.) Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, all the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven
heaven given me. And he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah; who is there among you of all his people, The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up. God hath charged me (faith Cyrus) or he hath made that my business, a business incumbent upon me, to build him a house in Jerusalem, that is, to further the worke, to give the Jews leave to build the Temple of Jerusalem; God hath charged me with this great trust, and I am willing to answer it. The same thing is recorded, almost in the same words (Ezra 1. 2.) Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. God giveth Princes their Charge, supreame soveraigne Princes, yea he giveth inferiour Princes and Magistrates, their Charge; but (faith Elihu,) Who hath given him a Charge? Certainly, no man. There is yet a twofold reading of this former part of the verse, both considerable.

First, Thus; Who for him hath visiteth the earth? As it it had been sayd, Hath God set any to visit, or to look to the earth for him, as if himselfe stood by and did nothing; God useth the power of man, he setteth up Magistrates to worke for him; but he never puts the worke out of his owne hand, nor doth he need any hand to helpe him in that worke, though he useth many: and though he saith, By me (yea for me) Kings reign, yet we may say with Elihu (in the notion now express,) Who for him hath visiteth the earth? that's a good reading.

Secondly, Who over him doth visit the earth? Is God any mans Vicgerent? is he a Lord Deputy, or a Viceroy? No, there is no man visits the earth over him, for, (as we render clearly,) Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? As if he had sayd, If God be an unjuft Judge, is there any superior Judge to whom we may appeale for remedy or redresse of our injuries? Who over him visiteth, or, who hath given him a charge over the earth.

That is, over the inhabitants of the earth, or over the affayres of the earth. The Earth, by a Synecdoche of the Continent for the matter contained, is here put for all persons and transactions over the face of the whole earth. Who hath layd that great Charge, the disposall of all things and people in the earth upon God?
God? surely no man on earth, no Angel in heaven, nor all of them put together. How should God derive a governing power from them, who derive their very power of being from him? He governs in his owne right, not by commissiön or deputation. We have the same point affirmed at the 36th Chapter of this Booke, v.23 d. Who hath enjoyed him his way? God knoweth and taketh his owne way, no man sheweth, much leffe commandeth him his way; Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?

Or who hath disposed the whole world?

This Question, as the former, contains a Negation; no Creature, none besides God hath disposed of the whole world, or of all the world. Mr Broughton renders, Who hath setled all the dwelt land? The word which we translate disposed, signifieth to place with a kind of art, exactly, orderly, carefully; Who hath thus disposed the whole world? There is a double disposition of the world.

First, In Creation; who hath disposed, joyned, and put the whole world in frame? who hath marshall’d the severall parts of the world as they now stand like the Host of God? The world as created is express’d in the Greek by beauty and order; before God perfected the creation, all was a confused heape without forme and voyd; But that rude indigested matter was drawne forth in the severall works of that six-dayes Creation, into a most beautiful forme and order. Thus God once disposed all the world by Creation.

Secondly, God dasyly disposeth the world by providence; and that’s the disposition which this text especially speakes of; Who hath disposed (in a providentiall way) the whole world? The word rendred world, properly signifieth, the habitable world; we find it opposed to the wilderness or desert (Isa. 14.17.) where few or none inhabite. That word is very significantly used here for the world, because the habitable part of the world, or where men inhabite, are the stages on which the providences of God appear, and act most eminently & convincingly; Who hath disposed of the habitable world? which the Greekes call, The house of abiding: Mr Broughton, The dwelt land, that is, the land wherein men dwell.

Againe, As the earth, before, is put for the inhabitants and occurrences of the earth; so whatsoever passeth, or is brought to E e e e pasle
But some may say, Is this a good Argument to prove that God is just, because he hath the supræme power over all the world? Will it follow, that he adminifreth all things rightly, because he hath a right to administer all things? There seemes but little of Argument in this, (may some say) many have a great deale of power, who abuse it, and they that have moft power, usually abuse it most, and make it but a servant to their lufts and passions; therefore how is it a profe, that the Lord is righteous and will doe no iniquity, because he hath the power of all things in his hand, or is Lord over all?

I answer. This is a strong argument, and (as I remember a good Author calls it) a peremptory argument, which can have no denial. The Lord is righteous, because he is Lord over all; he is not King of some corner of the World; he is not King of the whole World by election or vote of the World, he is not chosen at all, much leffe (as many have been) by evill means and wicked combinations; God is the supræme governor of all the world by naturall right not choyce; yet not (as some Princes are) by naturall right of succesion inheriting after a mortall father; but by the naturall right of creation, himself being the father of that world over which he is a governour. The Originall of Gods power is stated in himself; The eternall being of God, and his supræme authority are inseparable.

Yea, God is not only thus supræme in administering Justice; but he is the summe or fullnesse of Law and Justice, and therefore cannot pervert it. He whose power and goodnesse gave the world its being, how should he act any thing which is not good in the exercife of his power over the World! Injustice is the breach of a Law, but how can God break a Law who is the source and fountain of all righteous Lawes? who then shall dare to suspect God of injustice, or require a reason why he doth this or that in the world, which himself hath made? yea, who hath not reafon to admire and proclame infinite goodnesse mixt with absolute power, as in his making so in his ruling the world? For whose fake or for fear of whom should he pervert Justice, who hath all men alike under his power?
Earthly Judges may erre in judgment, but the Judge of all the earth cannot. God cannot doe injustice through ignorance or mistake; for he is omniscient and knoweth all things; nor can he have a will to doe unjustly, seeing his will is altogether just, and the rule or measure of all things that are just. As therefore he is not an idle Idol-god but most active in governing the World; so he is infinitely above the least falier in the government of it. The Sun shall sooner be turned into a cloud, and the morning light darken the earth, then any unrighteousness proceed from God; yea, when clouds and darknesse are round about him (that is, when we by reason either of the obscureness or afflictiveness of his dispensations can give no account of them, yet even then) righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his Throne; that is, his governing power abides unmoveably, or constantly (as in a habitation) within that blessed line and glorious sphere of righteousness. So then, the reasoning of Elihu from the universality and independency of the governing power of God, to the righteousness and equity of his government is not only probable, but demonstrative and unanswerable. He is alike mighty as the sole creator, and just as the supreme moderator of the World. If any man will presume to charge God with perverting judgment in governing the earth, that man faith in effect that he hath given God a charge over the earth; And if any man be so impiously and impudently presumptuous as to say that, let him come forth and answer this as peremptorily as truly denying question of Elihu; Who hath given him a charge over the earth?

Hence Observe.
The power of God is a primitive or undervived power.

His power is of himself; yea, his power is himself; God doth not rule by Commission or Deputation, all ruling power is fundamentally in him, as also the rule of that power, both which in God are one. Jesus Christ as Mediator rules by Commission; All things (faith he, Math: 11. 27.) are delivered to me of my Father. And againe, the Baptift gave this testimony of him (John 3. 35.) The father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. Jesus Christ as Mediator receives his Charge from the Father, and he hath received a Charge over the whole earth, as Mediator. But consider him as God, & the government of the world.
world is fundamentally and essentially in him also. It is the highest honour of an earthly Prince, when (as it is said of the Chaldeans (Hab. 1.7.) their judgement and their dignity proceedeth of themselves; that is, when they rule in their own right, not in the right or by the designation of any other. How high then is the honour of God, who ruleth not only over all the people, but over all the Princes of the earth, his Judgement and dignity proceeding purely from himself!

Secondly, As the power of God is underived or proceeds only from himself; so the power of God is absolute and unlimited. His is in the strictest sense imaginable supreme power. Heathenish Nebuchadnezzar confessed this truth (Dan. 4.35.) Before him (that is, before God) all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the Armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, and say to him what dost thou? There’s absolute power, none can say, that is, none may presume to say to him, What dost thou? no man ought to question, much less to quarrell at the determinations of God, whether concerning persons or nations; ’tis his right or prerogative to doe what he will; and how much soever he acts by prerogative, he will doe only that which is right; we may consider the absolute supremacy of God in a five-fold exercise of power.

First, In commanding; He commandeth what he pleaseth to be done; nor may his commands be disputed; they must be obeyed, because his.

Secondly, In prohibiting he forbiddeth whatsoever displeaseth him to be done. And how pleasing, how right soever any thing is in our eyes, yet if he forbiddeth it, we must for ever forbear it. We all know by our owne short how dangerous it is to cante of a forbidden Tree.

Thirdly, In suffering, I mean it not of any suffering evill in himselfe (God is infinitely above that) but of his suffering others to doe evill, or of his suffering any evill to be done. God may and doth permit, that which is naught, wicked, and unrighteous to be done in the world; and yet himselfe remains altogether holy, righteous, just, and good. This is a great part of the transcendency of his power.

Fourthly, In rewarding; God hath absolute power, to re-
ward; First, whom he will; Secondly, for what he will; Thirdly, in what kind he will; Fourthly, in what degree or measure he will; Fifthly, for how long he will, he can give (which none of the Princes of the earth can) everlasting rewards.

Fifthly, In punishing; God hath absolute power to punish, and the absoluteness of his power in punishing, may be exemplified in those five particulars, wherein his power of rewarding (in the former paragraph) was. In all these things we see the unlimitedness of the power of God, who hath given him a Charge over the earth? or who hath disposed the whole world? Himself alone doth it, and he doth it of himself. And for as much as there is such a supremacy, such an absoluteness of power in God, take these three inferences from it.

First, How freely should we yeild our selves to the commands of God, not questioning this as unequall, nor saying that is hard? we are more apt to find fault with the work which God requires us to doe, then to remember that it is a great fault not to doe it. The heart of man naturally riseth against the will of God; it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be (Rom: 8. 7.) the wisdome of the flesh thinks there is some unrighteoufesse, at least some unreasonablefesse or rigour in the commands of God, and therefore such wise men hope they have reasone on their side if they omit the or act against them. Any man will (at least he cannot but confesse he ought to) be subject unto that which is equall and right. Man hath no colour to disobey, till he hath put some blot upon the command. And seeing the commands of him who hath the charge over all the earth in himselfe and from himselfe, cannot possibly have any blot or defect in them, let us take heed we be not found disobeying.

Secondly, Seeing God hath the Charge of all the earth, we should as readily submit to his dispensations, works and dealings; as to his commands. The Jewes of old complained (Ezek: 18: 29.) the way of the Lord is not equall; They did even tell him to his face, his ways were not equall, and therefore they would not submit. The Church in captivity spake well (Lam: 3. 28.) Out of the mouth of the most high proceedeth not evill and good; that is, whatsoever the Lord hath pronounced to doe or hath done concerning us, is morally good and not evill; though it be penally evill and not good. Eli spake well also to this point
1 Samuel 3. 18. It is the Lord, let him doe what seemes good in his owne eyes; yet the thing which God was about to doe, was such (v. 11.) as at which, both the eares of every one that heard it should tingle. To have the heart quiet while the eares tingle, is pure submission. And any unquietness or murmurings at the dealings of God, whether respecting our persons or our families, Churches, or Nations, are in some degree rebellions against the sovereign power of God.

Thirdly, If the Lord be supreme, and have the charge over all the earth, then let us set him up as supreme in all things, let his ends be above our ends; let us designe God in all we doe; He who is over all, ought to be honoured by all. All our actions as so many lines ought to center in his honour, who is the Center of power. Of him and through him and to him are all things, faith the Apostle (Rom. 11. 36.) Because all things are of him, creating them, and through him, governing them, therefore all things should be to him, that is, all persons should in all things they doe, yea in all things that are done, ayme at and designe his glory, as the Apostle expressly concludes the verse before cited; To whom be glory for ever.

Thirdly, Whereas it is sayd, Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? or who hath disposed (not a part, or parcell, or canton, or corner of, but) the whole world?

Observe.
The power of God is an universal power.

It is extended throughout the world, to every patch and inch of it. What David saith of the Sun (Psal: 19. 6.) His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. The same may we say of the circuit of Gods power, there is nothing hid from, nor set beyond it. There is a four-fold universality of the power of God.

First, In regard of persons (Psal: 97. 9.) Thou Lord art high above all the earth, thou art exalted farre above all Gods; that is, above the Kings and powers of the earth; whom the Scripture calleth Gods. If God hath a power over the Kings of the earth, then surely over the people of the earth; yea God is not only exalted and farre exalted above this or that God or King, but above them all; This is a supremacy with utmost universality.

Secondly,
Secondly, His power is universal, as to places, and nations; some places claim privilege, and are exempt from the jurisdiction of Princes, if obnoxious persons get thither, they are free from the course of the Law. There were Cities of refuge among the Jews, and Sanctuaries in the days of old among us, where evill-doers could not be toucht. But the power of the Lord reacheth all places, even to the horns of the Altar (Psal: 83. 18.) Thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art most high over all the earth.

Thirdly, His power is universal, as in all places, so over all things; it extends to the stars of heaven, and to the fowles of the ayre, to the beasts of the earth, and to the fishes of the Sea; to whatsoever moves in this world; they are all at the command of God, if he doth but speake, they run and execute his will.

Fourthly, His power is universal, in reference to time; 'tis never out, nor shall ever end; he is King immortall, and King eternal, his Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom. The power of God is an universal power in all these considerations: His power of Governing is of the same extent, as his power of creating was; that which he created at once, he governes alwayes. He did not set up the fabric of this world, and then leave it to it selfe, but he preserveth and ordereth all things in it. The wel-being, the orderly being of the creature, is as much of God as the being of it.

Some say, God made the world at first, and set all the wheeles of it a-going, but now things goe on by chance, by fortune, or by accident, at least particular events are not under his government, but come to passe as the will of the creature or folly of men is most active in the production of them.

I answer, to set up blind fortune, and chance, yea or the wit and policy of man, as governing the world, is to set up other Gods in the world; if chance and fortune, or the wit of man, govern any part of the world, then they had a part in making the world. If you divide one power, you divide the other. For those invisible things of God, his eternal power and God-head, are as much or as evidently seene, in the things which are done, as in the things which are made. 'Tis true indeed God useth many hands in governing, ordering, and disposing the things of this world. The Princes of this world, are eminently his hand, but God doth
not use any power in governing this world, to diminish his owne, nor doth he withdraw his owne power, what power soever he useth; as his power that acts effectually, and gives successe in the acting of all power. It was sayd to that King who prided himselfe in what he had done in the world; Shall the Axe boast it selfe against him that heweth therewith, or shall the saw magnifie it selfe against him that worketh it? (IIa: 10. 15.) As if the Lord had sayd to that proud Allying Prince, Dost thou looke upon thy selfe, as if thou didst all, and governedst all? thou art no more in the governing the world (though the chiefe earthly Governor of all the world) then an Axe is in the hand of him that useth it; And though the artificer cannot doe his worke without an Axe, though he cannot divide his timber without a saw, yet I the Lord am able to doe my worke without thee. At best and most, men are but instruments in the hand of God; and he serves his owne turne by men, not to signifye that he cannot worke without them, nor that his worke is done either with more easie to himselfe, or more successe as to it selfe by their helpe (he is not so weake as to need helpe, nor is at all strengthened by the helpe he useth) but only to shew that as he hath the command of, so he hath a use for every creature (Ila: 7. 18.) The Lord shall hisse for the fly; if God doe but hisse to the fly, or any creature on earth, yea to the devills in hell, they are at his call, and doe his will, though they intend it not. Further; though God can doe all himselfe, yet he useth various instruments, that he may indear man to man, or that no man may say, he hath no need of another. Thus the Apostle argues (1 Cor: 12. 21.) The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor againe the head to the feete, I have no need of you. Surely then the feete cannot say to the head, we have no need of thee, nor the hand to the eye, we have no need of thee. That, Creatures may shew their love to one another, and see their need of one another, God is pleased to give them a charge to worke and dispose of the things in the world, though the charge and disposition of the whole world be in himselfe.

Now if the Lord be thus invested with all power originally and essentially, then I would mind those who are in power of two things, and those that are under power of one.

First, Let them that have power remember to use it for God. They that have but family power should use it for God; how much more
more they that have power over nations. (Psal: 2. 10, 11.) Be wise now therefore O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. When he trusteth, serve the Lord with fear, I suppose he doth not intend it in that notion of serving the Lord, as serving him denotes our holiness and obedience in general; but when he trusteth, serve the Lord with fear, his meaning is, serve him so in the exercise of your power, and in your places, as you have power in your hand, as you have received a Charge or Commission from God over this or that part of the earth, so serve him with fear, in the use of that power. As man ought in all the service of God to be in a holy fear, so especially when he serveth God in the administration of power, because all power is from God. And therefore (which is the next thing I would hence mind those of that are in power)

Secondly, Remember, The day of account must needs be a sad day to those who abuse their power to the oppression of man; and chiefly to those who turn their power against God; that is, against the ways and truths of God, against the servants and people of God, against the ends and designs of God. God will call such as have had any charge over the earth to an account, and let them who either of these ways abuse their power, consider whether such accounts will passe as they must give. Surely when the day of the Lord shall be upon such Oakes and Cedars, upon such mountains and hills, as the Prophet (Psal: 2. 15, 14.) calleth the Powers and Princes of this world, they will even be forced (as he describes them at the 19th verse) to goe into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. It is bad to be abused by the power of man, but 'tis worst for that man who abuseth his power. Thy terrible ness hast deceived thee (faith the Prophet, Jer: 49. 16.) and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the height of the hill; that is, thou that art in high power, and also holdest thy height, thou art deceived, and thy terrible ness hast deceived thee; because thou hast been able to terrifie many with thy power, therefore thou hast presumed that none shall ever terrifie or trouble thee; This vaine confidence hast deceived thee, for (as it followeth in the latter part of that verse) though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee
downe from thence, faith the Lord; that is, I will bring thee to a reckoning for terrifying those with thy power whom thou shouldest have protected by it.

Lastly, This is matter of great Comfort to all good men who are under power; though they are wronged and oppressed by the power of man, this may support them, God hath power over all the earth, he hath the Charge, and he will see them righted one time or other. (Eccles: 3. 16, 17.) Moreover, I saw under the Sun the place of Judgement, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there; I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every purpose and for every work. And if for every purpose and work, then surely for this, the reviewing of the unrighteous judgements of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who hold the places of Judgement and righteousness; to punish the perverting of which, the Lord who is Prince of the Kings of the earth often poureth contempt upon Princes (Psal: 107. 40, 41.) and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way; yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flocke. For as the Holy Ghoft faith (Psal: 138. 6, 7.) Though the Lord be high, yet hath he regard to the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar of; hereupon his faith riseth up to a full assurance in the next verse; Though I walke in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

Thus much for the argument here used, the Lord is righteous, for he hath all power in his hand; and he hath no reason upon any account in the world to pervert power; yea for him to doe any thing that is not righteous, were to act against himselfe, even against his owne being and blessednesse, who is God blessed for evermore.
If he set his heart upon man: if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath.
All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn to his dust.

In these two verses Elihu perfects the proofe of what he lately asserted, that God is just, and that there is no unrighteousness in him (v. 12.) ye surely God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement: For, as Moses in his dying song describes him; He is the rocke, his worke is perfect; for all his ways are judgement; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he. The first argument for the confirmation of this was opened at the 13 verse. And it was grounded upon the abibluteness and univerfality of his dominion: Here we have a second argument from the sweet temperament of his power and goodnes. God hath power enough in his hand at once to destroy all flesh, and to command every man back into the dust. But he doth not thus put out his power. We live and live comfortably; we enjoy not only our lives, but many mercies of this life; and therefore surely God doth not deale rigorously, much lesse unrighteously with man. He that doth all men good beyond their deserts, will not punish any man beyond his demerits. He that doth not exercise his power alwayes where he might, will not exercise it all where he ought not. That's the summe and scope of Elihu in the context under hand.


To set the heart upon any thing or person, is a Scripture expression, often used, noting more then barely to think upon or mind both or either. It signifies to have deep and serious thoughts, to think with consideration and attention, yea with some height and heat of affection. And all this whether that thing which the heart and affections are set upon, please or displease, be comfortable or grievous; for both love and hatred, hope and feare, are thoughtfull of, and solicitous about their severall objects. Hence
that caution (Psalm 62:10.) If riches encrease set not your heart
upon them; we naturally love riches, and therefore as naturally
spend many thoughts, both how to get and how to keepe them.
If a man have riches, or an encrease of riches, it is not unlawfull
for him to think of them, (yet we should be as sparing of our
thoughts that way as can be; our thoughts and the bent of our
soules should always be upon God) but that which the Psalmist
forbids is the setling of our hearts; As if he had sayd, Let not your
thoughts stay or dwell there. Riches are themselves transient things,
therefore they should have but our transient thoughts. Set not your
hearts upon them; for they may quickly be unsettled. Samuel be-
spake Saul in the same language about a worldly concernment,
when he went out to seek his fathers Asles (1 Samuel 9:20.)
Set not thy mind on them. Tis like Saul was over-burdened with
this thought, What’s become of, or what shall I doe for my fa-
thers Asles? Be not sollicitous about them, faith Samuel, greater
things are towards thee. Abigail ufeth the same forme of speaking
to David concerning Naball (1 Samuel 25:23.) Let not my
Lord regard this man of Belial, lay not to heart what Naball hath
sayd or done. Thus Jonadab took off Davids seare,that in one day
he had been deprived of all his Sons (2 Samuel 13:33.) Now
therefore let not my Lord the King take the thing to heart, to think
that all the Kings sons are dead, for Amnon only is dead. We are
as apt to set our heart upon our losses, as upon our enjoyments.
And to shew how little Pharaoh regarded the heavy hand of God
upon him, it is sayd (after Moses had turned all the waters that
were in the river to blood, Exodus 7:23.) And Pharaoh turned
and went into his house, neither did set his heart to this also; That is,
he slighted what God had done. Let God speak, and strike once
and againe, yea a third time, yet hard-hearted men doe not lay it
to heart, nor set their heart upon it. Thus here in the Affirma-
tive it is sayd of God, If he set his heart upon man; that is, if he
doe but intend and mind this matter, he can quickly bring it about,
even the perishing of all flesh.

If he set his heart upon man.

The text is rendered also, If he set his heart against man:

The Hebrew particle signifieth not only upon, but against (Amos 7.
16.) Prophefe not against Israel, &c. And the generall sense of
sum, i.e. if this

that reading may be given two wayes.
First, If he set his heart against man, to enquire strictly into his life and ways, if he should critically mark all his errors, or faults, and to resolve to proceed against him, he might soon make an end of him, as it followeth in the next verfe. As the strongest, so the best and holiest of men are not able to stand before him. Thus the words are an answer given by Elihu to that frequent request of Job, that God would let him come near to judgement; and hear his cause argued and debated before him, even at his Bar; but faith Elihu (according to this sense) If God set his heart against man, if he doth but strictly enquire into his condition, course, and conversation, it would be sad with him; All men must perish. Those two places in the Psalms answer this interpretation fully, (Psal. 130. 3.) If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand? That is, No man shall; We cannot stand in our righteousness before God, how then shall we stand in our iniquities! And therefore the second Text deprecates the Lord's severe enquiry into our purest and most perfect services, (Psal. 143. 2.) Enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

Secondly, If he set his heart against man, that is, If he have a general purpose to destroy and ruin him by his absolute Sovereignty, he can easily do it; what God hath a minde to do, or only willeth it to be done, he hath power enough to do it: He can make any man miserable, and not only strip him of the comforts of this life, but of his life too: And as he hath power enough, if he would use it, so he hath sovereign unquestionable authority enough to bear him out in the use of his power. Now, seeing God who is cloathed with this absolute power, yet doth not exercise such a power, but having given man a being, continues to very many men a comfortable being in this world, and doth not willingly grieve or afflict any of the children of men, nor execute any vengeance upon them without their desert; surely then God is righteous, he will not do wickedly. Thus we have the importance of the Translation, If he set his heart against man: We say, (which also beareth fairly enough the same sense) If he set his heart upon man.

If he gathereth unto himself his Spirit and his breath;
Some render it thus; If he set his heart upon (or against) man, &c. Vulg.
he will gather unto him his spirit and his breath: and then, as it followeth, All flesh shall perish together.

We repeat the supposition according to the Hebrew Text; If he set his heart upon man; If he gather to himself his spirit and his breath, then &c. Take either reading, the general sense is the same, and in brief 'tis this: If God have a mind to it, he can quickly thrust all men out of the world. He that gave man his spirit and his breath, can at pleasure recall both, and then all flesh perisheth and turneth again unto (what it once was) dust. The Hebrew word which we render to gather, signifies to add one thing or person to another: When Rachel had conceived and baxe a son, (Gen. 30. 22, 23.) she called (from this word) his name Joseph, and said, the Lord shall add to me another son. Thus here, if God add, or gather to himself his spirit and his breath, that is, the spirit and breath of man, &c. We may distinguish between these two, spirit and breath (Some insist much and curiously upon this distinction.) The spirit denoting the soul or the internal rational power of man, and the breath that effect of life which followeth or floweth from the union of soul and body. The life of man is often expressed by breath; Ceas e ye from man, whose breath (or life) is in his nostrils; (Isa. 2. 22.) If once man's breath goeth out, his life cannot stay behind. the spirit of a man is in this sense distinct from his breath; for when the breath is vanished, and is no more, the soul or spirit liveth. The Apostle in his prayer for the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 5. 23.) puts soul and spirit together: The very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved harmless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. There (tis most probable) by the soul, he intends the inferior powers in man, or his affections, and by the spirit, his higher powers of reason and understanding: yet the spirit is often put for that whole part of man which is contradistinct to his body. Into thy hands I commend my spirit: that is, my soul, not forgetting my body: And I conceive, we may safely expound it here in that latitude, as comprehending the whole inner man. Yet it is all one, as to the sense of this place, whether we take spirit and breath distinctly or for the same; the spirit being so called from spiration or breathing; If he gather unto him his spirit, and his breath. The gathering of the spirit and breath of man unto God, is but a periphrasis or circumlocution of death,
death, or of man's departure out of this life; when man was formed or created (Gen. 2, 7.) it is said, God breathed into him, the breath of life, and man became a living soul: And when man dyeth, his breath or spirit may be said to be gathered or returned back unto God; so then, the meaning of Eliph in this double supposition, (If he set his heart upon man, if he he gather to himself his spirit and his breath,) is clearly this, if God were once resolved, or should but say the word, that man must presently die, die he must, and that presently.

Hence Note,

First, God can easily do whatsoever he hath a mind to do.

If he do put his heart upon the doing of anything, it is done; Men often set their hearts, yea and their hands unto that which they cannot do; if men could do that which they set their hearts to do, or have a mind to do, and thereupon set their hands to do, we should have strange work in the world. 'Tis a mercy to many men, that man is often frustrated in his thoughts and purposes, in his attempts and undertakings; and 'tis a glorious mercy to all that have an interest in God, that God never lost a thought, nor can be hindered in any work he setteth his heart upon. He that can let or stop all men in their works, can work, and none shall let or stop him. What God will do, is not defecible or undoable (if I may so express it) by any power in heaven or earth. And as God can do what he will, and ask no man leave, so he can do what he will without trouble to himself; 'tis but the resolve of his will, the turning of his hand, or the cast of his eye (all which are soon dispatched) and 'tis done. Thus God breathed out his wishes for the welfare of Israel, (Psal. 81, 13.) O that my people had hearkened unto me, &c. I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. As if he had said, I could and would have easily done, or to do evil, he can do evil easily) some things are not only hard, but too hard, impossible for man; but there is nothing hard, much less too hard for God, he can easily do the hardest things; yea, the hardest things are
are as easy to him as the easiest; for as (Psal. 139. 12.) Darkness
hideth not from the sight of God, the darkness and the light are both
aike to him; so hardness hinders not the work of God, hardnes
and easiness are both alike to him, if he set his heart upon it.
From this general truth, take two inferences.

First, How should we fear before this God? How should we
tremble at the remembrance of, and walk humbly (in our hightest
assurance) with this God? We are much afraid to displease those
men who can easily hurt us, and in whose hand it is to ruine us
every hour: But O how little are we in this thought to fear the
Lord, to take heed of displeasing the Lord, who can with ease
either help or hurt, either bring salvation or destruction, who in
a moment can thrust the soul out of the body, and cast both into
hell.

Secondly, We may hence make a strong inference for the com-
fort of the people of God, when their straits are most pinching,
and their difficulties look like impossibilities, and are so indeed,
while they look to man; when their enemies are strongest, and
the mountains which stand in the way of their expected comforts
greatest, if then God will be entreated to set his heart, and cast
his eye upon them, their straits are presently turned into enlarge-
ments, difficulties become easie, and mountains plains. If we
can but engage the Lord, (his own promise is the surest en-
gagement, and indeed all that we can put upon him, or minde
him of, if I say) we can thus engage the Lord to be with us, who
can be (to our hurt, many will be to their own) against us.

Secondly Note.

Our life is at the beck, dispose and pleasure of God.

He can gather the spirit and the breath to himself whenever
he pleaseth; (Psal. 104. 29.) Thou hidest thy face and they are
troubled, and thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to
their dust. If God hideth his face from us, 'tis death while we
live; but if he take away our breath, we cannot live, but die.
(Psal. 90. 3.) Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return
to children of men. Here's man turning and returning upon the
saying of God; man turneth to death, he returneth to dust, and
shall at last return from the dust, and all this when God-faith he
must. Our life is a very frail thing, and it is in the hand of God
to
to continue or take it away; to let us hold it, or gather it home to himself.

Thirdly, From the manner of speaking, If he gather to himself his spirit and his breath;

Note.

When man dieth, he is gathered to God.

When (as Solomon allegorizeth the death of man, Eccl. 12.6,7.) The silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken, &c. Then shall the dust (that is, the body) return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it; that is, each part of man (when he departeth this world) shall go its proper way, and return to that which is most congenial to it; his body to the earth, from whence it is; his soul to God, of whom it is. God is a Spirit, the creating Spirit, and our created spirits are gathered to God when they are separated from the body; yet remember there is a two-fold gathering or returning of the spirit to God.

First, To abide and be blessed with him for ever; thus the spirits of believers or saints only are gathered to God when they depart out of this world.

Secondly, There is a gathering of the spirit to God, to be judged and disposed of by him, to receive a sentence of life or death from him. And thus the spirit of every man or woman that dieth, is gathered to God, be they good or bad, believers or unbelievers, (Heb. 9. 27.) It is appointed for men once to die, but after this the judgement. Tis the Statute Law of God, man must die, and the sound of Judgement is at the heels of death. That Text faith, but after this the Judgement. The general day of judgement shall not be till the resurrection of man from the dead; But there is a personal judgement, or a determining of every mans state when he dieth; and for that end every mans spirit is gathered to God to receive his sentence. The spirits of wicked men are gathered to him and condemned, the spirits of the righteous are gathered to him and acquitted: We are come, saith the Apostle (Heb. 12. 23.) to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. David knew he must be gathered to God, but he earnestly deprecated such a gathering as most shall have, (Psal. 26. 9.) Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men. It is this word, when sinners die, they are gathered
thered; but David would not be gathered as they are gathered; They are gathered to God, but it is that they may be for ever se-
parated from him; they are gathered to a day of vengeance and
wrath: Therefore David prayed, Gather not my soul with sin-
ers. Death is called a gathering in a threefold reference.

First, A gathering to our people. Thus it is said of Aaron, (Num.
20. 24.) Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, for he shall not en-
ter into the land, &c. Death separates the people of God from
their people, that is, from those that are like them on earth, but
it will be a means of bringing them into the society of their peo-
ple, or fellow believers who are gone before them into heaven.

Secondly, Death is called a gathering to our Fathers, (2 Chron.
34: 28.) Behold I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be
gathered to thy grave in peace. There's a gathering to a more spe-
cial company, and that with other like Scriptures are an argument
that we shall know our relations in heaven. For, to be gathered
to our Fathers, spoken of in the first part of the verse, is more
then to be gathered to the grave, spoken of in the latter; and
by our fathers, we are to understand more of our fathers then the
grave hath in its keeping (which is but their bodies) even their
souls, which are kept in heaven.

Thirdly, According to the phrase of this Text, death is called
a gathering to God; If he gather unto himself his spirit and his
breath.

Whence Note, Fourthly.
The spirit or soul of man hath its original from God.

It is of him to whom it returneth; The soul or spirit of man
is of God in a more special way then his body is; for though
God giveth both, yet the Scripture (in the place before named)
Speaks of the soul as the gift of God, but passeth by the body;
(Ecclef. 12. 7.) The dust shall return to the earth, as it was; and
the spirit shall return to God who gave it. 'Tis God, not man a-
alone, who hath given us these bodies, but 'tis not man, but God
alone who hath given us these spirits; therefore men are called
the fathers of our flesh, that is, of the body; in way of distinction,
from God, who is the father of spirits (Heb. 12. 9) We have had
fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them revere-
rence, shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spiri-
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rites, and live; that is, shall we not rather be subject to God then to man? Father of spirits is an Attribute or Title too high and honourable for any but God. One of the Ancients in his gracious breathing after God, brake out into this holy Paffion; My soul (O God) came from thee, and my heart is uneasy or restless until it return to thee again; God is our center, and our rest: He gather-eth to himself mans spirit; and when he doth so, what then? what's the issue of it? Elihu tells us what in the next verse,

Ver. 15. All flesh shall perish together, and man shall return again to his dust.

As if he had said, As soon as ever the spirit is gathered, the flesh is consumed, or, as we render, perisheth.

All flesh, may be taken in the largest sense, not only for all men that live, but for all living creatures: Thus largely Moses extendeth it, (Gen. 6. 17.) Behold, saith the Lord, I will bring a flood of water to destroy all flesh; that is, all the Beasts of the earth, and Fowls of the ayre, together with Mankinde, except a few of each in the Ark: so (Psal. 136. 25.) Who giveth food to all flesh, (that is, to man and beast) for his mercy endureth for ever. Yet some understand this first part more narrowly, for all flesh except man; because he addeth in the latter part of the verse, and man shall return again to his dust: But I conceive we are to take all flesh here for all men, and only for men, it being usual in Scripture to put the same thing twice, under different expressions. So then

All flesh, that is, every man, be he who he will, shall perish. Thus as all flesh is restrained to man, so it extendeth over all men, yea over all things of man (Isa. 40. 6.) All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field; that is, all men are perishing, and all that man hath, meerly as a man, is as fading and perishing as himself is.

Some take notice, that man was not called flesh till after his fall; It's said before, when God set him up in that primitive purity of his Creation, Man became a living soul. He was not spoken of at first as flesh, but as a living soul; (Gen. 2. 7.) but as soon as man had sinned, he was called flesh, as if he had no soul. There may two other reasons be given why man is called flesh, both following from the former. First, Because man since his fall doth
most for his flesh, and neglects his soul altogether, till being
planted into the second Adam, he is brought out of that wretch-
ed condition into which he fell by and with the first Adam. Se-
condly, He is called flesh, because, since the fall man is become
weak and frail, both as to Naturals and Morals, (Gen. 6. 3.) My
spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: As
if the Lord had said, Now man declareth himself to be flesh indeed,
he acts like an impotent sorry creature, he acts as if he scarce had a
soul in him, as if he were no more than the beasts of the earth: My
spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; and
therefore (v. 30.) God told Noah, The end of all flesh is come be-
fore me; that is, Man, and all his worldly glory, shall all be swept
away with a deluge of water, as here,

All flesh shall perish together.

There is a two-fold perishing; First, By way of annihilation.
Secondly, By way of transmutation. When Elihu saith, all flesh
shall perish, we are not to understand it of annihilating all flesh;
(God can do that, he can turn man back into that nothing out of
which he was made) but the perishing in the Text importeth only,
a change. Death is called a change, & a change to perishing, as that
good & great woman said, I will go into the King, and if I perish,
I perish, (Heft. 4. 16.) that is, If I die, I die. The Prophet la-
ments (Isa. 57. 1.) The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it
to heart. All flesh shall perish

Together.

That is, without exception, one as well as another, rich and
poor, high and low, strong and weak, all are alike in the hand of
God, (Psal. 33. 13.15.) The Lord looketh from heaven, he behold-
eth all the sons of men, &c. he fashioneth their hearts alike, or toge-
 ther; that is, he fashioneth the hearts of all men: God doth not
so fashion mens hearts alike, as to make them all alike, (faces do
not differ so much as hearts) but as he fashions one mans heart, so
another; he fashions the heart of a King, as well as the heart of
a beggar: All flesh shall perish together; none either by power or po-

Again, We may take the word together, for all at once, God
can make a total devastation in the earth, and sweep all away as

fifth
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And man shall return again unto dust.

Or he shall goe backe unto dust, that is, he shall dye: that's the sentence which God gave upon man when he had sinned (Gen: 3. 19.) In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returne unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou returne. Man was dust before he sinned; yet he had not returned to dust, if he had not turned from God by sin. Sin brought in death, and death brings us to the dust. All flesh shall perish together, and man shall return again unto dust.

Hence observe.

There is no one man hath more privilege then another, against the sentence of death.

The Greatest Prince dyeth as soone as the meanest peasant. Death can as soone and as easily breake into the strongest fort or tower of stone, as into the meanest cottage of reeds. High and low shall perish together. Let none hope to secure themselves by any thing of this world from going out of this world. Riches availe not in the day of death (Pro: 11. 4.) High Titles and honours availe not, strength availeth not, beauty availeth not, none of these can be a protection, if God send out a writ or summons to the grave. Happy are they, who get an assurance of life after death, for none have an assurance of life against death.

Againe, In that death is here expressed under this notion of perishing.

Observe.

Man is but in a perishing condition while he is in this world.

As all the things of the world are, so is man, while he abideth (if I may say he abideth) in this world. Christ earnestly exhorts (John 6. 27.) Labour not for the meat that perisheth. Why should we labour, that is, set our selves with our whole strength and might to pursue perishing things, seeing we our selves are perishing?
The more perishing we are, the more reason we have to look after and labour for those things which doe not, which cannot perish. When the Apostle faith (1 Pet: 1. 18.) We are not redeemed with corruptible things from our vain conversation, &c. He doth not instanche in flowers or fruits of the earth, which quickly rot, but in gold and silver, which are the most durable and lasting metals; even these are corruptible; but we our selves as to this bodily life, are corruptible, not only as gold and silver, but as the most fading flowers and summer fruits of the earth.

Further, From that other description of death, as 'tis called a returning againe unto dust.

We learne.

*Man is of the dust.*

Unless man, as to his body, were of the dust when he began to live, he could not be saied to returne unto dust when he dyeth, or departs this life. Many men pore upon their pedegree, and their minds swel with pride, because they are of such or such a noble descent; but let them remember, *man is of the dust.* The soule or spirit of man is indeed from above, as was shewed before; and the body of man is (I grant) a compound of all the foure Elements. Our bodyly spirits (say Naturalists) are of the fire, our breath of the ayre, our blood of the water, and our flesh and bones are most properly of the dust of the earth; yet the whole body of man is denominated dust or earth, or as the Apostle saitheth it (2 Cor. 5. 1.) 'Tis an earthly house; If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved. For though we may truely say, there is water, and ayre, and fire in this house, yet because earth is the predominant Element, the whole body beares the denomination of that. God is not saied to forme man of the water, or ayre, or fire, but of the dust of the ground (Gen: 2. 7.) though all those as well as earth were ingredients in the composition and formation of mans body. As man with respect to his spiritualls and moralls, is denominated from that which is chief in him, so with respect to his naturalls. Every man hath the seeds and principles of all sin in him, yet many men are knowne and expressed by some speciall sin. Thus one is called a covetous man, another a malicious man, &c. because covetousnesse and malice are their predominant sins in practice, though the principles of all other sins are in them.

So
So for grace, one is sayd to be a patient man, and another an humble man, and a third, a self-denying man. Though where any grace is all graces are, yet a godly man is knowne by that grace which acts most eminently and vigorously in him. In this notion man is sayd to be of the dust, and to returne to dust, as if he were nothing but dust, because dust is the predominant Element in the natural Constitution of Man.

And if so, then this is an humbling consideration. Some walke as if they thought the ground or earth not good enough for them to goe upon. Moses setting forth the dreadfullness of famine, as a punishment threatened the Jewish nation in case of disobedience, tells us it shall fall on all sorts, both of men and women (Deut: 28. 56.) The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, &c. Some are loth to put their feet to the ground, whereas the best foote that ever trod upon the ground, is dust as well as the ground trodden on, and 'tis but dust to dust when they are in the dust, and dirt to dirt if they fall into the dirt. The Apostle, among other reasons, for this also, calleth the body of man a vile body (Phil: 3. 21.) Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Our bodies are vile, chiefly from the contagion of sin, that hath made them most vile; but they are comparatively vile, with respect to the very matter out of which they were all representatively made when the first man was made, without the least taint or touch of sin. Man at best as to the body is but a little breathing dust or moving clay. And did we spiritually look upon the matter of our bodyes, it would exceedingly humble our spirits, and keep them low even when like Jordan they are ready to over-flow all the banks of modesty, and moderation. We heare of a bird, who priding himselfe in spreading and perusing his fine feathers, is presently as it were, ashamed by looking down upon his owne black feete. Surely did man often consider that his whole body is of the earth; it would be an excellent means to keepe his heart in a lowly frame, how highly foever himselfe is exalted in the earth.

And as man, while he lives is from the dust; so when he dyeth (that's another humbling consideration) his body not only returneth into dust, but turneth into dust. David, as the figure of Christ cryed out (Psal: 22. 15.) Thou hast brought me into the dust.
dust of death. Dust and death are neere acquaintance, and all that
dy, grow quickly into neerer acquaintance with the dust. It is sayd
(Psal: 103. 14.) The Lord knoweth our frame, he remembereth
that we are but dust. But what advantage is that to us, that the
Lord remembereth the one, and remembereth the other? I may answer
as the Apostle doth to another question (Rom: 3. 2.) much every
way, chiefly, because he will pity us and spare us and deale ten-
derly with us, as considering how frail we are. Now as it may
be our comfort that God remembreth we are but dust, so 'tis our
duty to remember that we are but dust, and that we must to the
dust. Shall God remember that we are dust, and shall not we re-
member it our selves? Did we more remember that we are dust,
we should more prepare for our return to the dust. Yea, I may
say, we should be more in heaven, if we were more in our dust;
that is, the gracious and serious meditation of our naturall vilenes
and infirmities would provoke us to looke heaven-wards, and pre-
pare for heaven, where these our naturall bodyes shall become
spirituall (1 Cor: 15. 44.) that is, they shall be like spirits
(though not turned into spirits) living without food or sleep,
living free from wearinesse and sickness, from paines and languish-
ments, yeas free from the remotest feare of ever dying or return-
ing again into dust. Such as these and many more would be our
soules advantages, did we often (as becomes us) remember that
our bodyes are of the earth, and must shortly be earth again.
Thus to be earthly minded, is the way to be heavenly minded.
Many are earthly minded, that is, they mind earthly things, but
few mind that themselves are earth. In what holy heights and el-
levations of spirit should we be, if we could spiritually remember
how low we once were, and how low, as to our bodyes, we within
a few dayes shall be.

Lastly, This truth should take us off from all creature-confi-
dence from trusting in man. Cursed is the man (saith the Lord, Jer:
17.5.) that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his armes. 'Tis a cursed
thing for man to trust in man, because trust is an honour proper to
God; he alone is to be trusted: And as it is a cursed, so it is also
a foolish thing to trust in man. David a Great Prince giveth us
this counsell from God (Psal: 146. 3, 4.) Put not your trust in
Princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help; his breath
goeth forth, he returneth to his earth (or to his dust) in that day
all
all his thoughts perish, happy is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help, What can dust do for dust? what can dust get by dust? that which is weake may become strong, by trusting to, or leaning upon that which is strong; the weakest man is strong enough, while he trusteth upon the strong God; but if weake trust upon weake, how shall it be made strong. Therefore let all flesh hearken to the words of the holy Prophet (Isa: 2.21.) ( cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrills; for wherein is he to be accounted of? Man himselfe is a some-ceasing creature (David useth the name of this verbe to express himselfe so, Psal: 39. 4.) and therefore we have reason to cease from man, to cease from any high estimation of the highest men, much more from any confidence in them. What can we allure our selves of from any man living, seeing he hath no assurance of his owne life? The Prophet would have us understand that, while he faith, his breath is in his nostrills; Mans life is gone as soone as his breath is gone, and how soone may that be gone! David describeth a proud man, puffing at his enemies (Psal: 10. 5.) He is puffed up and swelled with high conceits of himselfe, as if he had some great matter in him, and he puffeth at others as if he could do some great matter against them, forgetting that himselfe is but (as to his being in this world) a puffe of wind, which paffeth away. As then, we need not fear what hurt man can doe us, so we should not hope nor have any expectation from him that he by his owne power (now great forever his power is) can doe us any good, Wherfore (as to either of these purposes) is man to be accounted of? Man is an excellent creature, a creature of high account, as bearing the image of God, his soul is of more worth then the gaine of the whole world (Math: 16. 26.) and thus he is more to be accounted of, then all that in the world is most accounted of; But consider him as, to the fraylery of his life, and the possibility, yea probability of his sudden passage out of this world, and then, Wherfore is he to be accounted of? If we oppose man to God, or compare man with God, or trust man in stead of God, he is as vaine and worthlesse as any thing, a thing of nothing, or lesse then nothing.
JOB. Chap. 34. Ver. 15, 16.

If now thou hast understanding, heare this; hearken to the voice of my words. Shall even he that hateth right, govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Eliph having thus farre applied himselfe to Jobs friends, upon an Assurance that they were men of understanding; for so he bespake them at the 10th verse; Hearken unto me ye men of understanding. He now turneth his speech particularly to Job, and he doth it upon a hopefull supposition, that he also was a man of understanding.

Ver. 16. If now thou hast understanding, heare this.

The word which we render understanding, is not a noun, but the infinitive of a verbe in the Hebrew: and it may be rendered thus; If thou hast to understand; that is, if thou hast an ability to understand, which in sense is the same with our translation, If thou hast understanding. This forme of speaking by the infinitive for the noun, is frequent both in Scripture and other Authors. Thus tis saide, Your to know is nothing; that is, your knowledge is nothing, unlesse another know it, or be made knowing by it. Let us see (faith the Oratour) what thy to live blessedly is; that is, what thou countest blessedness. And another, I have left to be ashamed; that is, shamefastness or modesty. Thus Eliph, if thou hast to understand, heare this.

But it may be questioned, did Eliph indeed suspect whether Job did understand, or were an understanding man? Every man hath an understanding, as he is a man. To understand is the property, the inseparable property of a reasonable creature. Why then doth Eliph put a doubt upon Job in this, and say, If now thou hast understanding, &c. I answer; Eliph indeed deals with Job as if he were somewhat below man in this businesse, at least, as if he were dull, and slow to receive, and apprehend what had been spoken to him, and there—
therefore by this Apostraphe, he excites and fitrres him up to he regard his understanding a-work to the utmost; As if he had said, Al-
though thou hast a habit of understanding, yet thou hast not acted it like an understanding man; nor given such proof of it in this matter as is expected.

Further, These words, If now thou hast understanding, referre not to the faculty, but to the speciall attributes of his under-
standing; chiefly to these three.

First, To the soundness of it; If thou hast any thing of a sound understanding. The understandings of many are sicke, and disea-
sed, their understandings are tainted and infected with errors and misperceptions. Now if thou hast any thing of a sound un-
derstanding left in thee, if there remaine yet any strength in thy un-
derstanding, to apprehend the force of those arguments and rea-
sions which I shall propose to convince thee by, heare this. Erro-
nous understandings are altogether unfit to entertaine truth.
As there must be a surableness between the stomack and the meat,
elle it is not digested, so between the minde and the object, elle it cannot be received.

Secondly, To the uprightness or impartiality of it; If thou hast understanding; that is, if thou hast an unbiassed understanding; Sometimes the affections turne aside, and bribe the understand-
ing; self-interest puts a blinde upon the understanding. When a man hath a minde to that which is not right, he will have a minde to understand any thing that opposeth it.

Thirdly, To the spiritualness of it, If thou hast understand-
ing; that is, a renewed, a spirituall, an holy understanding, or the understanding of the holy, heare this. A man may have a great na-
turall understanding, a deep judgement, and yet be a very childe,
or a man of no understanding in the things of God. Only a spiritu-
al understanding is suited to spirituall things, (as the object is, such must the faculty be) that faculty which deales a-right about spirituall things, must be a spirituall faculty. The Apostle speakes concludingly ( 1 Cor: 2. 14. ) The natural man ( that is, the man unconverted or unregenerate ) perceiveth not the things of the Spi-
rit of God, for they are foolishnes unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. And therefore the same Apostle, proffeth to the Colossians ( Chap: 1. 9. ) We doe not cease to pray for you, and to desyre that ye might be filled, with
the knowledge of his will, in all wiseome, and spiritual understanding. The will of God being spiritual, cannot be truly knowne but by a spiritual understanding. According to this three-fold attribute of the understanding we may expound Elihu speaking to Job, If thou hast a spiritual understanding, an unbiased understanding, a sound understanding, heare this. As if he had sayd, I have spoken, and am about to speake such things as may call out the strength, the best, the utmost line of a sound, impartial and spiritual understanding, to sound the bottome and the depth of them. Thus he provokes him to attend, not only with his eare, but with his understanding, with the best of his understanding, with the best understanding to the things he was to speake. And in this sense the most of men, all bad men have no understanding (Psal: 14. 2.) and Job, though a good man, had much deficiency in his. If now thou haft understanding, heare this.

Hence note.
He that hath not a right, a sound, a spiritual understanding, can scarce be said to have any understanding at all.

There are many understanding men, who have not this understanding, or an understanding for this. While David saith (Psal: 49. 20.) Man that is in honour and understandeth not, he supposeth, that a man ascended to the highest pitch of honour, may yet be without understanding, that is, without a right, a sound, a spiritual understanding; and then (as it followeth there) he is like the beasts that perish. Beasts have no understanding at all, the rational or intellectual power is proper to man. A man in honour, not having this honour, a right understanding, may be numbered among the beasts. If thou hast understanding,

Hear this.

As if he had said, I am not calling thee to hear an idle story, or a trivial matter; Hear this, there is an emphasis in the words both as to the Act and Object.

It is questioned what Elihu particularly intendeth by this; some refer it to what he had spoken before in Job's audience, though directed to his friends: Hear what I have spoken to thy friends in the former part of the chapter, in vindication of the righteousness of God. Secondly, Others refer it to what Elihu was now.
now about to say; I have not yet done. I have not yet brought out all my reasons & arguments, I have not emptied my treasures, I have yet more to say, *Hear this: A third sort refer these hortatory words, hear this, in the former part of the verse, to what he had already spoken, and those in the latter part of the verse, hearken to the voice of my words, to what he had yet to speak; but it is not much to the matter to which we refer them, it being clear, that what he had said, and what he had to say, was matter of weight; and so hear this, is emphatical, this great, this deep, this useful and necessary point of Doctrine, which I already have declared, or am now about to declare unto thee.

Hence Note.

*That which we hear, we should labour to understand.*

(Col. 3. 16.) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom;* It is not enough to hear the word with our ears, or to have it in our mouths, it must dwell in our memories, and it must dwell there, not in a beggarly poor fashion, but richly; which it never doth, till we have a sound and clear understanding of it, and are both in heart and life conformed to it, yea transformed into it; that is it which the Apostle meaneth by the dwelling of the word in us richly in all wisdom. And he further assureth them (chap. 2. 1, 2.) that he had a great confidence for them; that is (as we put in the Margin) he had a great fear or care of them; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He had held forth those great mysteries, the mystery of God considered essentially, the mystery of the Father considered personally, the mystery of Christ considered mediatiorily; and therefore he presseth them to get a full assurance of understanding about all these mysteries. When Christ was discoursing with his disciples after his resurrection, (Luke 24. 45.) it is said, *He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures;* and then they did not take in what he spake only at the ear, but at the heart also. Thus (Acts 16. 14.) *The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul,* that is, he gave her an inward ear, and caused her to understand the things which he spake.
Secondly Note.

Whatsoever we hear is lost, and but scattered in the ayre, if we do not understand it.

Though we have it in our books, yea though we have it in our memories, 'tis lost, if we understand it not; we read of a book, sealed within, and on the back-side, with seven seals, (Rev. 5. 1.) we read also (v. 4.) that John wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book: That sealing of the book was nothing else but the shutting of it up from the understanding; and when Christ opened the book, he gave the understanding of it: the whole book of God is a sealed book, unless we have an understanding, or a saving knowledge of the truths therein contained. What John said (Rev. 13. 18.) of counting that mysterious number of the Beast, must be said in its proportion of the whole mysterie of godliness, let him that hath understanding count and consider them.

Note Thirdly,

Every understanding is not fit to receive the Truths of God.

An unregenerate man is not fit to receive any of the Truths of God; The natural man (that is, the man who hath nothing but nature in him) perceiveth not the things of God, he hath not a suitable faculty for them; and as a natural man's understanding cannot at all receive the things of God, so every degree of a spiritual understanding cannot receive all the truths of God, or not all the things of God in all their truth. The Apostle distributes persons into several degrees, and calls some babes, and others grown or perfect men; that is, such as have an understanding fit to take in and digest the highest and deepest things of God; and hence it is, that Christ told his disciples (John 16. 12.) who had a renewed understanding, only I was in a low degree, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; I suppose the reason why Christ saith they could not bear those many things, was not because being many, they were too great a burden for their memories, (though possibly there might be somewhat in that) but their inability of bearing those many things, was chiefly in their understanding. There are some truths, which though a man can remember, yet he cannot bear them; and the more he remembers them, the
the less he can bear them; the weight and mystery of them even cracks his brain, till he receives more light from God, and more strength of understanding, he cannot bear them: *If thou hast understanding, hear this;*

*And hearken to the voice of my words.*

This latter part of the verse is but the repetition or further enforcement of the same thing, we had the like expressions chap. 33.1.8. and therefore I shall not stay upon this, only note further from the whole.

*The beginning of true wisdom is to have a readiness to hear, and to shew our selves teachable.*

Some overween themselves so much, as to matter of knowledge, that they will not be taught; they judge themselves so learned, and fully instructed, that they will hear no more instruction; nor learn any other lesson, they are past the School; yet always they who know much in their own conceit, are least knowing in truth and reality: there is nothing doth so much hinder the receiving of knowledge, as an imagination or proud profession of it. *The sluggard* (saith Solomon, Prov. 26.16.) *is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason:* They which have least reason, are the greatest neglecters of it; only an understanding man is willing to hear, that he may gain more understanding. Therefore Elihu admonisheth Job, *If now thou hast understanding, hear this, and hearken to the voice of my words:* What Elihu would have Job hear and hearken to, followeth in the next verse, and in those which follow, to the end of the 33d verse.

*Ver. 17. Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?*

*This is matter indeed worth the hearing and hearkning to.*

*Shall even he that hateth right govern?*

*Shall he? He shall not, or at least should not, he ought not; he of all men is the unfittest man to govern, that is, to do all men right, who hateth right.* The Interrogation leads us to this strong Negation, or indignation rather; *What! He that hateth right, whose very spirit is against it, whose affections withdraw from it, is he*
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 17.

he made up for a Governor! The Hebrew word notes right from man to man; justice or righteousness consists in the due order and comly disposition of things and affairs, transacted and dispensed in this world from man to man, or between man and man; it imports also that order into which the most wise providence of God placeth both things and persons; we may take it here in both or either of these senses; Shall he that hateth right

Govern.

The word rendered to Govern, hath a threefold signification in Scripture. First, and most properly, to bind up: Secondly, by a Metaphor, to heal; because there is so great a use of binding in healing; the skillful ligature of a wound, or of a broken limb, is of so much consequence in Chirurgery, or the art of healing, that binding alone is put for healing; that which is well bound, is in a fair way to healing. We find both these acts put together in that great promise of the Churches glory under the Gospel, (Isa. 30. 26.) Moreover the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, &c. in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

Many learned Translators render the word here, by binding or healing, or by binding, as it refers to healing. The Vulgar Latine gives it passively, Can he who doth not love right be healed? The sense of which reading is this; God doth not use to heal or bind up the wounds of those who hate Right or Justice: Why should the wounds of those Magistrates be healed, who have no care, by doing right, to heal the wounds of others? I shall not stay upon this Translation, because the Original Text clearly carryeth an active signification. And some who retain this sense of the word, translate it actively; Shall or will God heal him that hateth right? Surely he will not: If a man hate Justice, and right, how can he expect that God should be a healer to him? And thus it is expounded in reference to Job, who complained that God did not heal him of his wounds, his wounds, though great, were not cured: now faith Elihu, Will God heal him that hateth right; that is, who doth not approve of that which is right; or, as it followeth, who condemneth him that is most just, as Elihu charged his Lord, who to have done.

Again, another renders, Will he that hateth the right heal the wounded?
wounded? The fence of which reading is given thus; Surely
God who is ready to binde up and heal the wounds of those that
are afflicted when they repent, is no hater of right, no perverter
of justice, as thou O Job hast said God doth; seeing God is ready
to heal the wounds, and binde up the sores of humbled sinners,
how unjustly hast thou charged him with perverting of justice?
The Tygurine version gives it thus, _will he that hates right, all
the part of a Chirurgeon?_ Will he binde up and heal? Doubtlefs
he will not, but will rather wound and afflict, vex and trouble
more and more instead of being a healer. Either of these ren-
derings bear a good fense of this Scripture; yet I fhall rather
take up our Translation, and infift upon it. And therefore
Thirdly, The word signifies tropically to rule or govern; and
the reason arifeth clearly from the proper signification of it; be-
cause he that is a Ruler or a Governour, is also a binder and a
healer: Magiftrates binde the people that are under them to or-
der, they binde them by their Laws. Laws are as bonds, they
have a binding power, they binde either to obedience or to pu-
nishment; and therefore Magiftrates are binders; they binde the
unruly and disobedient, they binde with the rule of the Law, and
with the penalties of the Law. When any break the rule of the
Law, then they fall under the penalties of the Law, so that every
way a Magiftrate is a binder; and as he is a binder, fo a healer;
The Laws of Government by which people are bound, are for
their healing, for the healing of their manners and corruptions;
as alfo, for the healing of thoſe whom they have oppreffed or
wounded by their evil manners and corruptions. Further, all
Governours fhould, and righteous Governours will improve their
power and authority for the healing of thoſe differences that arife
among their subjects, or thoſe over whom they are fet: In all these
respects, Magiftrates are healers and binders. Thus the Prophet
(Isa. 3. 6, 7.) expreffeth them, _When a man shall take hold of his
brother, of the houſe of his father, saying, thou hast clothing, be
thou our Ruler, and let this ruine be under thine hand: Here is a
breach, a ruine in the State or Commonwealth, let this be under
thy hand, do thou undertake the cure of this; but in that day fhall
be swear_ (v. 7.) _I will not be a healer: We put in the margin, a
binder, that is, I will not be your Governour; your cafe is fo
desperate, and you are fo obftinate in your way, that I dare not

I i i  

under-
undertake your cure, I will not be a healer to you, or I will not be your binder; or as the reason of his refusal is there given by the Prophet, from his own inability or incompetency for that undertaking; In my house is neither bread nor clothing, make me not a Ruler of the people. Thus the word very significantly holds out the office and use of Governours; they are or ought to be binders or healers: the wounds of the Body politic need a healer as much as those of the body natural; Governours are State-Physicians: and therefore we read very well, Shall he that hateth right govern? Mr Broughtoa faith, Can a foe to Judgement rule well? taking this sense, Elish doth two things in this verse.

First, He sheweth how unnot an unjust person is to rule; this he doth in the former part of the verse.

Secondly, He sheweth how unfit it is to condemn or censure a just Ruler; this he doth in the latter part of the verse. Shall even he that hateth right govern? He ought not. And shall he that governeth rightly be hated? Shall he fall under unrighteous condemmations, who condemneth others rightly? He should not. As he that is unjust is unfit to govern, so 'tis not only unholy, but abominable to condemn a just Governour. This is the sum of the whole verse. From the former part of it already opened, Shall he that hateth right govern?

Observe.

First, Some men are haters of Justice, Right, and Righteousness.

What is there so good, but an evil man hateth it? and the better it is, the more he hateth it: How precious a thing is righteousness, yet 'tis hated; (Mic. 3. 1, 2.) Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, &c. Is it not for you to know judgement, who hate the good and love the evil? How precious a thing is peace? and yet there are peace-haters; My soul (saith David, Psal. 120. 6.) hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. How sweet a thing is light? the light of the Gospel, yet there are many light-haters, (Joh. 3. 20.) He that doth evil, (loving to do it) hateth the light; How precious a thing is holiness? and yet there are holiness-haters; how precious a thing is truth? and yet there are truth-haters; how infinitely precious is God? and yet there are God-haters; (Rom. 1. 30.) How lovely, how desireable is Jesus Christ, both as a Saviour and as a Sanctifier? yet even Jesus Christ (who hath loved us, and washed
washed us with his own blood) is hated: There are many Christ-
haters, as himself told the Jews (John 15. 24.) They have both
seen and hated both me and my Father. And if there be that prin-
ciple of abomination in the heart of man to hate God and Christ,
what good is there that the heart of man may not set his hatred
upon? Elihu supposeth that there are haters of Right and Justice,
which are the most amiable things in the world, and should attract
the love of all persons to them.

Secondly, When Elihu faith, Shall even he that hateth right
govern? How disdainfully doth he speak of such?

Hence Note.
To hate right is a most hateful thing.

He is not worthy the name of a man that hateth right. When the
Prophet Eljka told Hazael what strange things he should do, what
haycock he should make in the world, he said (2 King. 9. 13.)
But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?
as if he had said, to do such a thing, renders a man as vile and
contemnible as a dog: 'Tis a piece of unrighteousness to reckon
or number them among men, who are haters of that righteousness
which should be exercised among men, and is the preservation of
mankind; not to honour righteousness is a hateful thing, not to
do right at all times, and in all things, is a hateful thing; what
is it then to hate right? How justly hateful are Justice haters!

Some may say, are there any indeed so bad as to hate right?

I answer, First, There are some who profusely, plainly, with
a bold and bare face hate the right; there is in all natural men a
seed of this hatred. The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God;
and surely, if it be enmity against God, it must needs be enmity
against all that is good; now as there is a seed of that enmity in
every man's nature, so there will be the workings and fruits of that
enmity in many men's lives.

Secondly I answer, He may be said to hate right that doth not
approve right, that doth not love and delight in it; nor to love,
not to delight in that which is right, is to hate the right. As he that
doeth not love God, is a hater of God; the second Command-
ment speaks thus, I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting
the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth
generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy to thousands of
them.
them that love me, and keep my Commandments. Hating of God, and loving of God, divide the whole world; they that do not love God, hate him; there is no middle of participation between these two, between the love and hatred of God: so there is a hatred of Justice or Right in him who loves it not; though a man do not make profession against it, yet if he hath not an affection to it, he will at last be found amongst that most hateful company, the haters of righteousness: not to hate evil, is to love it, and not to love good, is to hate it in God's account. Many stand as neutrals in the days of this world, but in that great day of the end of the world, there will be no neutrals seen: all shall stand in two parts, either among the sheep or goats; and among all the sheep there will not be one found, who hath not been a lover of goodness and righteousness; nor one among all the goats, who hath not been (in the judgement and esteem of God) a hater of them.

Thirdly, They may be said (in a degree) to hate right, who though they have some love to it, yet love it in a less degree than they should, or less then they ought; a lower or lesser degree of love, is a kind of hatred in Scripture language: The Law of Moses saith (Deut. 21. 15, 16, 17.) If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children; both the beloved and the hated, and if the first born son be hers that was hated; then it shall be when he maketh his son inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, &c. But what doth he mean by the wife that is hated? Surely the wife that is not so much loved; though he loved both truly, yet not loving both in the same degree, he is said to hate one of them: so I conceive that Scripture is to be understood (Luke 14. 26.) where Christ gives the rule concerning Disciple-ship: If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple: When Christ layeth this charge upon his Disciples, to hate wife, and children, &c. would he have his Disciples turn their hatred upon those relations? the rule of the Word forbids that: So then, his meaning is only this, if in case of following me, a man finde any stop or hindrance by these, he must not let out his love so to wife, and children, &c. as to hinder his coming to, or following of me. Every man must take off.
off so much love from these dearest worldly enjoyments, as hin-
ders men in following Christ; and he who through grace is en-
abled to do so, is in a true and clear Gospel sense said to hate
them. That which we can leave for Christ, we hate in compar-
ison of that love which we bear to Christ. Thus in the Text and
Point, they may be said to hate the right, who bear not a due
proportion of love unto it; not to love righteousness with highest
& warmest affections, is a degree of hatred. Some love the right,
but they love it lightly, they love it less then riches and gain; and
and therefore for self-gain they turn aside from, and forswake the
right. Some will speak fair for Justice, till the offer of private
advantage either put out their eyes, or stop their mouths; he that
loves not to do right to others more then to enrich himself, will
quickly wrong others to enrich himself: Now he that upon any
terms or considerations whatsoever (though it were to the advan-
tage only of some others who are poor and distressed, much more
when its for his own advantage) is drawn to pervert the right, is a
hater of it. Remember, any letter degree of love to that which
is right, may, at any time be interpreted the hatred of it; and
when we love it less then our own concerns, we cannot re-
 sist temptations which entice us to do that which will declare a
direct hatred of it.

Thirdly, From the whole tenour of these words, 

Shall he that
hath the right govern?

Note.

They that hate right, or righteousness, are altogether unfit to Go-
vern, or to be Governours?

Nothing is more contrary to the state of Government, or the
qualification of a Governour, then to hate right; righteousness
is the sphere wherein he ought to walk, and never to move out of
it; tis the business he hath to do, the trade which he hath to drive;
whosoever he doth in that capacity, he must be doing righteous
things. So far as any man hath the power of Government in his
hand, if it be but over a family, much more over a Nation, he
ought to do right; Davids prayer for himself as a King, and for
his son who was to succeed him in the Kingdom, was only and al-
together this, (Psal. 72. 1.) Give the King thy judgements, O
Lord, and thy righteousness unto the Kings son; that is, teach both
me:
me and him what is right, give us a heart conformable to it, and
a readiness of minde always to do it: That’s the scope of his
prayer when he said, Give the King thy judgements, O Lord, and
thy righteousness to the King’s son: Nor doth he barely pray for the
gift of judgement and righteousness, but he puts the stamp of
God upon them; Give them thy judgements, and thy righteousness.
It is possible for Kings to have a judgement of their own, and a
righteousness of their own, which are not the judgements nor the
righteousness of God. For as there is a righteousness of God, which
some being ignorant of, trust to a righteousness of their
own for the justification of their person; so there is a righteous-
ness of God for the government of man, which some neglecting,
use only a righteousness of their own, both in condemning and ju-
stifying other mens both persons and causes; Princes being in
Gods place, should exalt the righteousness of God in the govern-
ing of men. And therefore the same David in his dying song
spake thus (2 Sam: 23. 3.) He that rules over men must be just,
ruling in the fear of God; who ever he is he must be just, and
he must be just in the fear of God, which he can never be, but in giving out the righteousness of God; that is, in dis-
pening that for righteousness, which is right according to the
will of God. And if he must doe right thus, how shall he doe it,
if he hate it? no man will doe that willingly or constantly which
he hateth; he that hates right is so farre from doing it himselfe,
that he cannot abide others should doe it. Whereas a governour,
is not only to doe right himselfe, but to appoynt others to doe it,
and to see that they doe it, or else to punish them for not doing it.
The Rulers of the earth are sayd to bear the sword (Rom: 13. 4.)
And they are sayd to be Shields (Psal: 47. 9.) They are shields
to protect the good, and swords to take vengeance of those that
doe evill; both which are the workes of righteousness. And if
so, shall ever he that hateth right govern?

And wilt thou condemne him that is most just?

The scope of Elihu in the former part of the verse was to de-
monstrate that God is no hater of right, or righteousness, for he
is not only A Governour, but The Governour, all the world over,
or over all the world, and it were a most absurd thing, to thinke
that he should be the Governour of the world, and yet be a hater
of right, can it be imagin'd that he who ruleth all men, should wrong any man? Now seeing God who ruleth all is always most righteous, wilt thou (O Job) condemn him (saith Elihu) that is most just? God our governor is so farre from hating, that he is ever promoting justice, he that is so, is most just, and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Wilt thou condemn him?

To condemn is to sit in judgement; and give sentence against another. Wilt thou condemn, or give sentence against God? Wilt thou (as some translate according to the strictness of the Original) make him wicked, that is most just? Elihu makes use of a very hard and severe word, and it is conceived that he purposely pitcht upon it, or pickt it out, to convince Job, that it is no small fault, or offence, to complain of or to quarrell with the dealings of God. 'Tis indeed to condemn God, and to make him wicked, as the word imports; Wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Here are two words; in the Hebrew we put them together, and so render them by a superlative, most just. Some translate, Wilt thou condemn him that is strong and just? that is strongly just, mightily just; God is full of strength and might, so full that he, and he only is Almighty; yet his might never exceedeth right, nor his strength his justice. Strength and justice are commenurate in God. And while he is so strong, that he can doe what he will, he is so just that he will doe nothing but what is righteous.

Further, I find others joyning the word strong, with the word condemn. As if Elihu had sayd, Wilt thou so confidently, and perniciously, condemn the just God? To condemn God, though but a damnare audes, little, to passe the easiest sentence of condemnation upon him is bad enough; but wilt thou strongly condemn him? We render clearely to the scope of the place, Wilt thou condemn him that is most just?

Hence noe.
First, God is most just; or altogether just.

He is strongly just, mightily just; as he is strongly-mercifull. Rab: Sel: putting Merci.
putting forth a power in pardoning sin, and shewing mercy, so he is strongly just, or altogether just. The rule given to Judges by Moses speaks thus, (Deut. 16. 20.) That which is altogether just, shall thou follow. We put in the margin, justice, justice, shalt thou doe; that is, thou shalt doe pure Justice, nothing but Justice, or justice without the least mixture, tincture, or (if it be possible) without the least shadow of injustice. I may say, justice, justice is God, that is, he is altogether just, strongly just, everlastingly and unchangeably just. God is just under a three-fold notion.

First, As to be just is taken largely, importing a person accomplished with concurrence of all perfections, and virtuous qualities. In that sense, I suppose, the Apostle useth the word (1 Tim. 1. 9.) The law is not given for (that is, to terrifie or condemn) a just man; that is, for a man who is holy and good. Thus God is altogether just; for he hath all the lines of perfection, of holiness, and goodnesse centring in him, he is not only just and virtuous, but justice and vertue it selfe.

Secondly, To be just, imports the keeping of promises, and the performance of our word. He is a just man, who when he hath spoken, you may know what to have of him, and where to have him. Some give words, and you can get nothing of them but words, that’s injustice, because our words bind us and should be as lawes to us. A man may chuse whether he will make promises, but when he hath promised, it is not in his choice, whether he will performe or no; his word bindes him. In this sense, God is altogether just. WHATSOEVER word you have had from God, (and he hath given us many comfortable words for every condition,) God is a just God, and will performe it to a tittle. That Glorious and everlasting wittnesse is borne to him by dying Jesus. (John 23. 14.) And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your soules, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to passe unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. In this sense, God is sayd to be, not only mercifull, but just in forgiving our sins (1 John 1. 9.) If we confesse our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse. If we confesse our sins spiritually and believingly, deeply, humbly, and affectionately; if we confesse thus, he is just to forgive; why? because he hath given a pro-
a promise to forgive those who make such confessions of sin. And thus' tis in any other promise; he keepes his word, he keepes touch with man, he will not fayle nor come short in the lease, therefore he is altogether just.

Thirdly, He is just in the strictest acception of justice, giving every one his due. It is possible for a man to be just in neither of the two former notions, he may neither be vertuous in his actions, nor a keeper of his word as a man, & yet he may be just as a Magistrate, just as in a cause committed to his determination. But God is just in all these three considerations of a just man, and therefore he is eminently, or altogether just. And I conceive, the latter of the three is chieffely intended here; God is most just, that is, he never did, nor ever will, give an undue or an undeserved sentence upon any man.

I might shew distinctly, that God is just, and how just he is: 
First, in rewarding those that doe well; Secondly, in punishing those that doe ill. And that because he doth it; First, by a law; Secondly, by a law published; Thirdly, by a law possible (our inability of keeping the law is consequentall to the giving of it; man hath drawne it upon himselfe) though now he cannot performe it at all, yet God is just in punishing, because he sins against a law that he had a power (in his head or representative) to have fulfilled. Fourthly, God is just, because the penalties which he infliceth flow from a right and just law (as the Apostle speaks, Rom: 7. 12.) The law is holy, and just, and good; and therefore all the awards that are grounded upon it must needs be just too. 
Fifthly, he punisgheth justly, because he never punisgheth but upon proofo, and evidence; yea he will make every mans Conscience a witness against himself, or condemn him out of his own mouth. Sixthly, he punisgheth justly, because he punisgheth impartially, neither feare, nor hope, nor favour, can divert him (I sa: 27. 11. Jer: 22. 24.) Seventhly, he doth not only punish in a proportion to the law, but often in a proportion to the sin, and that not only to the measure of the sin, but to the manner of the sin; as that cruel king Adonibezek confessed, when himselfe was cruelly dealt with (his thumbs and great toes being cut off, Judg: 1. 7.) As I have done so God hath requited me: As if he had fayd, God is just not only because he hath punished me in measure acording to my sin, but after the very fame manner in which I sin-
Wilt thou condemn him that is most just? wilt thou do such a thing? what? condemn him that is most just! How great a wickedness is this, if we consider. First, that what-ever God doth, we ought to be patient under it. Secondly, that whatsoever God doth, we ought to acquiesce or rest quietly and contentedly in it; that's more then to be patient. Thirdly, that whatsoever he doth, we ought to approve and justify God in it. Fourthly, that we ought to magnifie God whatsoever he doth, though his dispensations are bitter, & burthenome; and if we do so we shall finde the bitterest dispensations sweeter to us. Now if we ought to be patient under, to acquiesce in, to approve of, yea to magnifie and exalt the name of God in all his dealings with us and determinations concerning us, then how simplistic it is to condemn him? What? Shall such poore creatures as we, take upon us to censtyle and condemn the works of God! Some say it at least in their hearts, if they had the reines of government in their hands, they would carry things evener then God doth; they would put all things right, if they might have the rule; if they might a while doe as they thinke fit, they would doe all things fitly. Some will talke thus arrogantly of their fitness to governe the whole world, who have not wit enough to governe their owne familyes; nor any grace at all to governe themselves; yea they will presume they could governe all men, who are scarce fit to governe a heard of swine, or as Job speaks (Chap. 30. 1.) to be set over the dogs of a mans flocke; such as these will take upon them to governe the world, & say they could doe it better then 'tis done. Things should not goe thus, if they might have their will. Though indeed (like that rafe and inconsiderate young man in the fabulous Poet, who desired for one day at least to be Charioteere to the Sun) if they might have their will, they would set the whole world a-fire, or put all into a flame in one day. Thus, vaine man would be wise (as Zophar sayd, Chap. 11. 12.) Though man be borne like a wild asses colt, that is, being altogether unwilling to be governed by
any right law, he would faine give the law to and governe all; what is this but to condemne the most just? and how great, how blasphemously impudent a wickedneffe is this!

But some may say, Did Job ever thus condemne God?

I answer; he did not condemne him in so many words, he did not formally fit upon his tribunall, and condemne God, but he spake such words as did shew a condemning of God, and Elihu justly condemned him for speaking them.

Hence note, lastly.
Not to submit freely to, or to complaine of the dealings of God, is a condemning of God.

This is a hard saying, we may be almost astonished to heare it, what? condemne God? yeas, so farre as any man murmurs against the dealings of God, so farre he condemnes God. The workes of God must be submitted to, as well as his word, his dispensations must be obeyed as well as his lawes and constitutions. Our complaints of what he doth are cenfures of his person. We question not only the sovereignty and power of God, but his very wildome and truth and justice, when we reluct against any of his acts or awards concerning us, though they produce our greatest sufferings. This Elihu further aggravates in the next words; Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked? and to Princes, Ye are ungodly? If men will be mannerly to Princes, how much more mannerly ought they to be towards God?
JOB. Chap. 34. Ver. 18, 19.

Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes, ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they are all the work of his hands.

These two verses are both an Illustration and a Confirmation or proof of what Elihu spake last in the close of the 17th verse, Wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Hereupon he infers

Ver. 18. Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked?

Those words, Is it fit, are not literally and expressly in the hebrew; and therefore some connect these two verses immediately with the former; Wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Who saith to a King, O thou wicked? and to Princes, O ye ungodly? That is, who is so just, that he spares not to tell the greatest Kings and Princes of their wickedness and ungodliness? Or as the Vulgar Translation hath it, Who saith to a King, O thou Apostate? I tell thee, Thou art fallen from that Justice and Righteousness which thou didst once exercise in thy Government. It is said of Nero, he had his five years wherein he govern'd excellently, but afterward he proved Apostate, cruelly tyrannizing over (instead of ruling) his people, as there are Apostates in Spirituals, so in Civils; an apostate is an hypocrite revealed, an hypocrite is an apostate vail'd: God unmasks hypocrites of all sorts, and will not fail sooner or later to reprove their Apostacy. It is better not to be good, than not to continue good: Backsliders are worse then they who never set one step in the ways of God and goodness.

So then, according to this reading, the sense may be given out thus: As if Elihu had said, How canst thou (O Job!) possibly imagine that God should be unjust, when he doth not forbear to tell the greatest Kings of their injustice, and convince them of it: he who calleth degenerate Kings Apostates, and unjust Princes wicked; he that is thus impartial in reckoning with Kings, and the mighty men of

the earth (as indeed God hath always been, and will ever be) How
should he be unjust? Wilt thou condemn the most Just? Even him
who is so just, that he rebukes injustice wheresoever he findes it, and
who can find it wheresoever it is? (Psal. 105. 14.) He reproved
Kings for their sakes, (that is, for the sakes of his peculiar people,
when they did them wrong,) saying, Touch not mine anointed, and
do my Prophets no harm: implying, that he trusts Kings with that
great power to protect his anointed, and to save his Prophets from
harm; and therefore would not take it well at their hands, if they
abused their power to hurt and affliet them. This is a good read-
ing, but I shall not insist upon it, though some insist much upon it,
because I would rather favour our own Translation, and carry the
Interpretation that way, as containing an argument to prove, that
it is a most wicked thing to condemn God as unjust, because men
are scarce any where found so presumptuous, or bold, as to say to
a King, Thou art wicked, or to Princes, ye are ungodly. It is much
easier for any man, much more for great men to do evil, then for
others to tell them so: And as the faults of Princes seldom find
reprovers, so it requires a great deal of wisdom, not to commit a fault
in reproving them.

Is it fit to say to a King thou art wicked?

Is this a comly thing? Or will Kings endure it? And if so,
doth it become thee, O Job, to speak hardly of God? Or will he endure it? Elihu did not charge Job with speaking evil of
God directly; but would intimate to him, that while he was so
unquiet under the afflicting hand of God, and pressed him so of-
ten for a further hearing of his cause, he did very dangerously re-
reflect upon his Justice; and that seeing we stand in awe of
Kings and Sovereigne Princes, and dare not misbehave our
selves before them, nor let fall an unreverend word concerning
them, how durst he presume to speak any thing unseemly of God?
Is it fit to say to a King,

Thou art wicked.

Kings are supream, they are cloathed with Sovereigne power
over all persons within their Dominion; Is it therefore fit to use
such coarse language, such down-right unhewen speeches in
any address to them? Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked? The original word imports the worst sort, the most infamous, among wicked men; So Mr Broughton renders, Is it meet that one say to a King, Belial? Some give it in the Vocative case, Is it meet for a subject to say to his Soveraigne, O thou Belial! O thou wicked one? Dare any speak thus to a King?

This word Belial is often used in Scripture, to note, not only a wicked man in general, but an eminently wicked man, even a man in whom all wickedness is (as it were) centred and settled, the very lees and dregs of all men, who may be called wicked. When Jezebel procured and suborned two false witnesses against Naboth, it is said, There came in, two men, children of Belial, (1 Kings 21, 13;) and sent before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, &c. These witnesses were perjured persons; to tell a lye is the worst of sins; what then is it to swear a lye? no word could reach the height of this wickedness more fully, then to call them children of Belial. When the Lord comforted the Church with the glad tidings of the Gospel, (Nab. 1, 15.) Behold the feet of those upon the mountains that preach peace; O Jerusalem keep thy solemn Feasts, perform thy Vowes; He subjoyns this promise as a reason, The wicked shall no more pass thorow thee, he is utterly cut off: We put in the margin, Belial shall no more pass thorow thee; that is, thou shalt then be freed from those Belialists who formerly interrupted thy peace, by vexing and persecuting thee, or profaning thy holy Assemblies by mixing themselves with thee: But I give thee assurance the time is coming, when Belial shall no more trouble thee. Yea Belial is a Title so full of wickedness, that it fits the Devil himself, whom the Scripture brands with that black mark, The wicked one, or the evil one. The Apostle puts that question with much holy disdain; (2 Cor. 6, 14, 15.) What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? that is, Christ with the Devil? They differ from the Devil only in flesh and blood, in nature they are as bad as he, who bear his name.

This may yet further appear, if we look into the Grammatical derivation of it, Belial, is commonly expounded a man without a yoke, or a man that will not be yoked; that is, a man who will not come under command, a lawless person; so we translate the Apostle's
Apostle's word, (1 Tim. 1. 9.) The Law is not made for a righ
teous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and
for sinners, &c. that is, for the sons of Belial, or, for such as will
not endure the yoke; the Law is a yoke, Christ calls the Law of
the Gospel his yoke, (Matt. 11. 29.) and they that will not
bear the yoke of Christ, shall never have benefit by the Cross of
Christ; we must take up the yoke of Christ, if we would taste
the fruit of the Cross of Christ. Now a Belial, will not hear
of, nor have to do with the yoke; he is like the wilde Ais describ
ed in the 39th of Job, who will not be taught to plow, nor be
bound in the furrow; you cannot make the wilde Ais work like
the Ox. Wicked men have hard and stony hearts, yet such soft,
tender, and delicate necks, that they cannot abide the yoke; tis
their bondage to be tyed to obedience.

Again, The notation of the word Belial, imports a person of
no use; or altogether unprofitable, a man that is good for nothing,
a meer unthrift, or spendthrift, a man that neither doth good to
himself, nor to any others; as if he were born only to spoil and
devour all that is before him, as if he came into the world to eat
other mens labours, and not to labour that he might have to eat.

Christ calleth the idle or slothful servant, an unprofitable servant,
(Matt. 25. 30.) and to be an unprofitable servant, is to be a son
of Belial; one that hath no good in his heart, nor doth any good
in his place, neither in his private nor publick capacity; neither
in his own family, nor in the neighbourhood, and Nation where
he lives. No man is born for himself, nor ought any man to live
to himself. It were better not to live, then not to be doing good
while we live. He that liveth only to profit himself, liveth to
little purpose; to what purpose then doth he live, whose life is
altogether unprofitable to himself? And indeed, he that is not
in some respect or other a common good, or good to others, cannot
be good, nor do any true good to himself; yet such is the wicked
man represented under the notion of this Text. Seeing then there
are such bad and base significancies in the bowels of this word; is
it sufferable by a King? Is it fit to say to a King, thou art Belial, or
wicked?

What can be said more unfitly? What greater reproach can
be cast upon a King (who ought to be a living Law, a breathing
Law, as also the Keeper of the Law by way of conservation and
protection)
Further, Is it fit to say to a King, Belial? As Belial designs an unprofitable person, a man good for nothing, a man of no use; what? Upon the Throne, and yet of no use to a Nation? How high an indignity is this to Regal dignity? Kings are set up for the greatest use, for the most important services, even for the profit and advantage of mankind, especially of all within their Kingdoms and Dominions; as all are to serve them in their state, so they count it their chiefest honour to advance the peace and profit of all their peaceable and profitable subjects: Therefore nothing can be said more dishonourably to a King than this, Thou art good for nothing, an unprofitable person, Belial. Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked?

And to Princes, ye are ungodly?

The word renderd Princes, signifies munificent, bountiful, free, willing; so Princes are called, to shew what they are or should be, men of bountiful, noble, munificent, heroic, free spirits, open hearted, and openhanded; they who are so, are Princes in truth as well as in Title. The holy Spirit of God, or God the holy Spirit, is called a Princely Spirit, (Psal. 51. 12.) we read it Free Spirit; and this free Princely Spirit of God, makes all his people of a free Princely spirit, of a large heart, both as to duty Godwards, and as to charity manwards; (Psal. 110. 3.) In the day of thy power the people shall be willing; they shall be as Princes; they shall serve thee as sons, not as slaves; a Royal Spirit is conveyed into them by the Spirit in the day of the Power of Jesus Christ,
Chap. 34.  An Exposition upon the Book of Job.  Ver. 17.

Christ, or when he conquers them to the obedience of himself. By this appellation, worldly Princes, the Princes of this world are exprest in sacred language, that 'so their very names might minde them of being such, and of doing such things as are the ornament both of their persons and places. These two high Titles in the Text, Kings and Princes, are somtimes taken for the same; and in strictest sense, Princes are the next degree, or but one remove from Kings.

Again, There are some called Princes, who have the supreme power within their own Territories. Others are called Princes, who have a delegated or derived power from Kings. The Apostle speaks of such, (1 Pet. 2. 13.) charging the Church and people of God, to submit to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the King as supreme; or unto Governours as sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. Elihu brings in both, for the fuller confirmation of his point, and the stronger conviction of Job, It is fit to say to a King, thou art wicked? and to Princes (who stand about his Throne, and serve him in his Government) ye are ungodly? Ye regard neither right nor reason, neither what's fit to be done, nor what to be advised? That's the sense of the words as they are an argument from the less to the greater; If it be an uncomely and undecent thing (faith Elihu) to say to a King thou art wicked? and to Princes ye are ungodly? How much more to him that accepteth not the persons of Princes? &c.

Hence Note.

First, Men are not all of a rank, or all are not of an equal state in this world.

This Text speaks of Kings and Princes; and the most of men are inferior not only to Kings, but to Princes. God hath not made man upon earth as minims in writing, all of a height; but as in the alphabet of Letters, some are longer and deeper then others; so in the Alphabet of mankind; some men are bigger and higher then others. Kings and Princes are but men, yet they are men in a great letter, or they are among men as the Aleph among the letters, which as it is first in order, so it signifies a Prince, a Chief, a Leader. And if the most wise God had not ordered such an inequality among men, how should order have been kept among
among men? Nothing (considering the corruptions and lusts of men) can be more unequal than that equality which some have vainly contended for among men. All men would fall down into confusion, if some were not above. That which keeps all up, is, only that some are uppermost, Kings and Princes.

Secondly, (which is here principally aimed at,) 

Note. 

It is most uncomely and sinful, to revile or give reproachful words to Kings or Princes.

When we say It is not fit, we say less than the thing is, or then the Text intendeth; there is more evil in it then a bare unfitness, 'tis indeed a very great wickedness, and ungodliness, to say to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes, ye are ungodly. To say so, is expressly against the Rule, (Exod. 22. 28.) Thou shalt not revile the gods, (or, as we put in the margin, Judges) nor curse the Ruler of thy people: And the Apostle Paul quotes this Text (Acts 23. 5.) when himself had flipt in that point, as he stood before the Judgement seat, and pleaded his own integrity; for when Ananias the high Priest commanded them, that stood by to smite him, on the mouth; Paul said unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: This drew a reproof upon him presently from them that stood by (v. 4.) Revilest thou Gods high Priest? And what doth Paul answer? (v. 5.) I wist not, Brethren, that he was the high Priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people. There hath been much dispute about that answer, I wist not that he was the high Priest: Certainly Paul saw and knew that he was the high Priest; and it is as certain, that he did not tell a lye, when he said, I wist not that he was the high Priest: His meaning I conceive was only this, as if he had said, having received such unjust usage in the Court, as to be openly smitten in time of hearing, I confess I was in a passion, and did not consider, as I ought, that it was the high Priest; I spake rashly and unadvisedly. I wist not, that is, I deliberated not with myself, who it was I spake to, for I ought not to have used such language; the Scripture also having forbidden it, which faith, Thou shalt not curse the Ruler of thy people. It will not bear us out, to use ill words to Magistrates, though (as Paul's case was) we are ill used by them. Shimei taking the advantage of David's affliction, rose up to this height
height of impudence against him, mentioned with indignation by 
Elihu in the Text, he openly and to his face called him Belial, 
(2 Sam. 16. 5. 7.) Come out thou bloody man, and thou man of Be-
lial: But we know what the issue was, he paid dear for it at last; 
though David forgave him at present, and did not suffer Abishai 
to take a sudden revenge, yet upon his death-bed he delivered him 
over to his son Solomon, to deal with him as he should see good. 
And so great is the offensiveness and unfitness of speaking thus 
unto a King, that the Jews joined it with blasphemy against God 
himself. We read (1 Kings 21. 13.) how two false Witnesses 
came against Naboth, saying, Naboth blasphemed God and the King; 
as much as to say, we heard Naboth say of the King, Belial; And 
as soon as these two had brought in their evidence against him, 
that he had blasphemed God and the King, they drew him out, and 
tened him: Blasphemy against God was death by the express 
letter of the Law, (Lev. 24. 15. 16.) It was also death by the 
same Law for any man to curse his Father or his Mother (Exod. 
21. 17.) And because the King is (Pater Patriæ) the father of 
his Country, it seems the cursing or blaspheming of him, was also 
punishable by death. The Apostle Jude useth an equivalent word 
in the Greek (Ep. of Jude, v. 8.) reproving a wicked Sect in those 
times; They fear not to blaspheme, or speak evil of Dignities: 
There is blasphemy against Princes, who are titular Gods, as well 
as against the only true God. Kings are to be feared, to be sub-
mitted to, they are to be prayed for, therefore not to be reviled. 
Is it fit to say unto a King, Belial?

Yet this doth not stop the mouths of all men from telling Kings 
and Princes their faults, nor doth it justify a silent dissembling of 
them; much less doth it open the mouths of any to dawb Kings 
and Princes with the untempered mortar of flatteries; Kings are 
no more to be flattered then they are to be reproached. Digni-
ties must not be spoken evil of, yet they may be prudently and 
humbly told of their evils, and informed of their failings plainly. 
When Elijah met Ahab, who said, Art thou he that troubleth Isra-
el? Elijah answered, (1 Kings 18. 18.) I have not troubled Israel, 
but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Com-
mandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baal. And we read 
how boldly Elisha carried it to the King of Israel, (2 Kings 3. 13, 
14.) What have I to do with thee? Get thee so the Prophets of thy

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father, and to the Prophets of thy mother: And Eliesa said, as the Lord of Hosts liveth before whom I stand; Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. Thus the Prophets dealt with much gracious severity towards mighty Princes. The Prophet Isaiah feared not to say (Isa. 1. 10.) Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodome, Give ear unto the Law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah; implying, that the Rulers of Jerusalem were then but such as the Rulers of Sodome once were, and that the people were no better then the people of Gomorrah; and it is conceived, that for this plainness and liberty of speech, which the Prophet Isaiah used toward the Princes and Rulers of Judah, he was put to death, being cut or mangled asunder with a wooden Sawe. One might think that Ezekiel did much forget himself, when he gave those opprobrious terms to Zedekiah King of Judah, (Ezek. 21. 25.) And thou profligate wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end; yet he sinned not in this harsh reproof of his sin, because commanded of God to do it, and specially directed by the holy Spirit. The Prophets might not diminish a word, but must give out what God gave in, John the Baptist reproved Herod for Herodias his brother Philips wife, and for all the evil which he had done, (Luke 3. 19.) And Jesus Christ himself called Herod, Fox; (Luke 13. 32.) The Prophets were often Instructed and Commissioned to prophesie against the mountains; that is, against the Princes and Powers of the world; and therefore take the state of the point, and of our duty about it, in these few conclusions, that we may not run upon the rocks either way; neither upon the rock of blasphemy against Kings and Princes on the one side, nor upon the rock of flattery on the other.

First, The Power or State of Princes must never be reviled nor jevill spoken of; kingly Power and Authority is always to be reverenced and honoured; though the Prince be wicked, yet his Power is to be reverenced, and that's the purest reverence. For to reverence the power of Princes, only, because, or when they are good, and do us good, and rule every way according to our mind; this is but a piece of selfishness; but when Princes are evil and bring evills upon us, yet to bear respect to the Power and Authority which they Exercise; this is to honour God, and
to give true submission to his ordinance. Whatsoever the person is, the power must be reverently submitted to.

Secondly, It is high wickedness to speak evil of the persons of just and righteous Princes; that every man will acknowledge.

Thirdly, Kings and Princes must not be reproved for personall or private faults publicly. To doe so is against the rule in any mans case; much more in the case of Kings and Princes.

Fourthly, Kings are not to be reproved for any of their faults, but by those who have a Call to it; that was the reason of the liberty which the old Prophets used towards Kings, they were specially commanded and Commissioned by God for it, and the peril was upon their own heads if they did it not; it is not for every one to reprove Princes, but for those that are called to it.

Lastly, Even those that are called to it must doe it with much submission; though they must not doe it to halves and deceitfully, yet they are to doe it respectfully. It is not fit to say to a King, Belial; such rough and unhewne language is not for Princes: their faults must only be insinuated, if that may serve, as Nathan dealt with David, who though he knew what his sin was, yet he did not say to him, Thou murdherer, thou Adulterer, but intimated the matter by a parable, and made him covertly, or in a third person charge himselfe, before he charged him, or applied the parable personally to him; with, Thou art the man. When Miriam the Sister and Aaron the Brother of Moses spake against him, because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married (Numb. 12. 1.) though they were thus neerely related, yet speaking irreverently of Moses the Chiefe Magistrate, the Lord sayd to them (v. 8.) Wherefore were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? Yet how common is this sin? the tongues of men walke exceeding foolishly in their discourses about the persons and powers of Princes; And we every where find most pleased to heare well of themselves, and ill of others, or to speake well of themselves, and ill of others, and the higher they are who are spoken of, or of whom they speake evil, the more they are pleased both in hearing and speaking evil of them. How untruly are their tongues, who cannot forbear their rulers! Thus much of Elihu's question, as it is resolved into a Negative proposition, It is not fit to say to a King, thou art ungodly. We may further consider it as an argument from the greater to the lesse, to prove, That it is a most wicked
wicked thing to speak a word unduly of God. Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked? and to Princes, ye are ungodly?

Ver. 19. How much lesse to him that accepteth not the persons of Princes?

Who is that? The words are a clear Periphrasis of God, he accepts not the persons of Princes. As if Elihu had said; the Kings and Princes of the earth, expect such great respect from their subjects, that no man should dare to censure them or speak evil of them, though they doe evil, or dealt unjustly; how much more unfit is it to speak evil of God, or to charge his government with injustice, who never doth any evil, all whole ways are not only just, but justice. He that accepteth not the persons of Princes, who are the greatest of men, can have neither will nor motive to dealt unjustly with any man. I shall not stay to shew what it is to accept persons? because that hath been shewed at the 7th verse of the 13th Chapter, as also Chapter 32. 21. only I'll give it in one word; To accept persons is too have more respect to the man then to the matter; and that's a very common fault among men, and as commonly condemned by God. 'Tis a received axiom, He that would or doth put on the person of a Judge, must put off the person of a friend; that is, he must not be sway'd by any respect whatsoever of friendship, or allyance, but must judge purely as the case deserveth.

Nor shall I stay to urge the greatness of the sin of speaking any thing uncomely of God, that also hath been spoken to in many former passages of this Chapter. Only from these words, How much lesse to him that accepteth not the person of Princes?

Note First.

That which ought not to be done or spoken to the greatest of men, ought much lesse to be either done or spoken to God.

The reason is, because, first, God is infinitely more to be revered then any man. Secondly, because God is infinitely more able to take vengeance, and certainly will, of any that shall doe or speak evil to him, then the greatest among the children of men. Yet how many are there who dare not offend a man, not a great man especially, either by word or deed, who are not afraid by
by both to offend and provoke the great God? O remember, the force of this text; If it be not fit to speake unduely of Princes, How much lesse of him that accepteth not the persons of Princes?

Hence note, Secondly.
God is no accepter of persons.

He hath no respect to Princes in prejudice to truth and righteousness, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness (be he never so poore) is accepted with him, (Acts 10. 35.) and in every nation he that feareth him not, but worketh unrighteousness (be he never so great) is unacceptable yea abominable to him. The Scripture often attributes this glory to God, (Deut: 10. 17. 2 Chron: 19. 7. Gal: 2. 6. Col: 3. 25.) And as it is the glory of God, that he is no accepter of persons, so is the duty of man (Deut: 1. 17.) Judgement must proceed and conclude with respect to the rule, and command of God, not with respect to the persons of men, or our relations to them. Levi was highly commended for this (Deut: 33. 9.) who sayd unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his owne children, &c. When man accepteth not the persons of men he acteth most like God, of whom Elihu saith, He accepteth not the persons of Princes,

Nor regardeth the rich more then the poore.

That's a further description of God; he doth not regard, that is, acknowledge or know the one more then the other; he is (in the best things) as communicative to, and converseth as familiarly with the poore as the rich; yea, he doth not value or prize the rich man more then the poore; the poor man is worth as much as the rich man in Gods account; suppose the rich man worth thousands, yea ten thousands of gold and silver, and the poore man so poore that he is not worth a shilling yet in the account of God the poore man is worth as much as the rich man.

The Scripture speakes of two sorts both of rich and poor men; There are men rich in spiritualls, such Christ intimates, who are (Luke 12. 20.) rich towards God; or as he speakes of the Church of Smyrnen (Rev: 2. 9.) rich in grace, I know thy poverty, but thou art rich; That is, I know thou art poor in earthly pelse, but rich in spiritualls. The Apostle James puts the question (Chap: 2. 5.) Hath not God
God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. Now, it is most certain, that God regardeth the rich in spirituals, more then the poor in spirituals, he highly regardeth those that are poor in spirit, and pronounced them blessed (Matt. 5. 3.) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; But he regardeth not those who are poor in spirituals; not them especially who boast of their spiritual riches when they have none (they that have them are thankfull for them, they do not boast of them) as the Church of Laodicea did, of whom Christ said (Rev. 3. 16, 17.) I will spew thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest I am rich & encreased in goods, and knowest not that thou art poore. Thus you see, there are a sort of rich men, whom Christ regardeth more then the poor of that sort. But as poore and rich are distinguished meereely by abundance and want, by the smallness and greatnes of their portion in the things of this world, as Dives and Lazarus in the parable were, so he regardeth not the rich more then the poor. When a poor man is gracious as well as poore, God regardeth him more then any rich man who hath no grace; And when either both have grace alike, or both are alike without grace, he regardeth them both alike. When rich and poore have grace, they are both greatly regarded, and when neither of them have grace, neither of them are at all regarded by the God of all grace. Thus 'tis plaine, God regardeth the rich no more then the poor, nor the poore any whit lesse then the rich.

The word rendred rich, signifieth also bountifull (Isa: 32. 5.) 'Tis also rendred, The helpfull, the saving man; for though rich men are not always helpfull with their riches, nor ready to save others in distresse; yet rich men may doe both: they have always in their hand power and usually opportunity to be helpfull to the poore, and to save the distressed. And surely, as the Lord regardeth not the rich more then the poore; so he regardeth those rich men least of all, who have no regard to helpe and save the poore. Once more, Some derive the word which we translate rich, from a roote which signifieth to clamour, or to speake out and boldly, which complies well with that sentence of Solomon (Prov. 18. 23.) The poore useth entreaties (that is, he speaketh humbly or by way of supplication) but the rich answereth roughly. And as God regardeth not the rich more then the poore, so he regardeth those rich men least, who speake loudly and roughly to the poore. Having thus
thus opened the allusion of Elihu, that God regardeth not the rich more than the poor; let us consider, The reason of it in the next words.

For they are all the work of his hands.

As if he had said, God cannot but deal impartially with all, because all are the work of his hands: what reason hath he to respect one more than another, seeing the one is no more to him than the other, they are all the work of his hands. Man as man is the off-spring of God (Acts 17. 28.) He is also the work of his hands; that is, man is made by his power; As man descendth from man, so he is called the fruit of the womb; but as man is the off-spring of God, so he is called the worke of his hands, and his hands have wrought the poor man as well as the rich; They are all the work of his hands in a two-fold respect.

First, In their naturall constitution; God hath moulded them in the same fashion, he hath given each of them a body and a soul; A body framed of the same parts; a soul consisting of the same powers. God hath bestowed as much care and cost upon the making of a poore mans body and soul, as upon the rich mans. The richest man in the world, cannot boast that he hath any one member in his body or faculty in his soul, more then a poore man hath.

Secondly, Look upon the rich and poore in their Civil state, and so likewise they are the work of his hands; and that I conceive, is here intended as much as, if not more, then the former; not only is God the maker of the poor and of the rich in their natural state, soul and body; but as poor, and rich, he is the maker of them; that is, he maketh one man poore, and another man rich, as himselfe pleaseth. (Prov. 22. 2.) The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all. He hath made them men, and he hath made them rich or poore men. There is as much of the power and wisdom of God seen in making some men poore and others rich, as there is in making them men; yea God thinks himselfe as much honoured in our acknowledgements that the poore with their poverty, as that the rich with all their riches, are the work of his hands.

Hence Note:

First, Poor men are as much the work of God as the rich.
As they have the same nature, and are of the same matter, as they are both made of the same stuff, or are both of a piece, so they have the same maker; and their maker hath been at as much charge in the making of the one, as in the making of the other; yea, and usually, the poor man yeilds him a better rent, and brings more into his Treasury then the rich man doth.

Secondly Note.

It is the Lord who makes men poor, and makes men rich.

Agur prayed (Prov. 30. 8.) Give me neither poverty nor riches, Agur knew poverty was a gift of God as well as riches. It hath been said (though prophaneely) Every man is the fashioner of his own fortune, or the contriver of his own condition. Some who acknowledge God hath made them men, think they have made themselves rich, or great men; and we commonly look on those who fail in their worldly Estates, that they have made themselves poor and low in the world. I grant, there is a sense wherein men make themselves rich, and make themselves poor; that is, when they do either by their sins. God is not so engaged in the making of a man rich, when he enricheth himself by his sin, by deceiving or oppressing his brethren, as when he groweth rich in a way of righteousness: He that is enriched by oppression, or deceit, or sets his nest on high by flattery, or by fraud, cannot thank God for his riches, or honours; and if he doth, he blasphemously makes God a partner in those sins by which he hath got his riches and honours. For though it be a truth that there is a hand of God in his gettings, (for all the craft, and policy, and oppression which men use, will never be able to make them either rich or great, if God did not permit and order it so,) yet the heart of God is not with him in it, and God will not own his own hand in giving them wealth or power, further then as they are a testimony against them, of his goodness, and their ingratitude. We may also say of some poor men, they have made themselves poor, not God; He made Job poor, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, was his humble acknowledgement (chap. 1. 21.) but there are some, of whom we cannot so much say God hath made them poor by his sad providences to them, as that they have made themselves poor by their idlenesfs and improvidence, or by their prodigality and vain profulenefs; yet even of such poor men we may truly say, there
there be a righteous hand of God upon them in leaving or giving them up to the lusts of their own heart, their laziness, or lavishness, which produce their utter undoing, and bring them to a morsel of bread. So that let men be in what condition they will, the Lord is the former of it. The diligent hand maketh rich, but it is with the blessing of God; and when an indigent man becomes poor, it is the curse of God upon him for his sin, as well as the consequent of his sin. Yea, when an honest diligent man becomes poor, (that's the case of some) it is the Lords withholding of his blessing, which makes all his labours fruitless and successless; such a man is indeed one of God's poor, or a poor man of God's making; and God will surely make the poverty of such a man (if he continue in a believing dependence upon him, and in an humble submission to him, if he know how to want as well as to abound, how to be hungry as well as to be full, and in every estate hath learned therewith to be content, as the holy Apostle had, then (I say) God will surely make the poverty of such a man better to him then riches, or the largest portion of this world's enjoyment. The poor of God's special making, are under his special keeping and blessing: As they have but little, so they want nothing; God himself will always be not only enough, but all to them.

Take two further inferences from the whole verse.

First,

Princes, great and rich men must not expect to fare better with God because of their greatness or riches. For,

He doth not regard the rich more then the poor.

Secondly,

The meanest man needs not fear that he shall fare the worse before God for his meanness.

The most high God will not overlook those in a low estate, he regardeth the poor as well as the rich; and that's matter of great comfort to the poor, when disregarded by the rich. Though the Lord doth not make all men of an equal respect in the world, 'tis his will that some men should be more regarded by men then others are, yet himself (in the sense opened) beareth an equal respect to them all; He regardeth not the rich more then the poor, for they are all the work of his hands.
In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hands.
For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his doings.
There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

In these three verses Elihu doth two things principally; First, He sets forth the judgements of God; Secondly, He gives an account of the equity of them. He sets forth the judgements of God,
First, More generally, Upon People and Nations.
Secondly, Upon Princes and Governours; All this in the 20th verse. And in this judgement of God upon Nations, we may take notice,
First, Of the nature of it, and how it is described: and that is laid down three ways. First, They shall die. Secondly, They shall be troubled. Thirdly, They shall pass away. Under these Notions the judgement of God upon People and Nations is express.
Secondly, We may here consider the suddenness of all this, In a moment they shall die.
Thirdly, We may consider the season, (or rather as to man, the unseasonableness) of it, it shall be (though in a dreaming time) when they little dream of it; The people shall be troubled at midnight. Thus we have the judgement or sad dispensation of God described in this 20th verse, both as to the acts of it, and likewise as to the manner of it upon the people.

Elihu having shewed the judgement of God upon the people in the former part of this 20th verse, declares also his judgement upon the Princes in the latter end of it; The mighty shall be taken away without hand. Where we see; First, How Princes are expressed or called, They are the mighty. Secondly, What kinde of judgement befall eth them, They are taken away. Thirdly, The manner how this is brought about, They are taken away without hand.
From the matter of the judgement of God both upon people and Princes, *Elihu* proceeds to give the reason why the Lord deals thus with both; This he doth in the two verses following.

First, Because of their sin; *They are workers of iniquity*; in the close of the 22th verse.

Secondly, Because, as they are workers of iniquity, so God is fully acquainted with all their iniquity, &c. *He seeth all their works, and the iniquity of their works, nothing can cover it or them from his sight; and therefore, as Elihu afferts the omniscience of God positively in the 21th verse, so negatively in the 22th verse, There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. Now seeing the works of those Nations and Princes were naught, and the naughtiness of them was evident to God, how could he but punish them? And how just and righteous is he in punishing of them? By all this *Elihu* clears his general Assertion, or the point he drives at all this chapter over, namely, to prove that *God is righteous*; against which position, he tells us before, *Job* having spoken dangerously, he was engaged to maintain it vigorously; which he doth here, especially in that eminent branch of it, mentioned at the 19th verse, That he accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor. For, Princes as well as common people fall under his hand. So much for the parts and resolution of these three verses, as also for the general scope of them.

Yet before I go on to the particular explication of them, I would only minde the Reader of another Translation of the whole 20th verse, which varieth somewhat from ours, rendering it as a description of the judgement of God upon Princes, by the violence of the people; whereas according to our Translation, it is a description of the judgement of God both upon people and Princes. The Translation I mean, is that of the Vulgar Latine, which runs in this form.

**Vers. 20. Suddenly shall they die, at midnight the people shall be in a tumult, and shall pass over, and take away the violent man without hand.**

This Reading, and the expositions given upon it, prove, That God is so far from accepting the persons of Princes, that he does not only tell them their own, and reprove them to their face for their Vulg.
their wickedness and Apostacy (as was shewed from the former reading of the 18th verse) but deprives them also of their dignity, and pulls them from their power; And he doth it in such a manner, that every man may understand and see the hand of God in it, because they see no hands in it. The least of man appears in any work of providence, whether it be in a way of mercy or of judgment, the more of God is to be acknowledged in it: and where nothing of man appeareth, all, or the whole must be attributed unto God. The judgement which Elihu speaks of here, seems (according to this Interpretation) to have much of man in it; yet because the men supposed to be in it, are looked upon as such as can do little in it, or ought to do nothing in it, therefore 'tis said to be done without hands. Histories have given many examples, and dreadful instances of such calamities falling upon Princes by the rising of the people; and then they are said to be taken away without hand.

That is, Without any foreseen appearance of such a mischief; a hand which was not thought of being lifted up against them. It is said of wicked Zimri, who slew his master, that when he saw the people conspire against him, and the City taken, he went into the Palace of the King's house, and (in the heat of his rage) set it on fire, and burnt the Kings house over him, and died, (1Kin. 16. 18.) Juftine reports the like conclusion (upon a like occasion) of Sardanapalus, that effeminate and voluptuous Monarch of the Assyrian Empire. They who prosecute this Translation, conceive Elihu reflecting upon Job in all this, who was very uncivilly treated by his own people, from whom he had deserved highest respects, as he complained at the 30th chapter, they raised up against him the ways of their destruction; they used him very rudely, even despightfully; and he was in a pining consuming condition, as a man taken away without hand. But I shall not insist upon this reading, but take the words according to the scope before given, as a description of a mixt judgement from God; a judgement partly upon the people, and partly upon Princes, a judgement upon the many, and a judgement upon the mighty; In a moment shall they die.

In a moment.

The Text is, a moment they die; Not, that they shall die but a moment,
moment, or be only for a moment dead, but they shall die before a moment is over; there is an Ellipsis of the preposition [Beth,] in the Hebrew, which we supply in our Translation, In a moment they shall die: A moment is the least particle or parcel of time; we cannot imagine anything shorter then a moment, tis the very point of time, (Ps. 30. 5.)

His anger endureth for a moment, (Ps. David, when he would shew how very short (comparatively) the anger of God towards his people is) but in his favour is life: Thus Solomon (Prov. 2. 19.) He that speaketh truth, his tongue shall be established; but a lying tongue is for a moment: A lye cannot last long; he that speaks truth, what he speaks to day, is good to morrow, and to morrow, and will be good for ever; but a lying tongue is for a moment; that is, his lies will be discovered, and usually they are quickly discovered; though he live long to tell lies, or doth nothing but tell lies as long as he liveth, yet his lies are not long lived. Job describing the joy of the hypocrite (chap. 20. 5.) faith, It is but for a moment; like a fire of thorns, a blaze and gone: when the Apostle would strengthen and encourage the hearts of believers against all the troubles and sorrows of this present life, he calls them, (2 Cor. 4. 17.) First, light, Secondly, short; Our light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 

And that we might know how quick the devil was at his work with Christ, the Scripture faith (Luke 4. 5.) He shewed him all the Kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. As to shew the instantaneousness of our change from death to life in the resurrection, it is said, (1 Cor. 15. 52.) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last Trump, we shall be changed: So to shew the extreme suddenness of these mens change from life to death, it is said here, In a moment

**They shall die.**

They? Who? Both great and small; one and another of them shall die, or be swept away by death in a moment. There is a twofold death:

First, Natural: When either sickness or old age dissolves the earthly house of this tabernacle: The natural death of some is very lingering and slow, others are suddenly snatched away, they die in a moment.

Secondly,
Secondly, There is a violent death; thus many are taken away by the sword Martial, or Civil, others casually: The Text is true both of natural and violent death, either of them may overtake us in a moment; yet I conceive the latter is here chiefly intended, in a moment shall they die; that is, some sudden destruction shall come upon them, they shall be surprized by an unlooked for disaster, and removed out of the world, while they had not a thought of their removal.

Hence Note.

First, Death of any sort, may befall all sorts of men.

None can plead exemption or priviledge from the grave. It is appointed to men once to die; most die a natural death, and any man may die a violent death; who knows how he shall go out of this world? Christ told Peter, (John 21. 18.) When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This speaketh, signifying by what death he should glorifie God. And what kind of death was that? The Church Historie assureth us, 'twas a violent death. He (as his master Jesus Christ) was nailed to a Cross, and dyed. We come but one way into the world, but there are a thousand ways of going out.

Note Secondly.

Death comes suddenly upon many men, and may upon all men.

The whole life of the longest liver in this world, is but a moment, compared to eternity; and there is not any moment of our life, but (with respect to second causes) we are subject to death in it: We always in some sense (though at some times more) carry our lives in our hand, and how soon, or by what hand they may be snatched out of ours, we know not.

Now if our whole life be but a moment, and we subject to death every moment, how should we stand prepared for death every moment? And how sad is it to think, that they who may die the next moment, should for dayes, and weeks, and moneths, and years, never prepare for death? Most are loth to think of the end of their lives, till they are nearer the end of them; yet no man knoweth how near he is to the end of his life. Many put off the thoughts of death till it cometh, yet none can put off the coming of
of death; they would remove the meditation of death to the fall of their leaves, to the winter, and worst of their old age, yet they are not able to remove death one moment from the Spring and best of their youth.

Note, Thirdly.

Violent death, by the sore and severe judgement of God, often sweeps multitudes away in a moment.

God can thrust whole thongs of men, yea whole Nations into their graves together; it is laid (Numb. 16. 21.) of Corah and his companions, The earth did cover, or swallow them up in a moment: And the Lord commanded Moses to say unto the children of Israel (Exod. 33. 5.) ye are a stiff-necked people; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: As if the Lord had said, I will take no long time for it, I can quickly dispatch you; how many soever there are of you, I will do it in a moment. We have a like description of the sudden and quick dispatch of men at the Lord's word of Command, (Psal. 73. 19.) How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment, they are utterly consumed with terrors? The final ruine of Babylon was thus prophesied (Isa. 47. 9.) These two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowerhood, they shall come upon thee in their perfection: Thou shalt utterly be destroyed, and perish at once for ever. The Prophet Jeremiah (Lam. 4. 6.) bewailed the destruction of Jerusalem, whose calamity was greater then that of Sodome and Gomorrah, which God destroyed in a moment: Sodome and Gomorrah were great Cities, yet how soon consumed! In some sense, there is a greater evil in a lingering destruction, then in a speedy one; so the Prophet aggravates death by famine, beyond death by fire; because to die by famine is a lingering death. Caesar being warned that some lay in wait to destroy him suddenly, sighted it, and said, unexpected death is most desirable: And that's the lot of many great men; to which some conceive the Psalmist had respect, when he said, (Psal. 32. 7.) Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes; that is, suddenly. But though in some sense a speedy death is more eligible then a lingering one, yet in many respects, to die suddenly, or in a moment, may be concluded a far greater judgement, then to see death coming by degrees, and destruction walking towards us step by step. So-

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lament (Prov. 1:27.) speaks of swift destruction, of destruction coming like a whirlwind; swift destruction overtakes them who are slow paced to receive and obey instruction. Thus the Lord can deal both with persons and with Nations; he needs not make any delays, nor take time to do it, their destruction shall come (if he will send it) in a day, in an hour, yea, in a moment shall they die;

And the people shall be troubled at midnight.

That is, the body, or generality of the people, the many shall be troubled; they shall be as men amazed, or as the Metaphor imports, they shall be disjoynted; Men associated under due Laws of Government, are as so many members of a well compacted Body; but when broken and scattered, they are like a body whose members are dislocated, or out of joynt, unfit for any use or service. And as there is a taxation of the members of the body, a disjoynting of the bones, so there is a disjoynting of the faculties of the minde; In times of great trouble, not only is the body Politick, which consists of many men, but the minde of every body, or of every single man is much out of joynt. The word is applied to those great concussions of the world (Psal. 18. 17.) The earth shook and trembled, the foundations also of the hills were moved, and were shaken at the presence of the Lord, because he was wroth; which we may interpret of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who are as hills and mountains; if the Lord do but touch them in anger, they move, yea tremble. The word is applied also to the waves of the Sea, (Jer. 5. 22.) which roar, and toss themselves; we commonly say, as in the Text, the Sea is troubled, or *is a troubled Sea, a tossing Sea. That expression is also common among us, when we see a man much disquieted, he is (we say) in a great toss; even as a ship at Sea upon the proud waves. Thus saith Elihu, the people shall be in a toss, they shall feel a storm in their mindes, sudden gusts of fear and sorrow shall carry them they know not whither; or they shall be lifted up to heaven in vain confidences, and then fall down to hell in despairing thoughts, as the tempest at Sea is described in the 107th Psalm. There is yet another rendering of the Text, in allusion to Drunkards, who are overcome with wine, (Jer. 25. 16.) And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad; the word which we translate move, is that in the Text; now we know drunkenness moves men, and puts all
all into disorder and disquietment: Thus the people (through the fierce anger of God, and the wine of astonishment which he gives them to drink) shall be moved, they shall reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man. Great troubles and afflictions are called in Scripture the wine of astonishment, because they make many say and do they scarce know what; great troubles bereave men not only of their comforts, but of their reason; they do not only straiten them, but astonish them. They who have drowned their wits in cups of worldly pleasure, may soon have them drowned in full and overflowing cups of worldly sorrow.

Besides this Exposition of the peoples being troubled with perplexity, fear, and doubt, with anxiety, and uncertainty of spirit what to do, I say, besides this, there is another way of being troubled, upon which some Expositors specially insist. The people shall be troubled; that is, shall be in a tumult; they shall rise up sediously, and (as we say) make a commotion, they shall gather together as many waters, with a roaring noise. Many people, are compared to many Waters; and there is sometimes a confluence, a great confluence or flood of them tumbling together: The Poet tells us elegantly what rude work a people make when they rise up like a flood of troubled waters. Their rage (faith he) finds out weapons, one throws stones, another throws firebrands, till all's in a sad combustion: These waters, if let alone, may quickly put all into a flame. The Psalms ascribes the quieting of the Sea, and the quieting of the people to God in one verse; yea, I conceive the one is but the explication of the other, (Ps. 65. 7.) Which shell the noise of the Seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of their people. Thus faith Elihu, the people shall be in a tumult, for they meet next, or those especially who never did not meet them any other hurt but to keep the peace, or bridge their headstrong fury.

Yet I rather adhere to the former Interpretation, The people shall be troubled, that is, they shall be in a great conformation of spirit, neither being able (which they seldom are) to advise themselves what to do, nor fit to receive (which they seldom will) advice from others. And (as Elihu adds) they shall be thus troubled at midnight.

Or, In the half of the night, as the words may be rendered; that's
that's a great aggravation of the judg-ment. The night is a time of rest, and midnight is the time of deepest rest; so that for the people to be in a tumult, or troubled at midnight, is to be overtaken with matter of fear, when fear seemed furthest off, or when they suspected nothing to make them afraid. David saith of some, (Psal. 3. 5.) There were they in great fear, where no fear was. To fear at midnight, is to fear when usually no fear is, that is, when people are at rest in their beds: And so to say, the people shall be troubled at midnight, signifieth either, First, the coming of trouble upon a secure people, upon a people who thought themselves, and while they thought themselves not only out of the noise, but reach of danger: Or secondly, It may signify the coming of trouble upon a people altogether unfit to help themselves; when a man is asleep, he cannot give counsel how to prevent danger, and while he is in his bed, he is in no posture to oppose it. All this may well be included in what Eliphaz faith, The people shall be troubled at midnight.

Hence Note. First,  
There are National troubles as well as personal.

God can scare not only a family, or this and that particular man, but a whole people at once; he cannot only make a child, or a woman, but a multitude, yea an Army of mighty men tremble like a child, and faint as the weakest woman. A people are many, yet every man shall be as if he were alone, or but one in the midst of innumerable dangers, and of a thousand deaths. Moses in his Song forefaw the dread of Nations upon the report of the Lord's miraculous conduct of Israel through the red Sea, (Exod. 15. 14, 15, 16.) The people shall hear, and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina, all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. And when Christ speaks of those dreadful Prognosticks of his coming, he not only faith, There shall be signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, but upon the Earth distress of Nations, with perplexity, (Luke 21. 25.)

Secondly, Observe.  
Both personal and publick troubles are at the command of God, as both publick, and personal peace are.

A people as well as a person, may and shall be troubled, even
at the midnight of their greatest security, if God give the word. I make peace (faith the Lord, Isa. 45. 7.) and create evill; that it, the evill of trouble. There will be occasion afterward to speak further of this point from those words (v. 29.) When he giveth quietness, who can give trouble, and when he hideth his face, who can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only; trouble of all sorts is at the command of God; if he faith to such or such a mischife, goe to a nation, it will goe; if he bid the sword trouble them, if he bid pestilence trouble them, if he bid famine trouble them, if he bid their owne divisions trouble them, the people shall be troubled; yea, they shall be troubled at midnight.

Whence note, Thirdly.

Trouble taketh or seizeth upon many when they least expect it.

God can send trouble when no man thinkes of it. At midnight every one is in bed, all are for rest and quiet. The Lord usually executes his judgements upon the unwary world, upon a secure people (Exod. 12. 29.) At midnight the Lord smote all the first-borne in the land of Egypt, &c. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt. We read also (2 Kings 19. 35.) In that night the Angel of the Lord went out and smote in the campe of the Assyrians, an hundred four-score and five thousand. It was not a day-battel, but a night-battel; When they were all gone into their tents, and were at rest, when the Army was secure; In that night did the Lord fight them by an Angel, and made a mighty slaughter among them. Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans was slaine in the night (Dan. 5. 30.) even in that night wherein he made a feast to a thousand of his Lords, and drank wine before the thousand (v. 1.) In that night not only of his security, but of his jollity and sensuality, when he had even drowned himselfe and his great Lords with wine and belly-cheare, in that very night the City was broken up, and Belshazzar slaine; History tells us what dreadful work was made upon the Babylonians that night. The great Judgement day is so described; Jesus Christ will, at last, trouble the world at midnight; The Day of the Lord so cometh (faith the Apostle, 1 Thes. 5. 2.) as a thief in the night; when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, &c. Christ him-
himselfe shadowing his coming under the parable of the ten Virgins, who all slumbered and slept, tells us (Math: 25. 6.) At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meete him. Though some were in a better condition then others, some wise, some foolish, yet all slept, and it was a kind of midnight to them all. Christ will come, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and then there will be a dreadfull Cry among the secure drowsie world. Therefore the Counsell of Christ is most proper (Math: 13. 35.) Watch, because ye know not at what hour your Master may come, whether at even, or at midnight, or at Cock-crowinge, or in the morning. It is hard to be put to it at midnight, tis sad to be in a sleepy or slumbringe condition when evil comes. The Gospel sheweth us, how much that man was troubled, when his neighbour came to borrow bread of him at midnight (Luke 11. 5. 7.) Trouble me not, my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee. If it be matter of trouble to be called out of our bed to doe a courtesie for a friend at midnight, O what will it be to be called up to Judgement, or to be surprized with any Judgement at midnight! Therefore prepare and be ready for all changes. At midnight the people shall be troubled,

And passe away.

These words are a third part of the description of the Judgement of God upon a people; they shall die, they shall be troubled, they shall passe away; that is, some of them shall die, all shall be troubled, others shall passe away. There is a three-fold notion of passing away.

First, Some expound it thus, They shall be carried captive out of their own Country; This with the former two make up a perfect Judgement upon any people; Some shall die, or be slaine, all shall be troubled and vext, they shall be at their wits end, and the rest shall be carried away captive.

Secondly, They shall passe away; that is, they shall pass into their graves; the forme of speech here used may well beare that sense, for death is a passing away, a passing out of this world (Psal: 37. 36.) Lo whom passed away and was gone, that is, he died; And that grave also, fed a pre abire in se pulchrum.

Merc: Till heaven and earth passe away, one jot or one tittle shall in
no wise passe away from the Law till all be fulfilled; that is, the Law shall stand in force as long as the world stands. Thus to passe away is to die. But I conceive, we are to expound this third branch of the Judgement distinctly from the former two, and therefore for as much as we have death in the first words, it will not be proper to take in death here again, or to expound passing away by dying. The third notion of, they shall passe away, is, they shall run or flee for it, they know not whether, they shall flee for their lives from the danger impending over them. As some shall die, and all be troubled, so not a few shall endeavour to save their lives by flight. Christ in the Gospel foretold the great troubles and afflictions which should come upon Jerusalem, and in them there was a sad concurrence or meeting of these three Judgments in the text. For when after forty yeares the Romans invaded and ruin'd their City, many dyed & were destroyed by sword and famine, all the people were troubled; Oh in what a hurry were they to see the Roman Eagle displayed before their Gates! and then they passed away; that is, as many as could, withdrew and got out of the danger. It is reported in history, that before the Seige of that City, a Voice was heard in Jerusalem, saying, (Migremus hinc) let us passe from hence, they who believed that warning, departed soone after; And as some passed away before the Judgement came, so when it was come, many were striving to be gone, or to passe away. Therefore Christ admonished them (Math: 24. 20.) Pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabath day. I conceive, we are to understand this text distinctly of such a passing away. In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and passe away; they shall do what they can to secure themselves by out-running the danger.

Note from it, First.

God hath variety of means to humble a sinfull people.

Into how many ways doe the Judgements of God divide themselves; severall persons bear severall parts; here is death to many, trouble to all, flight to some. That, in the Prophet, answers it fully (Jer: 15. 1.) where the Lord protesting that nothing (no not the interceffion of Moses and Samuel) should take him off from his resolve against that people, faith, Such as are for death to death, and such as are for the sword to the sword, and such as are for the famine to the famine, and such as are for the captivity to
to the captivity. There's pestilence, and sword, and famine and captivity ready at the call of God to take away a provoking people.

Secondly, Note.

To passe away, or to be put to our flight, is a grievous Judgement.

To flee from the face of the pursuer, to run for our lives, who knows the trouble and terror of it, but they that have been in it? what a mercy is it that our dwellings are continued to us? that we abide in our places, that we neither die in a moment, are not surpriz'd by midnight-fears, but rest quietly in our beds, though fears at midnight have been ready to surprize us. What a mercy is it, that we are not passing away, running, fleeing into the wilderness, as the poore Churches of God have done in severall ages?

So much of Judgement upon the people in that three-fold notion of it. We have here also Judgement upon Princes.

And the mighty shall be taken away without band.

Not only the many, but the mighty shall feel the Judgements of God; For as 'tis sayd in the former verse, He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poore; The mighty and the meanest of men are alike to God, when they are alike in sinning against God: If they doe evill alike, they shall suffer evill alike; God accepteth no mans person.

The mighty shall be taken away.

The word rendered, mighty, taken plurally, is used in Scripture to denote not only mighty men, but any creature that excells in might. And therefore according to the exigence of the place, it signifies sometimes Angells, who being spirits, exceed all flesh in might. The people of Israel in the wilderness did eat Angells food (Psal: 78. 5.) the food of the Abirims, of the mighty or strong ones: And as it is applied to Angells who exceed the strongest men in strength, so it is applied to any sort of strong beasts, to the horse (Jer: 47. 3.) to Bulls, (Isa: 34. 7. Jer: 50. 11. Psal: 22. 13. Psal: 68. 31.) Thus the word riseth above man to Angells, and falls below man to the beasts of the earth;
here 'tis applicable only to strong and mighty men, of whom yet there are three sorts.

First, Some are men of a mighty arme.
Secondly, Others are mighty in Armes.
Thirdly, There are men mighty in Authority.

The first of these is a natural mighty man, he hath a mighty arme, a strong body, or he excels in bodily strength. The second is a marshall mighty man, a fouldier, a man of warre. The third is the Magistralitical mighty man, he is cloathed with power both to punish and reward: Possibly he may have no bodily might, yea, possibly he is no fouldier, yet a man of such power he is, that he commands whole Nations. Now take the word Mighty in any of these three senses, and it is a truth, the mighty shall be taken away, the mighty in strength of the Arme, the mighty in strength of Armyes, the mighty in power and dignity, are by the hand of the Almighty God taken away.

They shall take them away (faith the Hebrew text) that is, say some (according to the first translation mentioned) the people shall violently take away the mighty. But by an utiull Hebrewisme we may read it Impersonally, the mighty shall be taken away, concealing or leaving it to be understood by whom. Like that speech to the rich man (Luke 12.25.) This night doe they require thy soule of thee, (so we put in the Margin) that is, (as the text hath it) this might thy soule shall be required of thee, they shall take thy soule, that is, it shall be taken away; so here they shall take away the mighty, that is, the mighty shall be taken away or removed. We may take notice of a two-fold remove or taking away.

First, There is a remove out of place and power; Thus a man is taken away when his authority is taken away.

Secondly, There is a removing or taking of a man out of the world; Thus they are taken away whose persons are destroyed, cut off, and perish. The mighty, both ways or either way are often taken away. The persons of many mighty men have fallen, and many more of them have fallen from their places and powers. Here they are under a general threatening, They shall be taken away. But how shall they be taken away? the text answers without hand.
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 20.

It is somewhat strange that they who are mighty, and have such power in their hand, should be taken away, and no hand touch them, or without hand. We use to say of a thing strangely gone, or gone we know not how, It cannot be gone without hands; yet thus the Lord deals judicially with the mighty of the world; They shall be taken away without hand. There may be a threefold understanding of that expression.

First, Thus; The mighty shall be taken away without hand; that is, they shall have no hands to help them, or they shall be destitute of all humane help. Sometimes God leaves or strips the mighty naked, they who have had great power, and many thousands standing up to defend them, have not a hand for them, and so are taken away without hand, no man drawing a sword or striking a stroake for them.

Secondly, To doe a thing without hand, is to doe it with the smallest appearance of second causes or instruments. We are ready to say, there must be a great deale of rugging to get the mighty downe, who like Oakes are strongly rooted and highly growne, who looke like mountains, which cannot be removed, yet (faith Elihu) the Lord can take them away without hand; that is, easily, without any trouble at all, little means or very improbable means being used to effect it. So then to doe a thing without hand, is to doe it as if we put no hand no force to it when we doe it. As they who move swiftly or lightly are sayd to goe without setting a foot on the ground (Dan. 8. 5.) the He-Goate came and touched not the ground, he did rather fly then goe. So to doe a thing, as if we did not put a hand to it, is to doe it with the greatest ease imaginable.

Thirdly, To doe a thing without hand, is to doe it without any visible means at all, even by the immediate stroake or power of God. There is a hand of God in all things that are done in the world, but some things are done without any other hand, and are therefore most properly sayd to be done without hand. Thus the Lord is able to doe the greatest things, even to take mighty men from the earth, no hand of man appearing or joyning with him in the action. Now, because God usually sets instruments avoure to effect his will in the world, and to bring about his counsels, therefore in what work soever he either quite leaves or seems to leave instruments out, that work is sayd to be done without hand. The
stone which shall grow up to be a great mountaine, that is, the kingdom of Christ, is called a stone cut out without hands (Dan: 2, 34.) that is, without humane power. The kingdom of Christ shall be set up so much by the power of God without any earthly contribution, that it shall confessedly be sayd to be set up without hands. Though we ought not to neglect the coming and advancement of the kingdom of Christ in the world, yet we should not be anxiously carefull about it, when we see little or no names for it, yea though we see great very great names set against it, because a stone cut out without hands shall doe it.

The Apostle uteth this forme of speaking, both as to eternalls and spiritualls. Concerning the former he is expresse (2 Cor: 5, 1.) We know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens; that is, a house of Gods own immediate making, a house to the making whereof man hath added nothing. The fabric of this visible world is a house made without hands, much more is heaven, and the glorious unseene state which Saints shall have hereafter. The house above, or state of Glory is wholly of Gods making. And as our eternall estate is expressed by a house made without hands, so our spirittuall estate is called by the same Apostle, A work done without hands (Col: 2, 11.) where having asserted our compleatness in Christ (v. 10.) he adds, In whom also ye are circumscried with the circumcision made without hands.

The external literal circumcision was made with hands; there was an operation of man in it, the cutting off the foreskin of the flesh, but in the spirittuall circumcision, man hath no hand, it is the work of God alone; as also that effectual faith is which always accompanieth it, and is therefore called (v. 12.) the faith of the operation of God. There is a temporary faith which we may call a faith of the operation of man, but true saving faith is the operation of God, and may be sayd as the spirittuall circumcision (which was signified and shadowed by the corporall) to be made without hands.

Now as the Scripture speakes both of spirittualls and eternalls which are made without hands, so this text speaks of externalls and providentials in the same language, The mighty shall be taken un, cujus nulla humana causa affignari, aut quod nulla humana vi declinavit, or mighty, nari potest.
migthy, which (as to the effecting of it) cannot be assigned to any thing in man, much lesse can the effecting of it, be hindered by man. The hand of God is most visible, in doing that which no visible hand hath done, or can undone. They shall be taken away without hand.

Hence note.
The mightieff have no might against God.

That cannot be avoyded by any humane power, which is done without humane power. God slew the first-borne of Egypt, and destroyed the Assyrian hoast without hand, he did it by his Angel, no hand appearing against them. The Lord smote Herod, and he died without hand (Acts 12. 23.) Immediately (that is, presently, as the Greeke word imports, tis true also, immediately, that is, without humane means, as our English word also imports) the Angel of the Lord smote him, and he was eaten of wormes, and gave up the Ghost. What a poore worme was that mighty man in the hand of God, when God flew him without hand, and commanded the wormes to eate him? Jesus Christ, who is also the mighty God (Isa: 9. 6.) called himselfe a worme and no man, in his humiliations for the redemption of lost man (Psal: 22. 6.) What are the mightieff men but wormes to God, who is so mighty, that if he say the word, wormes become their Masters. The mighty Giants are before God but pigmy's, punyes, or children. The Prophet gives a good warning (Jer: 9. 23.) Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Let him not glory in the might of his arme, Let him not glory in the might of his armes or Armies, though man have an Army of mighty men about him, yet let him not glory in them, no nor in the might of his power or authority. If any man useth his might against God, what is his might unto God? (Psal: 58. 1.) Why boaste thou of mighty man, that thou canst doe mischief? If a man be mighty, and have a mind to doe mischief with his might, especially if he boaste in his might, because he can doe mischief with it, he is not only sinfull, but weake and foolish. There is no greater morall weakness then to boaste either of naturall, martiall, or civill strength. Could any of the mighty men of this world stand before the might of God, they had somewhat to boaste of. Read the word of the Lord against the mighty (Isa: 2. 10.) Behold the Kings and Captaines of the earth
earth trembling before the presence of the Lambe (Rev. 6. 15.)
and then judge how weake the strongest are before the Lord?
All ages are full of teaching examples, that there is no might to
his who is Almighty.

Secondly, Note.

What ever God will doe he can easie doe it.

He can effect it with a looke, with a cast of his eye, he can doe it with a breath of his mouth, he can doe it with a word. It is said (Exod. 14. 24.) God looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and through the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and tooke off their Chariot wheele, that they drave them heavily. To looke upon them was an easie thing, God did not give them a stroake with his hand, but only a looke with his eye, and that overthrew them.

Thirdly, Note.

God can do the greatest things alone.

He can subdue the mighty, though none come forth to his help against the mighty; they are cursed who do not help the Lord against the mighty, when they set their might against the Lord; (Judg. 5. 23.) Curse ye Meroz, (faith the angel of the Lord,) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. But though it be the sin of man not to help the Lord against the mighty, yet the withdrawing of their help doth not hinder the Lord in his purpose against the mighty: For, He taketh away the mighty without hands. Though men stir not, though angels should not stir to his help, yet his own arm can bring either salvation or destruction. It is said of the Lord (Isa. 44. 24.) He strecthed out the heavens alone; there was none to help him to unfold that vast canopy of heaven, he strecthed out the heavens alone. As in the Creation he made all alone, so in Providence he can act and effect all alone. It is a great glory to God, that he hath many instruments to help him, many tongues to speak for him, many hands to work for him; but it is a greater glory to God, that he needs none to help him, none to speak or work for him. In this the glory of the Lord infinitely outshines the glory of all the mighty Kings and Princes of the earth. They have done, and can do mighty things, but not
without hands, and therefore they have the hands of thousands at command for them; 'tis not their place to put their hand to the work, 'tis enough that they give commands and orders, 'tis the duty of others to execute all their righteous commands, and fulfil their orders. But the Lord hath not only a commanding power, but an executing power too in himself; though no hand move, yet his affairs stand not still. God, and all creatures put together, are no more then God alone without any creature: Many are useful, but none are necessary unto God. Take two inferences from it.

First, This is matter of terror to wicked men; though they see no hand in the world against them, much less any able to match them, least of all to check them, yea though they see all hands for them, yet this is no security to them, this is no assurance of one hour's safety, seeing the Lord taketh away the mighty without hand, and he usually doth it when they see not which way any hand can reach them. It is the conclusion of one of the Ancients upon this place in reference to a mighty oppressour; He is invisibly pull'd down, who did visibly pull down; He ruined others with hands, but himself shall be ruin'd without hand; he saw him whom he took away, but he shall not see him who takes him away. Let them who live without fear of any hand, remember the Apostles admonition, (Heb. 10.31.) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God, who takes away the mighty without hand.

Secondly, This is matter of wonderful comfort, to all that fear God, and trust upon him, whether Princes or people, whether mighty men or mean men. What though ye see no hand for you; yet 'tis enough if he be for you who saves you without hand. The protecting and saving power of God, is as great and as effectual as his destroying power is; yea, he oftener saves without hand, then he destroyes without hand. As the Kings of the earth, so the great King of heaven and earth, loves to deal his favours, and bestow his rewards immediately with his own hand, but usually afflicts and punisheth by the hands of others. That's a most pregnant Scripture to this purpose, (Hos. 1. 7.) where the Lord promised to save Judah; But Judah might say, I am in a very low condition, and no help appears: Therefore he addeth, I will save them by the Lord their God; and will not save them by Bese, nor by Sword, nor by Battel, nor by Horses, nor Horsemen. Judah shall be
be saved, though there be no hand to save them. *I will save them (faith the Lord) by the Lord their God.* I will do it immediately. And the Lord doth not only say (in the affirmative) he will save them without hand; but he faith also (in the Negative) that he will not save them with hands, *But I will not save them by Bowe, nor Sword, nor Battel, nor Horses, nor Horsemen;* there shall be no appearance of these helps, I have heretofore destroyed you by Sword, and Bowe, by Horses, and Horfemen, but I will have all the honour and thanks of your salvation to my self. Though the Lords people have neither horses nor horfemen, though they are as helples as is imaginable, yet the Lord is able to save them, & he will do it in the fittest season. As this is true in reference to Princes and Nations in their publique capacity, so private Christians may take up the comfort of it. What though great diftrefs and affliction be nigh, and no hand to save you, yet the Lord can save without hand; if you are low, he can raife you, though none lend a hand to raife you; if poor, he can enrich you; if weak, he can strength- en you, though you have no means for either: It is an everlaft- ing spring of comfort, that the Lord can do all things without hand, that he needs not be beholding to the creature, nor stands in need of their help to eʃect either threatened judgments against Babylon, or his promised mercies unto Sion.

Thus we have seen Elihu describing the righteous, though fe- vere-dealings of God, both with people and Princes, who despife his counsels, and provoke his wrath: The reaʃon why they fall under his wrath, is further discovered in the next words.
JOKE. Chap. 34. Vers. 21, 22.

For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

In the former verse Elihu reported the judgement of God both upon the people and upon the Princes of the earth, In a moment shall they die, &c. In these two verses, he gives us a proof that the Lord is righteous in judgement both upon Princes and people, or he assignes the ground of it. That the words are a reason of the former, the Causal Particle in the beginning of the 21st verse puts it out of question.

Vers. 21. For his eyes are upon the ways of men.

As if he had said, God doth not these things, he troubles not Nations, and Nobles, People, or Princes, by an absolute and soveraigne power, or because he will, but he finds just cause to do it; What men do, is enough to justify God in what they suffer: He hath always power enough in his hand to destroy all men, and to turn this world back into its first nothing, but he never useth his power, nor puts it forth without cause.

For his eyes are upon the ways of man, &c.

God is a Spirit, the simplicity of his Essence is his first and highest perfection, he is purely incorporeal; yet as the passions of man's minde, so the members of his body are often in Scripture attributed unto God; we read of the face of God, of the hand of God, of the ear of God, and as in many other places, so in this, of the eyes of God: Now as the ear of God notes only his power of hearing, and the hand of God his power of working, so the eye or eyes of God note only his power of seeing, knowing and discerning the ways of men. And when Elihu saith, his eyes are upon the ways of man, his meaning is only this, he clearly discerns and understands the ways of man.

These words, his eyes are upon the ways of man, intimate,
Fourthly, A present act, he doth not say, they were, or they will be upon the ways of man, but they are. Secondly, They imply as a present, so a continued act; his eyes are so upon the ways of man, that they are never off them. The eyes of God dwell, as it were, upon the ways of man: His eyes are said indeed to, run to and fro through the whole earth, (2 Chron. 16.8.) yet they do not wander from one object to another, but are fixed and settled upon every one. Thirdly, they imply an intensive act, or the seriousness of the heart of God upon the ways of man. We may behold a thing, and yet take no great notice of it; but when our eyes are said to be upon anything, this imports they are busied much upon it. Fourthly, This manner of speaking significeth not only a clear sight, but that which is operative, carrying with it a most exact scrutiny or disquisition of the ways of men, according to that expression of the Psalmist, (Psal. 11.4.) His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men. God doth not only behold, but his eye-lids try the ways of men; that is, he so looks upon them, that he looks through them, and discerneth what they are to the utmost. God doth not only behold the body and bulk of our actions, but the soul and spirit of them, and while he seeth them, he seeth into them. All this, and much more then we can apprehend, is comprehended in those words, His eyes are upon the ways of man.

The ways of man.

The word is plural, not way, but ways; which shews the extensiveness of the sight or knowledge of God: The word being put indefinitely, is to be taken universally: His eyes are not confined to this or that object, to this or that place, to this or that person, but his eyes look over all, His eyes are upon the ways of man.

Yet further, the ways of man may be distinguished; First, as they are either internal or external. The internal ways of man, are the ways of his heart, as the Prophet hath it, (Isa. 57.17.) He went on forwardly in the way of his heart. And these ways of the heart, our inward ways are, first, our thoughts, what we imagine and conceive; secondly, our affections, what we love, and what we hate, what we rejoice in, and what we mourn for, declare the way of our hearts. Thirdly, The ways of the heart are a man's purposes, resolutions, and intentions what to do. Fourthly,
The ways of the heart are man's designes, or his aims, what he drives at, or proposeth as his end in all that he doth. In this latitude we are to understand the present Text; when Elihu saith, the eyes of God are upon the ways of man, remember they are upon his thoughts, upon his affections, upon his purposes, upon his designes and aims, all these are before the Lord; as it is said of Christ, (John 2. 25.) He needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man; that is, both the state of his heart, and all the movings of it. And if the Lord's eyes be upon the internal ways of man, then certainly they are upon the external ways of man; if he knoweth what work the heart is at or about, certainly he knoweth what the hand is at or about. He that knoweth which way the minde goeth, cannot but know which way the foot goeth. His eyes are upon the external ways of man, but 'tis his chief glory that his eyes are upon the internal ways of man, (Gen. 6. 5.) The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth: He saw man's actions or outward ways were very wicked, but besides that, faith the Text, He saw, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. He saw the ways within, what was formed up, or (as the word there notes) what creatures were made and fashioned in the minde of man. Thus, if we take the ways in that distinction of internal and external, the eyes of God are upon them.

Secondly, Take the ways of man as differed in their kinds; as they are either good or evil; the eyes of the Lord are upon both. They are (faith Solomon, Prov. 15. 3.) in every place, beholding the evil and the good: that is, the evil ways and the good ways of men. But faith not the Prophet (Habak. 1. 14.) Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil? Which may seem, at first reading, to imply, that God doth not behold the evil ways or actions of men. I answer, if we distinguish the word behold, we shall soon reconcile these Scriptures. To behold, is either to discerne what is before us, or to behold, is to approve what is before us. There is a seeing of knowledge, and there is a seeing of contentment; now when the Prophet faith, the Lord is of purer eyes then to behold evil, his meaning is, he doth not, he cannot behold evil with contentment or approbation, otherwise the Lord beholds evil, even all the evil in the world; both good and evil are before him, who is himself only and altogether good. His eyes are upon the ways of
Man.

Not only upon the ways of this or that man, but of every man; let man be what he will for a man, let him be a great man, or a mean man, let him be a rich man or a poor man, let him be a wise man or a fool, let him be an ignorant or a knowing man, let him be a holy or a profane man, let him be a subtle or a simple man, his eyes are upon him. Those things which difference men among themselves, make no difference at all among them, as to the eye of God. His eyes are upon the ways of (whomsoever you can call) man.

And he seeth all his goings.

This latter clause of the verse is of the same sense with the former, therefore I shall not stay upon the opening of it. The Scripture often uleth Synonoma's, and repeats the same thing in other terms, to shew the truth and certainty of it; and surely the Spirit gives a double stroke here, to strike this truth home into our hearts, and fasten it in our mindes, He beholdeth the ways, and he seeth all the goings of man. The word translated seeing, signifieth a very curious or critical sight, as was opened before.

Again, these latter words say, he seeth all his goings.

Where we have the universal particle express, which was only understood in the forme. And though these two words, ways and goings may be expounded for the same thing, yet in this conjunction we may distinguish them, by understanding the word ways, for the constant course of a man's life, and the word goings, for his particular and renewed motions in those ways. The Original word rendered goings, signifies sometimes going with much caution, yea with a kind of state or pomp, yet frequently any ordinary going.

Now, when Elihu allerts, The Lord seeth all his goings; we may sum up the matter under these five considerations; He seeth First, Where he goeth, what his path is. Secondly, He seeth whether he is going, what he makes the end of his journey or travel. Thirdly, when he goeth, or sets out, what time he takes for every undertaking. Fourthly, how far he goeth, the Lord takes notice of every step, what progress he makes in any business. 
good or bad. Fifthly, he seeth in what manner he goeth, with what heart, with what mind, or frame of soul he goeth. Thus distinct and exact is the Lord in beholding the ways, and in seeing all the goings of man.

Hence note, First.

Surely the Lord is a God of knowledge.

If we could conceive a man to have his eyes in all places, and upon all persons, an eye upon all hearts, and an eye in all hearts, as well as an eye upon all hands, you would say this man must needs be a knowing man, especially if he have such an eye, as the eye of God is, a discerning eye, a discerning eye, a trying eye, an eye which seeth to the bottom of whatsoever it seeth. Hannah sayd this in her song (1 Sam. 2:3) Speak not so proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your lips; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. 'Tis not a slight superficial knowledge which God hath of things or persons, by him actions are weighed, and so are the Actors. God puts all into an even balance, and he will weigh both persons and actions to a grain, yea every word and thought shall goe into the balance. It was saide to that great Monarch Beliehekazer, by a hand-writing upon the wall, Thou art weighed in the ballances. The Lord weighed that great King, he weighed all his power, and the exercise of it; and he that weigheth Kings, will not leave the meanest subject unweighed; by him actions are weighed. We many times passe over our actions without consideration, and never take the weight of them; at least, we never weigh them in the Sanctuary balance. If they will beare weight in the balance of the world, we presume they will in Gods ballance also. But as the Lord is a God of knowledge otherwise then man is, so by him actions are weighed otherwise then by man. It is said of Idols (Psal: 115.15.) They have eyes and see not; but we may say of the Lord Jehovah the true God, the living God, he hath properly, no eyes, yet he seeth; and his faculty of seeing is infinitely above that which himselfe hath planted in man. The Athesift while he is about the worst work in the world, the breaking in pieces of the people of God, and afflicting his heritage, while he is slaying the widow, and the stranger, and murdering the fatherlesse, while he is (I say) at such kind of worke as this, he saith (Psal: 94.7.) The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of
of Jacob regard it. But what faith the Pafmlift to him and fuch as he (v. 8, 9.) Understand ye brutifh among the people, he that formed the eye, shall not he fee? Thofe words of the Prophets to King 

Afa (2 Chron. 16. 9.) The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the whole earth, are an allufion to a man who having a defire to know much, or to fee all in the world, runs up and down, travels from place to place, from Country to Country for information. The Lord would have us know that he knoweth every thing as exactly, as they who run from place to place to fee what’s done in every place. It is prophecied of the latter times (Dan. 12. 4.) Many shall run too and fro, and knowledge shall be increased: that is, many shall be fo gravifhly greedy of knowledge, that they will refufe no labour nor travel to attain it. They will run too and fro, to inquire and search for it, they will not think any time or labour loft, if they may but gaine that precious commodity by it, called true knowledge, or the knowledge of the truth. And that expression of running too and fro, may well be expounded, they fhall by discourse and arguing beare out the truth; In discoursing the mind runs too and fro faster then the feete can in travelling; In discourse we run from poyn to poyn, from rea fon to rea fon, from objection to objection, from question to que fion, till we come to folid anfwers and conclusions, and fo knowledge is increafed. The Lord is furely a God of knowledge, whose eyes run too and fro without motion, and fee the bottome of all things, without discourse or argumentation.

Secondly, Note.
The Lords knowledge of man never abateth, he is alwayes obferving and alike obferving what men doe and what men are.

The beft the moft waking men, have their flumbrings and fleerings, but the Lord neither flumbereth nor fliepeth, his eyes are upon the ways of man. And when the Scripture faith, The Lord doth neither flumber nor fleep, we may understand it in a twofold reference. First, as to the protection of his people (Psal. 121.) Behold he that keepeth Israel, shall neither flumber nor fleep; that is, he watcheth over them fo unceffantly, so unwearyedly, that no danger can approach them without his knowledge. Secondly, he never flumbereth nor fliepeth as to the observation and confideration of all people, he never takes his eye off from the ways of man.

Thirdly,
Thirdly, Note

The Lord's knowledge or sight of man's ways, is universal and everlasting.

The All-seeing God seeth all our ways, and he seeth them always. And he seeth them all always by one act. The Lord's view or prospect of things is not successive one after another, but conjunctive, all at once. The Lord hath a large eye, and an everlasting eye, yes, all eye. He knows all things; First, past or that have been; Secondly, present or that are; Thirdly, future, possible or that shall be. Thus saith the Lord in the Prophet (Isa. 46:10.) I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. And upon this read the Lord's challenge of all the Idols in the world (Isa: 41. 21, 22, 23.) Let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them and know the latter end of them, or declare us things to come; Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods. As if the Lord had said, if ye can tell us all that's past, or any thing that is to come, as I can, then ye may take the honour of God, otherwise ye are but lyes and vanities. Again the Lord knows all things; First, without distraction; and secondly, he knows all things with clearest distinction; it is no more trouble to the Lord to see all things then to see one, and he seeth all things as if he had but one thing to see.

From the consideration of this knowledge of God, let me give four or five inferences for instruction.

First, (which is most natural to the text) if, the Lord's eyes be upon the ways of man, if he seeth all his goings, then all the Lord's judgements are right.

The Judges of this world, may have a principle of righteousness in them, and we may call them just and righteous Judges, yet all their Judgements are not always right. For, as some men are so ignorant, that they know nothing at all, so there are none so knowing as to know all things; the clearest sighted Judges do not see all that may concern them in giving Judgement; even among them some may be blinde, and many blinded, some are blinde and cannot see much, others are blinded and will not see all
all that they see, they are blinded possibly with bribes and gifts, with hopes or fears, with passions and prejudices. And how clearighted and honest-hearted soever any are, yet they cannot see all, somewhat may lye out of their sight. Hence it cometh to passe, that a just Judge may doe that which is unjust, he cannot see quite through every matter, though he set himselfe to search the matter before he giveth Judgement. But as the Lord is all righteous in his principle, and beares an everlasting love to righteousness; so he hath a clear sight of all things and persons, and therefore he must needs give a righteous Judgement concerning all things, actions, and persons; Though he overthrow nations he is righteous, though he overthrow Princes he is righteous, because he seeth into all things, and proceedeth upon certain knowledge of every mans case and condition. He cannot erre in Judgement, who hath no error in his Judgement, nor any deviation in his will.

Secondly, If the Lords eyes are upon all the wayes of men, then, certainly sinners, whose wayes are evil, shall never goe unpunished.

For if he have a principle of righteousness in him, and an eye to see all their unrighteous wayes, they cannot escape his justice; Say to the wicked, woe to him, for he shall eate the fruit of his doings (Isa: 3. 11.) The righteous God knoweth the unrighteousness of man, and therefore woe to the unrighteous man.

Thirdly, Take this conclusion, Then no godly man, no good man shall goe unrewarded, or lose the reward of that good which he hath done.

The Lord is righteous, and he seeth every one that doth right, or the righteousness of every mans waye; and it is his promise to reward the righteous, therefore they shall be rewarded. This is matter of strong consolation, and great encouragement to all that are righteous; If the Lord seeth all they doe, nothing which they have well done shall be lost in the dark, or lie in the dust. God will bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their just dealing as the noone day. And as the knowledge which God hath of their wayes, assureth the righteous that they shall be rewarded for, so that they shall be assisting and protected in their doing righte-
righteousness. The Prophet makes that inference in the place before-cited (2 Chron. 16. 9.) The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the earth (whatolloweth?) to show himselfe strong in the behalfe of them, or (as we put in the Margin) strongly, to hold with them whose heart is perfect towards him. The Lord is always strong, and alike in strength, his hand is not shortened at any time, that he cannot save, yet he doth not always shew his strength; but as he is strong, so he will shew himselfe strong for the perfect or upright in heart; that is, he will act his strength to the utmost for the safety and assistance of those whose hearts are perfect with him. So then, as they that are good, and doe good, shall be rewarded for the good they have done, so they shall be protected in the dangers and evills they incurre while they are doing good. Another Prophet speakes both these inferrences from this principle of the knowledge or sight of God (Jer. 32. 19.) He is great in counsell, and he is mighty in working, for his eyes are upon all the wayes of the sons of men, to give to every one according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Fourthly, If the eyes of the Lord are upon all the wayes of the Children of men, then the Lord will call all men to an account for their wayes.

Why doth he take notice of their wayes, but to bring them to a reckoning? That's the Apostiles conclusion (Rom. 14. 12.) So then every one of us shall give an account of himselfe to God; God would not take an account of our wayes while we live, if he did not intend to bring us to an account when we dye. As the omniscience of God fits him to call every man to an account, so it is an evidence that he will. Why should our wayes and workes be strictly observed and recorded, if they were not to be judged?

Fifthly, This truth that the eyes of God are upon all the wayes of man, should awaken every man to take heed (as David resolved he would, Psal. 39. 1.) to his wayes. Did we walke as remembering we are under his All-seeing eye, O how circumspectly should we walke! doth the Lord inspect our wayes, O how should we inspect our owne wayes! It argueth a great deale of Atheisme in the heart, if not the grooest Atheisme, yet Atheisme (quo-ad hoc) as to this or that thing: while that which some are afraid to doe, if a man, yea if a child see them, they are not afraid to doe though
though they heare that God seeth them. To feare to doe a thing when the eye of a creature is upon us, and yet to doe it, notwithstanding God seeth us, what is this but either an unbeliefe that the eye of God seeth us, or a contemp of his All seeing eye? This Divine Attribute, the All-seeing eye of God, well wrought upon the heart by faith, is enough to over-aw the sinfullnefe of our hearts. And though the people of God have a higher principle, upon which they forbear the doing of evill, then this, because God will see it, and punish it, yet to keep the heart in a holy feare of doing evill upon that principle, is both needfull and our duty. The Apostle would not have servants doe their Masters commands with eye-service as men-pleasers. It is indeed a baseness in a servant to doe his duty meecely because his Masters eye is upon him, or to forbear to doe what is against or beside his duty, because his Master seeth him; but how great is the impudence and wickedness of that servant who will not keep to his duty, when his Masters eye is upon him! So, in this case, meerely to forbear doing evill, because we heare God sees us, is eye-service, but how great is their wickedness, who will not forbear to doe evill, though they heare and know that God seeth it? Which Elifu confirms yet further in the next words.

Verf. 22. There is no darkness nor shaddow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

This verse holds out that truth negatively, which the former held out affirmatively. There Gods knowledge of mans wayes, was afferted, here his ignorance or nescience of the wayes of man is denied.

There is no darkness, &c.

The words seeme to be the prevention of an objection. For some possibly might say, 'Tis true indeed, God hath a large knowledge, his eye seeth farre, but we hope we may sometime be under covert, or compassed about with such darkness, that the Lord cannot see us. Therefore (faith Elifu) there is no darkness nor shaddow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. The Prophet gives a parallel prooue and testimony of this knowledge of God both in the affirmatif and negative part of it.
(Jer. 16. 17.) where he first afferts that God seeth all, mine eyes are upon all their ways, and then denyeth, that any thing is a secret untō him, They are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. These latter words of the Prophet are of the same signification with these of Elihu,

There is no darkness, &c.

We may take darkness two wayes; First, for naturall darknes, that darkness which spreads it selfe over the face of the earth upon the going downe of the Sun, 'tis the privation of Light. Secondly, there is artificiall darkness, that darkness which men make to hide themselves, and their actions in, from the eye of God or man; many are very skillfull, yea and successfull in making shadowes to hide their actions from men: They cover the evill which they have done with such cunning excuses or flat denyalls, and they cover what they purpose to doe (how foule soever) under such faire trappings of words, and specious pretenses, they glossle their worst actions and intentions with such appearances of good, that the wisest and best sighted men cannot finde them out. When Absalon had a moft unnaturall as well as a moat disloyall purpose to rayse a rebellion against his king-father, he coloured it with a devout profession of performing a vow; This was artificiall darkness. 'Tis reported by the naturall Historian, of a little fish, which seeing its enemy neare, casts out a kinde of blackness from it selfe, which darkens the water, and so escapes the danger. Thus men indeed hide themselves from man, and they would hide themselves from God too; but there is no darkness, neither naturall nor artificiall, that can cover their wayes from his eye; No,

Nor shadow of death.

The importance of this expression hath been opened more then once in this book, (chap. 3. 5. chap. 10. 21. chap. 12. 22. chap. 28. 3.) therefore I shall not stay upon it here; only consider, when he faith, There is no darkness nor shadow of death, by shadow of death, he means extremest darkness. If there be any darkness (as Job speakes chap. 10. 22.) like darkness it self, and whose light is as darkness, that is it. The metaphor is taken from the grave, where the dead being buried, have not the least glympse, ray, or shine
shine of light coming in to them, death wraps us up in extremest darkness. And we finde in Scripture, the shaddow of death put first, to express the extremest of spiritual darkness, or the darkest spiritual state, (Isa. 9. 2.) The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light, they that dwell in the land of the shaddow of death, upon them hath the light shined: that is, they that were wrapped up in the ignorance & utter unbelief of God in Christ, to these is Christ, the true light of God, the Sun of righteousness preached and openly revealed, and they prefert to the receiving of him, that their souls may live further as the shaddow of death is put for the worst of spiritual evils, or to note man's natural state before conversion, so likewise, it is used in Scripture to note the worst of his spiritual evils, who (being converted) is in a spiritual state: He that is in a spiritual state, may be under great spiritual evils, great soul afflictions and troubles may fall upon him; which I conceive David intended while he shewed such high confidence, (Psal. 23. 4.) Though I walk through the valley of the shaddow of death, I will fear none evil: as if he had said, Though I were in the worst of soul-afflictions, having no light of the favour of God shining upon me, nor any comfort in my spirit, though (as Homer bemoans his deferred condition (Psal. 88. 3.) My soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave, though I am laid in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deep, yet I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me. Again, the shaddow of death is often put in Scripture for the worst of outward worldly evils, (Jer. 13. 16.) Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness, &c. and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shaddow of death; that is, while ye expect good times and things, ye fall into the worst, or the worst befal you, Now as these words; the shaddow of death, signify the worst of, both in spirituals and temporals; so here they signify the closest concealment of moral evils; some sinners think themselves as much out of sight as a buried carcass, and they vail their wickedness with such darkness as is like the very shaddow of death. Sin is itself a shaddow of death, yea death it self, and they who are dead in sins and trespasses, will do their best that their sins may be no more seen then the dead are. But there is no darkness nor shaddow of death.
Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

What it is to be a worker of iniquity, was opened at the 8th verse of this chapter, and thither I refer the reader. Only in general know, workers of iniquity are more than ordinary sinners, they are cunning at the committing, and cunning at the hiding of sin. Some are but bunglers at sin, they cannot sin with such an hellish skill as others do, and when they have sinned, they have not the art of hiding it; but others are (as we say) their crafts-masters both ways, and they are properly called workers of iniquity. Yet (faith Elihu) the very workers of iniquity, they that make it their profession, their study, and their business to do evil, and to hide the evil they have done, to work mischief in the dark, and to keep their works in the dark, even they cannot be hid in any darkness. And when the Text faith, there is no darkness, &c. wherein the workers of iniquity may hide themselves; the meaning of it is, they stand naked, and in the open light before the eyes of God.

For though Elihu doth not say from what they cannot hide themselves, yet we may take it two ways; they cannot hide themselves, first, from the sight of God; he will discern them. The Prophet faith of God (Isa. 45. 15.) Thou art a God that hidest thyself, (it is the word of the Text in another construction) that is, as I conceive, it may be expounded, Thou art an invisible God. God hides himself naturally, or in his own nature; for that is invisible: likewise God sometimes hideth himself voluntarily, as sometimes he manifesteth or sheweth himself voluntarily; but he is a God always hid as to his nature, because he is invisible; and so he is called a God that hideth himself, in opposition to Idols or false gods, who are obvious to the eyes of men; Idols have eyes and see not, but themselves are seen by every eye. Jehovah the true God seeth, but hath no eye, neither can any eye see him; Thus he is a God hiding himself in the spirituality of his own being, which gross Idols cannot: the following words in that Text in the Prophet seem to make out this fence, (ver. 16.) They shall be ashamed and confounded all of them, (that is, all idol-makers, and Idol-worshippers, shall be ashamed and confounded) they shall go to confusion together, that are makers of Idols. Now, as God hideth himself both these ways, sometimes voluntarily, or in his will, he resolves to hide himself from his people, as David complained,
plain'd, (Pfal. 13.1.) How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? ) always in the spirituality of his own nature; so sinful men would be hidden too: though they cannot be hidden as to their nature, that being corporeal, yet they would hide themselves in their will, their wits are bent upon it, to make covers and shaddows for themselves, that they may keep out of the sight of God, or that they may not be seen of him, who cannot be seen, but is, in that sense, a God that hideth himself.

And as men cannot hide themselves from the sight of God, so nor, secondly, from the revenging power of God: This followeth the former; for he that would keep out of the sight of another, doth it usually that he may be hid from that danger and evil which he fears that other might bring upon him. Thus it is with the sinner, he hath his hiding places, he would withdraw himself from the revenging power of God, like a malefactor, who is unwilling to appear and come to the Bar before his Judge, but all in vain.

Meer natural or unregenerate men are much hidden from themselves; that is, they see little what themselves are, they know not their own condition, nor upon what terms they stand; even a godly man is much hidden from himself, his life is hid with Christ in God, (Col. 3.3.) his life is not only hidden from the world, but in a great measure from himself: the excellency of his spiritual state surpriseth his present sight; but a wicked man is much more hid from himself, he doth not see the wickedness of his own heart, nor the danger, the desperate danger he is in, he feeth not that he is within a step of the pit, or that there is, as it were, but a wainscot between him and hell fire; he feeth none of these things. Thus a wicked man is hidden from himself, and his work to prepare darkness and shaddows of death to cover his dead works from God. But there is no darkness will serve his purpose, nor shaddow of death wherein he may hide himself.

Hence Note.

First, It is usual for, and natural to sinners, to seek hiding places.

When Eliphaz saith, There is no darkness, &c. he plainly intimates, that it is the design and business of sinners, to make darknes to hide themselves; it is as much their business to hide themselves when they have done evil, as it is their business to do evil.

While
while the workers of iniquity confess in general the eyes of God behold their ways (they deny not in word that God is All-seeing) yet, as they often bea't the eye of man, so they are not out of hope to put darkness and raise a mist between themselves and the eye of God; Or if they rile not to this vain thought, that they can hide themselves from God, yet they come to this, that God hideth himself (as not regarding what they do) from them. Hence David affirms of the wicked man, (Psal. 10. 11.) He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never see it. Many say in their hearts, God seeth them not, while with their tongues they confess he is an all-seeing God. The heart hath a tongue in it as well as the head, and these two tongues seldom speak the same language: While the head-tongue faith, we cannot hide ourselves from the sight of God, the heart-tongue of wicked men will say, God will hide himself from us, he will not see: But if their heart speak not thus, then as the Prophet saith, (Isa. 29. 15.) They dig deep to hide their counsels from God; surely they have a hope to hide their counsels, else they would not dig deep to hide them. Their digging is not proper, but tropical; as men dig deep to hide what they would not have seen in the earth; so they by their wits, plots, and devices, do their best to hide their counsels from God, and they say who seeth, who knoweth? We, surely, are not seen either by God or man.

Now 'tis very natural for sinners to endeavour the hiding of themselves from God upon a two-fold account; First, To avoid shame; All sinners are not altogether doleful, all have not altogether baffled their own consciences, they have a kinde of modesty, they would not be seen sinning; it troubles them not to do evil, but a fear to be detected in doing it is their trouble. Secondly, Sinners hide themselves for fear; so Adam did, he was afraid as well as ashamed, I was afraid (saith he) because I was naked, and I hid myself, (Gen. 3. 10.) The Prophet tells us of such (Isa. 2. 21.) They shall go into the clefts of the rock, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he shall arise to shake terribly the earth. We finde all sorts call to the hills to hide them, for fear of him that sate on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; (Rev. 6. 15, 16.)

Secondly, Observe.

How much soever sinners attempt, yet they cannot hide themselves from God.
Let them study never so long, and dig never so deep, they cannot be hid: Where can a sinner be hid from him who is every where? Or, what thing can be our covering from him, in whose sight all things are open? Then let none think they have made a good market in sinning, when they have hid their sins from the eyes of men; what will it avail to hide your selves from men, when you lie open and manifest to the eye of God? read Psal. 139. 12. Amos 3. 2. The Apostle faith (1 Tim. 5. 24, 25.) some mens sins are open before hand, going before to judgment; (that is, other men quickly see what they are, & can judge what they have done) and some men, they follow after; though they were hidden at the first, yet they are afterward discovered unto men often, as always unto God: As they are not hid from God now, so he will bring them forth at last, in the sight of men: that the Apostle adds in the next verse; Likewise also the good works of some are manifest before hand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. The word otherwise may have a two-fold reference: First to the word manifest: As if he had said, though the good works of a man be not presently manifest, yet they cannot be long hid, they shall be opened and revealed. Secondly, The word otherwise may refer to good works, and so it reaches the point fully; that is, those works which are not good, or otherwise, then good, cannot be hid, though men labour much to hide them. Sinners, leave off your hiding, leave off your hiding, for you shall not be hid. There is no way for sinners to hide themselves from God; they may hide themselves in God, in the love, in the favour and mercy of God. Thus sinners may hide themselves in God, but from God they cannot be hid. Christ is a hiding place unto his people, and he is so in a double respect; First, from trouble, or in time of trouble; thus David spake (Psal. 32. 7.) Thou art my hiding place: The name of the Lord is a strong Tower (Fait Solomon, Prov. 18. 10.) the righteous runneth into it (for shelter in time of trouble) and is safe. The Prophet is express in this, (Isa. 32. 2.) A man (that is Christ) shall be for a hiding place from the winde, & a covert from the Tempest: Christ is truly so, as to the outward troubles and storms which men raise against his people in the things of this life, he is so, especially as to those internal troubles and storms which Satan, or our owne unbelieving hearts raise against us about the things and concemnments of the next life. That man who is...
also God, who is God-man, is the hiding place of humbled sinners, against the assault of all evils, whether temporal or spiritual. Secondly, As Christ is a hiding place from those troubles which men bring us unto for righteousness sake, or which Satan and our own hearts bring us into by raising questions about our interest in the righteousness of Christ; So he is a hiding place for us against our own unrighteousness. Sinners or unrighteous persons cannot hide themselves from Christ. And as Christ is the best hiding place from bodily dangers, so he is the only hiding place from soul danger: Any sinner may hide himself in Christ, as to the guilt of sin, whole eyes are opened to see and acknowledge his sin. Or more distinctly, sinners under a fourfold consideration may hide themselves in Christ; First, if humbled sinners. Secondly, if confessing sinners. Thirdly, if reforming sinners. Fourthly, believing sinners. Christ is a hiding place to all such sinners. And seeing no sinner can hide himself from the wrath of God by any means of his own devising or contriving: Let all sinners give over such vain contrivements, and learn that Gospel wisdom, to hide themselves in Christ from that wrath which is to come. When we labour to hide our selves any other way, we lose our labour, and do not hide our selves from God, but God from our selves; that is, we hide the favour and mercy of God from our selves.

Lastly Observe.

Men are not easily persuaded that they cannot hide themselves from the sight of God:

That hath much hold of us, which we are often warned to avoid. This is not the only place of the whole Scripture, no nor of this particular book where this truth is held forth. There are many and many Scriptures wherein this common truth is pressed upon us. And doth not this (if not strongly infer, yet) intimate at least that man doth not easily believe it? Yea, Is it not an argument that man is apt to nourish himself in those vain hopes, that he can hide himself from God, or that he shall be hid from God? I may cast the foolish presumptions of men about this thing into four sorts. First, Some hope to be hid in the crowd, or that they shall not be taken notice of among so many. Secondly, The eyes of others are so darkened, that their sins are hid from themselves, yea they
they take their vices for virtues, their evil acts for good; and because they see no evil in what they do, they are persuaded, or presume God doth not. Thirdly, Many are never so well pleased as when they are flattered, or when others not only hide the sinfulness of their ways from them, but commend and extol them as virtuous and praise worthy. And because their evil ways appear good to some men, they cannot be convinced that there is any evil in them appearing to God. Lastly, As all impenitent sinners put their sins out of their own sight, so nothing pleaseth them more than this imagination, that they shall never come into the sight of God.

Surely the Lord would never urge this matter so often upon the children of men if it were not so. But let sinners consider what they will do, and what will become of them, seeing, as it is impossible that they should be hid, so it will be most intolerable for them to appear and stand before God in the day of judgement, (Psal. 1.5.) All must come to judgment, and appear at the Bar, but it will be an inexpressible grief to appear, and not be approved, or to appear and then be condemned. Therefore be wise, and hide your selves where you may be hid; do not attempt to hide your selves (which is the attempt of most sinners) where you cannot be hid: They who will needs hide themselves in that darkness and shaddow of death, here spoken of, shall be cast into utter darkness, and abide for ever in that infernal valley of the shaddow of death, in which there is no ease to be had, and from which there is no release to be got. Darkness and death will be the portion of those sinners in the next world, who have studied to shaddow their sins with any kinde of darkness in this.
IN the 25th verse, being the first of this context, Elihu further justifieth the severest proceedings of God with man; He that layeth upon man no more then is right, may be justified in whatsoever he layeth upon him; But God layeth upon man no more then is right. Therefore &c. The Assumption is expressé in the text.

Ver. 23. For he will not lay upon man more then is right.

The text strictly rendred, is, He will not lay upon man more. Our translators supply the words, there is right to determine what that mere is which God will not lay upon man.

The words have a two-fold sense.

First, Some interpreters render them as a direct denial of any power feared in or liberty given unto man, to plead, capitulate, or to come in judgement with God; Elihu charging it upon Job, that he had not done well in taking or using such a liberty to complain about his condition; addeth here, (according to this interpretation) God neither hath nor will indulge man a liberty (as he hath not given him a just cause) to complain as if he had done him wrong. And if man when God hath once declared his mind, and published his sentence, should make his defence or offer to produce his reasonings against it, the Lord will not suffer it, he will not permit man to proceed in such a way, seeing the sentence of God and what he doth upon it is always just, and the right stands ever on his side, as well as the sovereignty is ever vested in him. Master Broughton translates the whole verse to this sense, ut de se ille que vis paller. Merc. Neg. enim ultra in hominis potestate est, ut veniat cum domino. Therefore it is not for man ever to purpose to enter into judgement before the Omnipotent; there is no appeal from God, nor will he admit.
admit sinners by any artifices, or delayes, to interrupt the pro-
gresses of his justice.

Secondly, The words (as we render them) carry both an af-
sertion, that God is just, and a demonstration of it; For he will not 
lay upon man more then is right, that he should enter into judgement 
with God; that is, man hath no cause to enter into judgement 
with God, if God should give him leave, and let him be at his li-
berty in that point; for God will not lay upon man more then is 
right.

There is another supply of a word which also beareth a good 
sense, and suiteth well with this exposition; thus; God will not lay 
upon man more then he can beare, (or hath strength to beare) that 
he should enter into judgement with him; if we reade the text so, 
then that of the Apostle (1 Cor. 10. 13.) is a cleare exposition 
of it. There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common 
to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted, 
above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a 
way to escape, that ye may be able to beare it. A temptation or af-
fliction common to man, is such as man may beare; God will 
not overburden his people, he knoweth what flesh and blood, as 
also what Grace can beare. As a man would not lay such a weight 
upon a childe, as would burthen a man, (we lay a child's burthen 
upon a child, and a mans burthen upon a man) to the Lord mea-
sures and weighes out his judgements in proportion to every mans 
strength, he will not lay upon him more then he is able to beare.

That's a good sense, and hath a cleare reason in it, why man should 
not complaine of what God layeth upon him, it being only pro-
portionate to his strength.

But I shall rather prosecute the text according to the supply 
given in our translation, which makes the reason why all such com-
plaints should be forborne and silenced, to be this, because the 
sufferings of man are never proportion'd beyond his desert.

He will not lay upon man more then right.

That is, more then he hath deserved, or is equitable in his 
case; whatsoever is layd, or imposed upon man beyond right, he 
hath cause to complaine of, and may traverse the judgement, or 
defire another hearing, yea he may appeale to some higher Judge 
if there be any; But if what is awarded against him be right ac-

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ording
cording to Law, and suitable to Justice, let the sentence be what it
will (let him be able to bear it or no, much more if he be able
also to bear it, as in this case it is he, hath no cause at all to de-
side a review of it. Thus it is. (faith Elihu) in all the dealings
of God with man, He will not lay upon man more then is right;
that he should enter into judgement with God.

To enter (or goe.) into judgement (as the word is) is either to
begin or renew a suit, and to desire the hearing of the cause a-
gaine. God makes no faulty Judgements, why then should any
cause determin’d by him come to a second hearing? there may be
reason enough among men to heare a cause againe, but what God
resolves, needs not be reviewed much lees reversed. Here then
Elihu meetes with those frequent complaints of Job under his af-
flictions, and likewise with those his severall motions, and earnest
petitions, to have his cause heard afresh, as if God had prest him
too sore, or, at least, had not done him right in suffering him to be
so sorely prest by men. Thus Elihu seemes to say; God never gave
any man any just cause, to plead his cause over againe with him, nor
hath he given thee (O Job) any cause to desire it of him. Tis true; car-
nall men, yea and sometimes godly men, when (as Job here) they
are greatly afflicted, are ready to thinke and say they are over-
severely dealt with; But the reason of Elihu stands good and firme
against all these thoughts and sayings. For he will not lay upon man
more then is right.

Hence note.

God never wronged, nor will wrong any man.

There are two speciall cases, in which God never did, nor ever
will wrong man; First, he will not wrong man by denying him that
reward, which he hath freely promised, no man shall serve God
for naught; he shall not lay, God hath promised, but he hath not
performed. The experience of his people seale to the truth of
his promises, as well as their faith imbrace it. That hope of man
which is anchored in a promise of God, never miscarried nor
made any man ashamed. Secondly, God will not wrong man, by
laying upon him a greater punishment then he hath threatened.
The Magistrate cannot be charged with laying more punishment
upon an offender, then is right, if he punished him not more then
the
the Law alloweth. There may be a great deal of severity (I grant) in punishing up to the rigor of the Law, but there is no unrighteousness in it. The Mosaic law allowed of forty stripes; now if they had laid forty-one upon any offender, they had laid upon him more than was right, because they exceeded the Law; and to have laid full forty stripes, which was the utmost they could by Law, had been severe, therefore they usually abated one stripe at least; Hence the Apostle Paul faith (2 Cor. 11. 24.) Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, if they had given Paul forty stripes they had done no wrong as to the Law, though one had been too many for and a wrong to him who had not broken their law. Seeing the Lord lays no more upon the worst of sinners, then the law alloweth, he doth not lay upon man more then right. Yea not only the chastisements which the Lord layeth upon his owne servants, but the greatest punishments which he layeth upon the worst of the wicked, in this world, are much lesse then might with Justice be inflicted. This was Ezra's humble acknowledgement before the Lord (Ezra 9. 13.) And after all that is come upon us, for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve. The punishment that was upon the people of Israel, was exceeding great, in so much that Daniel faith in his prayer (Chap. 9. 11, 12.) Under the whole heavens hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jerusalem, yet Ezra speaking of that very dispensation, faith, Thou hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve, In this life the greatest of our punishments, are lesse then the least of our sins. Every sin, or transgression of the Law, deserves eternall death; therefore in this life the greatest punishments that fall upon sinners, are lesse then their sins. As the least mercies which God bestowed upon them, are greater then the greatest of their deservings. (That was Jacob's free confession (Gen. 32. 10.) I am not worthy of the least of (or I am lesse then) all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant.) So the greatest punishments that fall upon them in this life, are lesse then the least of their sins: And in the next life, where sinners shall have full measure, heaped up, pressed downe, running over, and that for ever, yet then they shall not have one graine more, either of weight or measure, then they have deserved. The Lord layeth upon no man in this life so much, nor in that to come more then is right.

Hence
Hence it followeth, Secondly.

(Man hath no cause to complain of God, or God hath not given any man any cause to complain whatsoever his sufferings are.)

Why should he complain who hath but his right? As God hath not given any man a liberty to complain, so he hath not given any man just occasion, or a true reason to complain. If the burden of punishment be heavy upon any man, let him thanke his own sin, or else for it; he hath but his due from God. We are often cruel to and wrong our selves, God is usually merciful, and never but just to us; yea how great soever any affliction is, 'tis a mercy that 'tis no greater; and God can quickly make it greater, how great soever it is, and still be just. As he never doth more than he may, so he never doth so much as he can in punishing us. The Lord hath more in the treasures of his wrath, then yet he hath powred upon the worst of sinners. Nor indeed can the most capacious vessels of wrath, hold all his wrath; 'tis, as himself is, infinite. Cain sayd, My punishment is greater then I can beare (Gen: 4. 13.) yet God could have made his punishment greater then it was. Therefore Jeremy confessed (Lam: 3. 22.) It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions faile not. Whatsoever is lesse then utter consumption, hath some mixture of compassion in it, every punishment hath somewhat of compassion in it, except that of everlasting damnation. O then let all flesh feare and tremble to enter into Judgement with God, to complain or take offence at any of his proceedings with them.

There are foure things considerable in God, which should stop all mens mouths, from daring to doe so.

First, He is most powerfull; there is no escaping out of his hands.

Secondly, He is most wise and seeth quite through all that man hath done with his hand, yea all that hath been contrived in his heart.

Thirdly, He is most just, and will not be taken off from doing less, neither can he be provoked to do more then is right to any man.

Fourthly, How should man fear to enter into Judgement with God, seeing his judgments are past finding out, they are, as the Scripture
prue faith; a great deep, we are not able to fathome them; therefore wo unto thole that complain of, or murmur against them: we should alwayes pray with David, (Psal. 143. 2.) Lord, enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified : and we should alwayes be afraid to enter into judgement with God, for he will not only justify, but magnifie himself and his works in the sight of all men living. We should be so far from entering into judgement with God (which many do when they think they do it not) that we should continually beg him, not to enter into judgement with us; for we are not only unable to stand before him, but must certainly be broken before him; as it followeth,

Ver. 24. He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

As Job had often complained of his own troubles, so he had sometimcs of the prosperity of wicked men, or that God suffer ed them who were not worthy to live, yet to live in pomp, power, and pleasure. Thus he expostulated the matter, (chap. 21. 7.) Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? &c. We may conceive Elihu removing that stumbling stone, and answering him in these words, while he telleth us what work the Lord often maketh in the world in those his lesser and particular dayes of judgement, among the mighty of the world. He not only striketh and woundeth, troublcth and vexeth them, but breaketh them, yea, breaketh them in pieces. The words are a comparison between the mighty, & a potters vessel, of whom David faith (Psal. 2. 9.) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt (not only give them a knock, or a crack, but) dash them in pieces as a potters vessel; and he can break them so small, that there shall not be found in the bursting of them (as the Prophet speakes, Isa. 30. 14.) a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit. Thus the Lord shall break in pieces; not the poor, and weak, and mean, but mighty men.

Or as some render, He shall break in pieces many men; the Hebrew word refers to both quantities, to great in bigness, and great in number; but because we have their innumerableness mention'd,
tained distinctly in the next clause, it is best to render the word by greatness in power or might here. For least any should think God could break only a few mighty men, therefore it is said, he shall break in pieces mighty men, in all the notions of might, the mighty in corporal strength, the mighty in civil strength, power, or authority, yea martial mighty men, if they stand in his way, and hinder his work.

Without number.

All these God breaketh in pieces like a Potters vessel, as if they were but a swarm of flies, and sweeps them away in a moment: As if he had said, God will give innumerable examples of his infinite power and unbyass'd justice in destroying the wicked, he hath and will destroy so many of them, that no man knoweth how many he hath destroyed, or will destroy.

There is another reading of the words, Our Translators put it in the margin of our Bibles, He shall break in pieces mighty men, without searching out, which may have a two-fold interpretation:

First, He shall break them in pieces, and no man ought to search or enquire into his doings, or say unto him, (as that mighty Monarch confessed, Dan. 4. 35.) What doest thou? And thus it answers what was said in the former verse, They shall not enter into judgement with God. Some have a priviledge at Sea to pass without searching, no man must enquire what they carry, or what their lading is; surely when the Lord breaketh mighty men, no man may search into his doings or enquire into his actions, further then for his own instruction and admonition, that he may answer the purpose of God in them, and give him glory.

Secondly, He will break them in pieces, without searching; that is, without any formal examination or usual wayes of Processe, at least without any known to us. The Lord needs not to stand searching as men do, to finde out matters against the mighty, to frame articles, or to bring in his Bill of Attainder against them; God needeth not search to know, because he knoweth all things without searching, and therefore may justly break men in pieces without this kinde of searching; or, He will break them in pieces without inquiry; that is, without shewing cause why. God doth not always publish the reasons of his proceedings, his judgements are often secret, though never unjust. We render well, He will break in pieces mighty men.
Without number.

That is, how many soever they are, or though they are innumerable, yet he will break them in pieces as one man: Thus the word is used (chap. 5. 9. chap. 9. 11. In both which places the Reader may finde the extent and emphasis of this expression, without number, further explained) only consider, that these mighty men without number, may be taken two ways.

First, Collectively, as combined by leagues, or as march’d by orders into an Host: as if he had said, though an Army of them be gathered together, even a numberless Army, yet the Lord can break them in pieces; (I. 8. 9.) Associate your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

Secondly, We may take these mighty men singly or personally: Thus the Lord breaketh in pieces mighty men without number, one after another, one at this time, and another at that time; how many of them soever arise up one after another to oppose him, to oppress his people, or to do wickedly, they shall surely be broken.

Mr Broughton renders to this sense, He bruisth mighty men without end, he doth not break them without end, as having no end in breaking them, but as without end, notes his breaking them endlesly, or for ever. If men will sin without end, he can break them without end; he can renew destruction, as fast as they renew transgression.

Hence Observe, First,

God can easily ruin the mightiest men of the world.

He can break them in pieces, as an earthen vessel, with an iron rod, and how soon is that done? Both the holy Scriptures, and humane Histories abound with such examples. What a number of mighty men inhabited the old world? There were Giants in the earth in those days, (Gen. 6. 4.) yet God overthrew them all by a flood, they sank like lead in those mighty waters. What mighty men inhabited Canaan, before the children of Israel came to possess it? The searchers of the land brought in a report, that they were but as Gathhoppers to them, & they had Cities wall’d up to heaven, yet the Lord broke in pieces all those mighty men, Sihon the King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Bashan; and when David came to the Crown, he” (in Gods strength) destroyed the rest of
them. What mighty men were they that sat upon the Throne of the four Monarchies? They had in their days the rule of the whole world, yet the Lord brake them in pieces. First, the Assyrian, then the Persian; the Grecian, and the Roman Monarchs were also broken in pieces: This was revealed to the golden head in a dream, (Dan. 2. 35.) Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Brass, the Silver, and the Gold broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing floor. The mighty men of Israel, (when they sinned mightily) the mighty men of the ten Tribes, yea the mighty men of the two Tribes of Judah and Benjamin, God brake in pieces; his own mighty people could not stand before him, when they corrupted themselves, and would not be made clean. God breaketh mighty men, as easily as they break his commandments: And usually when mighty men come to that height of sinning, to sin, or break his Commandments with ease, he commands them (for his own ease, as he is pleased to speak Isa. 1. 24.) to be broken in pieces. To sin with ease, is a sure signe of a hard heart, yea of a prophane heart. He was a mighty man of this temper, whose breaking in pieces the Lord threatened in such wrathful Hethorick by his holy Prophet, (Ezek. 21. 25, 26, 27.) And thou prophane wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end; thus saith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown: this shall not be the same, Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him. What breaking words are here! Even a treble overturn denounce'd against the mighty. Thus said the blessed Virgin while her soul was magnifying the Lord, and her Spirit rejoicing in God her Saviour, (Luke 1. 52.) He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

Secondly, In that, he breaketh in pieces the mighty without number,

Observe.

*Tis no matter to God either how mighty or how many the wicked are.

I have heretofore spoken of the multiplyed acts of Divine Justice, and of the unwearied out-goings of his powerful providence to abate the pride of man, and therefore I shall not stay upon
upon it, but only caution the mighty ones of the earth, in the words of the Psalmist upon this point, express in the very words of this Text; for, God having laid to his Son, to whom he had given the Nations for an inheritance, (Psal. 2. 9.) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, and (in case of their non-submission to his Scepter) dash them in pieces like a Potters vesseil, he presently adds, (ver. 10.) Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling; Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.

Yet though God be often at breaking work, he is not always at it; for when he hath broken in pieces mighty men without number, he (as it followeth in the Text) will

Set others in their stead.

We may suppose these words given in upon a two-fold account.

First, To shew the absoluteness of the power of God, as well in setting up, as in calling down:

Secondly, To shew that we need not be dismayed nor discouraged, when we see God breaking in pieces some or many mighty men, for he can finde out others to supply their room, and fill up the breaches which he hath made. He sets others in their stead, detur deperire.

The force of the Hebrew is, He shall make others to stand; and that's more then barely to set another in the stead or place of those that are removed and broken. God is able not only when many fall to raise up others, but he can also establish and settle those whom he raiseth up. That's the meaning of Elihu, when he faith

And set others in their stead.

Elihu doth not determine who or what these others are; God may make his choice where and of whom he pleaseth, in what family or tribe he pleaseth, to set up in the place of those mighty men, whom he, at any time, is provoked to break in pieces. The words are plain; Note only two things from them.

First, God hath as absolute a power to set up, as to pull down when and whom he pleaseth.
(Psal. 75. 6, 7.) Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another. The same Soveraignty of God is asserted. (Dan. 4. 17.) To the intent that the living may know, that the most high ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. God sometimes setteth up those that are base in their conditions or manners for a scourge or punishment; sometimes he setteth up those that are base in their state or condition, being either men of meanest birth, or men laid lowest by affliction, (Psal. 113. 7, 8.) He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and setteth the needy out of the dunghill; that he may set him with Princes, even with the Princes of his people. No man is so poor, but the Lord can enrich him; no man so low, but he can raise him up. He can bring a man from a dunghill to a Palace, and from the dust to a Throne. Saul was cast down, God broke him in pieces, though a mighty man, and setteth David in his stead; He chose David his servant, and took him from the sheepsfolds, from following the Ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his Inheritance: (Psal. 78. 70. 71.) When God pull'd down Haman (the great favourite of Ahasuerus) who had plotted to advance Mordecai to the gallows, and ruins the whole seed of the Jewes, God did not only break him and his plot, but really advanced Mordecai into greater favour and confidence with his Prince then ever Haman had before.

Secondly, Note from the force of the word, to make to stand.

The Lord can establish those whom he setteth up.

The Lord doth not only set up, but keep up whom he pleaseth. Though they are weak whom he setteth up, yet he can keep them up; though they whom he setteth up, are opposed by the strong, yet he can keep them up. He can make a shrub stand fast, though opposed by a Cedar; and a reed to stand firm like a rock, though opposed by an Oak.

Thirdly, Note.

The Lord taketh care of the Government of the world.

He is not for breaking work only, he is for setting and settling too. God will not let the body of a people perish for want of a head; but when in judgement he hath broken one in pieces, he
in mercy sets up another. Mighty men are like pillars, which bear the weight of a whole Commonwealth or Kingdom. God rarely deals with Nations, as Sampson did with the house wherein the Philistims were assembled, who at once pull'd away the pillar, and pull'd down the house; but if he pulleth away one pillar, he puts in another, that the house may stand. God will not leave the world without rule or rulers: when he takes with one hand, he gives with another; when Judas the Traytor was broken, Chriff found out (a better man) Matthias to set in his stead. And when the whole Nation or Church of the Jews was broken and rejected, God called in the Gentiles, and set them up for a Church and people to himself in their stead; and (which is the greatest instance of all) when Jesus Christ was taken from the earth, when he left the world, who was the mighty one (he was first broken in pieces for our sins, and afterwards taken away) yet he gave a supply, and left us another in his stead; I will not leave you comfortles, (faith he John 14. 18.) I will come unto you, three not till the great day in person, yet every day in the gifts and graces of my Spirit. I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (John 14. 16.) Again, (John 16. 13.) When he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. God sent the Spirit in Christ's stead; he doth that for us which Christ did for us while he abode on the earth: and therefore the holy Spirit is not unfitly call'd the Vice of Christ here on earth, he feeds the flock of Christ, he looks to his people, he teacheth, he comforteth them in Christ's stead. And thus in Nations, when God breaketh one Governour, he sets up an other in his stead; he will not leave Nations without guides and leaders, nor suffer the staff of Government to be utterly broken, which is the greatest plague that can come upon any people. From the whole verse take these three deductions.

First, There is a vanity and an uncertainty, at least the vanity of uncertainty in all worldly greatness and powers.

God blasts and breaks them as he pleaseth. The most substantial things on earth are but as a shadow; or like the Land-sea's continually flowing and ebbing. One is cast down, and another is exalted; one is broken, and another is set up; yea, the same man who was lately exalted and set up, may quickly be cast down and broken.
There is no assurance to be had of the best things here below, but only this; that we cannot be sure of them: and 'tis good for us, that we cannot be sure of the best things here below, both because we are too apt to say, *It is good for us to be here,* where yet our best things are not to be had; as also because by this consideration we may be provoked to look after, and make sure of better things; then any are here enjoyed, even those best things which are under hope.

Secondly, Great examples of God's judgements are to be eyed and marked.

Why doth Elihu call Job to this consideration, but that he might be humbled, and give God glory; it is not for nought that God breaks in pieces the mighty ones of the earth, (1 Cor. 10. 11.) All these things have hapned unto them for enamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. As all those things among the Jews were Types; so all that God doth to this day upon the Princes, and Powers of the world, are but as types and enamples; they are for admonition, that we should consider those sins which have brought such judgements upon men, such breaking judgements, and avoid them. Some will never see sin in it self, but in the judgments of God all may see what sin is; when mighty men are broken in pieces, what will God do with the rest, if they sin against him, and provoke the eyes of his glory? Zenacharib that proud Prince, who invaded the land of Israel in the time of Hezekiah, being broken in pieces by his own bowels (his sons slew him) it was ordered to be writ upon his Tomb, Let every one that seeth me, learn to fear God, and not to despise him, as I have done. The breaking of the powers of the earth, should exceedingly exalt the fear of God in our hearts. It is better to learn wisdom by the punishment of others, than by our own.

Thirdly, If God will break the mighty, though many, yea though innumerable; This is comfort to the people of God when they are oppress'd, and broken by oppressors, let them remember God is able to break their oppressors, though they rise up like Hydra's heads one after another; read the whole fifty and second Psalm, as also the 39th and 40th verses of the 107th Psalm, as a clear proof of this. Elihu having shewed what sad breaches God makes upon mighty men, makes a fourth inference in the words following.
Ver. 25. Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.

For as much as God breaketh them, it is an argument that he knoweth what they are, and what they have been doing; there is a threefold reading of these words.

First, Some read them as implying God's making others to know their works, God maketh the secret sins of men visible, by his visible judgements. Wrath seen, may give us a sight of sin. Some insist much upon this exposition; and 'tis a truth, the Lord by his judgments brings to light, and doth as it were spread open, as in the face of the Sun, the wickedness and wicked deeds of mighty men: that all may know his judgements are deserved by their works, he makes their works known.

Secondly, Others render, He maketh them know or acknowledge their works; The Lord at last by fire, and severe judgements, will extort confessions from the worst of them, he will make the mighty acknowledge that their works have been nought, and their ways perverse. In Scripture the same word signifies to know, or to confess and acknowledge. Thus here, he makes them to know or acknowledge what their works have been.

Thirdly, Rather take it, as we render, of God's act in taking notice of all they had done; Therefore he knoweth their works: As if Eliphaz had said, these mighty men of the earth, thought themselves under covert, or that the Lord took no notice of them, nor of their works, their works were done in the dark, and they supposed the Lord could not pierce into them; but he will make it appear, that he knew their works, when he maketh his justice appear in punishing them for their works.

Hence Note.

We have an assurance that God knoweth the works of all men, because he punisheth all wicked works, or the works of the wicked so punctually and exactly.

He punisheth many of them here, and will punish them all hereafter: when we see him breaking the mighty men of the world, 'tis a proof that God was in their Cabinet counsels, and saw what was done there, we may conclude he knew their works, though men knew them not; he could never lay his judgements so exactly.
actly upon them as he doth, if he did not know their works: That God knows the works of all men, is a point I have met with before, and therefore passes from it here.

And he overturneth them in the night.

There are several readings of this clause.

First, Some thus, Therefore the Lord knoweth their works, and turneth into night; that is, he turneth their prosperity into adversity, he bringeth trouble and affliction upon them; they lived before in a day of prosperity, in a day of power and worldly greatness, but he turneth them into night.

Secondly, Or, as others thus, He turneth the night, that is, he changeth the night into day, he takes away the dark and close covers of their sins, and makes them as manifest as the light; Now, as the Apostle saith (Eph. 5. 13.) That which maketh manifest, is light; If God were not light, he could not bring to light the hidden things of darkness, nor manifest the counsels of the heart.

Thirdly thus, Therefore he knoweth their works, and when the night is turned, he destroyeth them; that is, they are destroyed and perish as soon as easily as the day takes place of the night; or as soon as the night is turned into day, so soon doth the Lord destroy them, he can quickly make an end of them, he can destroy them with the morning light.

We render, and I judge that best, He overturneth them (their persons) in the night; and so Elihu points at the season, or time, of Gods breaking and overthrowing them, he doth it in the night.

We may take it strictly, as in the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, (Exod. 12. 29.) as also in that of Belshazzar, (Dan. 5. 30.) or, in the night, that is, suddenly, unexpectedly; Though a man be destroyed in the day, yet if it be done suddenly, he looking for no such matter, we may say it was done in the night; because then men are most secure: This way of expressing an unlooked for evil, the coming of in the night, was opened at the twentieth verse, therefore I shall not stay upon it, He overturneth them in the night.

So that they are destroyed.

Elihu said before He shall break in pieces mighty men; Here he faith, they are destroyed; that is, they shall be broken to purpose, or
or thoroughly; God doth not break them in pieces for correction, but for destruction; there are great breakings upon the persons and estates of some men, and yet it is but for correction; others the Lord breaketh for utter ruine, (as here) so that they are destroyed. The Original word signifieth to destroy as it were by pounding in a Morter; and the same word is used to signifie a vit, auricul, contrite heart, a heart broken by godly sorrow under the sense of sin, comitit. They are destroyed, or, as it were ground to powder; you may break a thing into many pieces, yet not grinde it to powder or dust, as corn in a Mill, or spice in a Morter; but these (faith Elisha) are not only broken to pieces, but beaten to dust, that's the strength of the word which we render, they are destroyed.

Hence Note.

What God hath a mind to doe, he can do it certainly, and will do it thoroughly.

He breaks men in pieces, so that they are destroyed and brought to dust; When the Prophet declares the breaking of the four Monarchies, it is said (Dan. 2. 35.) They shall be as the chaffe of the Summer threshing upon the Mountains; if the Lord will destroy the mightieft, they shall certainly be destroyed; as Balak said to Balaam; I not that whom thou curfeft are cursed; as if he had said, thou canft curse effectually, if thou wilt set thy self to it; 'tis not in the power of all the Balaams in the world to effect a curse, though they pronounce a curse, 'tis only in the power of the Lord to curse effectually; he can bless whom he pleafeth, and they are bleffed; he can curse whom he pleafeth, and they are cursed. Thus as Ephraim lamenting his fin and sorrow confessed, (Jer. 31. 18.) Lord, thou hast chaffifed me, and I was chaffifed; God paid him home (as we speake) if we chaffe a childe, he is chaffifed, but) when Ephraim faith, thou hast chaffifed me, and I was chaffifed; his meaning is, I was greatly and effectually chaffifed; that is, first, in a literal sense, I found thy hand heauie upon me, it was a sore affliction that I was under. Secondly, In a spiritual sense; Thou hast chaffifed me, and I was chaffifed; that is, my heart was humbled and broken under thy chaffifements; in either notion we see the effectualness of the Lords work; Thou hast chaffifed me, and I was chaffifed. And therefore Ephraim invited the Lord to another work; Turn me, O Lord.
and I shall be turned; if thou wilt but turn thy Spirit upon this hard heart of mine, it will be effectually turned, it will be not only broken for sin, but from sin. As if he had said, I have received reproofs and counsels from men, and they have not turned me, but Lord, if thou wilt reprove and counsel me, I shall be turned; thus the Lord carrieth his work home to conversion, in his spiritual dealings with some, and to confusion in his temporal punishments upon others. Thus he threatened his owne people for their confidence in Egypt, and contempt of his holy word (Isa. 30. 13.) This iniquity shall be unto you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall breake it as the breaking of a potters vessel, that is broken in pieces, he shall not spare; so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a herd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withall out of the pit; that is, ye shall be made utterly useless and un-serviceable. That piece of a vessel is of no use, which will not serve for either of those little uses, the taking of a little fire from the hearth, or a little water out of the pit. And if God sometime breake his owne professing people thus small for their sins, how small will he breake his professed enemies! read for this the last breaking and down-fall of Babylon (Rev. 18. 21, 22, 23.) Therefore take heed how you fall into the Lords hand; for he can not only break you in pieces, but break you to powder; he can break you to destruction: The Lords purposes, and the effects of them, his works, are never without effect, for good or evil, for the better or for the worse.
JOB. Chap. 34. Ver. 26, 27, 28.

He smiteth them as wicked men, in the open sight of others:
Because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways.
So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Elihu having in the former words shewed the impartial vengeance of God upon the wicked, proceedeth to shew two things further about it in these words.

First, The manner of it, v. 26. He smiteth them as wicked men in the open sight of others.

Secondly, The causes, grounds, or reasons of it in the 27th and 28th verses; why doth God strike them? it is because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his ways; So that they cause the Cry of the poor to come unto him; their iniquity in turning from God, and their iniquity in oppressing the poor, provoked the Lord to smiteth them as wicked men in the open sight of others.

Ver. 26. He smiteth them as wicked men.

The word which we render strike, specially notes the striking of one hand against the other: our hands clash, or struck together, make a sound, or noise: Thus some Interpret the word here, He smiteth them with an ignominious sound. Many rejoice and clap their hands when they fall; They are destroyed with shrouing. Others take the metaphor from a bladder filled with wind, which being call'd on the ground, and stamp't upon with the foot, breaks with a noise, or gives a crack in the breaking: Wicked men, in all they think, and purpose, and doe, are but wind, and when they break, they break like bladders, which have nothing of solidity, only breath and fume in them. Such an Elegancy there is in this word, hitting the vanity and vacuity or emptiness of wicked men,
men, all their filling being but like that of a bladder, which puffs
them up, but never makes them wife or solid men.

Further, I find this word used for striking in a three-fold
sense.

First, For striking with sorrow and shame; such was that of re-
penting Ephraim (Jer. 31. 19.) Who when he thought on his wayes,
was ashamed and smote upon his thigh.

Secondly, For striking with scorn and derision (Lam. 2.
15.) All that passe by clap their hands at thee, they hisse and
mage their head at the daughter of Jerusalem.

Thirdly, There is also a striking with anger and indignation; Thus Balak being vexed, because he could not have his purpose to
bribe Balaam to curse the people of God, Smote his hands toget-
er (Numb: 24. 10.) and the Lord himselfe is express expres-
sing his angry indignation against his owne people the Jewes, by
this gesture (Ezek. 22. 13.) Behold therefore I have smitten my
hands at thy dishonest gaine, &c. There is then a speciall Empha-
sis in the smiting or striking here intended, besides the generall
meaning of it. The Lord destroys wicked men in such a manner,
that all who behold it are filled with the admiration of his righte-
ousnes and with a detestation of their lewdnesse. The Septuagin-

say, He hath Extinguished wicked men; As if they were but smoo-
king firebrands, or the flaming saucier of a candle. Another renders
it, He binds them, the word signifying also to bind or straighten;
The Lord brings forth evill men, as it were, bound hand and foot
to Judgement. We say clearly, He stricketh them, and that in no
ordinary way, but

As wicked men,

So we translate; yet the particle which we render, as, may
(here according to his frequent use else-where) carry in it a rea-
son, He strikes them because they are wicked; some read the text,
not as we by way of similitude, how God striketh them, but as gi-
ging an account why God striketh them, even because they are
wicked men. Mr Broughton faith, For the wicked he maketh plenti-
full reddance of them, which hath a good sense in it, but takes some-
what too great a liberty with the original text; and because the
reason of this striking, is held forth in the verses following, it is
more distinct to say he striketh them, (not because they are wicked
men,.
men, but as wicked men; that is, as wicked men use to be struck, or as they use to be proceeded against in a way of Justice. God strikes the mighty men (of whom he spake before) as common offenders or malefactors; though they are great on earth, yea though they are (in title) Gods upon earth, yet God strikes them as the basest of wicked men, they shall not only dye (as tis said, Psal. 82. 7.) or fall like one of the Princes, but they shall dye like the worst of men, like wicked men.

Hence note.

First, They that doe like the wicked, shall be dealt with by God as the wicked, how high, or mighty soever they are in this world.

And as they who are openly wicked shall be dealt with as wicked men, though they be high in the world; so they that are really wicked shall be dealt with as wicked men, though they make a high profession of godliness in the Church, even them will God strike also as wicked men. Christ speaks of some (Math. 7. 22.) who made a loud profession of religion, with whom yet he dealt as with wicked men; Depart from me (faith he) I know ye not, ye workers of iniquity. Though God doth not deal alike with all wicked men, yet he dealles with them all like wicked men. There is not one wicked man in the world, but he shall be dealt with according to his kind, that is, as a wicked man, and shall have that for his portion which is the portion of their Cup, who are wicked. As the Godly, so the wicked, whether prophane or false and hypocritical, shall be esteemed and handled by God like themselves, or as they are.

Secondly, From the first word, as it is taken causally, (upon which many insist) Note.

The reason why wicked men are struck is because they are wicked.

Were not men wicked they should never feele such strokes from the hand of rather iron rod of God. If any smart and are ruin'd, they may thank themselves for it, that is, their sins for it; their sufferings are the fruits of their sin. The Prophet told the sinful Jews so (Jer. 4. 18.) they had an affliction upon them, which did reach even to the heart; God made their hearts ake, he struck them to the heart; but why did he do? the answer is;
Thy sin and thy doings have procured these things to thee, &c. He striketh them as wicked men.

In the open sight of others.

These words are a further description of the manner how God strikes the wicked, he doth it openly, or (as we put in the margin) In the place of beholders, that is, in such a place, and in such a manner that all may behold it: we say, He striketh them in the open sight of others; that is, he punisheth them in an exemplary way, or that they may be an example of warning unto others. For, The place of seers, or of beholders, is some open and eminent place op- pot'd to a Corner; as Paul sayd pleading his cause before king Agrippa (Acts 26. 26.) This thing was not done in a Corner; no, it was done, as upon the house-top, even in the place of beholders. The Lord will not have to doe with wicked men only in a Cor- ner. He will have witnesses of his doings with them. There shall be enow to take notice how he handles them, therefore he often takes open vengeance on them, in the frequent assembly and con- course of many beholders, both approving and reverencing, yea adoring the impartiall equity of the suprême Judge, and his care of humane affairs. So then, the words are an allusion to the exe- cution of Common malefactors, who dye by the Judgement of the Magistrate, such being condemned and sentenced by the Judge, are not put to death in the prifon, or in a hole, but are taken out and carried to some noted place of execution, or a Scaffold is purposely erected, where a multitude of spectators are ad- mitted to come and behold the Tragedy. When our Lord Jesus Christ, who (to deliver us from our transgressions) was num- bered with transgressers, when he (I say) was crucifi'd, The Evangelift faith (Luke 23. 35.) The people stood beholding, and the Rulers al- so with them derided him. Christ himselfe was strucken as a wicked man in the place of Beholders. And so have many thousands of his faithfull witnesses. The wicked dealt with them often, as the Lord dealteth sometimes with wicked men, they are brought forth from prifon to death, and executed in the open sight of others. All things (in this world) come alike to all, no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them (Ecel: 9. 1, 2.) The Apostle Paul speaking of himselfe and his fellow-Apostles (to shew the pub- lick disgrace which they were put to) faith, We are made a spe-
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Excal to the world, to Angels, and to men (1 Cor. 4:9.) The Greek is, we are a theater to the world, &c. As if he had sayd, all see how we are used; And as bloody persecuters make the faithful servants of Christ a spectacle, so Christ will at last make wicked men a spectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men. Thus it is prophesied (Isa. 66. 24.) that all flesh who come to worship before the Lord, shall goe forth and looke upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against him, &c. They shall be stricken in the place of Beholders or Seers.

Some expound that word Seers, as implying more then ordinary seers, or more then barely such as see what is done; namely, such as are delighted and pleased with what is done, yet not as it is a suffering of paine by man, but as it is an act of Justice from God.

Hence note.

God oftentimes doth Justice upon sinners openly.

The Judgements of God are of two sorts: Some are secret, others are manifest; he can doe execution upon men when none see it; nay he doth the severest executions upon some men when they themselves doe not see it (that's the sling and severity of the Judgement, that) they have not so much as any sense of the wrath of God, when the full vials of his wrath are pouring out upon them. But many of the Judgements of God are open; As he striketh some so secretely, that none can see it, so others so visibly, that all may see it. Thus the Lord commanded Moses (Numb. 25:4.) when Israel had joyned themselves unto Baal-peor, Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the Sun. By the heads of the people, we may understand either the capital offenders, those who were most active and ready in wickednesse; or their principall Rulers, who instead of stopping them from or punishing them for those offences, gave way to them or at least wincketed at them: These must be hanged against the Sun, that is, as Elihu speakes here, in the open sight of others, or, in the place of seers. Thus they were made an example of caution that all might see and feare and doe no more presumptuously.

Read the like executions of divine Judgement threatened (2 Sam. 12. 11. 12. Isa. 26. 11.) John in the Revelation (chap. 15. 4.) prophesieyth of the Saints triumphing at the fall of Babylon, and
fing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 
Great and marvellous are thy works, &c. for thy Judgements are 
manifest: God hath now stricken Babylon his great enemy in 
the open sight of others; his Judgements were right before, (they 
are always right) but till then not manifest. David saith (Psal. 9, 
16.) The Lord is knowne by the Judgement which he executeth: 
now if the Lord be knowne by the Judgement which he execut 
eth; then the Judgement which he executeth must be knowne; 
it must be an open Judgement; and such are very many of the 
Judgements of God, they are acted as upon a stage. And I may 
give you an account in three particulars why the Lord will some 
times doe Justice, in the place of beholders, or in the open sight of 
others.

First, That there may be witnesses now of what he doth, and 
so a record of it kept, at least in the minds and memories of faith 
full men for the generations to come.

Secondly, The Lord doth it not onely that he may have wit 
nesses of his Justice, but also that his Justice and the proceedings 
of it, may have an effect and a fruit upon those who did not see it, nor fall under it. This was the reason why the Lord threatened 
to punish Jerusalem in the sight of the nations (Ezek. 5, 5, 6, 7, 
8, 14, 15.) Thus saith the Lord God, this is Jerusalem, I have set 
it in the midst of the nations and Countreyes that are round about her.

God is sayd (Psal. 74, 12.) To work salvation in the midst of the 
Earth; that is, in Jerusalem, or among his people, who were placed 
as it were in the Center, and middle part of the world: not 
that Jerusalem stood exactly in the midst of the world, but because 
many Nations stood about it, that might well be called a City 
standing in the midst of the nations; and therefore it is added 
(v. 8.) Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I, even I am against thee, 
and will execute Judgement in the midst of thee, in the sight of the 
nations. God would execute Judgement in Jerusalem a City placed 
in the midst of the nations, that as the nations had taken no 
tice of the extraordinary favours, benefits, deliverances, and sal 
vations which God wrought for Jerusalem; so they might also take 
notice of his judgements and sore displeasure against them. Jeru 
salem was not seated in some nooke, corner, or by-place of the 
world, but in the midst of the nations, that both the goodnesse and 
severity of God towards them might be conspicuous; And that 
the
the nations round about seeing the sufferings of that people for their sin, might fear and tremble to sin as they had done; for if Jerusalem the seat of instituted worship and God's peculiar people were not spared when they provoked God, their neighbours might well conclude, surely we shall not be spared. As the Lord himselfe argued it against those uncircumcited nations (Jer. 25. 20.) Behold I will bring evil upon the City that is called by my name, and should ye see utterly unpunished? Certainly no! If God punish his own people in the sight of the heathenish nations when they doe wickedly, what then are heathen nations to expect, who doe nothing but wickednesse?

And this (by the way) may give the Alarme; and be a very awakening consideration to all the Churches and people of God at this day throughout the world. If God did strike Jerusalem of old, that is, his people there, as wicked men even in the open sight of others; if the Lord was so wroth with his people, that he polluted his inheritance, and gave them into the hand of the Chaldeans (11a. 47.6.) If he forsooke his house and left his heritage, and gave the dearely beloved of his soule into the hands of her enemies (Jer. 22.7.) and sayd (v. 9.) Mine heritage is to me as a speckled bird, the birds round about her are against her; yea if he (in the close of that verse) invited the worst of men under the name of beasts to spoyle them, Come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field come to devour; Now (I say) If God struck his ancient people, the Jewish Church, as wicked men, by wicked men, in the open sight of others, O let the Gentile Churches take heed, lest they also be stricken after the same manner. Many Churches in Germany and else-where have been stricken so already in this last age, let the remnant both there and else-where remember themselves and give glory to God, before he cause such darknesse to come upon them, and strike them also as wicked men in the open sight of others.

God lets some sinners suffer or puniseth them openly, both because he would have all others take notice that he dislikes what they have done, as also because he would not have others doe the like, lest they be made like them, both in the manner and manner of their sufferings. 'Tis a favour (as well as our duty) to be taught by other mens harmes, and to be instructed by their strokes, to prevent our own.

And as the Lord strikes some wicked men openly, that others may
may feare and not doe the like, so that they who have done the like may be humbled for, and repent of what they have done. God doth not always powre out the same Judgements upon all those that have done the same wickedness, (the whole world would be in blood if he did so) but he takes here and there one that the rest bethinking themselves, and (with repenting Ephraim) smiting upon their thigh, may prevent the Lord from smiting them at all, especially from striking them as wicked men in the open sight of others. It is sayd (Rev: 13.13.) that, after by a great earth-quake the tenth part of the City fell, and in the earth-quake were slaine of men seven thousand, the remnant were af-frighted and gave glory to the God of heaven. And surely the rea-son why after one man hath been chastised or stricken, others take their turnes too, is because they did not take warning by his cha-stisements and sufferings. Did we but mind the scope of God in punishing any openly, the striking of one might save hundreds, or thousands from being stricken; but because men are so secure and so slow to take warning by what God doth to others, therefore they are called forth one after another, to suffer and feel his hea-vy hand in their own persons.

Thirdly, God strikes some wicked men in open view, or in the place of beholders for the comfort of his own people, and for their encouragement (Psal: 58.10, 11.) The righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance; not that he shall be glad of the vengeance, purely as it is a hurt, or a suffering to the creature, but the righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance of God, as it is a fulfilling of the threatening of God against the sin of man, and an evidence of his own holiness. (Psal: 64.9,10.) God shall shoot suddenly at the wicked, all that see them shall flee a-way; that is, they that see how God deales with them, shall get away, lest ruine overtake them, or they shall flee away (which is their best course) from such courses and practices as procured them that ruine. Thus the righteous rejoice when they see the vengeance, yea they wash their feete in the blood of the ungodly; that is, they get comfort and encouragement by seeing the Lord avenge their cause against their adveraries. It is sayd (Exod: 14.30,31.) that God having overwhelmed the Egyptians in the red Sea, the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead upon the shore; God did not suffer the carcasses of the Egyptians to sink to the bottom of the
the Sea, but caused them to lie upon the shor, that the Israelites might see them: And when Israel saw that dreadfull stroke of the Lord upon the Egyptians, It is sayd, The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses: Thus they were confirmed in their faith by Gods open Judgements upon the Egyptians; They were smitten in the place of beholders, or in the open sight of others.

There are yet two other interpretations of these words, which I shall touch.

He striketh them in the place of beholders, that is (faith my Author) in such an estate or condition wherein themselves might see, both by that natural light which every man hath, & especially by the light of doctrine and instruction, what they ought to doe, and what to shun or avoyd. In this sense to be smitten in the place of Seers, is, to see and behold, to have light and understanding what to doe, or forbear doing, and yet to act against that light, and so provoke the Lord to strike us; which is a great aggravation both of the sin, and punishment of man.

A second gives it thus, He striketh them in the place of seers, or where they saw; that is, he striketh them in the eye of their understanding, or in their Judgement, he striketh them with spiritual blindness, as the Sodomites were with corporall, so that they are not able to see their way, or what becomes them to doe. This is a most severe stroke. There are many who when they have abused the light, and would not doe what they saw they ought, God hath struck them with such blindness; that they should not see what they ought to doe. Both these are rather tropological Expositions then literal, yet they may have their use and improvement by way of allusion. In this place Elisha having thus held out the openness and exemplarines of the judgements of God upon wick-ed men, proceeds in the following words, to shew the equity and righteousnesse of them.

Ver. 27. Because they have turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his ways.

Here, I say, lest any should surmise that God takes vengeance without cause, the cause is named and assign'd why God takes vengeance; 'tis because they turned back from him, they in the pride V u u u z
and stoutness of their hearts (which great men especially are much subject to) refused to obey and follow God, and therefore his wrath followed and brake them.

They turned back from him.

There is a two-fold turning back; First, Corporally; Secondly, Morally or Spiritually, none can corporally turn back from God, though some attempt it; to what hiding place soever we turn ourselves, we cannot be hid from him who filleth every place? But there are many who morally turn back and depart from the living God. Sinners would turn their persons back from God, and hide their heads, they would get quite out of his sight and reach, though they cannot; but all of them turn back from God in their hearts.

In two respects sinners in general, may be said to turn back from God; First, when he commands and they will not obey him, or withdraw their obedience from his commandments; Secondly, when he entreats and invites them, and they will not come to him, nor accept his tendered respects and favours. Thus the Lord complained of his own people (Psal: 81. 11) Israel would none of me; God wooed them, but they had other lovers, and after them they would goe; even Israel lightly regarded the God of Israel, yea they made a defection from him. More distinctly.

There is a three-fold turning back from God, or they who turn back from God are of three sorts.

First, There is a turning back from God, by those who have openly followed him, or made profession of his name; Thus hypocrites and formalists turn back from God. This the Scripture calls back-sliding, revolting, and going a whoring from God. Such as these, are like perfidious Souldiers, who enter and lift themselves in an Army, marching with them for a while, & taking their pay, yet soon after forsake their colours, and turn to the enemy: Thus many apostatize from God to the Devil, and to the creature, or (as Paul sayd of Demas) they forsake Christ and embrace this present world. Luther was charged by his enemies that he was an Apostate, and he acknowledged, he was, but he thanked God for it, he indeed turned back from what he did once profess, but it was to a better profession; he did not turn from God to the world, but he turned from the world to God, and that’s a blessed.
blessed Apostacy; he did not turn from truth to error, but from error to truth; he did not turn from pure worship to Idolatry and superstition, but from Idolatry and superstition to pure worship. How wretched is their condition who are indeed Apostates! who turn from God to the world, from truth to error, from pure worship to Idolatry and superstition, from a holy conversation to prophaneness, loathness and libertinisme, to a compliance with the world, and a symbolizing with them in their lufts and wickedness. This abominable apostacy is a fruit of hypocrite, Hypocrites turne only their faces to God, and Apostates turne their backes upon him, or, turn back from him. And all they who turn only their faces unto God, will for their owne advantage, or to save themselves turn their backs upon him. Hypocrites when put to it, when the storme comes, ever prove Apostates.

Secondly, There is a turning from God found even in the best followers of God; who is there among the Saints on earth that keepes constant un-interrupted communion with God? The least degree of inordinate letting downe or turning the heart to the creature, is, a degree of turning back from God. As holiness is our motion toward God, and to act holyly is to keep the eye of the soule alwayes upon God; so, unhollines, is an aversion from God. David did not say, nor could he say (though as holy a man as lived) that he had never turned from God; he could only say that he had not wickedly departed from God (Psal: 18. 21.)

Thirdly, There is a turning back from God, proper to all unregenerate persons, whether they be such as are civilly honest and possibly such as doe not decline the outside of that religion wherein they were borne and bred; or such as are flagitious in their lives and wayes, scorning to own religion, and being even ashamed of the wayes of God. These may be said to turn back from God, because they have many calls to God, and are invited to come unto him; which yet they either neglect and mind not at all, or refuse and reject, and so thrust away God from them; and when the light comes, they love darkness rather then light, because their deeds are evil (Joh: 3. 19.) Such were they of whom Job spake (Chap: 21. 14.) They say to God depart from us; he doth not intend it of Apostates in a strict notion, who once made profession of godlines; but he speaks of common and prophane persons, who have no mind at all to obey or walk with God, but mind.
mind only the fulfilling of their lusts, or the affayres of this present life; and so their whole life is nothing else but a turning from God. Thus the vulgar translation renders the text with a good significance, though not with a clearness to the Hebrew; who have purposely turned from God; distinguishing them from those who through dayly Infirmity turn from God, as the best of his people do; whereas, these sin willingly, yea willfully and resolutely against God. I conceive, the words of Elijah in this text are to be understood of turning from God in this third sense; For he is not here speaking of those who were eminent professors before, and did Apostatise; much less of those that turn from God by dayly failings in duty, or some neglect of duty; but he is speaking of such, whose whole course of life is as a continued turning from God, themselves never having been wrought upon by the grace of conversion, or savagely turned to him. This third sort of turners back from God are most proper to the present text, though such also are within the reach and compass of it, who doe wickedly after they have made faire pretensions to the best things. This is the reason why God striketh the mighty to destruction; they have turned back from God. The reason being thus explicite and express, teacheth us,

First.

God never punisheth any man without cause.

God doth not alwayes shew the cause why he punisheth this or that man, but he never punisheth any man without cause; if he striketh, 'tis because men turn back from him, either by a plain apostacy from what they once professed, or by a notorious course of impiety, refusing so much as to own his ways or make profession. God electeth some, and passeth by others without respect to any thing in them; Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated; God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy (Rom: 9. 13, 15.) thus, I say, God electeth us without respect to any good in us; but God never striketh or punisheth us, but with respect to some evil in us or done by us.

Secondly, Note.

It is the duty of all men to follow after God.

To follow God in his way, and to propose God as our end, containe
tain the summe of all duty. That, God hath made man and given him a being, that, he placed man in the highest forme of his visible creation, should draw man after him. We ought to follow God because we are his creatures, because we have our all from him, or because in him we live, and move, and have our being, as the Apostle speakes of mankind in generall, even of the heathens (Acts 17. 28.) And forasmuch as we are his off-spring (v. 29.) our hearts should spring, or rise up to him in love and thankfullnesse; as the rivers, because they come from the Sea, goe back thither: so we being the off-spring of God, and derived from him, should be always returning to him. This nature tells us; And therefore the Apostle faith (Acts 17. 27.) God hath made of one blood all nations of men, that they should seek after him, &c. The light of nature, though dim and dark, shews that a man should seeke after God, as a man in the dark doth after his way. And if all men ought to follow God, because they have their natural life and breath from him; much more should believers, who have a new, a spirituall life breathed into them, and bestowed upon them, be always following after God; And the truth is, where true faith, or the life of grace is, that soule cannot live without dayly returnings back to and breathings after God, even as meere carnal men, who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, are dayly turning back from him.

Hence thirdly, Note.
The whole life of every unconverted soule, and notorious sinner, is a turning from God.

They who set their faces sin-ward, turn their backs God-ward. They who pursue their lusts, their covetous, their ambitious purposes, they who gratifie the flesh, their pride, their luxury, their wantonnesse, their malice, what doe any of them, what doe all of them, but turn back from God? The belt of Saints have their turnings from God, but they doe not make it their business to turn from him; their business is, to draw near, to keep close to God, to keep as it were in his eye; but as for the naturall man and gross sinner, his business is a departing from God (Heb. 3. 12.) Take heed (faith the Apostle) lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. He gives Caution.
tion to the Church, search your selves, lest there be found in any of you an evill heart of unbelief, &c. Where unbelief remains in any measure unmortified, it may quickly doe a great deale of mischief. And where it remains in full power or altogether un-mortified, it doth all manner of mischief. All which is wraught up in that one word, a departure from the living God. Unbelief is the root of Apostacy; The reason why sinners turn from God, is, because they give no Credit to the word of God; they are not persuaded God is such a one as he hath declared himselfe to be, and will either doe that for the obedient which he hath promised, or that against the rebellious which he hath threatned. They who believe not in God cannot but depart from God; And therefore the life of an unbeliever is a continuall departure from God. He sers out with his back upon God; the very first step he takes into the world is from God. As soon as we are borne we naturally goe astray speaking lyes; we are ever out of our way, till we look toward God, and ayme at him; which we never doe, till he by his mighty power changeth our hearts, turneth our course, and bringeth us home to himselfe.

Further, Consider, how did these mighty men turn back from God? they might say, where did we see God? where did God appeare to us? that we are thus charged with turning back from him?

I answer; First, God manifests himselfe to man in his workes, or in his providences. Secondly, He manifests himselfe in every part of his word, especially in his Commands, in his promises, and in his threatenings; in his Commands, he manifests himselfe a holy God; in his promises, a gracious and bountifull God; in his threatenings, a just and righteous God, who will neither do wrong nor suffer himselfe to be wronged. The Septuagint make this Exposition the text, translating these words of Eliph, thus; Because they have turned from the Law of God.

Hence note.

They who turn from the word of God, turn back from God.

When a Command comes, if you flight the authority and obligation of it, you turn back from God; when a promise comes, if you doe not believe the truth of it, and hope for the good of it, you turn back from God; look what of the mind of God is manifested
fested to you in the dispensation of the word, if you do not obedi-
dientially close with it, you neglect to close with God himselfe,
and while you turn from it, you turn from God himselfe. Thus
the Apostle speakes concerning back-sliders (2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.)
If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the
knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ they are againe en-
tangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them; then
the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have knowne
the way of God, then after they have knowne it, to turn from the
holy commandement delivered unto them; so that, a turning from
the Commandement of God, is a turning from God himselfe; He
turneth back from the holy commanding God, who turneth back
from the holy commandement of God, and he turneth back from
the God of the promise, who turneth back from the promise of
God.

Fifthly, Note.
As it is exceeding sinfull to turn back from God, so they who
doe so, grow every day more and more sinfull.

If a man be once upon a course of back-sliding and Apostati-
zation from the commands and promises of God, he will find him-
selве worse and worse day after day; for still the further from God
any man goeth, the more vaine he groweth; and the more doth
lust get a hand over him. As unbeliefe is the roote of Apostacy
from God, so Apostacy encreaseth all that wickednesse which is
in man. As the cause of all evill, whether of punishment or of sin,
is our departure and turning from God; so the very nature of sin
is a turning from God; and therefore the more we turne from
God, the more sinfull and the fuller of sin we are. As the nearer
we come to God, the more holy and spiruall and heavenly we
are (while we with open face as in a glasse ( faith the Apostle,
2 Cor. 3. 18.) Behold the glory of God ( that is, while we draw
neere to him in his holy ordinances ) we are changed into the same
image, that is, we become more like to God) so the more we keep
at a distance from God, the more unlike we are to him, that is, the
more unholy we are. And as persons unconverted, or in an unho-
ly state, are wholly alienated from the life of God, and cannot
endure to come neere him; so it is in a degree by any of our
withdrawings or turnings from him: we are made more unholy,
and are changed more into the image of those carnal and earthly things which we behold, and with which we over-intimately converse in the time of those withdrawings.

Lastly, Note.

A holy life consists in following of and keeping close to God.

To keep close to God is both a holy and a comfortable life; 'Tis the perfection of Saints to walk with God; Enoch walked with God; and that was his holiness (Gen. 5.24.) Caleb followed God fully, and that was his holiness. A spiritual life, is nothing else but our following God. The most religious worship of God is to imitate whom we worship. And our imitation of God is our following of God; no man can imitate any thing but when his eye is upon its pattern, or the Idea of it abides in his mind. And therefore it is sayd of the ungodly man (Psal. 10.4.) God is not in all his thoughts (then followeth, v. 5.) his ways are always grievous. If God be not in the thoughts of a man, nothing of God is stamped upon the ways of that man. In vaine are we called Christians, unless we keep close to Christ, and in vaine doe any pretend to godliness, unless they walk with God. Jesus Christ hath called himselfe the way (Joh. 14.6.) chiefly upon this account; because by him we goe to the Father, and have acceptance with God by the grace of Justification; but Jesus Christ is the way also, of our Sanctification; we must walke in him, and as he walked (I Joh. 2.6.) that we may be holy: every departur from God lets the heart loose to sin. That which shall maintaine the Saints holiness to Eternity, is, They shall always behold the face of God; they shall never turn back from God, they shall never be taken off one moment from the actual vision, enjoyment and contemplation of God in glory; therefore they shall never be taken off from actual holiness and purity, now in proportion, as we keep our hearts and spirits steady upon God, and doe not turn back from him, such is our holiness in this life; and as our holiness is, such will our comfort and peace and joy be in this life. For as because when we arrive at glory, we shall never turn back from God, much less turn our backs upon him, therefore in glory there is fullness of Joy, and pleasure for evermore; So the nearer we keep to God, and the closer we walke with him in this life, the fuller and more lafting will our joyes and pleasures be.
As in this former part of the 27th verse, we have had the first cause opened why God striketh the mighty as wicked men in the open sight of others, namely, their apostacy from God, Because they turned back from him. So in the latter part of this verse we have another reason assigned why God doth it, and that is, because

They would not Consider any of his wayes.

The word which we render Consider, signifies also to understand or know, which is an act precedent to consideration; Consideration is a contemplative act; by consideration we become more knowing, but we cannot consider any thing till we have some understanding or knowledge of it. And this word is often (in another Conjugation) used in the title of some speciall Psalmes. The 32d Psalme, as also the 42d Psalme, is called Maschil, as much as to say, a teaching, or an instructing Psalme, a Psalme giving understanding and requiring deep and serious consideration. Thus in the text, they would not consider, nor understand, nor know, nor contemplate any of his wayes.

The Hebrew is, all his wayes; that is, none at all of them. The wayes of God in Scripture are taken in a two-fold notion; First, for those wherein he would have us walk; such are the wayes of his commandements: they are called the wayes of God, because the direct us to walk in them. A holy life consists in our walking with God, and we cannot walk with God any further, or any longer, then we keep in the wayes of his commandements. It is saied of the children of Israel, after the death of Josua (Judg. 2. 17.) they turned quickly out of the way, which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandements of the Lord; but they did not so. To obey the commandements, is to walk in the way of them. Taking the wayes of God in this sense, when Elihu faith, They would not consider any of his wayes, his meaning is, they did not intend nor had any heart to set themselves to learne the mind of God revealed in his word concerning their duty, or what they ought to do; they know not the wayes of God practically. The word properly denotes the wisdome and prudence, which stayeth not in notion, but proceeds to action. These men lived as if they had
had never heard of, at least never understood the Law of God, which is the rule of life. They considered not the ways of God to walke in them, as Moyses exhorted the people of Israel (Deur. 29. 9.) Keep therefore the words of this covenant to doe them.

Secondly, The ways of God are those wherein himself walketh, the works of God are the ways of God; the works of his providence either in mercy or in judgement, either in doing good or in doing evil (that is, penal evil) these are the ways of God; in these God shewes himself as in a way, in these he goeth forth in his power and goodness, in his mercy and justice. All these divine glories and perfections are discovered in the works of God. Thus David is to be understood when he faith. (Psal. 25. 10.) All the ways of God are mercy and truth, to them that fear him, and keep his Covenant; that is, all the providential works of God are mercy and truth; though all of them are not mercy in the matter, or precisely taken as works done, though none of them are mercy, respecting some persons to whom they are done, for many of them are materially chastishments, afflictions, and crofties to good men, and all of them are wrath and judgement to evil and impenitently wicked men; yet they are all mercy in the issue or result of them to good men, or to those who fear God, and keep his covenants. For whether he do good, or whether he do evil, whether he wounds, or whether he heals, all these providential ways of God, are as truth in themselves, so mercy to his people; or, as the Apostle concludes (Rom. 8. 28.) They work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose. In both these fences we may expound this Text. They would not consider any of his ways; that is, they would neither consider the Lawes of God, which were the way wherein they should walke. Hence, first we may take notice, Elihu doth not say, they did not consider his ways; but, they would not; It was not so much an act of carelessness and negligence as of contempt and rebellious resolution.

Hence
Hence Observe.

*Evil men have no will to consider or understand the good ways of God; yea, their will is against such an understanding.*

A natural man liketh not to retain God in his knowledge, (Rom. 1: 28.) Now, he that doth not like to retain God in his knowledge, or had rather think of any thing then of God, he can never (while such) like to retain the ways of God in his knowledge; he that layeth God out of his thoughts, will much more lay the law of God out of his thoughts. The natural man hath not only a blindness in his minde, which hinders him from discerning the things of God, (they being discernable only by a spiritual eye,) but he hath an obstinacy in his Will; or, he hath not only an inability to know, but an enmity against the knowledge of that which is spiritual: He shut his eyes, and draws a curtain between himself and the light which is ready to dart in upon him; away with this light, faith he; Thus he rebelleth against the light, and as his understanding is dark, so his affections are corrupt. *Solomon* gives us all this in the expostulations of wisdome with wicked men, (Prov. 1. 20, 21, 22.) Wisdome cryeth, &c. How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? That which a man hateth, he hath no will, no minde to know. An impotency or inability unto God, argues a very sad condition, but a rebellion, a frowardness, a wilfulness against it, demonstrates a condition much more sad; not to know because we have no means of knowledge, will make us miserable enough, but not to know because unwilling to receive, or because wilfully set against the means of knowledge, renders any mans condition most miserable. Such were these in the Text, They would not consider any of his ways.

Secondly, *Elihu* saith not, they did not know any of his ways; or they knew not which way to go; but they would not consider them. There is no man but knowes some, yea many of the ways of God, that is, of those wayes wherein God would have him to walk; these wayes of God are written in the heart by nature, there is an impression of the Will of God upon every soul, though not such an impression or writing as grace maketh there (that's another kinde or manner of work) for, when once through grace the Law of God is written in, and impressed upon the heart, then the heart
heart is suited to the Law, yea, the heart is not only conformed unto, but transformed into the Law of God, whereas by nature the Law is written only so far as to give us the knowledge of the Law, and a conviction of that duty or conformity which we owe to it. The men here intended by Elihu, knew the Law or ways of God, by the light of a natural conscience, but not by the light of a renewed conscience, and therefore they would not consider any of his ways, which is a farther description of the heart of man in a state of Nature.

Hence Note.

That which a natural man knoweth of the will of God, he will not consider, unless it be to reject and turn from it.

I (saith Wisdom, Prov. 1. 24, 25.) have stretched out my hand, (as a Teacher doth to his hearers or disciples) and no man, (that is, no meer natural man) regarded, they saw at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof. Let me say what I would, they would at most but give me the hearing, they would not consider it; though the light shined in upon them, and they could not chuse but see somthing, yet they would not sit down and roll it in their thoughts, and work it upon their hearts, to finde out the excellency of what they saw. It is a very great measure of sinfulness not to know the ways of God, but not to consider what we know, but lightly to pass it by, that is a greater measure of sinfulness.

Thirdly, comparing this assertion concerning wicked men, they would not consider any of his ways, with their practice in the former part of the verse, they turned back from God, and with the effect of it in the verse following, they made the cry of the poor to come up to him, &c.

Observe.

The reason why men are so wicked, and act so wickedly, is, because they minde not the Word of God.

They who consider not the rule of the Word, are far both from righteousness towards man, and holiness towards God. If once a man throw aside the Word of God, where will he stay? He will neither abide in any ways of holiness, nor will he abide in any ways of righteousness; they cannot make conscience of the ways of God, who will not consider the ways of God. We have this clear character of a wicked man, (Psal. 50.) he is one that will possibly
possibly take the covenant of God in his mouth, he will be talking of it, his tongue may be tipp'd with it, but (vers. 17.) he hateth instruction, and causeth the words of God behind his back. He that would consider a thing, holds it before his eye, and keeps it, as much as he can in sight; therefore the Lord, when he would assure Zion how much he did consider her cause, though she had said a little before, God hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me, yet presently the Lord saith, (ISA. 49. 15, 16.) Can a woman forget her sucking childe, that she should not have compassion on the son of her wombe? Tea, they may, yet will not I forget thee; (what follows? ) Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me. As if the Lord had said, you may be sure I will consider your cause, for I have you here pourtrayed upon the palms of my hands, and am always viewing your walls, either as ruin'd and demolished, to move me to pity, or in that strong & beautiful model according to which I purpose to raise them up again, or re-build them. Thus I say, both God and man intending to consider any thing, have it always before them; but what a man hath no minde to consider, he casts it behind his back; thou castest my words behind thy back, saith God to the hypocrite, and when once the hypocrite hath got the word behind him, then he is ready for any wickedness (vers. 18, 19, 20.) When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with the adulterer, &c. Whence was all this? he had cast the word behind his back. It is David's question, (PSAL. 119. 6.) Wherein shall a young man cleanse his way? The answer is, By taking heed thereto according to thy word; that is, by continual eying of the word, and of his way, and by comparing them together. They that will make right work, must be always eying the rule; if once you lay by the rule, you will make but crooked, or bungling work: When the rule of righteousness is laid by, righteousness is laid by too. These mighty men of whom Elihu speaketh would not consider any the holy wayes of God, and you see what ill favour'd work they made, what foul wayes they walked in.

Fourthly, The Text doth not say they would not consider some, or such and such of his wayes, but any of his wayes.

Hence Note.

A wicked man liketh, delighteth in, or loveth no one way of God better or more then another.
He is as much out with all as with any, they are all alike to him, that is, he likes none of them; they would not consider any of his ways. He that hateth one truth of God, hateth all truth, though possibly his hatred is not called out or acted against some truths; and he that hateth one law of God, hateth all his laws, though possibly his lusts are not drawn out against some of them. The reason why the Apostle James faith, (chap. 2. 10.) Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all, is, because if a man hath a minde to sin against one branch of the law, that evil principle will carry him to sin against any branch of it: If he be not stop from without, he findes no stop within against the worst of sins, as it is a sin.

Fifthly, We translate any, the Original word is [all] his ways, which imports a refusing of every one of his ways; there are several Scriptures of a like fence. (Psal. 103. 1, 2.) O praise the Lord, and forget not all his benefits; that is, forget not any one of his benefits; not that a man shall be excused, though he forget many of the benefits of God, or half his benefits, if to be he forget not all, or remember some: but when that Scripture faith, forget not all his benefits, the meaning is, forget not any one at all. Thus here, they considered not all his ways, (that's the letter of the Text, and so Mr. Broughton translates,) that is, none of them. Taking that reading, and the Scripture fence given of it, it gives us this useful Observation.

That unless all the ways of God be considered and obeyed, there is not any one of them considered or obeyed.

God will not be obeyed by halves; he must have entire obedience, universal obedience, or he owneth none; there is a band or tye between all the commandments of God, and unless you keep them all, you break them all; they that submit not to all, submit to none of his laws. It is not enough for a man to say he is no adulterer, if he be a thief; or to say he is not a murderer, if he bears false witness. He that doth the one in act, doth the other in his heart; nothing hinders him but the absence of a temptation, or of an opportunity, the Law doth not.

Further, [they] would not consider any of his ways. Who were they? No fools I dare say, either in their own opinion, or in the opinion of men. Doubtless those mighty men spoken of by Eli-
were worldly wise men; they were the mighty, the great men of the world, and they are commonly very considering men, as well as very considerable men; they are knowing men, as well as men much known; they are men of counsel, and fit in counsel to debate difficult matters, and of greatest outward concernment; these things they could consider exactly, and weigh them to a grain; but they would not consider any of God's ways.

Hence Note.

There is nothing so little regarded by ungodly men, as the ways of God are.

Though they have wisdome and ability to understand and consider earthly things, yet they will bestow none of it upon the things of heaven. Christ rebuked Martha when he saw her so busie about worldly business, (Luke 10. 41.) Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, one thing is needful; Martha had some care about the one thing needful, but because not so much as she should, Christ gave her a gracious check and reproof for it: How much more may Christ come and rebuke the men of the world, ye are careful about many things, ye are wise considering men about your profits and preferments, those ye can think of all night long; but there is one thing needful, my ways, my word, my commandments are to be considered, what account can ye give of or concerning them?

Farther, this non-consideration of the ways of God is brought as a charge, as a high charge against those mighty men; not only were they bad men who did not consider the ways of God, but this was a part, yea I may say the whole of their badness, that they did not consider the ways of God.

Hence Note.

Not to consider the ways of God, is in itself a very great sin.

The omission, or non-performance of what is good, is as sinful as the commission or doing of that which is evil. Not to do good is to do evil; especially when it is the not doing of such a good duty as opens a way to the doing of all evil. Should we suppose a man not chargeable with the breaking of any commandment of God, yet if we could charge him that he did not consider the commandments of God, this were the breaking of all the commandments.
mandments. For as they are all to be considered that we may keep them, so if we consider them not, we cannot keep them. 'Tis the description of a godly man, (Psal. 1. 2.) His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night. Meditation is nothing else but consideration. A godly man meditates or considers day and night what the Law or Word of God is; not that he thinks of nothing else but the Law of God day and night, for then he must throw off his Calling; but the meaning is this, he is very sedulous and watchful of all opportunities both night and day, to get and keep his heart up in holy meditation; and why is he so much in holy meditation? 'Tis surely, that he may be much, yea always in holy action; and when it may be said of a man, that his meditation is not in the Law of God, neither day nor night, or that he never considers the ways of God, this is an undeniable evidence that he neither keeps in the way, or observes any one line or letter of the Law at any time. It is our sin, and that no small one, not to consider our own ways, how much more is it sinful not to consider the ways of God! To consider our own ways, is a great part of our work: If we consider not our own ways, they will soon be crooked ways. The Prophet adviseth the Jews, (Hag. 1. 5.) Consider your ways; the Text is, Set your heart upon your ways; that is, ponder your ways; as if he had said, the reason why your feet are so often in bad ways, is, because your hearts are so seldom upon your ways. Now, if not to consider our own ways be so sinful, and subjects us to every sin, then much more is it sinful not to consider the ways, the word and truths of God, and much more doth the neglect of this lead or lay us open and obnoxious to every sin. This neglect is not only a special sin in itself, and an effect of sin, but the general cause of all other sins: What sin is not, or may not be found in the ways of those men, who consider not the ways of God?

Lastly Observe.

'Sin makes men stupid, and transforms them into fools.'

He that is not a considering man, is a weak and a foolish man; every wise man is a considering man; and the more a man is versed in consideration, the more wise he is, and the wiser he grows. The wicked man is often called a fool in Scripture, and he deserves
serves no better a title; when he is called so, he is both served and
called in his kinde (Psal. 14. 1.) The fool hath said in his heart,
there is no God. The thoughts of the heart are the sayings of the
heart; and sin hath made a wicked man so much a fool, that as he
knowes not how to say any thing of God, which is honourable,
with his tongue, so all that his heart can say, the is, think of God,
is, that God is not; which as it is the highest blasphemy, so the
deepest piece of folly and irrationallity that ever was hatcht in the
heart of man. Sin makes dull-heads, it stupifies the soul; sinners
consider not that, at any time, which is their interest as much as
their duty to consider of at all times, the wayes of God, as taken
for the wayes wherein man ought to walk towards God.

Again, If we take the wayes of God in the second notion, for
the wayes wherein himself walks towards man, usually called his
works, or the wayes of his providence.

Note.
It is the mark of an ungodly man, not to consider the works and
providences of God, how God walketh towards him, or what he
doeth in the world.

(ISA. 1. 3.) I have nourished and brought up children; that is, I
have done for my people as a father for his children; but what
follows? My people doth not know, Israel doth not consider: They
consider not what I have done for them, as well as not what I have
spoken to them; they consider not how I have nourished and
brought them up, as well as not how I have instructed and given
them counsel; and from this neglect God infers, (VER. 4.) Ab
sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, 
&c. they quickly proceed to the doing of all evil against God, who
consider not of the good which God doth or hath done to them.
Read this sin, the not considering of the works of God, with the in-
fulness of all the works of those unconsidering men, (Psal. 28. 4, 5.
ISA. 5. 11, 12.) The Scripture makes frequent mention how ex-
tremely ill the Lord takes it, at the hands of men, when his works
are not considered by them, when they regard not the operation of
his hands. Indeed God doth much in the world, he walketh in man-
ly dark and hidden wayes, which though we consider, we cannot
fully understand; Thy way (faith Alaph, Psal. 77. 19.) is in the sea,
and thy path in the great waters, and thy foot-steps are not known.

Y y y y 2

God
God hath many invisible works both of mercy and of judgement; yet we should be, though not curiously, yet seriously searching, as much as possibly we can, even into those ways of God which are unsearchable; we should consider, though we cannot search them out. But as for those works of God that are visible and plain, which are written as it were with the beams of the Sun, which are so plain and obvious, that he who runs may read them, to neglect the consideration of these, or lightly to pass them by, how sinful is it! Those works of God which are most plain, have wonders in them, if we could find them out. As in the plainest Text of Scripture there is a world of holiness and spiritualnes; and if we in prayer and dependance upon God did sit down and consider it, we might behold much more of those wonders then yet appear to us: It may be at once reading or looking we see little or nothing, as Elijah’s servant, when he went once, he saw nothing, therefore he was commanded to look seven times; What now, faith the Prophet? O now I see a cloud rising like a man’s hand; and by and by the whole surface of the heavens was covered with clouds. So you may look lightly upon a Scripture, and see nothing, and look again, and see little, but look seven times upon it, meditate often upon it, and then you shall see a light like the light of the Sun. ’Tis thus also with the works of God, we pass many of them by as small matters, but when thoughtfully considered, there is a wonderful depth in them; now not to consider those ways of God wherein he is so visible, and which are the actings and exercising of his power, goodness, wideness, and faithfulness, this must needs be a very great sin, (Isa. 26. 11.) Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, (they take no notice of it, much less lay it to heart) but they shall see, (they shall be made to see one way or other,) and be ashamed for their envy at the people, or (as the margin hath it,) towards thy people. As godly men see the hand of God, and are both confirmed and comforted for his mercy to his people, so wicked men shall see, and be both ashamed and confounded, because they both envied the people of God that mercy, and opposed it. They who will not see the works of God to give him glory, shall see them to their own shame. God hath given us his works of Creation, that we should consider them daily, as David did (Psal. 8. 3.) When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon, and the Stars which show...
now, Of God but And though they, &c. Certainly, Thou fittest it, not the is holds upon them, unrighteousness, among all creatures in this lower world, (and he hath only fitted man) to give him glory by considering his works. The beasts of the earth cannot glorify God by considering his works: tis true, both they, & the fowls of the air, with the fift of the sea, according to their kind, praise God; but man only is fitted and furnished with an intellect or understanding faculty to consider, and so to draw out from all the works of God, those peculiar excellencies which make his Name glorious. Now, for man to leave such a faculty unexercised and unacquired, (as they who consider not the works of God do) is not only a dishonour to God, but a degradation of himself. As it is the privilege and happiness of a man to enjoy the benefit of the works of God, so it is his holiness and his duty to consider the beauty of them. And so to all who bruitfully lay by the works of God without consideration, let me add this consideration: God considers all your works or wayes, and will not you consider the works, the wayes of God? Of this be sure, whether you consider the wayes of God, his Word-wayes, or work-wayes (of this be sure:) God will consider your wayes, certainly he will; those wayes of yours which in themselves are not worth the considering or looking upon, your sinful wayes, though they are so vile, so abominable, that if your selves did but look upon them and consider them, you would be utterly ashamed of them, yea though they are an abomination to God while he beholds them, yet he will behold and consider them. The Lord who is of purer eyes than to behold any the least iniquity, to approve it, will yet behold the greatest of your iniquities, and your impurest wayes to consider them. Thou (faith, David, Psal. 19, 14.) Thou beholdest mischief and spite, to require it. God beholdest the foulest dirtyest wayes of men, their wayes of oppression and unrighteousness, their wayes of intemperance and lasciviousness; their wayes of wrath and maliciousness, at once to detect, detect and
and require them. If the Lord thus considereth the ways of men, even these filthy and crooked ways of men; should not men consider the holy and just and righteous ways of God? And that God considers all the ways, the worst of ways of the sons of men appears further in the next verse.

Ver. 28. So that they cause the cry of the poor to come up to him, and be heard the cry of the afflicted.

If the ways of men come up to God, then surely God considers the ways of men, even their vile and base ways, their wicked and unworthy ways; how can he but consider those ways, the cry of which cometh up to him?

So that they cause the cry of the poor to come up to him.

Here Elisha expounds to us or gives us more particularly what those ways of God were which those men would not consider, as also what the sin of those mighty ones was, which provoked God, to strike them as wicked men in the open sight of others. The ways of God which they would not consider, were the ways of his righteousness and justice; of his compassion to and care for the poor, they went quite cross to those ways of God. For they caused the cry of the poor to come up to him. But doe ungodly men bring the cry of the poor up to God? Certainly they have no such purpose, and therefore those words,

So that they cause the cry of the poor to come up unto him.

Note only a consequent, of what those men did; not the intent of those men; they aimed at no such thing by their oppressing the poor, as that God should hear the cry of the poor, yea they hoped the cry of the poor should never come up to God. They would willingly have stoppt the mouthes of the poor, that they should not have cryed to God, and presumed the eares of God would be stoppt against their cry, let them cry as long as they would: they doe not say to the poor, goe and appeale to God, goe make your moane to God; (yet some have been thus impudently blasphemous, when they have opprest the poor, to bid them, goe cry to their God;) but here we are to understand it as the issue of the oppression, not as the desire of the oppreffors. Their cruel and unrighteous dealing with the poor (like that of Pharaoh
Pharao with the Israelites) caused the cry of the poor to come up unto him.

Further, some render the text, not as expressing (though supposing) the cry of the poor coming up to God, but as reflecting or turning back in sad effects upon their oppressors; so that they cause the cry of the poor to come upon him; that is, upon every one of them, meaning the wicked themselves; they cause the cry of the poor to come upon them, or pull down vengeance upon their own heads. Several learned interpreters give that reading, taking the relative Him as a singular put for a plural distributively, upon him, that is, upon every one of them; taking also the cry of the poor by a metonymie of the effect, for that punishment which they deserved by their oppression, who caused the poor to cry. As if he had said; by this their wickedness they draw downe the wrath of God upon themselves.

But I shall only pursue our reading, and give the sense accordingly. They cause the cry of the poor to come unto [him] that is, unto God. The cry of the poor is their mournfull cry, their pittifull lamenting cry; yet this cry may possibly be, not so much vocall as real, not so much what the poor did make formally or directly to God about their wrongs, but the very wrongs and evils which they suffered cried to the righteous Judge of all the earth. Their affliction had a cry, a voice, a tongue, a thousand tongues in it. They cause the cry of the poor.

The word properly signifies those who are exhausted and drawne dry; oppressors will squeeze and suck such as they get into their power, till they have drawne out every drop; they will empty them from vessel to vessel, till they become empty vessels, and then like empty vessels the poor sound most and make the greatest cry. When oppressors have got all the money out of the purses of the poor, when they have pull'd the bread out of their mouthes, and even drawne the blood out of their veins, then they (poore soules!) sound out and lend up their cries to purpose. So that they cause the cry of the poor to come up unto him.

Hence note.

First, One fits makes way for another.
Turning back from God, brings in the non-consideration of the word and works of God; the word and works of God, not being considered, brings in the works of unrighteousness towards men, or oppression of the poor. One sin given way to, makes way for many more. No man knows where he shall end in doing evil, when once he begins to doe evil. 

David having defiled the wife is led to the murder of her husband. Peter having first disowned or denied his Master, proceeded to forswear him. If good men are thus hurried from sin to sin before they come to repentance, whether will sin carry wicked men, who goe onne, and onne impenitently?

Secondly, Note.  
They are the worst sort of wicked who make poor men cry.

Oppression is a sin against the light and law of nature, as well as against the light and law of God; every sin is the more sinfull, by how much it is committed against more light of any kinde, or against more kindes of light; and these sins are extreamly high, which are committed against the lowest and most common light, that of Nature. They who sin against the light of grace, against the light of the Spirit, sin (as the Prophet speakes, Hos: 6. 7.) like men, but they who sin against the light of nature, sin as if they were not so much as men but very beasts, yea worse then many beasts, there being scarce any of them who (as oppressors doe) devour those of their owne kind, though of some of them it be said and experienced (especially of the fishes in the Sea) that the Greater devour the leffe, as the mighty men of whom Elihu spake did the poor, causing their cry to come up unto God.

Thirdly, Note.  
Oppression will quickly cause a Cry.

(Isa: 5. 7.) I looked for Judgement, but behold oppression, and for righteousness, and behold a cry; that is, the cry of the oppressed. As the act of oppression is a crying sin, so the effect of it is crying; oppression cryeth loud, though the oppressed shut their mouths in silence and say nothing, yet usually the oppressed cannot forbear crying. The Apostle James (Chap: 5. 3.) schooles the wicked rich men of the world, with, a Go to now weep and Howle, &c. Your riches are corrupt, and your garments moth-eaten; 

Behold
Behold the hire of the labourers which have reaped downe your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth, and the cry of them which have reaped are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. As the poore labourers cryed, so their hire that was detained cryed also. The loud cry both of the oppressed and of oppression is often reported and recorded in Scripture, read (Exod. 2. 23. Lam: 1. 17. Chap: 2. 18. Psal: 86. 14.) The oppressed who cry are in a sad condition, but the condition of oppressors who make the poor cry is much more sad; For, as the text hath it,

The cry of the poore cometh up to God.

Though God should not come downe to that, yet that cometh up to God. And when it is sayd the cry cometh up to him, and not he at the cry. This intimates the cry of oppression, a very loud cry, that’s a loud cry that ascends up to heaven; Cities walled up to heaven, are high-walled Cities, and cries reaching up to heaven, are high-strained cryes. The breach of a commandement makes a great crack, especially when it is such a breach as makes the poore cry too. If a Great house, or a Tower fall suddenly, what a noyse doth it make? Certainly the unjust pulling downe of any poore man, is like the fall of a great house, or of a tower, it makes a noyse that reacheth up to heaven; he doth not speak of Gods coming downe. When Cain had slaine his brother Abel, the Lord sayd (Gen: 4. 10.) The voice of thy brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground; and so the cry of Sodom came up to God,(Gen: 18. 21.) The fall of a poore man makes a report as farre as heaven. Among men the fall of Princes and mighty men, makes a huge noyse, all the world is filled with the fall of a Prince, tis told every where, A great Prince is fallen. But I tell you the fall of a poore godly man, of the meanest of the servants of God, makes a greater cry then the fall of the greatest Prince in the world who is not so. The fall of a poore man by the oppression of the wicked, possibly is not heard a mile from the place where it was done on earth, yet it reacheth up to heaven; oppression hath not only a voyce, but a very loud voyce. To wrong a rich man, who can beare the wrong and be a rich man still, is a sin which hath a voyce in it; but the sin which the Scripture faith hath a cry in it, is the oppressing of a poore man. There is no liberty given to wrong a rich man, and that would be considered; Some
take a kinde of liberty, if he be a rich man that they are to put a reckoning upon, they thinke they may doe it somewhat largely, and say, he is able to beare it. But be the man never so rich and able to beare it, yet to wrong him is a sin, and a sin that God will take notice of to punishe. And though he can beare the wrong done, yet the wrong-doer will hardly be able to beare it when he comes to reckon with God for it. Thus (I say) to wrong the rich offends God; but to wrong the poore cryeth to God; and as it followeth in the text.

He heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Many cryes come up to God which he doth not heare, he doth not regard them, and tis possibile for a poore man to cry to God and God not heare him, in the sense here spoken of; Some poore men cry (as we say) before they are hurt; they cry rather out of discontent then want, they cry because they have not what they desire, not because they have not what they need. God will not heare the cry of such, though poore; but when a poore man is afflicted, when a poore man that is humbled (as the word here signifieth) and layd low in his state, is low also in spirit, and lowly in minde, God heareth the cry of such a poore man. If a poore man have a proud spirit, or is humorous, God will not heare him, though he cry. The word here renderd, afflicted, signifieth not only a man destitute of helpe, of strength, of friends, of assistance, (such is the reach and strength of that word) but he is one of a submitting patient spirit, or it noteth a man not only first, unable to resist his oppressor, but, secondly, unwilling at least not forward to make resistance, but sitting downe by the losse quietly, or possiessing his soule in patience when he hath losst all that he possiessed by oppression. The Lord hears the cry of this afflicted man; he will not reject his cry, not stop his ears against it. And when Elihu faith, He heareth the cry of the afflicted, his meaning is, he yeilds or grants him the thing he cryes for.

Hence note.

First, God graciously heareth the cry of humble oppressed ones.

Whosoever cry to him upon just cause, being indeed oppressed, though they are not godly, yet God will take notice of their cry; for he will right the oppressed as oppressed, and therefore the Jews had those caution (Exod: 22, 23. Dent: 24, 15.) not to
to wrong any servant or stranger, let him be who or whence he would, let he cry to me (with God) and it be sin to thee. But when any are not only oppressed and suffer wrong, but are also godly, of humble and lowly spirits, they are heard much more; when it is not only a cry of nature, but a cry of grace; not only a complaining cry, but a praying cry, God will certainly hear. (Luke 18. 12.) Shall not God avenge his own elect that cry to him day and night? when it is not only a complaining cry that they are under oppression, but a believing cry to be, or that they shall be delivered from oppression, when it is a holy cry, the cry of the elect, God cannot but hear their cry. He heareth other cries; he heareth the cry of the Ravens when they call upon him, and provideth for them, much more will he hear the cry of Saints, the cry of believers, the cry of the humbled and humble.

Secondly, as hearing notes granting,

The cry of the oppressed brings vengeance upon oppressors.

Read Psal. 12. 6. Eccles. 10. 26. Isa. 35. 1. Jer. 22. 16. All these Scriptures teach this truth, that the cry of the oppressed brings vengeance upon oppressors: Let the mighty remember, 'Tis dangerous meddling with God's poor; 'Tis dangerous meddling with any poor, but most dangerous meddling with God's poor. Some will say, there is such a great man, it is dangerous meddling with him, and they are afraid to wrong him, they dare not do it; if ever (say they) he should come to know it, he may break our backs, sit on our skirts, and crush us with his power; but if they can get an underling, a man below them, they presume there is no great danger in oppressing him; what can he do? if he bark, he cannot bite; if he hath a tongue, he hath no teeth; we can deal with him well enough. Thus, I say, men think it dangerous to wrong great men, but conclude they may do what they please with the poor, and those that are underlings; but we should more fear to wrong a poor man, then to wrong a rich man, though we ought not to do either; yet, I say, we should more fear to wrong the poor, then the rich, because the poor are under the special protection of the great God; they are under more promises of protection then the great men of the world are. Therefore Solomon gives that serious caution, (Prov. 23. 10, 11.) Enter not into the Vineyard.
Vineyard of the fatherless; (do not oppress the poor fatherless,) for his avenger is mighty, and God will plead his cause for him. You think you may do any thing with the poor and fatherless; O faith wife Solomon, take heed, do not invade the heritage of the fatherless, (we are not to take the fatherless there in a strict fence, for those whole parents are dead, but any that are poor and low, are fatherless, as the Prophet calls them Hos. 14. 3.) In thee the fatherless findeth mercy; beware faith he how you deal with the fatherless, for his Redeemer is mighty: though he hath no might, yet he hath a mighty Redeemer, and he will plead his cause for him. Possibly the poor man cannot plead with thee, he cannot try it out with thee in Law, he cannot see an Advocate, but God can and will be his Advocate. Therefore you that dare not wrong the mighty for fear they should crush you, be much more afraid to wrong the poor, for God is their avenger, and how easily can he crush you?

Lastly, This is matter of comfort to the godly poor, to the humble and meek; they may look for help from God in all their afflictions and hard usages they meet with in this world from the hands of men; when men even eat them up as bread, and ride over their heads as if they were but dirt, they may appeal to heaven and there have audience; they may refer their cause to God and be righted; He that is their Redeemer is mighty, and he will plead their cause; The expectations of the poor shall not perish for ever, (Psal. 9. 18.) that is, it shall never perish.
JOB. Chap. 34. Ver. 29.

When he giveth quietness, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only.

This verse is an argument or proof of what Elihu affirmed in the former, that, God heareth the cry of the poor: He doubtless heareth the cry of the poor, when he stirs or takes away the cry of the poor, when he lets the poor in a quiet state, or setteth them in peace; in such a peace, as their proud and wrathful oppressors shall not be able to disturb. Thus the Lord dealeth graciously in reference both to persons, and Nations, that cry unto him; and that's an undeniable argument, that he heareth their cry, the cry of distressed persons, the cry of distressed Nations.

Ver. 29. When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only.

The first part of the sentence, rendred, when he giveth quietness, is but one word in the Hebrew, we had it before (chap. 3. 13) where Job supposeth if he had died in his infancy, then should he have been still, and been quiet, he should have slept, and been at rest. The grave is a silent and quiet abiding place, the dead are quitted of all worldly unequettudes. And at the 26th verse of the fame chapter, Job faith, I was not in safety, neither was I quiet: (that is, secure) yet trouble came. So then, as this word notes, the quietness of the dead who have no sense of trouble, so it notes such a quietness of the living as hath no fear of trouble. When he giveth quietness, or as Master Broughton translates, when he maketh rest, who &c. The Italian version is, if he sendeth home in peace, &c. As if it had been said, If he by his sueraigne sentence freeth effere fectis out of slavery and oppression, as he did the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt &c. If he commandeth rest and quiet, then, as it followeth,
Who can make trouble?

Or, as Master Broughton renders, who can disturb? Who can displease those to whom God gives ease, or oppress those to whom God gives protection? The words bear the signification of a divine challenge, like that, (Rom. 8.31.) If God be for us, who can be against us? or like that (ver. 34.) Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Let us see the man, or the devil, that can charge the elect and prevail. Such is the Emphasis of the present Text, when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? Where is the man, high or low, great or small that can do it?

Further, the word which we translate make trouble, hath a three-fold eminent signification in Scripture.

First, It signifieth to be wicked; or to do wickedly; thus we read it at the 12th verse of this chapter, Surely God will not do wickedly, He that is altogether holy and righteous, doth all things holily and righteously. The same word signifieth to do wickedly, and to make trouble, because to do wickedly bringeth trouble often upon others, always upon the doer.

Secondly, it signifieth to condemn; thus we translate, at the 7th verse of this chapter, wilt thou condemn him (as one that hath done wickedly) who is most just? The same word may well signifieth to do wickedly, and to condemn, because they who do so, are worthy to be condemned. In this sense also we translate it, in that famous Prophecy of Christ, (Isa. 50.9.) He is near that justifieth me, who shall condemn me? or make me wicked and unrighteous. Thus some render the minde of Elihu in this place, if he giveth peace or quietness, who can condemn?

Thirdly, The word signifieth, as we render, to trouble, molest, or vex, so we translate (1 Sam. 14.47.) where it is said of Saul, that he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines; and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed, or troubled them. The word may be taken in these three significations with a subserviency one to another; for he that is wicked, or doth wickedly, deserveth to be condemned, or, men are condemned because they do wickedly: and he that is condemned by a righteous sentence is punished, and cannot but be troubled; a legal sentence of condemnation, brings a legal penalty
penalty upon the person condemned; we translate clearly to the
fence of the Text, who can make trouble, when God giveth qui-
etness? for here the word is not opposed to well doing, or acqut-
ting, but to quieting and pacifying; when he giveth quietness,
who can make trouble?

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

The face of God, by a well known Hebraifme (very frequent in
Scripture) signifies the favour of God; Master Broughton reads,
when he hideth favour. The favour which we bear to others, is
most visible in the face, and therefore the face may well signifie
favour. David over-looking all the good things of this world,
prayed for a good look from God in this expression, (Psal. 4.6.)
There be many that say who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou
up the light of thy countenance (or of thy face) upon us: that is, shew
us favour, or be favourable to us. And as the greatest good of
Saints in this world, so all the good of the next world is compre-
hended in this one word (Psal. 16.11.) In thy presence (the text
is, in thy face, that is, in the full enjoyment of thy benigne and
gracious presence) is fulness of joy. In like sense the word is
used Psal. 21.6. Psal. 67.1. So then, to hide the face, is to with-
draw favour, and kindness, love, and respect; more distinctly,
this phrase of hiding the face, hath a three-fold importance; or may
hold out these three things.

First, a distaste either against persons or things; we turn away
our face from him, or that which we do not like, or is displeasing
to us. The hiding of God's face is a manifextation of his displea-
sure; In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, faith
God to the Church, (Isa. 54.8.) This form of speaking is bor-
rrowed from their usage or practice, who refuse to admit into their
presence, or so much as look upon such, whom they either really
hate, or would seem at least to be much displeased with; As Da-
vid gave command concerning Absalom (2 Sam. 14.24.) Let him
turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. When God
withdraweth the wonted expressions of his love and kindness from
a person or a people; then (according to Scripture sense and lan-
guage) he is said to hide his face from them, Deut. 30.20. Psal.
30.7.

Secondly, The hiding of God's face, notes a refusal to help
those.
those who in straites cry to him for relief and deliverance: For if we will not give a man our eye, we will hardly give him our hand; if we will not so much as look upon him, we will hardly assist him. When God hides his face, 'tis as much as his denial of succour; Thus David bemoaned himself, (Psal. 13. 1.) why hidest thou thy face? that is, Lord, why withdrawest thou thy help from me? That he was sensible of such withdrawal, is plain by the prayer which he made, (ver. 3.) Consider, and hear me, O Lord my God; and by the reason of it given (ver. 4.) Left mine enemies say, I have prevailed against him. We finde David deprecating the hiding of God's face upon the same ground, (Psal. 44. 24. Psal. 69. 17.) The Prophet is very express in this point, (Isa. 59. 1, 2.) The Lords hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heaive that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you, and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear: that is, as he distasteth, and is displeased with you, so he denyeth you his usual help and assistance, because ye have great-sinned against him.

Thirdly, the hiding of God's face, notes not only some distastie, and a denial of help; but a total flight, or refusal of any care concerning us, (Isa. 40. 27.) Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God; that is, Why sayest thou, the Lord takes no care at all of me, and in that sense Job spake, (chap. 24. 1.) Why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not, see his dayes? that is, why seeing God doth not neglect times, and seasons, and how things go in the world, (there time is put for things done in time, why (I say) seeing God hath not cast off the care of the things of this world) is it thus with me? Why am I as a man forlorn, and utterly cast off? We may expound Elihu in all or any of these senses; when he hideth his face, or withdraweth his favour that is, when God is displeased, and Refueth to help, when God throweth up the care of a mans person, or condition; it cannot but go and be ill enough with him; for as it followeth, who then can behold him?

The face of God as taken for his essential being, cannot at all be seen, nor can we at all behold him; There shall no man (faith the
the Lord, Exod. 33. 20.) see my face, and live; But, as the face of God is taken for any manifestation of his being, whether in wrath or in love, in judgement or in mercy, so it may be seen: Now when God hideth his face, that is, his favour, and will not give out any pleasing manifestations of himselfe, who can behold him? that is, who can behold him with comfort? who can stand before an angry God? or abide his presence? As the gracious presence of God is the sweetest, so the wrathfull presence of God is the most bitter thing in the world, When he hideth his face, who can behold him?

Some expound thus; if God will not shew his face, if he is not pleased to reveale himselfe, no man can know, or see any thing of him; that’s a truth. We can know no more of God, then himselfe will reveale of himselfe to us; tis in his light (Psal: 36. 9.) that is, in the light which he causeth to shine from himselfe, that we see light, or what and who himselfe is, who is light, and in whom there is no darknes at all. If God will hide his power, or his wisdom, or his truth, or his mercy from us, who can see any thing of them? though all these perfections be always more glorious in him then the beams of the Sun, yet unless God shew them us, we cannot perceive them. We see the light of God in Gods light; if God hath a minde to conceal himselfe, or draweth (as it were) a curtaine between the creature and himselfe, who can behold him? we cannot by any study, or skill, or art, or endeavour of ours come to any sight or knowledge of God, further then himselfe makes himselfe knowne. This exposition is both true and ufefull; yet I conceive, when Elihu faith, Who then can behold him? his meaning rather poyns at these two things.

First, Who can have any comfortable enjoyment of him; to behold a man whose displeasure we suspected, and find acceptance and freedome with him, is compared to our beholding the face of God. I have seene thy face as though I had seene the face of God and thou wraft pleased with me, sayd Jacob to Esau (Gen: 33. 10.) when his brother treated him so lovingly contrary to his expectation, he looked upon it as an evidence of the favour of God to him. Or Jacob being much affected with the countenence and kindness of Esau, compared his face to the face of God, because in his reconciled face he saw (as it were) the face of God smiling upon him. This was Davids argument, that God favoured
him (Psal: 41. 11.) because his enemies did not triumph over him; much more is it an argument of God's favour, when they speake and act friendly towards us, or when we behold their face and are accepted. Joseph threatened his brethren, ye shall not see my face (or behold me) except your brother be with you (Gen: 43. 3.) if you come without him, either I will not admit you at all into my presence, or I will look more soberly upon you. Thus to behold God, is to see his face (as 'tis said (Chap: 33. 26.) the repenting sinner should) with joy.

Secondly, Who can have any confidence in him, or boldness with him; David speaking of godly and upright men, saith (Ps: 34. 5.) They looked (or shall look) unto him, and were lighted, and their faces were not ashamed; that is, they beheld God or came to him, with much assurance of his favour. Some dare not so much as look another in the face, for shame or fear; but when we look a man in the face, it sheweth we have either confidence in him, and free come with him, or courage enough against him. Now, if God hide his pleased face, or withdraw his favour, who can behold him confidently, or come to him with hopes to speed. Fierce Abner sayd to Asael (2 Sam: 2. 22.) Turne thee aside from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground (I could easily doe it, and he did it presently) how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother. As if he had sayd, I can have no confidence to come to Joab, thy Generall, if I should kill thee. Guilt of evill done to others, drawes a jealousie that others will do evill to us, especially they who are needely concern'd in the evill which we have done; we cannot hold up our face to or behold them with expectation of acceptance and favour, to whose neere relations we have been unkind or injurious. Thus, if God hide his face, who can behold him? either with confidence or with comfort.

Some referre the relative him (who can behold him?) to man; not to God; as if the meaning of Elihu were this; if God hide his face from any man, all men will hide their faces from him too; no man will look kindly upon such a deserted person, or give him a good look; he shall have but frowninges from men, from whom God withdraweth his favour; that's a truth; He that is out with God cannot keep in long with men. Usually all sorts disowne him that is forlorn and forsaken of God; As when a mans ways plea the God (because then God is pleased with him), his enemies shall be at peace.
peace with him. ( Prov. 16. 7.) So when God is displeased with a
man, his very best friends shall turn enemies to him. Yet I con-
ceive the text carrieth it rather the other way, referring to God
himselfe; If God hide his face, who can behold him? that is, who
can confidently behold God, or draw neere to him with comfort?
And so it generally comes to passe, or thus it is,

Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.

As if Elihu had sayd; What I have affirmed, that, when God
giveth quietness, no man can make trouble, or when he hideth his face
no man can behold him, is appliable to whole nations, as well as to
particular persons. This is an extensive truth, a truth of large con-
cernment, and therefore a truth of necessary and important con-
deration. That which may be any mans or all mens case, should be
studied by every man.

Whether it be done against a nation, &c.

The particle which we render against, signifieth also for. We
find it so translated Psal. 32. 6. and at the 36th verse of this
Chapter. Now to doe a thing for a nation or for a person, notes
the doing of it with respect to or in favour of either. Thus we
commonly speake in our language, pray doe such or such a thing
for me. To this sense some render here, whether it be done for a
nation, or for a man only. So, Mr Broughton, whether it be done for
a nation, or for an earthly man alone. But, whether we read for, or
against, the generall truth is the same. The word and power of
God in sending good or evill upon nations or persons, in acting for
or against them, is uncontrouleable and irresistible.

Further, to cleare the text, that word in the close of the verse,
renderd only, signifieth, sometimes together ( Ezra 4. 3. ) some-
times alike ( Psal. 34. 15. ) and sometimes as we understand it
alone, or only, whether it be done against a nation or a man ro-
tother, or against a man only or alone, the matter is alike or the same
to God. Many or one make a great difference among men in any
matter, but they make no difference with God, he can deal with
whole nations ( in wayes of judgement or mercy ) as well as with
single persons; yet because of the opposition which the text makes
between one man and a nation, it is most sutable to translate it ei-
ther only or alike not together.

Thus
Thus we see, how the Spirit of God by Elihu hath made a dou-
ble application of the former part of the text (when he giveth 
quietness, who can make trouble, &c.) in this latter, first, to a na-
tion; secondly, to a person. If the text were not thus expreft, it 
might be thus expounded and improved without any strenue at all 
to it. But forasmuch as the Spirit of God hath told us distinctly, 
that this great truth concerns nations as well as persons, there-
fore we have a cleare ground (besides the great usefulness of it) 
to speake to the words in both their references. And this pre-
sent memorable day (as also their native order) leads me specia-
ally to speake of them, first, under a National consideration.

When he giveth quietness to a nation, who can make trouble or dis-
trube the peace of it. And the text may well respect that national 
blessing, peace, because the word translated giveth quietness, sig-
ifies such quietness primarily, as is opposite unto warre, fedition, 
and tumult in a nation (Josh: 11. 23.) And the land rested from 
warre, it is this word, so (Judg: 3. 11.) The land had rest forty 
years. (Judg: 3. 30.) And the land had rest fourscore yeares. 
(2 Chron: 14. 1.) In his days the land was quiet ten yeares. 
(Zech: 1. 11.) And behold all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest; 
in all these places we have the word here rendered quietness, in op-
position to warre; who knows not how great an unquietness warre 
makes wherefoever it comes? and by a like analogie, the word is 
sometimes rendered to be silent. Warre is full of clamour (Isa: 9. 
5.) Every battell of the warrier is with confused noise. Not only is 
it so in some battells, but (as that Scripture) 'tis so in all bat-
tells, Every battel of the warrier is with confused noise. What a noise 
is there in an Army, especially when joyning battell with another 
neighing of horses? what clashing of armour? what groanings of 
the wounded? When God gives quietness or peace, there is none 
of this noise; none of this confused noise of the warrier. Hannah 
faith in her song (1 Sam: 2. 9.) The wicked shall be silent in dark-
ness; that is, either they shall be destroyed and thrust into their 
graves, where there's nothing but rottenness and stench, darkness 
and silence; or they shall be so affrighted & confounded with the 
horror and darkness of those miseries which shall come upon them 
while they live, that they shall not have a word to say, the mouth 
of iniquity shall, be stopp. In this manner the wicked are silent in 
dark-
darkness; but the Lord can make his people silent in light, that is, he can give such quietness as shall at once silence the noise of warre and all their own complaints. When he giveth quietness (this blessed silence to nations) who then can make trouble?

Hence observe.

First, The quietness or peace of nations is the peculiar gift of God.

Whosoever hath or enjoyeth quietness, it is God's work, but most eminently when nations enjoy it. Of nationall quietness the Lord spake by his Prophet (Isa: 45. 7.) I forme the light, &c. I make peace, I the Lord do all these things. As naturall so civil light is of God's forming; as spirittually, so temporall peace is of God's making. And the Church was confident he would be their peace-maker (Isa: 26. 12.) Lord thou wilt ordaine peace for us. Some read it as a prayer, Lord doe thou ordaine (or command) peace for us; we as a profession of their faith and hopefull if not full assurance that the Lord would ordaine peace for them. The Lord gives out an order, or makes an ordinance in heaven, when he pleareth for the peace both of Churches and nations here on earth. And the Church there had this good ground of their assurance, that he would doe it, even their former experiences of his great power and goodness in doing much for them, as it followeth, for thou hast wrought all our workes for us; As if they had sayd, Lord those gracious preservations which thou hast heretofore given us in trouble, and deliverances out of trouble, strengthen our faith both in praying that thou wouldst, and in believing that thou wilt, now at this pinch ordaine peace for us. To doe so is a mighty and a mercifull worke of God, and we may consider it two wayes.

First, As the giving of quietness to a nation is the restoring of peace, or the settling of them in a quiet state, after they have been torne and troubled with warres, and tossed with continuall tempests of trouble (possibly) for many yeares together. To bring peace out of warre, and quietness out of unsetledness, is a worke worthy of God. (Psal: 46. 9.) He maketh warres to cease to the ends of the earth; that is, all the world over. The end of ceasing of warre is quietness. And to assure us that the Lord can make an end of warres, the Psalmist in that place sheweth us the Lord spoyling all the implements, or instruments of warre, He breaketh the bow, and cuts the speare asunder, he burneth the chari-
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job, Ver. 29.

Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job, Ver. 29.

This is the fire; Here are three great instruments of warre, the bow, the speare, the chariot, all which are sometimes comprehended under that one word the sword, which is the most knowne and universal instrument of warre. Now, when neither sword, nor bow, nor speare, nor chariot, are to be had, we need not feare warre. And therefore that great promise of peace runs in this tenour (Mic: 4. 2.) They shall beat their swords into plow-shears, and their speares into pruning-hooks; then presently followeth; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn warre any more; There must needs be peace when the art of warre is layd by as uselesse, and shall be learned no more. That will be a blessed time indeed when the art military shall be out of date, and (being it selfe the greatest interrupter of learning) shall be learned no more. When Souldiers shall turne Husbandmen and Vine-dressers, beating their swords into plow-shears, and their speares into pruning-hooks, then we shall have peace, and put away the remotest feares of warre. When a man cafteth away his sword, we may very well conclude he intends to be quiet. Thus the Lord gives quietnesse to nations, which have been engaged in warre, by causing warres to cease.

Secondly, He gives quietnesse to nations by continuing their peace, when warres are ceased; for uselesse the Lord give a check to the lufts and passions, to the wrath and rage of men, plow-shears are quickly turned into swords, and pruning hooks into speares. To preserve peace is the Lords worke, as much as to give peace. It requires the same or as great a power to keepe our peace as to make it; to keepe it out of the hand of the sword, as to get it out of the hand of the sword. When the king of Assyria threatened Jerusalem with a siege, the Lord preserved their peace, and sent Hezekiah word (Isa: 37. 33.) He shall not come into this City, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a banke against it, for I will defend this City to save it. The continuance of peace, and quietnesse, is a continual giving of it. Warres returne after peace, as clouds returne after raine, unlesse the Lord prevent and forbid them.

And have not we of this nation reason to acknowledge this double mercy.

First, Was not the end of our late unnaturall warres, the gift of God? was it not he that made our troubles to cease from one end
end of the nation to the other, yea throughout the three nations? If the Lord had not given the sword a check, or counter-mand, if the Lord had not called in the commission which he once gave the sword, it had been devouring flesh, and drinking blood to this very day. We read (as it were) a dialogue between the Prophet and himself concerning the sword (Jer: 47. 6, 7.) O thou sword of the Lord, (sayd the Prophet being grieved for the slaughter and desolation which the sword had made even in a strange land) how long wilt thou be quiet? put up thy selfe into thy scabbard; rest and be still; Himselfe answers himselfe; how can it be quiet seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the Sea-shore? there hath he appointed it. I spake to the sword of quietnesse (faith the Prophet) But alas! how can it be quiet, how can that sheath it selfe in its scabbard, and not in the bowels of men, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon? As if he had sayd, I see no entreaties can perswade the sword to rest and quietnes, till it hath fully executed the command of God, and done his work, though it be very bloody work, even the making of it selfe drunke with blood. The Lord can make the sword quiet; & it will hearken to no voyce but his; if the Lord give a charge for the sword to returne into the sheath then it will, and if not, it will not. The sword raged in these nations till the Lords work and will was done, and then that had done. And as we have reason to acknowledge, that the Lord hath commanded the sword back into its sheath, and given us peace out of warre, so

Secondly, That he hath continued our peace since the warre, when he giveth quietnesse, who then can make trouble?

Note.

If God will give those nations quietnesse, where it was not, or continue it where it is, there is no power on earth can stop, or interrupt it.

Who can make trouble, where he ordaineth peace? Balaam was forced to this confession (when he would have troubled the people of Israel, and went from mountaine to mountaine to seek divination) I cannot curse whom the Lord hath blessed; why not, said Balak, I will give thee a good fee if thou wilt, no, faith Balaam (Numb: 23. 20.) The Lord hath blessed and I cannot reverse it. We may put this query, when he giveth quietnesse, who
can make trouble? especially to three sorts of persons.

First, To politicke men; some presume they can trouble nations and shake the surest foundations of peace, with the engine of their brains, with their wit and subtilty. Yet this engine proves uselesse and unserviceable to that end, where the Lord gives quietness. Abirolphel was as an oracle of God for wisdom in his times, and he stretched his brains upon the tenters to make trouble, but God sayd there should be peace, and therefore (as David prayed) his wisdom was turned into foolishness. There is no wisdom (faith Solomon the wise, Pro: 21.30.) nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord.

Secondly, We may put the question (who can make trouble?) to mighty men; their power (the strength of their Armies, and arme) cannot doe it? Senacharib came with a mighty host to disturb Israel, but he could not make trouble; he could not so much as shoot an arrow against Jerusalem, when the Lord forbade it.

Thirdly, We may put the question (who can make trouble?) to magickall men or forcerers; they cannot doe it by their witcheries and enchantments, by their closest correspondencies with the devill himselfe. This was Balaams conclusion, who (it seems) traded that way to doe mischief (Numb: 23.23.) Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be sayd of Jacob, and of Israel, what hath God wrought? When God is resolved to give a people quietness, though the devill would, he cannot disturbe them. We need not seare witches or magicians (who correspond with hell to trouble the earth) if God say there shall be peace; neither policy, nor power, nor witchery, can prevail against the purpose of God.

Then happy are that people, who have the Lord for their God (Psal: 144.15.) what can a people desire more to make them happy, then to have the Lord for their God, if we consider these two things?

First, God hath a negative voyce upon all the counsells of the wittiest men in the world; if he saith it shall not be, it cannot be, whatsoever faith this or that shall be (Lam: 3.37.) Who is he that saith and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? if he gives not his assent, nothing can passe into a law. The Lords single negative stops the affirmative votes of all men joyned in one.

Secondly,
Secondly, The Lords power is paramount; He can effect what he willeth, whether men will or no. That's plaine in the text. If he give quietness, who can make trouble?

To come a little nearer; This day, this fifth of November, which we solemnize in a thankfull remembrance of our deliverance from the Gun-powder treason, is a very great confirmation of this truth.

Who is there that was alive at that day (as severall here I know were) yea who is there that hath heard of that day, of the substance and circumstances, of the matter and manner of the Gun-powder treason, but can tell us, that a Popish party at home with their correpondents abroad, intended to make trouble in this nation; surely there was a purpose to make trouble in the nation that day, if ever there were a purpose to make trouble in any nation. What did they leave unattempted, to promote the trouble of this nation? Counsels were joyned for a conjunction of forces to trouble this nation. The men engaged in that plot, may properly be called Trouble-makers; It was their business or their designe to trouble the waters, that themselves might fishe in those waters of trouble. We may with respect to their purpose, (though God prevented it graciously) truly say to them what Ahab sayd falsely to Elijah, These were the men that would have troubled our Israel; they would have made trouble in every way, and in every thing, wherein trouble could be made by men.

Would it not have made trouble to destroy the King the chiefe Governour of these three nations, with his royall issue in one day?

Would it not have made trouble, to blow up the representa-
tive of the nation, the Parliament, in one day?

Would it not have made trouble, to put the whole body of the people into a confused heape, without a head, in one day?

Would it not have made trouble in the nation, to have scene Papal power, with Popish Doctrine and worship brought in againe upon us within a few dayes?

Would it not have made trouble, to have scene poore foules imprison'd, perexcepted, and consumed to ashes for their conscien-
tious witness-bearing to the truths of the Gospel?

Would it not have made trouble, to have loft our civil liberties, and to have had a yoke of spiritual Bondage layd upon our necks by worse then Egyptian task-masters?
Would it not have made trouble, to spill the blood of thousands? Was it not an attempt to make trouble, to attempt all these things which would probably, that I say not certainly, have been the issue of that plot, if it had succeeded? Let us therefore praise the Lord, who was pleased to prevent it, and sayd it shall not be. They did every thing to make trouble, but make trouble; they did every thing, but prosper in their designe: They took secret counsell, they took oaths, yea they took the Sacrament to assure the secrecy of those counsels and oaths. All this they did towards the making of trouble, yet they could not; God sayd at that time let England be in quietnesse, and therefore, only, those Romish Emiitaries and incendiaries could not make trouble.

Againe, If we consider the present season wherein we live, 'tis a confirmation of this truth, God hath given us quietnesse for some yeares; and hath he not preserved this quietnesse hitherto, against all those both persons and things that would have made trouble? if God had not confirmed our peace, we had been in trouble long before this time, but yet our peace continueth, yet it continueth; and is it not wonderfull that it should continue, if we consider.

First, The sins of the nation which are the seed of trouble, especially those two generall sins, first, unthankfullnesse for our peace; Secondly, our ill improvement of it. How have many abused their peace to nurse up their pride, wantonnesse and vanity! and being delivered from the feare of men, have even cast off the feare of God! what just cause is there, that we should loose that peace which we have used so ill, and have almost turned into a warre with God himselfe! yet hitherto the Lord hath given England quietnesse, and none could make trouble.

Secondly, If we look upon the divisions, both in opinion, and affection, that are found among us, is it not a wonder that yet we have peace! if God had not given quietnesse, doubtlese these differences, of which we are so sadly full, had filled us with trouble long before this time.

Thirdly, While we consider the different interests which have been abetted and hotly pursued by too many in this nation, is it not marveilous in our eyes, that our peace is continued! divided interests make greatest distances, & open those breaches through which trouble usually enters upon a nation. When a people are of
one mind, of one heart and way, trouble can scarce find any way to come in among them. But only God (who peremptorily gives quietness) can give quietness to and prevent the trouble of a people who are divided in opinions, affections, and Interests. As therefore it is the most desirable mercy that a people may be all united as one man, in one mind, heart, and way, according to the mind, heart, and way of God; so it is a most admirable mercy, to see their peace continued while any considerable part among them are dis-united in any of, especially if in all these.

Fourthly, Consider, that since the time of our peace, we have had many changes, we have been emptied from vessel to vessel, from hand to hand, from government to government, and from governor to governor; and is it not matter of astonishment as well as of thanks-giving, that yet we have quietness! how many have waited and hoped, yea desired and longed for our day of trouble, by these changes, revolutions and vicissitudes, but yet we have peace. Must we not then conclude, If God giveth quietness, none can make trouble; neither our sins, nor our divisions, nor our animosities, nor our changes shall put it into any man’s power (though they put an advantage into many men’s hands) to make trouble where the Lord our God is graciously & freely pleased to give us quietness. Yet let us be in a holy feare, left we at last provoke God, and sin away our quietness, and make trouble for ourselves. The condition of a people who doe so is very wofull; for surely (as it followeth in the text)

If he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

This latter part of the verse is applicable to a nation as well as the former, and therefore before I come to speake of either with respect to a single person, or a man only.

Observe.

God sometimes hideth his face from whole nations, even from those nations that have the outward profession of his name.

As there are national mercies, so national calamities, as his people in common may have the shinings of God’s face upon them, so the hidings of his face from them. Did not God hide his face from the people of Israel, his peculiar people, when they were though a professing people, yet a very sinfull & provoking people?
(Isa. 59. 2.) Is it not said (Jer. 7. 12, 14, 15.) Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it, for the wickedness of my people Israel; God would not always owne that place which he signally called his owne, and had set his name there, and that, at first (which was a great endearment of it to him) but when they sinned much against him, he would not so much as give them a looke of favour, no nor of pitty, till they turned from their wickednesse; yea he made his levere proceeding with them a president to his people in another Generation, as it followeth in the same place. Therefore will I doe unto this house which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you, and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seede of Ephraim. There's a nation cast out of the sight of God. To be cast out of Gods sight is more, if more can be, then Gods hiding his face from a people. The Church complained bitterly of this latter (Ps. 44. 24.) Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction, and our oppression. We use to say, Out of sight, out of minde; and when God leaves a nation under affliction, as if he did not minde them not cared what became of them, then the Scripture faith, he hideth his face from them, or, casteth them out of his sight. I shall only adde three things about this hiding of the face of God from a nation.

First, This hiding of his face, is not a sudden act of God, he doth not presently nor easly hide his face from a people. He tells them often he will doe it, before he doth it once. The Lord warned the old world long, before he brought the flood (Gen. 6. 3.) And the Lord saied, my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days (wherein I will spare him and wait for his repentance) shall be an hundred and twenty years. Of this patience the Apostle spake, telling us (1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.) That Christ by the Spirit which quickned him, went and preached to the spirits in prison (not in prison when he preached to them, but in prison ever since for not obeying what he preached, as the text faith) which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Arke was a preparing: wherein few, that is, eight soules were saved by water; God did not presently hide his face from that debauched Generation,
ration, who had corrupted all their ways, but gave them long warning, even an hundred and twenty years. And how often did God give warning before he withdrew or hid his face from the people of Israel, his special people? He sent his Prophets rising early, and sending them, saying, *Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate,* (Jer. 44. 4.) And in another place, *O Jerusalem, be instructed, lest my soul depart (or be disjoyuned) from thee*; (Jer. 6. 8.) as if he had said, I am loth to depart, yea I will not depart, if thou wilt but now at length hearken to my voice, and receive instruction.

Secondly, As God is long before he begins to hide his face from a Nation, so he doth it not all at once, but gradually, or by several steps: we read (Ezek. 9. 3.) *how the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house:* Then (chap. 10. 18.) *The glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the house, and stood over the Cherubims:* And then (chap. 11. 23.) *The glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the City, and stood upon the Mountain, which is on the East side of the City.* When the Lord was departing from them, he did it by degrees; he withdrew and hid himself by little and little, as in the Eclipse of the Sun, whether partial or total, we observe the light gradually shut in and hidden from us.

Thirdly, As God is long before he hideth his face, and long in hiding it from a Nation, so (which makes it dreadful) his face being once hid, continueth long hid from Nations. He doth not return presently to them, as he often doth to particular persons. The Eclipses of Divine favour abide long upon Nations and Churches. We commonly say, *Great bodies move slowly;* And God is usually slow in his motions both from and towards great bodies; as he doth not quickly remove from them, so he doth not quickly return to them. He stayeth long before he hideth his face, and he makes them stay long before he caueth his face to shine upon them again. When for the sin of Israel God gave up both them and the Ark into the hands of the Philistines (though the Philistines vexed with the hand of God upon them, sent it back shortly after, yet) it was long before it was fully felted among them; (1 Sam. 7. 17) and it came to pass while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, the Philistines were longs for it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel was vexed after the Lord. The Ark (which was a signe of God's
Gods presence with them) being removed, was not soon restored to its proper place; yea it was 20. years more after that, before it was set in its place by David, (2 Sam. 6. 17.) And whereas it is said, that in those first twenty years, they lamented after the Lord, this signifies, that all those years God was (comparatively to what he had sometimes been) but as a stranger in the land, leaving them under the cruel oppressions of the Philistines: nor did they recover his favourable presence, till they solemnly repented and reformed, putting away their strange gods, and Ashteroth, preparing their hearts unto the Lord to serve him only, as Samuel exhorted them to do at the third verse of that chapter. The Jewish Nation in after ages had fad experience of this in the Babylonish captivity; when God hid his face from them, it was seventy years before he lookt upon them again: and since that Nation provoked him (by their rejection of the Gospel) to lay them aside, God hath hid his face from them above these sixteen hundred years, and they are to this day a scattered unsettled people, and wanderers among the Nations, having their hearts hardened, and their eyes shut against the light of the glorious Gospel. And as the Jews, so many Christian Churches have for a long time felt the sad effects of these Divine hidings and withdrawals. Those seven famous Churches in Asia, mentioned in the second and third chapters of the Revelation, Ephesus, Smyrna, &c. have been under this woful Eclipse many hundred years; nor have those ancient Churches in Africa, where Tertullian and Augustine once flourished, recovered the presence of the Lord to this day. Let the Nations and Churches abroad remember this, and tremble to provoke the Lord to such departures and deferions. God hath long hid his face from the Bohemian Churches, & subjected them again to the Papal yoke; several parts of Germany are under the same hidings: the light is departed from them, and they are left in much darkness, their state is very deplorable, and their former purity, both as to doctrines of faith, and practise of worship (as to humane help) irrecoverable. And should not the dealings of God with them, awaken us in these Nations and Churches, to remember and consider the wonderful patience of God in continuing our peace, notwithstanding all our provocations, left at last he hide his face from us also, and then who can behold him? A throng of evils and mischiefs will soon appear to us with open face, if once God
God hide his face. And it will not be unuseful to instance a little in this place, what those evils and mischiefs are which throng and crowd in upon Nations and Churches, when God hideth his face from them.

First, When God hideth his face from a Nation, he layeth down his former care of them, and watchfulness over them, he takes little or no notice of their case and condition, of their troubles and frights, (as was toucht in opening the Text) he regards not how it is with them, nor what becomes of them. Such apprehensions the Prophet had in reference unto the people of Israel, (Jer. 14. 8.) where he humbly expostulated with the Lord, why art thou as a stranger in the land; & as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night; a stranger or a wayfaring man, intending to stay but a night in a place, thinks not himself concerned with the state of that place; if he can but get a supper and a lodging for his money that night, he troubles himself no farther: whether it be well or ill with the place, whether it be sickness or health, if he can make shift for a night, he is satisfied. Thus the Prophet conceived the Lord even as a stranger among his people, little minding what became of them, whether they did sink or swim, whether it were peace or trouble, joy or sorrow with them. And, further, he represents the Lord not only as a stranger, but as a man affrighted, not only as a man who cares not to help, but as a man who cannot. An affrighted man, how mighty soever he is, hath no use of his might. He that can do little with his reason (that's the case of an affrighted man) can do less with his hands. Now such a one is God to his people (that is, he will do no more for them then such a one) when once he hideth his face from them.

Secondly, When the Lord hideth his face from a Nation, he hath no regard to their prayers and supplications, no not to their fasts and humiliations; that speaks sadly. Prayer is our best strength, it engageth the strength of God; by prayer we have our resort to God, and fetch all our help and succour in a day of trouble from his All-sufficiency. If once God say to a people, I will not hear nor answer your prayers, they are in a most forlorn condition. Thus God resolved against the people of Israel, (Jer. 14. 12.) When they fast, I will not hear their cry: And as he would not regard their own prayers, so he forbade the Prophet to pray for them, (vers. 12.) The Lord said unto me, pray not for this peo-
people for their good; yea, he tells them, he would not regard the prayers and intercessions of any others for them, (Jer. 15. 1.)

Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, (that is, should become Advocates in their behalf) yet my heart could not be towards this people, (that's a sure and a dreadful prognostick of ruine, as it followeth) cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.

Thirdly, When the Lord hides his face from a Nation, he refuseth to give them counsel, or to direct their way. We need the counsel of God as much as his strength; as we cannot do what we know unless he strengthen us, so we know not what to do unless he counsel us. And when ever God hideth his face from a people, he hideth counsel from a people. When God hid his face from Saul, who was in a publick capacity, and in a publick case, his war with the Philistines, O how he complained that he could get no counsel, (1 Sam. 28. 6. 15.) The Lord answers me no more, neither by Urim, nor by Thummim, nor by Prophet, nor by Dreams; as if he had said, I cannot get a word of direction from God, what to do in this calamitous and intricate condition, wherein my self and my Kingdom are plung'd, by reason of this Invasion; I know not what to do, and God will not at all give me any intimation what to do, nor how to do, what is safest, or most conducing to my own safety and preservation. The Prophet brings in the Church lamenting this effect of Gods hiding his face, (Psal. 74. 9.) We see not our tokens, there is not any Prophet, nor any that can tell us how long; as if they had said, heretofore God was wont to give us signes and tokens, he would even work miracles for us, or he would send a Prophet to instruct and advise us what to do, we had those who could tell us how long, that is, how long our troubles should last, and when we should have our expected end of them; but now we are in trouble, and no man can tell us how long, now we are left to the wide world, to shift for our selves as well as we can; the Lord will not advise us what to do, nor give us his minde what's best to be done, or how to proceed; thus deplorable was their condition upon the hiding of Gods face from them.

Fourthly, (which is yet worse) when the Lord hides his face from a people, he doth not only with-hold his counsel, but gives them up to their own counsels, & that is, to their own hearts lufts, (Ps. 81. 12.) Israel would none of me, (faith God) they would not hark-
en to my voice: What then? So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels: and that was to give them up to a spirit of division, to a spirit of discontent, to a spirit of envy and jealousy, to a spirit of ambition, of self-seeking and emulation, and so to a spirit of distraction and confusion, and so to ruin and destruction: such and no better is the issue, when God gives a people up to their own counsels; then they soon become a very Chaos, and run themselves into a ruinous heap. As good have no counsel from man, as none but man's.

Fifthly, When God hides his face from a Nation, he is ready to declare his displeasure, and the sorest testimonies of his fierce anger, formally, against them; God looks upon a sinfully sinning people as a burthen upon his heart; he is prett, and even oppressed with them, he loaths them, his stomack turns at the thought of them, (Ifa. 1. 24.) Ah! I will ease me (the Hebrew is, I will be comforted, or I will comfort myself, that is, I will unburden my soul, and satisfy myself by taking vengeance) of my adversaries, that is, of my people who have rebelled against my command, and have been disobedient to my word. These the Lord counts no more as his children and friends, but as his enemies, and numbers them among his adversaries; Ah, faith he, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: I am grieved to do it, yet I must do it, I am resolved to do it. As soon as the Lord had declared that he would receive no intercession for Israel, he adds, (Jer. 15. 1, 2.) Cast them out of my sight, let them go forth, and it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord, such as are for death, to death, and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; such as are for captivity, to captivity; I will cause them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the earth, (ver. 4.) and as I will not pity them, so none shall, (ver. 5.) All these tokens of displeasure fall upon a people when once the Lord hides his face from them. Yea then the Lord himself will go forth against them as a fierce Lion, (Hos. 5. 14, 15.) He was to Israel as a moth, and as rottenness, (ver. 12.) that is, a secret consumption, he would also be an open destruction to them as a Lion, yea as a Leopard by the way would he observe them, or lie in wait for them, and meet them as a Bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and rent the very soul of their heart, (Hos. 13. 7, 8.) The Lord...
God takes upon him the actings of the most savage beasts in righ-
teousness, to shew how much he is provoked, when he seeth his
people act like beasts in unrighteousness, filthines, cruelties, sen-
tual pleasures; when men behave themselves unlike men, God
will not meet them (as he told Babylon he would not, Isa. 47. 3.)
as a man, that is, either in the weakness of a man, or in the com-
passions of a man; but he will meet them either as a beast of prey,
who hath no compassion, or as God in the fulness of his power,
not drawing forth, but quite restraining his compassions. Yea, the
spirit of God will thrive no more in ways of mercy with such a
people, but turning their enemy (Isa. 63. 10.) will fight against
them. He not only forbeareth to assist them again, & deliver them
from their enemies, but even assisteth their enemies against them,
or delivereth them up into their enemies hand.

Sixthly, When God hideth himself from a people, he removes
their spiritual enjoyments; he takes away his holy Ordinances,
his Worship, the light and power of his Gospel, or leaves them
nothing but the shells and out-side forms of them; they shall be
fed with husks, because they have not improved sweet kernels
and wholesome food; they shall have long shaddows, but little true
light or Sun-shine. Vision shall cease; God will take away his
Ministers and be gone, and then they are presently over-run with
error and superstition upon one hand, or with ignorance and pro-
phanenes on the other.

Seventhly, He will spoil them also in their Civil enjoyments,
he will take away good Magistrates, who are as a staff and a stay, as
a shield and a shelter to a Nation; he will break the stay and staff
of Government, as he threatened (Isa. 3. 1, 2.) and then (as it
followeth ver. 5.) The child shall behave himself proudly against
the ancient, and the base against the honourable; he will leave them
to the corruption of Justice. Judgement shall be turned away back-
ward, and justice shall stand afar off, and then truth falleth in the
streets, and equity cannot enter, (Isa. 59. 14.) and after all this,
what will he do with them? He will either leave them to the
worst of National evils, total Anarchy, or, he will give children
to be their Princes, and babes shall rule over them. When God hid
his face from the Jewish Nation, he broke their Government by
taking away ten Tribes out of Rehoboams hand, and putting them
under Jeroboam; and out of his hand they fell into the hand of se-
veral
veral other wicked Princes, till at last they were carried into captivity by the common enemy. These & the like are the woful effects of Gods hiding his face from a Nation; from all which we may well conclude with Elihu in the Text, who then can behold him? who can bear his wrathful presence, when his face or favourable presence is hidden from us? To shut up this point, I shall only add, that because these hidings of Gods face are gradual, (as was shewed before) therefore they are little taken notice of; as the Prophet complained (Hos. 7. 9.) Gray hairs are here and there upon them, and they know it not; that is, they are in a declining condition, (gray hairs are the signes of old age, which is the declension of mans life, he alludes from the body Natural, to the body Civil or Politick, they are I say, in a declining, weakning, spending condition) yet they lay it not to heart. And that's a foresight, if not the chiefest judgement of God upon a Nation, when hiding his face, he hides his judgements from them, and gives them up to hardness of heart, to blindness of minde, and a spirit of stupidity, that they see not nor take notice of their own danger, nor the departure of God from them, which is the cause of it. And still the more God hideth his face from a Nation, the more miserable they are, and wretched, the more insensible of their misery. So much from that consideration of the Text, as to a Nation, When he gi- pié vitunt. 

Or against a man only.

As this verse respects a man only, or a single person, it is expounded two or three ways.

First, Of Oppressors and wicked men; as if he had said, When God will give a wicked man quietness or prosperity in his sinful way, who can make his estate troublous, or trouble him in his estate? He shall be quiet while the will of God is to suffer him to be so; and if God once hide his face from him, that is, declareth displeasure against him, who can behold him? that is, who among the mightiest of wicked oppressors, can lift himself up against, or stand before God?

Secondly, The words are expounded of the oppressed, or of godly men; as if he had said, when God is minded or resolved to give peace and quietness to any of his faithful servants, who can hinder him, or trouble them? and when he is pleased for reasons Si deus parent

tribuat impia,

guis illius providentiam

carnem judicia

deemnare su-
dbit. Gregor.

best Philip.
best known to himself, to leave any of his faithful servants in darkness, and withdraw the light of his countenance from them, who among them can behold him? that is, bear or endure his angry appearances.

A third expounds the former part of the verse according to the second Exposition of the whole verse concerning the oppressed or afflicted godly, if God will give them quietness, who can give them trouble? And the latter part of the verse, of Oppressors, if he hideth his face from wicked and unjust men, who can behold

Further, Some who take this sense, do not understand it as an act of God hiding his own face, but as an act of God hiding the face of the wicked Oppressor; as if it had been said, When God hideth a wicked man's face, and wraps him up as a condemned man, or when, by the command of the Magistrate, after his legal trial his face is covered, being ready to seal the warrant for his execution; (Haman's face was covered as soon as the Kings word went out against him) then who can behold him? Some insist much upon this interpretation, in allusion to the customs of those times, when condemned malefactors had their faces covered; and indeed, when God wraps up the oppressors face as a condemned man, who can behold him, that is, who can hold up his face against God, or resist him in this work of justice. But I intend not to prosecute the personal consideration of the Text under these distinct notions, but shall only take up the general sense; When he giveth quietness to a man, who can make trouble? And when he hideth his face from a man, who can behold him? I shall only adde Master Broughton's gloss upon the whole verse; When for the poor he kills the mighty, none can stay him; and when he hideth his favour, none can finde it.

Hence Observe.

First, The quietness or peace of any man, of every man, is of the Lord.

If God will have a wicked man live in quietness, so it shall be, and God hath given, and doth often give them quietness. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green Bay tree, (Psal. 37. 35.) David spake this from a good witness, the sight of his eye: I (faith he) have seen the wicked in much outward.
outward pomp and splendour, and as the outward peace and quietness, pomp and splendour of the wicked is from God, so also is both the outward and inward peace of any godly man.

First, The outward peace, or the peace of a godly man in his outward estate, is of the Lord, (Psal. 4. 8.) I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou only makest me to dwell in safety: that is, thou O Lord wilt watch over me in the night, and not suffer me to be surprized by any sudden danger, and therefore I will quietly repose myself upon thy gracious promises, and throw off those cares and fears, which as thorns in the pillow, would not suffer me to rest, when I lye down in my bed: the Lord is my safety, even the rest of my body. In the 5th chapter of this book (ver. 23, 24.) Eliphaz telleth us, how the Lord secures the outward condition of a good man, and gives him such quietness, that even the very beasts of the earth shall be in league, and the stones of the field at peace with him, and he shall know (or be assured) that his tabernacle shall be in peace.

Secondly, The inward peace, the soul peace, the spiritual peace of a godly man is much more from the Lord, (John 14. 27.) Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, so give I unto you; as if Christ had said, I will not deal with you after the rate of the world, that is, either deceitfully and slyly, or rigorously and unjustly; I will not give you such measure as the world gives you, nor in such a manner: I give you my peace, therefore let not your hearts be troubled, neither be you afraid: what-ever outward trouble the world can give you, be not afraid of it before it cometh, nor troubled at it when 'tis come, I will give you inward peace in the midst of all your troubles. Christ invites the weary and the heavie laden to come to him, with this promise, I will give you rest, (Matth. 11. 29.) soul-rest he meaneth; that Title or name of Christ, Shiloh, (Gen. 49. 10. The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come) signifies tranquility, peace, and rest; As Jesus Christ hath bought our peace and rest with his blood, so he bears it in his name. The fountain of our soul-peace is the heart of the Father, Grace and Peace from God the Father, &c. (Col. 1. 1, 2. 1 Thess. 1. 1.) The purchase or price of this peace, is the blood of the Son, (Col. 1. 22.) He hath made our peace through the blood of his Cross: Our peace cost dear, it cost blood, and that the blood of the Son of God. The convey-
conveyance of this peace is made by the holy Spirit; he is sent to bring the good tYPings of peace unto believers: the Spirit speaks peace from God, and witnesseth with our spirits, that we are at peace with God, and as this peace is at first from God the Father as the fountain of it, & from God the Son as the Purchaser of it, and from God the holy Ghost as the Speaker of it; to the continuing and renewing of this peace is from the same God. He establisheth and fetleth the heart in that peace which he hath given, and he restoreth that peace when at any time we have lost it, and the heart is unsettled. David's soul being unquiet, and his peace ravell'd after his sin, he addres'd to God the renewing of it, (Psal. 51. 12.) RESTORE TO ME THE JOY OF THY SALVATION. David petitioned the renewing of his peace, while he petitioned the restoring of his joy: 'tis possible to have peace without joy, but there can be no joy in that soul, which hath not first attained to peace. We must wait upon God both for the renewing of our peace when it is departed, and for the continuance of it when it is enjoyed. When he giveth quietness to a man, either as to soul, or body, or both, who can make trouble?

Note, Secondly.

The quietness or peace which God bestows upon any person is an invincible, an insuperable peace and quietness, as to all that this world can do, or he suffer in this world.

If God will give a quiet outward estate, no man can disturb it; when God gave Job outward quietness, what a mighty man was he? how did he flourish? Nor could any break his outward peace; Satan confesseth it in the first chapter, Thou hast made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side; there is not the least gap open, no nor stake loosened in his hedge, who can touch him? who can come at him? I cannot touch him, Sabeans and Chaldeans cannot touch him. While the Lord giveth and guardeth our outward peace, it is inviolable. And as to our spiritual peace, if the Lord speak it, who or what can trouble the soul?

First, The afflictions, tribulations, and vexations which we meet with in the world, cannot trouble this inward peace; while storms are without, there will be a calm within; the soul may be at peace,
and the conscience quiet, in the greatest visible confusions. Let
the world turn about and overturn, let it shake and break into a
thousand pieces, this peace abides unshaken, unbroken: let the
world rage in the heat either of war or persecution, yet the heart
is serene, fixed, and quiet, like Mount Zion, that cannot be re-
moved. Christ tells his Disciples (John 16. 33.) These things have
I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; (and in the fame
verse he foretells them) In the world you shall have tribulation:
as if he had said, you shall have a peace concurrent and contempor-
ary with your tribulation; trouble from the world shall not
hinder the peace you have from me; yea, my peace shall conquer
the troubles you have in the world. Thus the Prophet trium-
phed in believing, (Hab. 3. 17.) Though the labour of the Olive
should fail, and the Vine yield no fruit, though there be no Calves in
the stall, nor Sheep in the fold, &c. yet I will joy in the Lord, and
rejoice in the God of my salvation. To rejoice in the Lord, is more
then to be quiet, or to have peace in the Lord. Joy is the exalpa-
tion of peace, it is the most delicious fruit of peace: The worst of
worldly evils cannot despoil us of the least purely spiritual good,
much less of the greatest. Him wilt thou keep in perfect peace,
whose mind is stayed on thee, (Isa. 26. 3.) That's perfectly per-
fect to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can
be taken away; yet that is truly perfect, to which though some-
thing may be added, yet it cannot be either totally or finally ta-
ken away. Such is the soul-peace of true believers in this life,
and therefore a perfect peace.

Secondly, As outward tribulation cannot hinder the soul-peace
of a godly man, so the policy, plots, and temptations of Satan
our arch-enemy cannot, yea his charges and most spiteful accusa-
tions shall not. The great designe of the devil, is, to destroy and
devour souls, his own condition being most miserable, he at once
envies all those who are not in the same condition, and attempts
to make them so; and when he fails in that attempt, the destruc-
tion of souls, yet he will not cease to attempt their molestation,
and to trouble those whom he cannot utterly devour. Now, as
Satan cannot at all prevail in the former attempt, the destroying
of souls, so he cannot wholly prevail in the latter, the troubling
of souls. Hence that gallant challenge of the Apostle, (Rom.
8. 33, 34.) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it
is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that dyed, year rather, that is risen again, &c. As if he had said, let all the enemies of our spiritual peace rise up and combine together, they shall not be able to condemn that is, wholly to discourage or disquiet the heart of a believer, he having received (his quietness) rest and peace from God, in the justification of his person, and the pardon of his sins. Satan can do much, and would do more (if his chain were lengthened, and he not restrained) to the trouble and molestation of our souls, there’s not a godly man living should rest an hour inquiet for him, if he might have his wish or his will; but because God gives quietness to some believers, and will not have it so much as stirr’d, therefore Satan cannot make any trouble at all in their souls, but they live in the constant light of God’s countenance, and in the joy of the holy Ghost. And because the quietness which every believer hath is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, who hath made their atonement, and established their peace, through the blood of his Cross; therefore Satan cannot make any such trouble in any of their souls, as shall for ever destroy their peace, or disolve their quietness, though for many reasons, all serving his glory, and their good, God suffereth Satan many times, possibly for a long time to entangle and interrupt it. Temptations to the committing of sin, and accusations or charges about sin committed, may exceedingly hinder and shake the peace of a believer; but, as the sins to which he is tempted cannot hurt his peace, when he resists and overcomes them, so the sins into which he falleth through temptation, cannot destroy his peace, because those sins shall certainly be destroyed both by repentance and pardon.

Thirdly, The thunders of the Law cannot take away the peace of that soule, to whom God giveth quietness. Christ having in his owne person fullfilled the Law for believers, both doing the duty, and enduring the penalty of it, he hath delivered them from the terror and curse of the Law, himselfe having been made a curse for them (Gal: 3. 13.) So then if neither tribulations nor temptations, nor the terrors of the Law can make trouble, where God giveth quietness; we may conclude, nothing can.

There is a double Consideration upon both which, we may demonstrate, that if God giveth quietness, either outward or inward, none can make trouble.
First, Because, as God is soveraigne and doth ay dispoze peace and quietness, to whom he pleaseth, or at his pleasure, or when he will, or to whom he will; so he hath an all-sufficiency to maintain and confirm, to preserve and protect the outward peace of any man, against all the powers of this world; and the inward peace of a godly man against all the powers of hell, against the terrors of the Law, and the accusations whether of Satan or of his owne Conscience.

Secondly, None can destroy the peace of a godly man, because it is a perfect peace; as was shewed before from that promise in the Prophet (Isa. 26. 3.) 

Him with thou keepe in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. For being a perfect peace it will not decay of it selfe; and because 'tis perfect God will neither destroy it himselfe, nor suffer any else to destroy it. Mark the perfect man (Psalm David, Pial: 37. 37.) and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. He is a perfect man whose end is peace, and that is perfect peace which holds to the end, or which shall never end. The peace which God giveth is perfect; First, because 'tis establisht upon perfect righteousness, the righteousness of God. That righteousness which is the root of our peace is called the righteousness of God, both because God hath appointed it, and because God hath wrought it. Jesus Christ God-man is the Lord our righteousness, and the Prince of our peace; or as the Apostle expresseth it (Heb. 7. 1, 2.) He is Melchisedec, being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace. (Isa. 32. 17.) The work of righteousness is peace, and the fruit of it is quietness and assurance for ever. Righteousness is such a foundation of peace, as cannot be shaken, and therefore that peace which is built upon it cannot be utterly overthowne, how much soever it may be shaken.

Secondly, 'Tis a perfect peace, because it was obtained by an absolute victory over all the enemies of it. That people must needs be in perfect peace who have got a perfect conquest over all their enemies, and have got their opposers under their feet. Now the spirituall peace which God giveth his people, ariseth from a perfect conquest over all their enemies. First, the world is perfectly conquered by Christ (John 16. 33.) Be of good cheare, I have overcome the world. Secondly, the Devill is perfectly con-...
quered by Christ (Heb. 2. 14.) He hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil. He is more then conquered who is destroyed; Christ hath destroyed the Devil, who is the destroyer, though not as to his being, though not as to his will to destroy, yet as to his power to destroy those whom he hath redeemed, and will eternally save. Thirdly, Christ hath also perfectly conquered the Law (not by destroying but) by fulfilling it. Christ was above all that the Law required or commanded, and so he did at once freely submit to it, and fully (as to any hindrance of a believer's peace) subdue it; he holdeth it under him as well as he was made under it. And he was contented for that very reason to be made under the Law, that he might hold it under him, and that we might not be under (the dread of) the Law (though we must walk and work by the rule of it) but under grace.

'Tis matter of strong consolation to poor souls, that when the Lord giveth quietness none can make trouble. And hence we also learn, that all the breaches which are made upon the peace of the people of God, are from God himself. As those breaches are meritoriously from themselves, so efficiently from God himself; till he breaks their peace none can.

Thirdly, From the second branch, When he hideth his face, who then can behold him? This being applicable to a single person as well as the former.

Observe.

God sometimesclouds his face from his own servants, and children.

These words, When he hideth his face, suppose that God sometimes doth so, and the Scripture else-where testifies that God hath often done so; God hath love always in his heart towards his children, but he hath not always favour in his face towards them; his appearances are not always the appearances of a friend, he may appeare angry, and turne away his face as if he would not be spoken with. Of this we find frequent complaints in Scripture; and I might speake much to this point, but I have already met with it (Chap. 13. 24.) and therefore I passe from it.

Only from the connexion of these words, When he hideth his face, who can behold him?

Note!
Note.

The hiding of God's face, or the vayling of his favour is exceeding grievous unto any person.

When he doth it, who can behold him? This manner of speaking doth not only hold out, that if God will hide his face no man can see him, or know him; for God is a secret to all men untill he is pleased to reveale himselfe; yea all the truths of the Gospel are secrets, and mysteries, till God is pleased to reveale them and make them knowne (Math. 11. 25.) Father I thank thee (faith Christ) that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; that is, thou hast not opened them to the wiseft, &c. (there needs no other hiding of them from the wiseft of men, than a forbearance to open them) but to the babes, who are (though weake,yet ) humble and teachable, thou hast opened them, and opened their eyes and hearts to see and receive them. This speech holds out not only this truth, that when God doth not reveale himselfe, no man can know him or any thing of his minde, or that neither his nature, or his will are knowne but by some way of revelation; but this forme of speaking (Who can behold him?) plainly tells us, that if God hideth his favour, he is so terrible, that none can have the boldness or courage to behold him. For the hiding of his face, implyeth an appearance of anger and displeasure; and when he is angry, who can behold him? If the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, as the Apostle speakes (2 Cor. 3. 7.) surely then no man can steadfastly behold the face of God when his countenance is filled with wrath. Some said to Christ (John 14. 8.) Show us the Father and it sufficeth; that is, reveale to us the love and good will of the Father, and that will satisfie us, that will fiff up all the desires and longings of our soules; we shall have nothing more to wish for, nothing more to look after, if thou wilt but shew us the father. Now, on the other side, if the Father will not shew himselfe, if the Father will hide himselfe from the soule, what then can suffice? what can comfort? where is our refuge or rest? As when God is tranquil, quiet and favourable to us, he can make all things favourable and dem tranquill quiet to us; So, if God be displeased, nothing can be pleasing to his omnis.

A soule that is sensible of his displeasure. A believer looses not
only the joy and triumph of his faith, but his very peace, he is not only in a dark, but in a disturb’d condition; not knowing where to repose himselfe, or rest his head, when God hideth his face.

Take this inference from it.

If the hiding of God’s face be so terrible, then take heed of provoking him to hide his face.

For though we are not tenants at will for our peace in reference unto the world, in reference to men, in reference to devills; yet we are only tenants at will for our peace in reference unto God. He can take away our peace; and he doth usually continue our peace, only so long as we behave our selves well. As some have Letters Patents for great offices which run in that tenour; They shall enjoy them (quam diu te bene getlerint) as long as they carry themselves well; but upon default or male-administration they may be turned out of all; so I say, though we are not at the will of the world, nor of any creature, for the holding of our peace, yet we are at the will of God for it. And as he sometimes meerly out of prerogative hideth his face (as was shewed Job 13. 24.) that he may try what a soule will doe in a dark condition, and that he may declare what the strength of his invisible grace can doe when nothing is visible, no not any the least ray or shine of favour from himselfe to support and comfort the soule, I say, though God doth thus in a prerogative way sometimes hide his face; yet usually he doth it not, but upon some default in us, especially our neglect of him; when we regard not the face of God, and grow slant as to our valuations of his presence, then he withdraweth his presence and vayles his face towards us; and when we fall into any grosse sin (such was the case of David, Psal. 51.) God takes us upon default, and leaves us in a sad condition, as he did David, who complained that even his bones were broken, and that he had lost the joy of his salvation, which upon the renewing of his faith and repentance, he begg’d earnestly might be restored to him, and it was. Therefore if you would keepe the light of God’s Countenance, keepe close to the light of God’s Commandement. No marvaile if we be under the hidings of the face of God, when we are turning our backes upon God! Sin is a turning from God, a turning our backs upon God; and is it any wonder.
wonder if God turne his face from sinners? To turne our backe upon God is the worst of a sinfull condition, and to find God turning his backe upon us, or hiding his face from us, is the worst of a miserable condition. What can comfort us, when the God of all consolation will not look upon us, unleffe in displeasure? What pleasure (but the pleasure of sin for a season, which ends, without repentance, in endless torment, what pleasure, I say) can that soule take in whom God taketh no pleasure, or with whom he is not pleased? It is very sad with the soule, when we loose the sight of our owne graces (sometimes a gracious heart cannot see any worke of grace, nor perceive any workings of grace in him, but thinks he hath no faith in God, no love to God, no sorrow for sin, this is sad) but it is much more sad to loose the sight of the face of God, to have the favour of God withdrawne from us. This made Jonah complains (Chap. 2. 4.) I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes; he lookt upon himselfe as an outcast, and then Jonah thought himselfe as cast into the belly of hell (v. 2.) When God hides his face from us, or will not vouchsafe us a sight of his pleased face, we are as in the belly of hell, as Jonah bemoaned himselfe. What is the glory and happinesse of heaven? Is it not the sight of the face of God? is it not the cleare vision and manifestation of God? Glory is that estate wherein God will never once hide his face, nor look off from his glorified Saints, no not one moment to all eternity. Now the happinesse which we have here, the heaven which we have upon earth consists in this also; when we live neere God by believing, and behold his face by faith; when God lifts up the light of his countenance upon us, we are (as it were) lifted up from earth to heaven. As vision in heaven will make us happy for ever, so hidings on earth make us miserable for the time. And that which is the very hell of a godly man upon earth, the worst hell, he can or shall have, is this, when God hideth his face from him; Therefore take heed you doe not put the Lord upon withdrawing from you through your default; This favour, the shine or light of Gods face is continued or denied to us, usually upon these termes, as we behave our selves well or ill towards him.
JOB. Chap. 34. Verf. 30.

That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared.

These words are the conclusion of Elihu's discourse, about the executions of divine Justice, upon the sons of men; And in them we have two things; First, the power; Secondly, the impartiality of divine Justice. God is so powerfull, that he can pull downe the Mighty, and he is so impartial that if there be cause, he will not spare to doe it.

Or in the words we have to consider these three things.

First, The character of the person upon whom the Justice of God is executed, The hypocrite.

Secondly, The Judgement it selfe, 'tis a stop to his greatness, that he reigne not.

Thirdly, We have the grounds of this Judgement, which are two-fold.

First, His wicked purpose, against the people; He, if suffered, would lay snares for the people.

Secondly, Gods gracious protection of the people; He will not have the people ensnared.

That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared.

What a hypocrite is, and what the importance of the original word is, here translated hypocrite, hast been opened from some other passages in this booke. I shall only say thus much further, that the word imports, First, a filthy thing disguised or covered; For a hypocrite is a filthy prophan person, under the cover or disguise of holinesse. Our English word knave is neere in sound to this Hebrew word chanaph, and some conceive 'tis derived or taken from it. And to be sure, every hypocrite is a prophan person, though all prophan persons are not hypocrites; Some wicked and prophan ones care not who knoweth they are so; yet very many who are indeed prophan and wicked cover it, what they can, and shew that only whereof they have only a shew, somewhat of godlinesse or of goodnesse.

Againe, There are hypocrites of two makes or straines; First,
First, Religious, or Church hypocrites. Secondly, State, or Civil hypocrites, and sometimes these two are combined in one. 'Tis possible for a man who pretends not to Religion, yet to be a hypocrite; A Magistrate, whether supream or subordinate, may offer very fair for the profit and liberty of the people whom he governs, when he minde no such thing; yea, he may not only offer fair for the good of a people, as to their outward profits and liberties, but as to the good of Religion, and the benefit of their souls, and yet minde no such thing; we may take the hypocrite in this Text, as twisted up, or compounded of both these; 'The State hypocrite and the Religious are sometimes bound up together. That the Hypocrite

Reign not.

To reign is the privilege of Supream Powers; By the Kings reign, faith Wisdom, that is Christ, (Prov. 8. 15.) and when Paul saith how high the Corinthians carried it in spirituals, he by way of allusion tells them (1 Cor. 4. 8.) ye have reigned like Kings without us; ye are got (as ye suppose) to the top, and into the very throne of Religion, and you think your selves able to manage all difficulties, and can do well enough there without our help; But to the Text.

This not reigning of the hypocrite may be taken two ways.

First, As a stop given him by the providence of God, from In getting up into the throne, or from getting the power of a Nation into his hands; thus sometimes God faith to the hypocrite, Thou shalt not reign, that is, thou shalt not exalt thy self, though thou attempt it.

Secondly, This not reigning may be taken for a stop to the progress of his power, when he hath both attempted and attained it; ab offendiculis and that two ways, either first by taking him away from his power; or secondly, by taking away his power from him; as Daniel, who told Belshazzar, while he minded him of the greatness of his father Nebuchadnezzar (who had all the world (upon the matter) at his command) as also of his fall from that greatness, (Dan, 5. 19, 20.) Whom he would, he set up; and whom he would, he put down; but when his heart was lifted up, and his minde hardened in pride, he was deposed from his Kingly Throne, and they took his liberty, and glory from him. He was deposed, or as the Chaldee hath it, (so we in tyrannide, put Merit,
put in the margin) He was made to come down from his Princely throne; either of these ways doth God (who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords) when he pleaseth, put an end to, or check the progress of false hearted Princes, that have either got their power by batteries and pretensions to that good which they intended not, or who exercise their power so. That the hypocrite reigneth not,

Left the people be ensnared.

The root of the word here rendred to ensnare, signifieth the spreading of a Net, or the setting of a Grin, such as Fowlers and Hunters make use of, to take Beasts or Birds with; and thus God himself spake concerning his dealing with Babylon, (Jer. 50.24.) I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware; literal Babylon was a snare to the people of God of old, and so is mystical Babylon at this day. The great Hypocrite, or Snare-setter, reigns in or over Babylon; therefore faith God, thou who hast set snares for my people, shall be ensnared, thou shalt be taken unawares, I have set a snare to catch and hold thee fast. When Elihu faith, left the people be ensnared, it seems to intimate, that God will prevent the ensnaring of a people by the hypocrite; He shall not reign, left the people be ensnared, or left they should come into snares. There is another reading, which gives the reason from the snares which the people have already been entangled with, because of the snare, or because the people have been ensnared, (therefore faith the Lord) let not the hypocrite reign; thus God revengeth the people's wrong, and doth justice upon those that had set snares for them. So much for the general sense of these words, and the opening of them.

There is a second reading of the whole verse, which carryeth the sense somewhat another way, and yet may be of use, and yield us some profitable considerations, but I shall not meddle with that, till I have prosecuted those observations which arise clearly from our own reading.

The words in general hold forth the heart of God towards false hearted men, he cannot abide them, nor will he suffer them long to abide, especially not to abide in power and greatness; That the hypocrite reigneth not, left the people be ensnared.

Hence
Hence Note. First,

A hypocrite is a person hated of God, and hurtful to men.

He is therefore hated of God, because hurtful to men. And therefore God is not pleased he should reign, either as to reign is taken strictly, for the exercising of Soveraign power; or, as to reign may be taken largely, for the exercising of any power, and living in the height of prosperity. For the clearing of this truth, that a hypocrite is hated of God, I shall shew, first the nature of an hypocrite; secondly, give the distinctions of hypocrites; thirdly, make some discoveries who is an hypocrite. To the

First, An hypocrite in his general state or nature, is (as I may say) a wicked man in a godly mans clothes; he hath an appearance of holiness, when there's nothing but wickedness at the bottom. There are two great parts of the hypocrites work, first, to shew himself good, which he is not; this is properly the work of simulation or feigning: secondly, to cover that real evil which he is or doth: this is properly the work of dissimulation or cloaking. The hypocrite strives as much to appear what he is not, as not to appear what he is; he makes a semblance of that purity which he loves not, and he dissembleth that impurity which he loves and lives in.

Secondly, We may consider hypocrites under this distinction. First, there is a simple hypocrite, who hath not the good which he thinks and believes he hath; thus every one that professeth or nameth the name of Christ, and is not really converted, is an hypocrite; because he hath not that which he seems to have, yea, which possibly he verily believes he hath; I may call such a one (though it may seem a very strange expression) a sincere hypocrite; he doth not intend to deceive others, but is deceived himself, because he hath not the root of the matter in him, nor the power of godliness, though he brings forth some seeming fruits of godliness, and is much in the form of it. Such we may conceive shaddowed out to us by the foolish Virgins; they made a profession, they had their lamps, yea, they had oyl in their lamps, they did something which was considerable in the outward duties of Christian Religion, and they hoped to be accepted with Christ, but they had no oyl in their vessels with their lamps, as the wise Virgins had, (Matth. 25. 4.) that is, they had no grace in their hearts,
nor did they minde the getting of that till it was too late, (v. 10.) but satisfied themselves with that little oyle in their lamps to make the blaze of an external profession. Such as these are simple hypocrites, being pleased with a shell instead of a kernel, and with a shadow, neglecting the substance. These hypocrites are in a very deplorable condition; yet these are not the hypocrites which I intend in this point, or have here to do with.

There are a second sort of hypocrites, commonly called gross hypocrites, such as hold that out which they know they have not, such as know they have nothing in or of Religion, but the shew of it; such as work by art, or with a kinde of force upon themselves in all the good they do, and duties they perform towards God, and about the things of God. They do nothing as the Apostle saith Timothy did (Phil. 2. 20.) naturally, I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. The word naturally is not there opposed to spiritually, but to artificially, or to forcedly. What a sincere heart doth in the things of God, he doth it naturally, that is, it floweth from an inward principle, it is not forced from him, but the hypocrite doth all as it were by a kinde of art or force upon himself. The Lord chargeth the Jews with this kinde of hypocriticie, (Isa. 58.2.) They seek, me daylie, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteousness; that is, they acted with an appearing forwardness, like those who truly delight to know my wayes; yet all this was but as a piece of art, for as the Lord upbraided them (vers. 3,4.) they really kept their sins, and walkt in their own wayes of oppression, strife, and debate; yea they made all that noise about humbling themselves, that they might the more undiscernedly smite others with the fist of wickednes; and therefore saith the Lord (v. 5.) Is it such a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul, &c. and then for many dayes to afflict both the souls and bodies of his brethren? or to abtain a day from meat, and glut himself with sin? That's the strain of the hypocrite, he (as I may say) maintains and drives two trades, he hath a trade for God, and the wayes of God, and he hath a trade for sin, and the wayes of wickednes; this is his course, (Jer. 12. 2.) Thus art yeer in their mouth, but far from their reins; they speak of thee, but they have no desires to thee, no affections for thee, thou art far enough from their reins; they act a part in Religion, but they neither partake of Religion, nor with it.

Thirdly,
Thirdly, There are others, who besides that they are gross hypocrites, may also be called designing or plotting hypocrites; for they that serve God with a reserve, as to any sin or by-way, usually serve him with a designe, or for an end of their own. Christ (Matth. 23.14) speaking of gross hypocrites, such as the Pharisees were, faith, they devour widows houses, and in a pretence make long prayers; they pray long in a pretence, or under a pretence; that is, they have a plot or a designe in prayer, they pray, not purely to enjoy communion with God, nor purely to honour God; but they make use of prayer, and under pretence of that, do other work. Christ doth not there speak against, nor disparage long prayers, as some do, to the great reproach of the Spirit and grace of God, but he chargeth them with praying long in a pretence; pray heartily, and then pray as long as you will; other due circumstances being observed, the more you pray, the more is God pleased. But whether prayers are long or short, if done in a pretence, or with a designe to do mischief to others, or only to get some worldly profit and advantage to our selves (as those Pharisees prayed) they are an abomination to the Lord. 'Tis not the length of prayer, but the end of prayer which discovers hypocrisie.

The prophet Isaiah (chap. 32.6.) gives as a description of this gross designing hypocrite, 'The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisie, and to utter error before the Lord: while the hypocrites heart worketh iniquity, his tongue speaks villany; not that all his words are villainous words, for then he were not an hypocrite, but a profest prophane person; but he is said to speak villany, because how pious, and specious, and godly soever his discourse is, yet he hath a villainous intent in speaking, and his heart at the same time is working iniquity, to practice hypocrisie.

Now that I may a little more unmask this plotting hypocrite, I will shew you a fourfold plot or designe, which such hypocrites have in their most zealous professions of, and pretendings to Religion.

First, They designe their own praise or estimation among men; Christ makes this discovery in his Sermon upon the Mount, (Matth. 6.2.5.) Do not as the hypocrites, for all they do, (whether they give almes, or pray, or fast,) is not for the glory of God, but that they may have glory of men, and be pointed at for charitable
ritable and holy persons; *Praise or glory with men is the food of hypocrisy*. If the hypocrite have but an applause from, and acceptance with men, he doth not look after acceptance with God, which above all things a sincere heart looketh after, and laboreth for; *In this we labour (faith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 9.) that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him;* that's the highest ambition of a sincere heart; but the hypocrites ambition is to be accepted of, and to have praise among men; and therefore hypocrites are more troubled, if at any time they fail in expressing themselves to men, then because (which they do at all times) they fail and faint in their affections to God; whereas he that is sincere and honest with God, can bear it well enough though he hath not such plausible expressions towards men, because he knoweth his affections stand right with God. That great Macedonian Alexander having run many hazards in war, turned himself to his soldiery, and said, *What pains have I taken, what dangers have I undergone, only to be praised and cried up by you?* As many in their worldly actions aime only at their own praise, so do this sort of hypocrites in their spiritual and holy actions; they pray, and hear, and deal about their almes for applause with men. What the Historian writes of the Camelion, is most true of them, they live by the ayre, and are fed with the vapours of an earthly praise.

Secondly, Others (most of all the mighty, of whom Elihu is discoursing) act for God in the out-side of Religion, to get an opportunity of revenge upon men; they put on a fair shew of godliness, that they may have a fairer advantage to let out their malice, and vent their spleen. When either a real or supposed injury, falls upon an impotent and impatient spirit; malice will provoke to give that back which charity teacheth to forgive. The tyranny of this passion gives no rest to the discontented soul; all methods shall be studied, and stratagems devised to content hatred by the compassing of revenge; and when common projects fail, the habit of zeal and religion shall be put on, that the conceived malice may be let out. Such a man will cloath himself with the garments of piety, that he may cover the instruments of cruelty, and do a mischief unsuspected. Saul was a hypocrite, and false with God, yet how did he encourage David to follow the War, and *fight the Lord's battels against the uncircumcised Philistines*;

(1 Sam.)
(1 Sam. 18. 17.) whereas Saul sought not the honour of God at all, nor the overthrow of the Philistines, so much, as the overthrow of David; his intent was to take his own revenge upon David, rather then Gods revenge on them: for he hoped David would one time or other over-act his valour against the Philistines, and lose his life, to win honour and reputation. How religiously did Abner (who was a great Prince as David called him) urge the promise of God to make David King, (2 Sam. 3. 18.) and yet 'tis plain in the Text, that his designe was to revenge himself upon Ishbofeth, who had put (as he thought) an affront upon him, rather then to be instrumental for the fulfilling of the promise of God to David. Jezebel a great Queen proclaimed a Fast (which is one of the highest acts of Religion) while her purpose was only to get an opportunity to feast her self upon the destruction of Naboth, and to drink his innocent blood. Herod a King (Matt. 2. 8.) desired to have the young childe Christ, that he might come and worship him, but his designe was to murder him; and because he could not have his will to kill him alone, he resolved to kill him in the multitude, commanding all the infants of such an age to be slain, lest he should escape. We have a sad instance of this in two of the Patriarchs, (Gen. 34.) I do not say they were hypocrites, but, I say, they acted a high strain of hypocrisy, and put on a religious pretence for the compassing of revenge. Dinah, Jacob's daughter being deflowered by Shechem, he sued to have her for his wife, and would wipe off the stain of his lust by a legal marriage; old Hamor pleaded for his son, and Jacob was willing enough (tis like) to salve the credit of his daughter; but the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully (v. 13.) and they said, we cannot match with you, except you be circumcised, and so become Proselyts to our Religion, If Shechem will be of their family, he must be of their faith; they stood not upon their sisters jointure, the matter stuck only upon a scruple of conscience. What argument of greater zeal for God could they have given then this? Yet while these religious words were in their mouths, they had bloody swords in their hearts: And all this pretence for circumcision, was only that they might have an advantage, to come upon them in their forense and destroy them; which (as the holy story tells us) they soon after effected.

Thirdly, Hypocrites often designe worldly gain, and ayme at the
the purse more then at God in all their holy services. Many take up a profession of Religion, as all men take up a Trade, that they may get a Living by it; the Apostle speaks of such (1 Tim. 6.5.) who profess that gain is godliness; whereas he saith (ver. 6.) Godliness with contentment is great gain, they say, Gain is godliness; and all they look at by their profession of godliness, is worldly gain. Religion is often made (as the Apostles word is, 1 Thess. 2.5.) a cloak of covetousness; and he professeth in the same place, that in the dispensation of the Gospel, he had not used his Ministry as such a cloak, God was his witness; but there are many against whom (though men cannot) yet their own consciences do, and God will witness, that their appearance in Religion is but the hiding of, or a cloak for their covetousness. Hamor and Shechem used no other argument to persuade their Citizens to take upon them the seal of the Covenant, but only this, Shall not their cartel, and their substance, and every beast of theirs, be ours? (Gen. 34.27.) And it seems the very mention of their own emolument overcame them; they thought it a bargain well made, to sell a little of their blood at so high a rate, and to exchange their foreskins for so many head of Cartel. And hence it is, that among those seven sorts of Pharisees collected out of the Talmud, the first are called Pharisei Shechemites, receiving (it seems) both their Order and Denomination from these Shechemites, because as they turned Hebrews, so these became Pharisees upon the hopes of worldly benefit. And such were those Pharisees in truth, whatsoever their Title was, who (as was touched before) devoted widows houses, and in a pretence made long prayers. As it is a very great point of ungodliness (prophaneness indeed) to say, What profit is there in serving the Lord? So it is gross hypocrisy to take up Religion meerly for profit; there is profit, even worldly profit in Religion; Godliness is profitable for all things, (1 Tim. 4.8.) and hath the promise of this life as well as of that to come; but who to those that take it up designing profit, and the filling either of their purses, or their bellies. Our Saviours Divine Spirit quickly discovered this carnal spirit in his followers, (John 6.26.) Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled; Judas followed Christ, but the motive of it, was in the bag, (John 12.6.) The zeal of Demetrius to his Idol Diana, was kindled by as pure a fire as the zeal of these hypocrites.
pocrifies to Jesus Christ, (Acts 19. 24.) By this we get our living. They know nothing of the life of Religion, who are religious only that they may live: If profit be the Loadstone of our profession, our profession will never profit us; for what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world by a profession of the name of Christ, if he lose his own soul? Satan charged Job with this gross hypocrisy, (chap. i. 9.) Dost Job fear God for naught? as if he had said, Job finds 'tis no lean business to be religious, and therefore no wonder if he be found so religious. Who would not do and be as much as he in Religion, to have his fields full of Cattel, and his folds full of Sheep, and his house full of Riches? He knows well enough which side his bread is buttered on, what makes for his profit; all the account he makes of Religion is, that he perceives by his books, and the inventory of his goods, that it turns every year to a good account: Jobs flander is the just charge of many, they use Religion but as a talking horse, to catch worldly riches.

Fourthly, The grosse hypocrite often designes, that which is higher in the esteeme, and more taking upon the spirits of many then worldly riches, even worldly power, or to get very high, if not uppermost in the world. 'Tis no new thing for men to make religion a stayre to ascend the highest roomes among men, or a stirrup to get into the saddle of honour, and when they have got high enough, then downe with the stayres, or 'tis no matter for the stirrup by which they ascended. Jehu was very zealous in the cause of God, and for reformation, but his designe was for a kingdome, or his owne exaltation(2 Kings 10. 16.) he made a noyse of much piety, Come see my zeale for the Lord, yet all was but a piece of State-hypocrifie. His care in destroying Ahabs house and Baals Priests (according to the command of God) was but to pave the way to the throne. The same way Absolom was taking to his fathers Crowne; he told the people he was troubled that they were no better governed, that they had no quicker dispatch in their suites and busineses; he told his father he had made a vow, and desired the liberty of his absence from Court, that he might goe and performe it; all he pretended was righeteousnesse and religion, yet he intended only to get an advantage to make his party strong, that so he might thrust his father out of the throne, and get up himselfe. He seemed a Saint while he meant to be a Traytor. The History of the Church reports of Julian the Apostata.
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 30.

Socrates Hist. Apo\footnote{Apollonius, that when his predecesor (being a Christian) held the Empire, he highly pretended the profession of Christ, and read a Gospel-Lecture in the Church of Nichomedia; yet while he was in the was a Christian, and in hope an Empeor, he was in heart a pagan. He saw the times served him not to act the pagan openly, and therefore he doubtly betooke himselfe to his disguise, and personated the Christian, even in the mortified way of a monasticke life, that he might smooth his way to the Empire. To which having once attained, he presently put off his disguise, and, to his utmost, disgraced and opposed the name and faith of Christ, which he had formerly owned and professed.}

Thus I have touch't upon the foure grand desigines of the Groffe hypocrite: First, praise among all men; Secondly, revenge upon some men; Thirdly, the gaine of worldly riches; Fourthly, the attainment of power, dominion, and Greatness in the world. These are as the foure wheeles of Satans chariot, wherein he hurrieth thousands to the land of darkness, while they would be esteemed children of the light. Or some one of these is as the (\textit{primum mobile}) first mover (of which Philosophers speake in their doctrine of the heavens) carrying many with a rapt and violent motion in the sphere of religion, while they have in the \textit{Interim} a secret undiscerned natural motion of their owne directly opposit to this, by which they hope at last to steale on faire and softly to their wished periods.

Having thus farre shew'd the close purposes of the designing hypocrite, who is so hatefull to God and hurtfull to man, I shall a little discover and unmaske his hypocrite, by shewing how we may know him, how we may looke through these vayles and see his ugly face.

Designing hypocrites are usuallly discovered these foure wayes.
First, By their affectation to be seene and taken notice of; they that will have praise and glory with men, must needs affect to be seene of men; for no glory comes to man, from men, but by what falls under the eye and observation of man. \textit{Job} faith of murderers (Chap. 24. 13.) They are of those that rebell against the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof. The murderer cannot endure the light either natural or moral, because that tells who he is, or what he hath been about. The contrary, in one sense, is true of the hypocrite, he loveth the light,
light, and will doe nothing willingly, but as he may be taken notice of, and seen of men; as for those acts or exercises of religion, which are private retirements between God and his owne soule, he is a great stranger to them, he cannot delight in them, but any thing that may fall under publick observation, he can be forward enough in. Christ (Math. 6.5.) gives us this plaine discovery of the hypocriall Pharisees; They love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. This was so much in Jehu's heart, that he could not but blab it out with his tongue (2 Kings 10.) Come see my zeal; A false fire kindled his zeal, else he had not made such a blaze. It was, insincere rotten-hearted Saul that sayd (1 Sam: 15, 13.) Come thou blessed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord; he was his owne trumpeter, and would needs tell the story of his doings himselfe, though he had done his business to halves; Come thou blessed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord; as if it would not serve him to doe his duty, unless Samuel had seen and taken notice of him. Abraham gave proofe of the highest act of faith that ever was in the world, yet did Abraham say, Come see my faith? Moses led the people of Israel forty yeares in the wildernesse through a series of wonderfull tryalls and temptations, to the very borders of Canaan (which was one of the highest services that ever man undertook) and was faithful in all his house (Heb: 4.2.) yet did he say, Come see my fidelity? Joshua victoriously expelled the Cananites, and divided their land by lot among the tribes of Israel, yet did he say, Come see my foritude? We heare not a word of any of their doings from those who were sincere. When we see men forward to invite the approbation of others by making reports of their good deeds, it gives a strong argument of suspicion, that they have done what they have done with a bad heart, or, that (as it is sayd of Jehu) they have not sought God with all their hearts.

But some may object, Did not Samuel proclaime his own integrity before all the people (1 Sam: 12.3.) Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith?

I answer; Samuel spake this to upbraid their ingratitude and
discontent, not to extoll his owne justice; yea some conceive that he made this challenge, to give Saul a patterne how he ought to governe, rather then to commend his owne government. I find the Apostle Paul making large reports of his owne both doings and sufferings (2 Cor. 11.) But if we peruse that Chapter, we shall find him hovering in a suspense of doubts and feares, whether or no it were convenient or comely for him to doe so. How many preambles and Apologyes did he make before he fell directly upon that unpleasing subject? Would to God ye could bear with me in my folly (faith he) and indeed bear with me. And againe, I speake (as it were) foolishly in this confidence of boasting. And yet all that he spake was not to make a boast of himselfe, but to vindicate his Apostleship from unjust and envious calumnations.

'Tis most certaine, He that is sincere desires not to be open, but silently satisfieth his soule with the conscience of doing his duty, and takes more content, in knowing his own integrity, then in knowing that others know it. Vertue looseth nothing of her value, in his esteme, no nor of her lustre in his eye, because she is hidden from the eyes of men. Like the earth (in this poynt) he keepes his richest mineralls, and most precious gems of grace and goodness below in his bowells, or at the center of his heart, and will not let them be seene, till a kind of necessity diggs them out. When Moses after his forty dayes neere accessse to and communion with God in the Mount, perceived that his face did shine (Exod: 34.33.) he put a vayle upon it; every true Moses whose acquaintance and fiduciall familiarity with God, hath stamp upon him the impressions of divine light, is so farre from affecting to dazzle the eyes of others with it, that he rather puts a vayle of gracius modesty upon it; and will not let so much as the light of his good workes be seene, but as thereby (in which case Christ commands it (Math: 5.16.) He may glorifie his father which is in heaven. And herein a Christian followeth the example of Christ, in whom though the Godhead dwelt bodily, yet he rarely shewed his divine power. And when once by a miracle, he had made the blind see, he also by command made them dumbe concerning that miracle (Math: 9.30.) See that no man know it. It was our Saviours counsell to all his followers (Mat: 6.5.) Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth, and it was his confo-
conclusion to them in the next words; Your father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward you openly; yea (which is a higher conclusion then that) Himself will be your reward.

Secondly, As the designing hypocrite desires to be seen in doing good, or to have the good which he hath done seen; so he is exceeding censorious and rigid towards those whom he sees falling into evil. Christ gives this discovery also (Math. 7. 3.) Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye; concluding at the 5th verse; Thou hypocrite (why doth Christ call him hypocrite? surely because he was so quick-sighted to see a mote, that is, a smaller fault in his brother's eye, but took no notice of the beam that was in his own eye; a spot upon his brother's coat, was cenured more by him, then his own wallowing in the mire. I do not say that the Patriarch Judah was an hypocrite, but, as those two other Patriarchs, so he added one very grosse part of hypocrisy (Gen. 38. 24.) For he no sooner heard that Tamor was with childe, but he cenured, yea condemned her prefently to death; Bring her forth (said he) and let her be burnt; and yet himself was more faulty then she. How hard a Judge was he of that crime in another, which was principally his owne? Saul had sinned greatly (1 Sam. 13. 9.) in offering sacrifice before Samuel came, which was an usurpation of the Priest's office, and so great a sin that Samuel told him prefently, God would therefore rend the Kingdom from him; yet he thought to put it off with a slight excuse. But in the 14th Chapter when Jonathan only offended against a rash command of his (putting a Curse upon that people if any did eare before the going downe of the Sun) he sentenced him to death for it. In the 8th of John, How severe were the Pharisees to the woman taken in Adultery, they haled her before Christ, and pressed the Law that she should be stoned to death; yet, when Christ said (v. 7.) He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her, they being convicted by their owne conscience, went out one by one. We ought to reprove and not flatter sin in others; yet they who are extremely severe against a sin in others, usually favour either the same or a worse in themselves. He that is sincere, pitifieth others, as much as reproves them, and he reproves them, though with sharpness, yet with meekness, at once considering himself, lest he also be tempted (Gal. 6. 1.) and blessing God who hath kept
kept him in or from these temptations.

Thirdly, The designing hypocrite discovers himselfe by laying downe or departing from the profession of religion, when his worldly ends are attained: Feined zealcoles or abates, is lesse and lesse towards the things of God, as such zealots grow warmer and warmer in their nests, and find their carnal interrests more and more served or secured. 'Tis reported by a Popish Author, that a Fryar or Monke was observed very precise, and circumspect in all his wayes, hanging downe his head to the earth, very humbly and devoutly, as if he meditated continually upon his mortality, or returne to the earth; who afterwards being chosen Abbot or Governour of the Covent, grew very proud, high and insolent. Some, wondering at this change of behaviour, tooke the boldnes to aske him the reason of it; O, said he, I was but seeking the keyes of the Abbey, and now I have found them. Having gotten what he fought for, he laid aside his strictness in religion, and threw off his vayle. When John that hypocrite was in his way to the Kingdome, how zealous was he? yet no sooner setled in it, but he was unsetled in religion, & turned Idolater, worshipping the Calves that were in Dan and Bethel. When Julian had obtained the Empire, he had done with Christ, and gave all the world a full argument against himselfe, that he was but a hypocrite in his former profession of Christianty. David was as zealous for God and as holy when he was upon the throne, as when he kept the sheepe upon the Mountaines, as good when a princely traine followed him, as when he followed the Ewes great with young. Moses was as faithfull when he was the ruler of Israel, as when he was an exile in Midian. Joseph was as gracious when he wore a chaine of Gold, and had the power of all Egypt put into his hand, as when himselfe was a prisoner in Potiphares house, and the iron (chaines) entred into his soule. I fear God (sayd he, Gen: 42. 18.) when he had no man to feare. And when after his fathers death, his brethren feared he would reckon with them for their old faults, or at least be carelesse of and unkind to them, who had been so unkind and cruel to him, yet he would doe them nothing but kindnesses and courtesies, and thereof bid them be confident, (Gen: 50. 21.)

Fourthly, As succesfull discovereth some hypocrites, so the crosse discovereth many more. The hypocrite will run from his colours.
colours when he comes to the batel, or feeth he must either quit the truths of God, or his owne peace. If once he findeth that he cannot thrive by religion, he will meddle no more with it. There is a generation who will appeare no further for truth, then serves their owne turne; and when they see they cannot serve that, by holding the truth, they will neither hold nor profess it any longer. They will venture no further in such matters, then they may make a faire retreate, if they see themselves in danger, or cannot carry onne their owne interests. Thus the second ground is described (Math. 13. 20, 21.) He that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not roote in himselfe, but dereth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He hath enough of the word, when he seeth he cannot have that, and enough of the world too. Many will get aboard the ship of the true Church in a calm, who if they see the clouds gather, the ayre darken, the winds rising, the storme coming, they dare not ride it out in an angry Sea, but will be calling for the boate, and row to the next shoare. These never purposed to endure all winds and weathers, with the Church of God, but hoped to be transported to the cape of their worldly good hope, and wished for earthly haven. Their flight interprets their intents, and lifts them among designning hypocrites. The house founded on the sand, sheweth as faire in a faire day, as that founded on a rocke; But when the raine descends, and the clouds come, and the winds blow, you may distinguish it, by the down-fall. He was never more nor better then a meere out-side professor, who doth not hold fast his profession in a day of trouble as well as in a day of peace; in the greatest distresse, as well as in the highest success and triumph of the people of God in this world.

To shut up this point and observation, I shall only give three or foure considerations, which may move all to take heed of hypocrisy. Christ faith (Luke 12. 1.) Beware of the Leven of the Pharifees which is hypocrifie. As Leven lowres the whole lump of bread, so doth hypocrifie both the persons and conversationes of those who are infected with it.

First, Beware of hypocrifie, or of hiding what you are, for what you are, doth alwayes appeare to God, though not to men; All things are naked and manifest unto the eyes of him with whom
we have to doe (Heb: 4. 13.) though we are painted over, though we are cloaked, and hooded, and vizarded with pretences, yet we are naked before the eye of God. And that was the argument with which God pressed Abraham to beware of hypocrite (Gen: 17. 1.) Walke before me and be thou perfect; that is, remember thou art always in my eye and sight, therefore take heed of fallennesse and insincerity. We use to say, There is no halting before a Criples; Criples know whether yours be a fained or reall lamenettes. O take heed of halting before God, he knoweth how it is with you, he knoweth the temper of your soules, as well as the body of your conversations; he doth not only know what you doe, but with what aimes, with what heart and purpose you doe it. Paul sayd (1 Thes. 2. 5.) We have not used a cloake of covetousnesse, God is witnesse. As if he had sayd, God will quickly see through us, and find out our covetousnesse, though we cover it with never so thicke or faire acloake of devotional professions.

Secondly, Consider, as the Lord seeth through you, so he will make you throughly seene, he will make you knowne or unmaske you before men one time or other. As he will bring forth the righteounesse of a godly man as the light (after it hath been long hid under the darknesse of uncharitable sulpitions or false accusations) and his just dealing as the noone day, Pial: 37. 6.) so he will bring forth the unrighteounesse of a hypocrite as the light, and his false-dealing as the noone-day, though it have layne hid a while under the cloake and faire colours of the most pious semblances and protestations. God loves to uncafe hypocrites, because he is a God of truth; and because it magnifieth his truth, justice, and omniscience to doe so. And he doth it many times, by letting them fall into foule sins; they make faire shewes in religion, through restraining grace, and as soone as that bridle of restraining grace is let loose, that very shew is gone, and they shew plainly what they are. The closest designing hypocrites, often prove open Apostates; and though some may abide long, (possiblly as long as they live) in this vaine shew or forme of Godliness, without discovering their rottenness, yet at last their rottenness shall be discovered: for as Solomon assureth us (Eccles: 12. 14.) God will bring every worke to judgemen, and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be euel. Or as the Apostle hath it, (1 Cor: 4. 5.)
Chap. 34. *An Exposition upon the Book of Job.* - Ver. 30.

He will discover the secrets of the heart, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness; which, what are they, but the hypocritical designings of men? We say, murder will out, and 'tis as true, Hypocrite will out. The Lord many times brings it out to the shame of hypocrites in this life, and he will bring it out to the confusion of all their faces, in that great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

Thirdly, Take heed of this designing hypocrite; for as all who continue in it shall be discovered, so usually they continue in it; your plotting cunning hypocrites, are very rarely converted. Simple hypocrites (in the notion toucht before) are often converted; all unconverted persons that make any profession in religion are hypocrites, and many of them are simple ones, they hope all is well with them, and that they have grace, though they have it not, these are often converted, but gross designing hypocrites, of what rank or degree soever, are rarely converted. This is it which Christ said to the Pharisees, (Matth. 21. 31.) Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of heaven before you; Publicans were the worst sort of men, and harlots were the worst sort of women; yet these repented and received the Gospel sooner than the hypocritical Pharisees. The Evangelist made a like report of them (Luke 7. 29, 30.) All the people (that is, the common sort of people) that heard him, and the Publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John, but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him; yea, as Christ speaks in the next words, they were piped to, but they would not dance; they were wept to, but they would not mourn. All those various dispensations of the Gospel were fruitless to them; neither a more pleasing nor a more severe Ministry won any thing upon that generation of designing hypocrites.

Fourthly, consider, As hypocrites are hateful to God, so God will deal with them accordingly; he will for ever separate them from his presence, and cast them out of his sight. A hypocrite hath a double minde, a divided heart; he is not half enough for God, (indeed he is nothing at all for God,) and he is too much, yea altogether for himself, and therefore he shall have nothing at all of God, not so much as a sight of him. It is said in the 13th of Job, The hypocrite shall not come before him: Such as we hate, we
we cannot endure they should come in our sight: 'Tis a fitable judgement, that they who have so often come before God with salse hearts, and mocked him with a seeming desire of being in his presence, should at last be thrust for ever out of his presence. 'Tis the portion of an hypocrite to have no portion in God, of whom he hath made such a boating profession. When the word of punishments is spoken of, it is called the hypocrites portion (Math: 24. 51.) Give them their portion with hypocrites in the Lake that burnes with fire and brimstone. Hypocrites are spoken of as if they were the free-holders of hell, or as if all other sinners that shall goe to hell were but as inmates, and they the grand tenants of hell. Consider how miserable a thing it is to be an hypocrite, if this be the portion of hypocrites, to have no portion in God. And as they shall not reigne at all in the glory of the next world, so they are sometimes checkt (faith the text) from reignning in the glory of this world.

That the hypocrite reigne not.

Reigning, as was shewed before, being strictly taken, is the exercise of suprême power, and in a large sense may signifie the exercise of any power, or a state of great prosperity.

Hence note, Secondly.

Hypocrites are high minded, and look after great things.

David was a king, he reigned over Israel, but it was not his owne ambition, but the election of God, and his anointing, which brought him to the throne. He could say of himselfe (Psal: 131. 7.) Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither doe I exercise my selfe in great matters, or in things too high for me. Though David was high in his person and state, yet his spirit was not high; nor was his spirit for high things, only God placed him on high. But here we see the hypocrite is climbing and getting to the top of the staires, he is ascending even to the throne. Hypocrites are proud of that nothing which they have and are in spirituals, and they would have all, they would get high, they would be highest in temporals. There are two lufts which usually reigne in hypocrites, and both of them respect the world.

First, The luft of covetousnesse, which is an inordinate desire of getting and keeping the riches of this world. The Pharisees all
the Gospel over are taxed for hypocrites; and when Christ had
preached that parable of the unjust Steward, concluding with this
sentence, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon:* The Evangelist tel-
leth us (Luke 16. 14.) *The Pharisees also who were covetous,
heard all these things, and they derided him.* Covetousness and
hypocrisy goe together; They who have no true hungrings and
thristings after the things of heaven, are most hungry and thirsty
after earthy things. We finde Job in the 27th Chapter of this
Booke (v. 8.) speaking of the hypocrites gaine; *What is the hope
of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his
soule*; which implyeth that the hypocrite is a great aimer at
worldly gaine.

The second predominant luft of the hypocrite is, ambition, or
desire of getting to the upper end of the world. Christ chargeth
the hypocricitall Pharisees with this luft also (Math: 23. 6.
Mark 12. 39.) *They love the uppermost roomes at feasts, and the
higheft seats in the Synagogues.* They are all to be uppermost,
they must have the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the higheft
seats in the Synagogue, both in Civill and Church-meetings, hy-
pocrites affected superiority, or, Diotrephes-like, to have the pre-
heminence, and (which was another symptome of ambition)
they (faith Christ,) *love greetings in the market place, and to be cal-
led Rabbi, Rabbi,* which is a title of greatness and mastership. Yea
many hypocrites would not only have the uppermost seats at
feasts, and in the Synagogues, but the very uppermost seats in Na-
tions & Common-wealths; *They sometimes affect to be the head, who
are worse then the tayle of all the people.* There are hypocrites of all
ranks, and among all degrees of men, some of low degree are in
a very high degree of hypocrisy; There are hypocrites in raggs
and in ruffet, there are hypocrites alfo in scarlet and in purple;
hypocrisy may reigne in and among those that reigne. It is a
maxime which some Princes have held out to all the world, as the
rule of their reigning; *He that knoweth not how to dissemble, qui necit dis-
knows not how to reigne.* Dissimulation is a great part of hypocrisy, *simulare necit*
there is dissimulation both as to the things of God, and the things
of men; Some if they knew not how to dissemble in both (at leaft)
with men, would not believe that they knew how to rule over, or
governe men. Now as many who are great, and in power, make
little conscience to dissemble, or make use of hypocrisy, to carv

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on their government, and secure themselves; so most hypocrites have a mind, and will use all means (not forbearing those which are bad enough) to get into power, and make themselves great. The spirit of hypocrite is an aspiring spirit.

Againe, Elihu faith, That the hypocrite reigne not, left the people be ensnared; here's not one word of the good government or protection of the people, which should be the maine business of those that reign; The text speaks only of snares; That the hypocrite reigne not, left the people be ensnared.

Hence observe; Thirdly.

Hypocrites getting into power, doe either secretly or openly wrong and oppresse the people.

They lay snares for them in stead of being shields to them. Hypocrites in power, enslave chiefly two ways.

First, By their ill example, there is a great snare in that; Inferiors are very apt to be formed up according to their mould and manners who are above them; the example of Kings and Princes are seldom unconformed to by their Subjects. There is a great power in example, what is done perswades, as well as what is spoken. And the errors of those that rule, become rules of error; men sin with a kind of authority, through the sins of those who are in authority. Jeroboam made Israell to sin, not only by commanding them to worship the Calves at Dan and Bethel, but by commending that Idolatrous worship to them in his owne practice and example.

Secondly, They ensnare the people by sinfull and bad Lawes; The Prophet denounceoth a woe distinctly unto men of several ranks and places (Hos: 5. 1.) Hear ye this, O Priests, and hearken ye house of Israel, and give ye eare, O house of the King; he directs his speech, in that three-fold division; First, to the Priests; Secondly, to the body of the people; Thirdly, and chiefly to the house of the King, why to the house of the King? Because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor. That Scripture may be interpreted; First, as an allusion to such as were wont to hunt upon those mountaines; Mizpah and Tabor were famous places for hunting, there they were wont to set nets, and lay snares to catch their game; now, faith the Prophet, ye have been even like hunters spreading nets and laying snares, Nimrod is called
called a mighty hunter before God; He was a hunter of men more then of wild beasts. Now, look what nets and snares are to wild beasts, the same are sinfull lawes to the consciences of honest and upright-hearted men. And it is well conceived that the Prophet there refers to those ensnaring Lawes made by Jeroboam and the succeeding Princes in the Kingdome of Israel, whereby they endeavoured to draw off the people of God from his true worship, and vexed those who kept close to it. Secondly, some expound those words, Ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net stre JD upon Tabor, to signify their setting spies upon those mountaines to watch and so to give information, who went to the solemn feasts, that so they might be proceeded against according to those ensnaring Laws. Which way soever we take it, 'tis cleare, that Scripture reproves and threatens Judgement against the Priestts and Apostatizing people of Israel, complying with if not provoking the the ruling powers to trouble those who could not digest the Idolatrous worship set up by Jeroboam at Dan & Bethel, upon a politique consideration, left the people going to Jerusalem, should fall off from him, and weaken the kingdome of Israel in his hand. Another Prophet complained (Mic. 6. 16.) The Statutes of Omri are kept. Omri was a king of Israel, a successor of Jeroboam both in his power and hypocritie, he also pretended a zeale for the worship of God after his owne devising, and therefore made ensnaring Statutes to entangle those that were sincere, and persevered in the true worship which the Statutes of God appoynted. The Prophet speakes of a strange kind of bridle, or of a bridle used for an unfruitful purpose (Isa. 30. 28.) There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people causing them to erre. A bridle is put upon the head of a horfe or mule, as David speaks (Psal: 32. 9.) not to caufe either to erre or goe out of the way, but to keep them in the way. 'Tis evident by the context of this Chapter, as also by the expresse text of the 37th Chapter (v. 29.) that this bridle was the Lords power against Senacharib and his host, whereby as with a bridle in their jaws he diverted them from their purpose of besidding Jerusalem. 'Tis a truth also (to which we may warrantably enough apply those words of the Prophet in a way of allusion) that good lawes are like a bridle in the jaws of a people, the multitude or the most would else be like headstrong horses, if authority did not keep them in. 'Tis a great mer-

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cy when Laws are as a bridle to keep us from erring, but 'tis sad when any Lawes are a bridle in the jowes of a people causing them to erre, or go out of the way of the Lawes of God; such Lawes are not (which all Lawes should be) rules, but snares. Such were the Lawes of Jeroboam, and the Statutes of Omri in Israel of old; and what Nation is there that hath not had experience in one age, or other, of such Lawes as have been a bridle in their jowes causing them to erre, or a snare to their souls and consciences?

Fourthly, When Elihu faith, That the hypocrite reigneth not, lest the people be ensnared, he intends an act of divine wrath, upon hypocrites, abusing their power to the hurt of the people.

Hence Note.

God is highly displeased with Princes and Magistrates when they ensnare the people.

We read (Isa. 3. 12.) how the people of Israel were ensnared, and how the Lord was highly displeased with those who did ensnare them. O my people, they which lead thee, cause thee to erre, and destroy the way of thy paths. Thy Leaders mislead thee. There are two sorts of Leaders, First, Spiritual Leaders; the Ministers and Preachers of the Word now, as of old the Priests, Levites, and Prophets, were Leaders of the people (and sometimes proved their misleaders, Jer. 23. 13.) in Spirituals. Secondly, There are Leaders of the people in Civil things; such are all Princes and Magistrates. We may understand that Text in the Prophet Isaiah, of both these Leaders; as if he had said, Thy Prophets and thy Princes mislead thee, and cause thee to erre; and therefore at ver. 14. of the same chapter, God declareth his displeasure against them, professing that he would enter into judgement with the Ancients of his people, and the Princes thereof. The same Prophet Isaiah (chap. 9. 16.) complains of the same thing again; The Leaders of this people cause them to erre, and they that are lead of them are destroyed. The Hebrew is, they that bless this people, (so we put it in the margin,) The Leaders of the people were so called, either because it was a part of their office, to pronounce the blessing upon the people; or because the false Prophets used to sooth up the people in their sins; and (as another Prophet hath it,) to sow pillows under their elbows, as if they were in a very blessed condition, and should do well enough, notwithstanding
ing all the clamours of the true Prophets against them. And so the latter words, they that are led of them, are suitable to the former in the Hebrew, being thus read in the margin, they that are called blessed of them; that is, declared or assured by them to be in the right way, and so such as should come to a blessed end, though indeed their end proved destruction. And if they who are misled (or called blessed) fall into destruction, surely their misleaders (who call them blessed) shall not escape. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch, (Matt. 15. 14.) only the blind leader, or misleader, shall fall deepest into it.

Fifthly, Observe.

As God is displeased with the hypocrite when he useth his power to ensnare the people, so the Lord sometimes puts him beside his power, or takes his power from him, that he may no longer ensnare the people.

The ultimate scope of the place, is not only to shew the Lord displeased with the hypocrite, but displacing him. When the Prophet had summon'd all sorts, Priests, and people, and the house of the King, he addes, Judgement is towards you, because ye have been a snare upon Mizpah, (Hos. 5. 1.) Thus as God pulls down hypocrites, because they are hateful to himself, so because they are hurtful to others; hurtful to their Civil Liberties, and worldly Interests, over which God is tender; hurtful also to their spiritual Liberties, and soul Interests, over which God is more tender. The Kings of Israel (who were very wicked, and did much ensnare the people) went off their Governments, most of them, very speedily, God did not let them reign long; yea, the whole Kingdom of Israel (which had not one good King) was dissolved long before the Kingdom of Judah, which had many good Kings. God did not suffer the hypocritical Kings of Israel to hold their power, but gave them into the hand of the King of Assyria, (2 Kings 17. 6.) because (ver. 8.) they walked in the statutes of the heathen, and of the Kings of Israel, which they had made.

From the whole verse I would give one Note by way of Corro-

A hypocrite is of all persons most unfit for publick service.

How unfit is he to have power in his hand, who can use it no better,
better, then for the enframing of the people? A hypocrite is of a private spirit; he is all for himself, and therefore most unfit for publick trust. We may say of the hypocrite, as the Prophet (Ezek. 15. 3.) of the Vine, Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or, will men take a pin of it, to hang a vessel thereto? No, it is not fit for that mean purpose or service, much less would a man take a Vine to hew a beam or a pillar for a house out of it. Magistrates are as pillars of the house, or like great beams, to hold up and fasten all; the hypocrite is so far from being fit Timmer to make a pillar of the house, that he is not fit to make a pin to hang a vessel on upon the wall. Power is never so improperly employed as in making snares, and yet that's the usual employment or improvement which hypocrites, high or low, put it to.

I have thus far opened the Text, and given these Notes from it, according to our reading; yet before I pass from it, I shall minde you of another reading or version of this whole verse, which carryeth the fence quite into another channel. Thus who (meaning God) maketh (or suffereth at least) the hypocrite to reign, because of the offences or sins of the people. The Chaldee Paraphrase, the Septuagint, and Vulgar Latine agree in this, and the dependance (for clearing of it) may be made out thus.

Elihu having shewed in the 29th verse, that if God giveth quietness, none can make trouble; and that if he hideth his face, none can behold him, whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only, proceeds in this verse to shew the justice of God in punishing the people, by putting power into the hypocrites hand.

The learned Mercer, I grant, is not satisfied with this rendering, as not being so suitable to the Grammatical construction of the Hebrew Text; yet, holding the first, he makes this as a consequent of it; confessing that it may be taken in this sense; That the hypocrite reigneth not who did once reign, because of the sins of the people; and so it intimates the sins both of the Prince and people. Thus both readings correspond, and are not repugnant but subservient to each other. For if God suffer not the hypocrite to reign any longer, 'tis an argument that for a time he suffered him to reign for the sins of the people, that is, to be an instrument of his wrath and vengeance upon them for their sins. The same word signifies both a snare, and sin; a snare set by others, and an offence or sin committed by our selves; and well it may, seeing
feeling nothing doth more ensnare us then our own sins. And as some are led into sin by the snares which others lay for them; so very many by sinning bring themselves into snares: and usually when a people have entangled themselves in the snares of sin, God sets evil men at once to rule over them and entangle them with the snares of those sufferings which are most proper to their sins.

And thus 'tis conceived Elihu answers those expostulating demands which Job puts (chap. 21. 7.) Wherefore do the wicked live? become old? yea, are mighty in power? Here are three questions, ὣς ἡγετήν ὄποιον ἔτοιmphos "καλαίσχειν 

First, Why do they live? they are not worthy to breathe. Secondly, Why become they old? they deserve to be cut off in their Druf. youth, and not to live out half their dayes. Thirdly, Why are they mighty? Why do they command all, who use their might only to do mischief? Elihu answers these questions in a word, God giveth power into the hands of evil men, because of the sins of the people. As if he had said, if at any time you see the puli. Nam ἰηαν propter signifit. Druf. Pafli Or ita accepti, ne re-making of it out from the Text; but taking it as 'tis given, I shall get hypocrit. only give you two Notes from it.

First, Bad Princes are set up by the permission, yea disposition of God.

He makes evil men to reigne. The same power which brings wicked men into the world, sets wicked men high in the world. It is of God that any wicked man hath a place in the world, and it is of God that any wicked man gets into the high places of the world. All the Kings of Israel from first to last were stark naught, and very wicked, yet they were all of God's setting up, though their own ambition, or the satisfying of some lust, put most of them upon aspiring to get up. In the first book of the Kings (chap. 11. 29, 30, 31.) Abijah the Prophet finding Jeroboam (the first and worst of them) in the way, caught the new Garment that was his regnumur, on him, and rent it into twelve pieces, and he said unto Jeroboam, Irenel.5.c. take thee ten pieces; for thou faith the Lord, the God of Israel, behold, 24. I will rend the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ren.
Tribes to thee. This Jeroboam was so bad a man, that he was not content to sin alone, but made Israel to sin; yet even him did God set up, and sent a Prophet to him to tell him so. How unholy foever men are in their place, and how unjust soever in the exercise of their power, yet the holy and just God (for reasons known to himself) placeth them in power.

Secondly, Observe.

God permits wicked Princes to reign, as a punishment of the reigning sins and wickednesses of the people.

The power of wicked Princes is the punishment of a wicked people. Some Princes and Magistrates are given as a blessing, for the protection, peace, and profit of a Nation, and for the exaltation of righteousness in it. Others are given as a curse, for the vexation, trouble, and impoverishing of a Nation. The Lord takes this fully upon himself, (Hos. 13.11.) I gave them a King in mine anger, &c. Angry providences are the fruit of sin. God gave Saul in anger, he gave Jeroboam and the rest of the Israelitish Kings in anger; and as he gave them in anger, so he took them away in wrath. The sins both of Princes and people, produce mutual ill effects towards one another.

First, The sins of the people are the cause sometimes why good Princes are immaturly or suddenly taken away from them. Josiah that good King was removed very early for the sin of Judah; Pharaoh Necho had never slain him, had not the people been unworthy of him. Hence that of Solomon, (Prov. 28.2.) for the transgression of a land, many are the Princes thereof. He means not (as I conceive) many together, but many successively, that is, good Princes go quickly off the stage one after another for the transgression of the people of the land; But (as it followeth in the same verse) by a man of understanding & knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged. Our Translaters render these latter words in the plural number (as the margin hath it) by men of understanding & wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged; that is, when there are many godly, wise, and understanding men in a Nation, God blesteth them with long-lived and aged good Kings or Governours.

Secondly, Whole Nations or a people are sometimes punished for the sins of their Princes, (Jer. 15.4.) the Lord tells the Jewish State he would bring all that evil upon them for the sin of Manasseh.
Manasseh. The sins of Princes prove oftentimes the sufferings of the people. As both by and for their goodness and virtues a people are blessed, so by and for their evills, errors, and vices, a people are endangered, yea sometimes ruined: When the Head of a Kingdom or Common-wealth is sicke, the Body is seldom well.

Thirdly, The sins of a people bring destruction both upon their Princes and themselves together, and wrap all up in one ruinous heape, as Samuel threatened the people of Israel (1 Sam. 12. 25.) If ye still doe wickedly, ye shall be destroyed both you and your King. He speakes not a word of any sin in their King, but tells them that their wickednesse may bring destruction not only upon themselves, but upon him also.

Fourthly, (which is the point in hand) the sins of a people cause the Lord to set evill Princes over them. When once a people refuse the sweet and easie yoke of Christ, or say, we will not have this man to rule over us, he in Judgement sends such to rule over them, as shall lay heavy yokes upon them indeed. God useth some Princes as his staff to support a people, and as his shield to defend a people, yea as his Sun to cherish and influence them with abundance of mercies. He useth others only as his sword to wound them, or as his scourge to correct them for their sin. Some are a blessing, others are an afflication to the people. An ancient Poet observing the City wherein he lived, twolne with vanity, and bringing forth dayly many monstrous births of pride, luxury, and oppression, he could not forbeare to give his appre-ッション of the issue in this elegant fancy; This City (said he) is with child, and I am afraid it will bring forth shortly (and what will it bring forth?) some severe corrector of your evill insolencies. When Phocas (a cruel tyrant) had got the Empire, and reigned, there was a good man, who prayed much, about him, and did ever ven expostulate with God, why he would set such a wretch as he was over the Empire; the story faith, he received this answer from God; I therefore set him to govern, because I could not finde Cur superbus? a worse. And I finde a like report of another, though in a lower non inventi person, non inventi person, now in power, wherein carrying himselfe Episcopus quod very insolently, one sayd to him; Why are you thus haughty and dignus sacramento quod high-minded, why so proud of your power? God did not put you into the government of this place, because you were worthy of it, but be-cause episcopo.
Deus quibusdies cause we were worthy to have a man of your worthinesse set over us, multo tanquam carnificibus uos oft, ad sumendum de a some men as tormentors to affliet and punish others. Which is verisimile in most tyrants. Such a bitter medicine was Phalaris in his time to the Argentines, and Marius to the Romanes. St Augustine speaking of Nero, maketh this conclusion; The power of Government is not given, no not to such, but by the providence of the most high God, when he judgeth the affaires or manners of mankind justly deserve and call for such Lords and Masters.

O let nations take heed; The sins of a people, are the worst shares of a people; sin provokes God to set up Princes for a snare. As therefore the Psalmist admonisheth Princes, Be wise now therefore ye Kings, and learned ye Judges of the earth; so I may say, Be wise, ye people, and obedient all you that are inhabitants of the earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice before him with trembling, Kisse the Son (submit to Jesus Christ) lest he be angry, and give you such Princes and Powers, or put you into such hands as shall break and vex you to purpose, and make you know what it is to serve men in rigour, having refused to serve God in love. Many in all nations are apt to complain much, when they have any burdens upon them by Governours, but few complain of their owne sins, which cause God to burden nations with such Governours; let all leave off complaining of evill Governours, and complain more of their owne evill government, both of their hearts and lives.

Thus we see how this text according to these distinct translations, First, gives warning to Princes, That the hypocrite reigneth not, lest the people be ensnared; and Secondly, gives warning to people, that they provoke not God by their scandalous offences, to set wicked Princes and Powers over them.
Surely it is meete to be said unto God, I have borne chaitement, I will not offend any more.

That which I see not, teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.

Elihu having convinced Job, both of the power of God, to doe what he pleaseth, and also of his righteousness, that he is just in whatsoever he pleaseth to doe, proceedeth to give him counsell, how to carry himselfe better towards God, then by his former speeches and expostulations (hinted at the 5th verse of this Chapter) he seemed to have done. In these two verses he gives him (according to our translation) counsell consisting of three branches.

First, He counsells him to a due submission, to the hand of God. In the former part of the 31st verse; Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chaitement.

Secondly, He counsells him to reformation, or to a gracious resolution of laying downe every sinnfull thing, or what ever was a provocation to God. This he doth once and againe, twice in these two verses; First, in the close of the 31st verse; It is meete to be sayd unto God, I will not offend any more; Secondly, in the close of the 32d verse; If I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.

Thirdly, Elihu counsells Job, to pray for further discoveries, both of his sins, and sinnfullnesse, as also of his duty, at the beginning of the 32d verse; That which I see not teach thou me. Thus you have the distinct points of that counsell which Elihu gives Job, according to our reading of these words. There is another reading, which I shall touch, when I have first opened and prosecuted the words as they stand in ours.

Verf. 31. Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chaitement; I will not offend any more.

These are child-like words, such words as a faulty, yet a sub-
mitting repenting childe, speaks to a displeased father, when he is under his rod, (yet such as become the most aged and growe men in grace) I have borne chastisement, I have been under thy correcting hand, forgive me O my father, I will doe so no more. Thus Elihu advieth Job, to bespeak God his father while he was afflicting him.

Some render the former part of this verse, by way of interrogation, or question, Hast he sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will offend no more? hath Job spoketh thus to God? As if Elihu (making his appeale to the by-standers) had sayd, Ye all are witnesses that Job hath not yet humbled himselfe under the correcting hand of God, but rather charged God with severity, in dealing with him, and over-boldly enquired into the reason of his dealings. Our affirmative translation carrieth the same sense with this interrogative, and questioning translation; for when Elihu faith to Job, It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement; he supposeth, that Job had not sayd so.

Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God.

The Hebrew particle which we render surely, commonly signifieth, for, as giving an account or reason, of somewhat that went before; yet we render it well both here, and elsewhere, surely, according to the scope of the place; especially seeing Elihu speaking thus, is not giving a reason of what was sayd before, but inferring a duty from it.

Againe, The word meete, is not expressly in the Hebrew text, yet it is clearly implied in it, and therefore added by our translators to fill up, and cleare the sense; the originall is, It is to be sayd unto God, we say, It is meete to be sayd unto God,

I have borne chastisement.

The word chastisement also is not expressly in the original, there it is only, I have borne, but because bearing must needs import, that somewhat is borne as a burthen, and seeing according unto the subject matter that Elihu is upon with Job, it must referre to some affliction or chastisement laid upon him, therefore we fitly supply this word chastisement, It is to be sayd unto God, I have borne; what? (it cannot be meant of any outward corporall burthen, or visible loade sayd upon his back; but, I have borne) cha-


chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 31.

It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastifement; that is, I both have and will beare, whatsoever thou haft, or shalt be pleased to lay upon me; I will not dispute thy burthens, but take them up. So then, this first part of the verse is a direction ministred to Job, shewing him how to behave himselfe in the bearing of affliction; He must not strive or struggle with them, nor with God about them, but sustaine them. And this direction is not peculiar to Job's person, or to his case alone, but it belongs to all that are in affliction, let their case be what it will; all such ought to beare quietly or patiently to abide under the burthens which God layeth upon them. I shall not stay upon the opening of the speciall signification of that word chastifement, because it is not in the Hebrew text, only thus, chastifements are usually taken for those afflictions, or afflicting providences, which God layeth upon his owne children; he layeth judgements upon the wicked, and punishments upon the ungodly, but properly, and strictly, that which falls upon his owne people is called chastifement. For though in Scripture, there are dispensations of God towards his owne people, spoken of under the notion of judgement, yet they have not a proper sense of judgement, as proceeding from wrath, and intended for revenge. Wrath is the spring from whence judgements flow, and as to their issue, they tend to the satisfaction of Justice. This God doth not expect, at the hands of his owne children, and therefore their affictions are most properly called chastifements, Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastifement.

Hence note.

It is our duty when the hand of God is upon us, or when we are under chastifements, to speake humbly, meekly, and submissively to God.

We ought always to be humble, and carry it humbly towards God, but then especially when God by any afflicting providence is humbling us. The Prophet (Hos: 14, 2.) calling that people to returne unto the Lord, adviseth thus; Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips. As Elihu here makes a kinde of directory, what a person in affliction should say unto God, It is meete to say unto God, that is, for a man in thy case,
to lay thus unto God; so that Prophet, by the Spirit, faith, Take unto you words, and turne to the Lord, and say or speake thus unto him; though not strictly, syllabically, in so many words, yet to this fence, and purpose, or according to this tenour, speake thus, Take away iniquity, and receive us graciously. And when the Prophet faith, Take unto you words, his meaning is not that they should affectedly study a forme of words for God, much lette that they should artificially counterfeit words which their hearts had not conceived, or were not correspondent to their hearts, (many speake words, even to God, which never come neare but are meere strangers to the intents of their hearts) but sincere words, humble words, words of supplication, not expostulating words; not quarrelling words, not murmuring words, not meere complaining words, but take to you words of confession, and submission, and to present your selves and your condition before the Lord. The Preacher (Eccles: 13. 10.) fought to finde our acceptable words, and so should we when we speake unto men; Preachers of the word should seeke to finde our acceptable words; not fine words, not swelling words of vanity, not flattering soothing words, but acceptable words, that is, such as may finde easie passage into the heart; or such words as may make their passage into the heart, through the power of the Spirit of God. Now if the Preacher fought to finde our acceptable words, when he spake to the people, much more should we when we speak to God. O how should we labour then to finde our acceptable words. All words are not fit to be spoken unto God; the words that are (in such cases as the text speakes of) may be reduced to these two heads.

First, They must be God justifying words, that is, words by which we acquit the Justice of God, how sore, and how heavy forever his hand is upon us. When Daniel (Chap: 9. 7, 14.) was laying before the Lord the calamitous state of that people (they were under as fore judgements as ever nation was, For under the whole heavens (faith he there) hath not been done, as God hath done unto Jerusalem) yet all the words he spake unto God, tended unto the justification of God; O Lord (said he) righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, &c. We have not had one stroke more, then we have deserved, there hath not been a grain of weight more in our burthen, then we have brought
brought upon our selves, there hath not been a drop in our cup
more then we have given just cause for, Therefore hath the Lord
watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us, for the Lord our God
is righteous in all his works, which he doth, for we obeyed not his
voice; these are words fit to be spoken unto God.

Secondly, We are to take to our selves self-condemning, self-
abasing, self-emptying words. Such we finde in that chapter, (v.
5, 6, 7.) To us belong shame, and confusion of face, &c. these are
the words we should take to our selves, and thus it is meet to be
said unto God, whenever his chastisements are upon us.

Secondly Observe.
It is our duty to acknowledge it to God, that he hath chastened
us, when he hath.

We must own his hand in afflicting us, as much as in prosper-
ing us, in casting us down, as much as in lifting us up, in wound-
ing us, as much as in healing us; It is meet to be said unto God,
we have born chastisement, thy hand hath been upon us. The ne-
glect of, or rather obstinacy against this, is charged as a great sin
(Ifa. 26. 17.) Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see;
that is, they will not acknowledge thy most eminent appearances
in anger against them. 'Tis so with many at this day, though there
be a hand of God (as it were) visibly afflicting their bodies, and
estates, their children and families; yet they will not see, that it
is a hand of God; but say as the Philistines, it is a chance, or, it
is our ill fortune; it is from the negligence of this man, or from
the malice of that other man. All this while there is no acknowl-
dedge ment of the hand of God. They say not with Eli, (1 Sam.
3. 18.) It is the Lord; nor with David, (Psal. 39. 9, 10.) I was
dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it; Remove thy
stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. It
is as much our duty, and for the glory of God, to confess that our af-
fections are of God, as our mercies and favours.

Thirdly Observe.
The chastenings of God must be born, they must be endured.

Many are chastised who cannot say they have born chastisements;
It's an ordinary thing to be under chastisement, but its a great thing
and requires much holy skill and spiritualness to bear a chastife-
ment;
ment; the duty of a Christian lies most in two points.

First in doing, or in active obedience.

Secondly in suffering, or in passive obedience, and there is as much of God, as much of grace, as much of holiness, yea I may say much more held out in bearing and in suffering, then there is in acting or in doing.

But you will say, what is it to bear, that you make it so difficult a matter to bear chastisements? How must chastisements be born? or what is it to bear them?

I will answer the question under two heads. First, Negatively, To bear chastisement is not

First, meerly to finde or feel it upon our shoulders as a burthen which pincheth or presseth us; so a beast may bear.

Secondly, it is not a bearing meerly because we cannot help it, or be rid of our burden, for so the worst of men may bear; they bear the greatest burthens that God layeth upon them, because they cannot avoid them, nor ease themselves of them.

Thirdly, It is not a bearing stoutly, or flightingly, to make nothing of it; so proud men bear, men of unsubdued spirits unto God, and his word, regard not what they bear, nor what God doth to them.

Fourthly, It is not a bearing them slowly or sullenly; for so discontented persons bear; yea, so the devil beareth the burthen which the hand of God hath laid upon him.

Fifthly, Nor is it a bearing chastisement faintly or dispondingly; so weak believers bear. To bear and faint, is not the bearing of faith. Neither of these are the bearing of chastisement which E-lihu intends in this counsel, when he faith, It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement. Thus ye see the Negative, what the bearing of it is not?

Secondly, I answer affirmatively, To bear a chastisement as an act or work of grace, is

First to bear it sensibly; that is, feeling the weight of the hand of God, and tasting the bitterness of that cup of sorrow which he giveth us to drink.

Secondly, 'Tis a bearing of it submittingly, humbly, patiently, laying our selves down at the foot of God, and saying, as Eli did, Let him do what seemeth him good; or as David, (2 Sam. 15.26.) Behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. We never
never bear any evil of affliction well, till we can say (with a sweet resignation of our selves) to God, do with us what seemeth to the good. And (for our encouragement I may say) nothing can hurt a godly man which seemeth good to God.

Thirdly, 'Tis a contentful bearing, or a bearing contentedly; thus Christ spake (Psal. 40. and 'tis cited by the Apostle Heb. 10.) Lo, I come to do thy will, I am content to do it; what was that? It was to bear or suffer; the greatest part of what Christ was to do, was to bear or suffer the chastisement of our peace, (I Isa. 53.5.) and in suffering to be made a sacrifice for us; his contentment to do the will of God, was a contentment to suffer. Of such a spirit should the people of God be; bearing chastisement not only patiently, but contentedly; this is hard, but this cannot be left out in the full exercise of that grace.

Fourthly, 'Tis to bear it (more then contentedly) willingly; how free was Christ to bear, when he said (John 18.11.) The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Surely I will, I am willing to drink it, though it be a bitter cup. We are not to will our sufferings, but to suffer them willingly; there is a vast difference between these two; I do not say we are to will our sufferings, but we are to suffer them willingly; we must suffer what, and how, and when, and how long God will; and when God willeth our sufferings, we must suffer with our wills, or be willing to suffer.

Fifthly, To bear chastisement in the sense here intended, is not only to bear it with our will, but with our affections, not only willingly, but acceptably, and embracingly; 'tis to say welcome cross, because it is the will of God. There is no chastisement that we can rejoice in, or have any affection to, considered in itself, but to bear chastisement in contemplation of the will of God, should work our hearts to an accepting, to an embracing, to a welcoming of it; we should say to all our sufferings, welcome, by the will of God.

Sixthly, 'Tis to bear it prayerfully; we must bear silently in opposition to complaining; but we must not bear silently in opposition to praying. While chastisement is upon us, supplications must be in our mouths; and we must pray, first, That we may see the reason why or for what cause God chasteneth us: Secondly, We must pray, that we may answer the ends which God aimeth.
aimeth at in chaf tening us. Thirdly, That we may have fresh
power to bear his chaf te nings. Fourthly, That God would be
pleased to remove our chaf tenings. While we bear chaf tenings,
we may pray, and pray hard that God would take them away. Da-
vid had no former laid, I opened not my mouth, (that is, complain-
ingly) because thou didst it (Psal. 39. 9.) but presently he open-
ed his mouth in prayer (ver. 10.) Remove thy stroke away from
me. While we bear our crofs patientely and willingly, it would be
our fin not to pray for deliverance from it. To lay I am under a
chaf tenement, and let the Lord keep it upon me as long as he will,
I will never ask him to take it off; were a moft unbecoming frame
of spirit. They that bear affliction moft cheerfully, should pray
moft earnestly to be eased of it; we must be willing to bear them
always, yet we must pray that we may not bear them long. If a
childe under the rod of a parent, should not say, pray father fly
your hand, it is enough, but let him go on striking, and never inti-
mate a desire of his forbearance, this were a signe of stubbornnes,
not of patience and submission. 'tis as bad not to ask release from
our troubles, as to murmur at them, or to be unquiet under
them. Remember then, you must be as much in the exercise of
prayer as of patience under the crofs, and that in these four re-
spects. Thus you have the answer to that question; by which it
appears, that 'tis no easie matter to say what Elihu faith, It is meet
to be said unto God, I have born chaf tenement ?

There is yet another question, (for some may demand) why
should chaf tenements be thus born? I answer,

First, We must bear them according to all the rules before
given, because they come from God. Our afflictions are Gods al-
lotment, we must bear what he appoints: therefore old Eli, though
he had failed, and sinned greatly, and so brought a cloud of cala-
nity upon himself and his family (the very report whereof, as Sa-
muel told him, would make both ears of every one that heard it,
to tingle) yet he compos'd his spirit to a submissive hearing of it,
upon this single consideration, It is the Lord, and there is enough in
that consideration to make all men submit. For first, The Lord is
supreme, and therefore what he doth must be born. Secondly, He
is a Father, a childe must bear what a Father layeth upon him;
and as the Lord is a father, so he is not a hafty, imprudent, or pas-
tionate father, but a moft wise and judicious father; therefore 'tis
our
our interest as well as our duty to bear his chastisements. Yea, he is a gracious, tender, and compassionate father, and when we know he that layeth a hand of affliction upon us, hath also a heart full of compassion towards us, we should willingly bear his hand.

Secondly, Chastisements are to be born in the manner directed, because they are for our good, and shall we not bear what is good for us? It is good for me (said David, Pial. 119. 71.) that I have been afflicted; and so the Apostle (Heb. 12. 10.) For they verily for a few days, chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Chastisements are for our profit, and shall not we bear that which is for our profit? If God should lay chastisements on us for our hurt, meekly to vex us, & so put us to pain, or meekly because he delights in our sufferings, who could bear them? But it is meet to bear what God lays upon us, because he doth it for our good and profit.

Thirdly, We must bear chastisements in the manner shewed, because unless we bear them so, they will do us no good; or we shall have no profit by them, and that's a misery indeed. To bear smart, and finde no advantage coming in by it; to drink gall, and to have no sweeteness come out of it; to endure loss, and to have no kind of profit by it is very grievous. Now what ever chastisement is laid upon any, it doth them no good, and they can have no profit by it, unless they bear it as was before described; it is not the bare being afflicted, that doth us good, but it is the wise management, or the skilful bearing of it that doth us good; and therefore we finde, that the Apostle (Heb. 12. 11.) when he had said, There is no affliction joyous for the present, but grievous, adds, Nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, (but to whom? What to every one that is afflicted, have they these sweet fruits? No, but) to them that are exercised thereby. Afflictions bring no sweet fruits to them that have them, unless they be exercised by them: how exercised? Afflictions exercise every one that hath them; they are to all a passive exercise, but to be exercised, notes here an active exercise; they who graciously exercise themselves in affliction, shall without doubt finde benefit and fruit by affliction.

But some may say, what is it to be thus exercised by affliction? I answer (for the opening of that Scripture) to be exercised,
First, To be much in searching our own hearts, and ways, or how 'tis with us, and what hath been done by us, (Eccles. 7.14.) In the day of adversity consider, that is, think your selves, First, What God is doing. Secondly, What you have been doing. Thirdly, What becomes you to do in such a day. The prophet points us to the two latter Duties of such a day, in one verse, (Lam. 3.40.) Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. To search our ways, is to consider what we have been doing; to turn to the Lord, is the great thing to be done, in a day of adversity.

Secondly, As this exercise of the soul consists in searching our own hearts; so in searching the heart of God (if I may so speak) that is, in an humble enquiry to the utmost; what God meaneth by any affliction, what hath moved him to afflict us; and we have as much cause to search Gods heart, as our own in this case. Thus in that National affliction (2 Sam. 21.1.) when the famine continued three years, year after year, it is said, David enquired of the Lord, why is it thus? he search'd Gods heart by desiring an answer from the Lord, what sin it was which provoked him to that sad dispensation. And thus we should be enquiring of God by prayer what sin he striketh at, or what grace he specially calleth us to act by any affliction which he sendeth either upon our families or persons.

Thirdly, There is an exercising of our selves in searching the affliction itself; first, into the nature of it. Secondly, into the circumstances of it, how timed, and measured, by what hand, and in what way the Lord deals with us; this is a great exercise, and unless we are thus exercised under affliction, we get smart, and loss, and bitterness, but no good at all by it. So much for the first counsel given Job by Elihu, It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chaste semen.

His second counsel as it lies here in the order of the Text, is about the reformation, or the amendment of what is amiss.

I will not offend any more.

It is fit the afflicted should say unto God, I will not offend. The root of the word here used, signifieth somtimes the pains of travel in signification magnum occendi cupiditate ardere, sicut mulieres ardent desiderio concipiendi, situm, transsecur in secunda conjugatione, vel ad parturientium dolores, vel ad concepienti libidinem. Moller in Psal. 7.14.
Childe-bearing, (Cant. 8. 5.) I raised thee up under the Apple-tree, there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee. And again (Psal. 7. 14.) Behold he travelleth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood: It signifieth also in Scripture to corrupt, or to pollute, (Neh. 1. 7.) We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgements which thou commandedst thy servant Moses. To deal corruptly, or to do corruptly, what is it but to sin against or offend God? Every offence or sin, springs from the corruption of our own hearts, and is a corruption of our ways and manners. Both these readings, I will not offend, or, I will not corrupt, meet in the same sense; for to corrupt our ways is to offend, and to offend is to corrupt our ways; so any evil is to corrupt our selves, or others. So then, the meaning plainly is this, I will corrupt my way no more; the man in affliction must say to God in a deep sense of, and sorrow for his former sins, offences, and corruptions, I will offend, I will corrupt no more. Now, comparing the former counsel with this; Observe, First.

Chastisement is for amendment.

The evil of affliction is brought upon us, that we may take heed of, and turn from the evil of sin, (that's intimated by the connexion) therefore to go on offending, while God is chastening, is to add rebellion to our sin. It was the brand of Ahaz (2 Chron. 28. 22.) in the time of his distress, he trespassed yet more against the Lord; whereas being in distress, he should have said to the Lord, I will trespass no more.

Note secondly.

When God chastens us, we should promise amendment.

We should tell God, we will him offend no more, we will grieve him no more, we will provoke him no more, we will dishonour him no more; the least sin once committed is too much, therefore we should engage to sin no more.

But it may be question'd, can any man make such a promise, or take such an engagement upon himself, when under chastisement, that he will offend no more? Is that degree of perfection attainable in this life, to offend no more? How then is this meet to be said?
said unto God, I will offend no more? Must we promise things that we cannot perform? Is there any man chastened that offends not again? faith not the Apostle James, in many things we offend all? Is it then meet to say this unto God, I will offend no more? Is it not sinful to make a promise not to sin? I answer,

First, by way of concession. No man may promise, what ever his chastenements are, that he never will sin at all any more, no man can make any such promise, neither is that the meaning here; but he that is under the chastening hand of God, may and must, promise that he will not commit such, or such a sin any more; especially not such a sin as he most suspects to have brought the chastening upon his back; we may make promises against particular sins, though we cannot promise we will never sin.

Secondly, We may promise, when we are under the chastening hand of God, that we will offend no more, in such a manner as we have offended formerly, so foolishly, so vainly; so negligently; we may and must promise to be more watchful, that we sin not the same sin again either for matter or manner.

Thirdly, When chastened, we may say unto God absolutely, we will offend no more, with respect to the purpose of our souls; that is, we must lay aside all purposes of committing any sin; yea we may, we must tell the Lord, tis the desire and purpose of our souls, tis our ayme, and shall be our endeavour to offend no more. The ayme of every true believer is not to sin, though (in this world) it be not the attainment of any (1 John 2.1.) My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not: As if the Apostle had said, I would fain wynde up your hearts to such a pitch, that you may not sin at all; But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; I know you cannot but sin, yet let it be your care not to sin, and your prayer to offend no more. And how should we blee the Lord, if we could live without sin, and be for ever rid of it? we should with a thousand times more to be quit of sin, then affliction; thus we must say unto God, we will offend no more.

Fourthly, though we cannot promise, or take up such a resolution absolutely, nor in our own strength, yet we may and ought in the strength of Christ, or to the utmost of that strength and grace, which he gives out, and bestoweth upon us.

I shall have occasion to speak further to this point, from those words

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words of the 32d or next verse, (which are of neer alliance both as to matter and form with these here,) *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Only before I pass from this rendering of the Text in hand, take two Notes more; in that Elihu telleth the penitent person, he ought to say unto God, *I will not offend any more.*

**Note. First.**

_A truly humbled and repenting soul, is as careful to avoid the act of sin for the time to come, as to be freed from the guilt of sin past._

This holy care is a sure argument of a good conscience. A wicked wretch may be desirous to have former offences pardoned, but he hath not any unsignified purpose not to offend any more; and usually he hath no sooner cast up his sin by a seeming penitent confession, but he returns with the dog to his vomit by a fresh commission of his sin. Sorrow for sin yeilds no comfort, if not accompanied with a care not to sin. Christ was not so rigid to the woman taken in Adultery as her accusers were, yet he faith to her, (John 8. 11.) *Go and sin no more;* as if he had said, thy case will be sad, though now thou hast escaped or got rid of thy accusers, if thou tradest on in this wicked way. And when David prayed for purging the sin past, he also prayed for establishing by the free Spirit of God, against such-like temptations in time to come, (Psal. 51.) *as if he had said, Lord, I do not ask pardon that I might take liberty to offend again, but I desire thy confirming and preventing grace, that I may offend no more._

Secondly, From the extensiveness of this engagement, to which Elihu directs the penitent person, *I will not offend any more, neither in one kinde nor other._

**Note.**

*He that is truly humbled for any one sin, will to his utmost avoid every sin._

He faith, *I will not offend any more._* He that loves God, cannot live in the doing of any one thing which God hates; but as he expects good out of all the promises, so he hath respect to all the commandments; whoever hath so, would not offend in any thing any more._

Further,
Further, as this latter clause is translated, *I will corrupt no more.*

**Note.**

**First,** *Sin is a corruption.*

We shall do well to look upon sin in all its notions, to make it loathsome to us; this is one notion of it, sin corrupts every thing and person it hath to do with.

**First,** Sin is the corruption of our nature, the whole mass of mankind, and the whole of every man is leavened by it.

**Secondly,** Sin is the corruption of our conversation, and of our way, (Gen. 6. 11, 12.) *God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.* Moses warns the people of Israel against sin upon this ground, (Deut. 4. 16.) *Left ye corrupt your selves, and make you a graven image,* read Psal. 53.1. Hos. 9.9. Zeph. 3.7. Zech. 3.7.

**Thirdly,** Sinning is the corrupting of the Commandments of God, a sinner as much as in him lyeth makes void the Law.

**Fourthly,** Sinning is a corrupting of the Covenant of God; yea some kinde of sinning is a corrupting the blood of the Covenant, or a counting the blood of the Covenant as an unholy thing (Heb. 10. 29.) though the blood of the Covenant be in it self infinitely above all corruption, yet sin doth what it can to corrupt it.

**Lastly,** Some render, it is meet to be said unto God, *I have born chastisement, I will not break;* which we may understand two ways. First, *I will not again break the Commandment;* so it falls in with our Translation, *I will not offend.* Secondly, *I will not break;* that is, those rods, or bonds of chastisement that thou hast laid upon me; as if he should say, *Lo: d, thou hast bound me in these fettters of affliction, and I will abide thy pleasure under them, I will not strive, but submit, I will not break prison,* but wait thy time for my deliverance.

**Hence Note.**

*We must bear, not break the bonds of our affliction.*

Some (like stubborn children under the chaftening hand of a Parent) would even break away from God; or like malefactors, when under the hand of Justice, they would break prison, knock off their irons, and get away. As the wicked do, and speak concerning the bands and cords of Gods Commandments, (Psal. 2. 3.)
Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us; so some speake and doe about the bands and cords of divine chastishments, they will breake from them, or breake them, if possibly they can. Let such remember, 'tis best when they are in Gods bands, to let him untie them, and when they are in his prison, 'tis good to abide there, till he is pleased to discharge and let them out. The Apostles being in prison, the Magistrates sent the Sergeants, saying, Let these men goe, but Paul sayd unto them, they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now doe they thrust us out privily, nay verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out. A godly man when under restraint by the illegal or rigorous dealings of the Magistrate, will not accept his liberty, upon unworthy terms; surely then he will not make an escape out of the hand of God unwarrantably. He is ready to accept his liberty with much thankfulness, but he will not force it with violence. A godly man would free himselfe from sin, and get heaven by a kind of force (as Christ speaks in the Gospel) but he would not free himselfe from suffering by force, nor get his ease by violence. When God bindes him, he faith (according to this reading) I will not break.

But you will say, who may be sayd to breake or get by force out of the chastning hand of God?

I answer; First, they doe it, by way of interpretation, who are impatient and unquiet in their afflictions. A child that strives and struggles under his fathers rod, breaks away from him as much as he can.

Secondly, They actually breake from under the hand of God, who by any sinful way helpe themselves out of their afflictions. Such, when God hath bound them with the cords of affliction, goe to the Devill to loose & let them out. 'Tis sad when God imprisons a man, But O how sad is it to go to the Devill for a release; yet so doe all they who being under affliction, endeavour to free themselves by any sinful way; especially when they who are persecuted for the faith & truth of Christ, break their faith with Christ, and quit the truth before professed, that they may quit themselves from persecution. O take heed of such deliverances, rather dye under the afflictions of God, or the persecuting hand of man, then free your selves from either by putting your hand or suffer- ing your mouth to sin. Better be utterly broken by affliction, then...
to to breake the bands of affliction; better dye in affliction, then
sin your selves out of affliction. Let God who hath layd the bur-
then upon you, take it off, or else tye under it still. Thus much
for these two counsels given Job by Elihu; It is meete to be sayd
unto God, I have borne chastisement, and, it is meete to be sayd unto
God, I will offend no more; there is yet a third thing to be sayd
unto God, which Elihu gives alo in counsel, that which I see not
teach thou me; But, before I proceed to that, I shall a while con-
sider another translation of the verse already opened, very Con-
sistent with the Original text, and much Inflisted upon by some
learned Interpreters, as being full of Gospel Sense, and very spi-
ritual matter. According to this second reading the words run
thus:

Ver. 31. But to the Almighty God who saith, I forgive, I will
not destroy; It ought to be said, beside what I see
(teach thou me, if I have done Iniquity, I will not
proceed to doe it.

The difference of the translation is very evident and eminent;
we read thus; Surely it is meete to be sayd to God, I have borne cha-
(ostisement, I will not offend any more. This translation faith, But to
God who saith I forgive, &c. It ought to be sayd, &c. Mr Brough-
ton, is expres for this translation, render the text in these words;
Now unto the omnipotent which saith, I pardon, I will not destroy,
this shall be said, what I see not teach thou me, &c.

As the words according to our translation contain an humble
and a very gracious acknowledgement of the Chastening hand of
God, and mans promise of reformation; so according to this they
contain a most precious description of the most gracious dispo-
sition of God, speaking two things of himselfe to man.

First, As pardoning.

Secondly, As not destroying. From this double discovery of
God, a double duty is inferr'd, incumbent upon man. For God
having thus declared himselfe ready to forgive sin, and loth to
destroy sinners, every sinner should be induced to say thus to
God; I see many of my sins, and I believe I have many sins more
which I see not; therefore, first, I beg of thee, O God, that thou
wouldest shew me what I see not, and secondly, that thou wouldest
keep me for ever from doing or committing againe that evil which
thou shalt shew me or cause me to see. Thus the 32d verse is an In-
fersing.
ference of a two-fold duty in man, upon that two-fold manifestation of the goodness of God, as a God that willingly pardoned sin, and as a God that is unwilling to destroy sinners.

Or we may give the summe of these two verses (according unto this second translation) thus; We have first an Exhortation to repentance from the most mercifull nature of God, both as ready to forgive, and as loth to destroy his creatures. The former act importing the taking away of the guilt of sin; the latter the remittal and removall of the punishment.

Secondly, We have here a direction about repentance, or to the penitent, shewing, how an humbled soule should behave himselfe toward God; He ought to say thus; What I see not teach thou me, and if I have done iniquity, I will doe no more. Where we see the humbled soule in the exercise of a fouerefold duty; First, He confesseth what sins he knoweth; Secondly, He confesseth or supposeth, that he hath many sins which he doth not know. Thirdly, He entreateth the Lord to shew him every sin, whether of heart or life, which he knoweth not of. Fourthly, He engageth that he will not continue in any sin which the Lord shall discover to him, or give him the knowledge of. You have thus the generall scope of these two verses according to this second reading.

I shall now a little open the words, and give Notes from them according to this translation.

But unto God who saith, I forgive.

It may here be justly questioned, how the Original can be rendered into such variety; one translation saith, It is meece to be said to God, I have borne chastisement; this other saith, To God who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy; It ought to be said, &c. The first reading makes the words to be spoken by man; this second reading gives the words as spoken both by God and man, or they are a direction given by the Spirit of God to man, what to say to God, Who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy?

I answer, for the clearing of that doubt, the difference of the readings ariseth from the copious signification of one Hebrew word, which is renderd many ways in Scripture, especially two.

First, To bear, in which sense we translate, I have born cha-

-K k k k k 2
The word chastisement, as was shewed before, is not expressly in the text, but supplied, to make out the tense, by our translators: I have born, what? thy hand, thy chastisement.

Secondly, It signifies also to pardon, or to forgive; I shall referre you to one Scripture, in which that word is used in both these tenses (Gen. 4. 13.) And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater then I can bear; that's the text, but if you read the margin of our larger Bibles, that faith, My iniquity is greater then that it may be forgiven, or pardoned; the text faith, my punishment; the margin faith, my iniquity; the same word signifies both sin the cause, and punishment the fruit. Againe, there the text faith, My punishment is greater then I can bear; and the margin faith, my iniquity is greater then that it can be forgiven. So that according to the text, the words are Cains complaint against the justice of God; that he dealt over-rigorously with him, My punishment is greater then I can bear. And according to the margin, they are a description of his despair of the mercy of God, my sin is greater then that it may be forgiven. And as we find the word used in that place, both for bearing, and for pardoning; So in severall other places it is translated by pardoning; take but one Instance in the Psalms, where we find it translated twice in the space of a few verses to forgive or pardon (Psal: 32. 1.) Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven. And againe, v. 5th, I said I will confess my iniquity, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin; So that, though there be a different version and translation of the word in this text of Scripture, yet it is such as is consonant to the use of the word in other Scriptures, and also to the truth of the whole Scripture.

Yea, we know that in our English tongue, to bear with a man, signifies to forgive him his present fault, or not to punish him and use extremity against him for it. And therefore according to the exigence of any place, the word may be translated either way, and here it may be safely taken in both.

But to God who faith, I forgive, I will not destroy, it ought (or it is meete) to be said, what I see not teach thou me.

Elihu according to the reading now before us, brings in God thus speaking, yea even boasting thus of himselfe, I forgive, or I pardon.

Hence
Hence note.

First; It is God, omnipotence of his own selfe, that he is a sin-pardoning God.

And God doth so much say or professeth this of himselfe, that when he was entreated by Moses to shew him his glory, this was the chiefest thing which he said of himselfe (Exod: 34. 6, 7.) And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God mercifull and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. Here's my name (faith God) if you would know how I am called, or what I would call myselfe, this is it, I am a God forgiving iniquity, &c.

And as God pardonneth sin, so there is none in heaven or in earth that pardoneth like-him, that hath such a name for pardon as God hath (Mic: 7. 18.) Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity, &c. The gods of the Earth, that is, Kings and Princes give pardons, and to doe so is the sweetest and choicest flower in the Crowne of Princes, and they usually shew their Greatness by this act of grace when they come first to their Crowne and exercise of their sovereign power. The Princes or Gods of the Earth can pardon, but (tis no disparagement to put that question) Can they pardon like God? no; their pardon is no pardon in comparison of God's pardon; yea their pardoning is a kind of condemning compared with the pardoning grace of God. The pardons which Kings give are but the shadow of his pardon, who is King of kings (Isa: 43. 25.) I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgression. As if he had said, I am he, and there is none else; this glory is proper to me, and none can partake with me in it, nor will I give this glory to another. All sins are committed against God, and (in a sense) against him only, therefore only to be pardoned by him. Who can remit the debt but the Creditor? (Psal: 51. 1.) Against thee, thee only have I sinned. What debt soever we run into, by any sin committed against man, God only is the Creditor. All that men can doe, is but to forgive the trespasses against themselves; so farre as man is wronged, he may, yea he ought to forgive, as Christ teacheth us to pray (Math: 6. 12.) Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. All that we can forgive is only the trespass done to our selves, and so forbear personal
sonal and private revenge. We cannot forgive the offence against
God. For when Christ saith (John 21. 20.) *Whatever sins ye
remit, they are remitted*; that remission is but the declaring of a
pardon, it is not the bestowing of a pardon, or it is only a mini-
fisterial forgivenesse, not an authoritative forgivenesse; to to for-
give is Gods Royalty; He faith, I forgive.

Secondly, *To God who faith, I forgive, &c. Forgive! what? for-
give! whom? Here's neither what nor whom, neither things
nor persons named, God barely faith, I forgive.*

Hence observe.

*The pardoning mercy of God is boundless and unlimited.*

Here's no sin named, therefore all are included, no sinner spe-
cified, therefore all are intended. I forgive, I pardon; the par-
doning mercy of God knows no limits; it is not limited; First,
to any sort of sins or sinners; Secondly, it is not limited to any
degree of sins or sinners; let sins or sinners be of what sort they
will, let sins or sinners be of what degree they will, they are
within the compass of Gods pardoning mercy. And as this text
intimates, that the pardoning mercy of God is boundless, because
it expresseth no bounds; So other Scriptures tell us expressly that
it is boundless, extending it selfe to all sorts and degrees of sins
and sinners (Math: 12. 31.) *Every sin and blasphemy shall be
forgiven.* That a sin is great, that it is extremely aggravated, is
no barre at all to the pardoning mercy of God; he can as easily
pardon great sins as little sins; even sins that are as Crimson and
scarlet, as well as those of the lightest tincture. The die or colour
of some cloaths or stuffs, is so fading, that (as we say) the next wind
will blow it off, or cause it to dye away, but scarlet and crimson
in graine never change their colour; yet the pardoning grace of
God causeth crimson and scarlet sins to change colour, and makes
them as white as the natural wool or snow, that is, takes them
quite and cleanse away. Yea the greatnesse of sin is so far from be-
ing a stop to pardon, that it is used as an argument to move God
to pardon, David prayeth (Psal: 25. 11.) *For thy names sake O
Lord, pardon mine iniquity; why? doth he say? because it is little,
or only a small sin, a sin committed rashly, unadvisedly, or but
once; no; he useth none of these exculatory pleas for pardon,
but faith, *pardon my sin for it is great.* Moses was not afraid to
speake
speake for pardon upon this ground alio (Exod: 32. 31.) Lord (1aith he) these people have committed a great sin, and have made them gods of gold, yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin, &c. There's a great deale of divine Rhetorique in that speech; Moses was not doubtfull, whether God would forgive them their sin, because it was great. Where sin abounds, Grace doth much more abound (Rom: 5. 20.) and therefore God is said to pardon abundantly, or to multiply to pardon (Isa: 55. 7.) and whom doth he promise to pardon there? even the man of iniquity, so that Scripture hath it; Let the wicked forke his way, and the wrighteous man (or the man of iniquity) his thoughts, &c. If you who have sinned abundantly, repent, I will pardon abundantly. The heart of God in pardoning sin is infinitely larger then the heart of man can be in committing sin: and as the least sin needs pardon, so the greatest may have it; nothing hinders the pardon of sin, but the sinners not coming for it, or his not asking it. The sin against the holy Ghost cannot be forgiven; but the reason is, because such as commit that sin utterly reject the grace of God, and tread the blood of the Covenant under their feet, as an unholy thing.

Thirdly, The text speaks in the present tense; God faith not, I will pardon, or, possibly, I may pardon, but sheweth what he both actually doth, and what he always doth, To God who faith I pardon.

Hence note.

God pardoneth presently, he pardoneth continually.

I pardon, is a present, it is a continued act. To pardon is God's work to day, and God's work to morrow. As every soule may say of himselfe, Lord I sin; not only I have sinned, or I shall sin hereafter, but I sin: so faith God, I pardon; as men stand always in need of pardon, so God stands always prepared to pardon. He is (Psal: 86. 5.) plenteous in mercy, ready to forgive; The heart of God is never out of frame for that work, never indisposed to it. David found him so (Psal: 32. 5.) I said I will confess mine iniquity; he did not say, I have confessed mine iniquity; he was not come to a formal Confession; onely he had it upon his heart to humble himself before God, and confesse his sin; yet it follows; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

While:
While there was but a holy resolve upon his heart to confess his sin, the pardon of it was given him. The holy history of his sin and of Gods mercy assures us, that the word was no sooner out of his mouth (2 Sam: 12.13) I have sinned, but instantly Nathan said, The Lord hath put away thy sin. Though God doth not pardon of course, yet he is in a continuall course of pardon; therefore Moses prayed (Numb: 14.19.) That God would pardon the people according to the greatness of his mercy, and as he had forgiven them from Egypt until then. As if he had sayd, Lord, thou hast been pardoning all along from the very first step we took out of Egypt to this day, thou hast exercised abundance of patience, long-suffering and mercy in pardoning this people, now Lord pardon us, as thou hast done from Egypt to this day; doe not stop thy acts of Grace. The very first act of pardon stands for ever, he that is once pardoned, is alwayes pardoned: yet there are daily renewings of pardon, and fresh acts of it every day.

Fourthly, The word render'd to pardon, signifies to take away; as to beare a burden upon our selves (according to the former translation) so to beare, or lift it off from another.

Hence Note.

Pardon is the taking away, or the bearing of sin off from us.

An unpardoned soul hath a burden of sin upon him ready to break his back, yea enough to break his heart, were he sensible of it; the Lord by pardon takes this burden off from him. David speaks of his sins under this notion of a burden, (Psal. 38.4.) My sins are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavie for me to bear. Yea sin is a burden too heavie for the strongest Angel in heaven to bear. But pardon easeth the soul of that burden, or 'tis the unburdening of the soul: Hence also pardon is called the removing of sin, (Psal. 103.12.) Thou removest our sins from us, as far as the East is from the West. Pardon removes sin even to the utmost distance, such is that of the East from the West. Pardon is called in another Scripture, the casting of sin behind Gods back (Isa. 38.17.) Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. Ye when God by pardon takes sin from off our backs, he doth not only cast it behind his owne back, but he layeth it upon the back of his Son. Sin must lye some where till it is satisfied for; therefore pardon takes sin off from us, and layeth it upon Christ, (Isa. 53.6.)
6. He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. While sin is unpardoned, we bear it; and that it might be pardoned, Christ hath born it, (1 Pet. 2. 24.) He bare our sins in his body on the tree. Pardoned sin is taken off from the sinner, and laid upon Christ; and he can do well enough with it, he can bear it, and discharge it fully, none else can: Indeed heaps of sin lye on the souls of some sinners, and they feel them no more then a fly: what's the reason of it? Because they are dead in their sins, and nothing is a burden to a dead man, throw a thousand Millstones upon him, he feels none of them: but a soul that is awakened, that hath but so much life put into it, as to feel a conviction of sin, O how is that soul pref't and burden'd with the weight of sin! Yet till pardon take sin off from the soul, there it must lye, there it must abide; therefore Christ's faith, (John 9. 41.) Because ye say ye see, your sin remains; What's that? You are unpardoned, your sin is upon you still; you think your selves very wise and understanding, you think you can do well enough without me, therefore your sin remaineth; that is, it stands in full power and force against you.

Thirdly, Here are no conditions; God faith not, I pardon upon such and such terms, but I pardon.

Hence Note.

God pardons freely, he doth not clog pardon with hard terms.

'Tis the glory of God that he pardons freely. The pardon of sin may be considered, First, In the Decree of God from everlasting. Secondly, In the Execution of his Decree; which is, when any are effectually called and converted. Thirdly, As to the manifestation and Declaration of it to the person pardoned. A poor sinner may be unpardoned in his own sense, or in the Court of Conscience, when he is pardoned in the Court of Heaven. Now as pardon is free in the Decree of it, so in the Execution of it, as also in the Declaration of it to the soul; for though something, yea much must be done in the soul before pardon is declared, yet nothing is deserved, all is of free grace. God doth not manifest pardon till man repents and believes; yet he doth not pardon him because he repents and believes.

It may be objected, Surely there is something in us which moves God to pardon, for faith not Christ of Mary (Luke 7. 47.) Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much. Hence Papists argue,
that pardon of sin is from something in us; she repented much, bel-

lieved much, loved much, therefore much was forgiven her.

I answer: That Scripture declares her great love to be the ef-

fect of great pardoning mercy, not the cause of it. Christ faith

to Peter, much is forgiven her; this woman was a noted sinner,

and it appears plainly, that much hath been forgiven her, for she

loved much. That her many sins are forgiven her, this is the testi-

mony, she loved much: The love of God to us, not our love to him,

is the reason and original of pardon, (Isa. 43. 25.) I am he that

blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake. God pardoneth sin

for his own sake, and for Christ's sake, not for ours. In one Scrip-

ture God saith (Exod. 34. 6, 7.) I will by no means clear the guilt-

y. In another (John 6. 37.) Christ saith, He that cometh to me, I

will in no wise cast out. Till the sinner cometh to Christ, his sins

are upon his own account; that is, he stands guilty, and God faith,

I will by no means clear the guilty; no man shall ever be clear'd of

the punishment due to his sin, while the guilt of his sin is untaken

off by the blood of Jesus Christ; but besides respect to the blood

of Christ (which is the ransom paid for us) God respects nothing

out of himself as the reason why he pardoneth us. I forgive.

I will not destroy.

Our Translation reads it, I will not offend. The word signifies

first to offend or sin; it signifies also to destroy; and because de-

struction is a fruit or effect of sin, one word may well serve for

both; so we render it (Micah 2. 10.) This is not your rest, because

it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.

Canaan was the resting place of God himself, (Psal. 132. 14.) and it was

the resting place of the Jews after their travel through the wil-

derness, (Jer. 31. 2.) but when once they had polluted the land

by sin, the land gave them no rest, but destroyed them; that is,

they were destroyed out of the land. Here God declaring him-

self gracious in pardoning penitent sinners, promiseth rest to them,

and freedome from destruction. I forgive, I will not destroy.

Hence observe first;

God is able to destroy.

Thus God reported himself by Moses, (Deut. 32. 39.) See now,

that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I
make alive: I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can de-
over out of my hand. God doth not say I cannot, but I will not de-
stroy; (James 4. 12.) There is one Law-giver who is able to save
and to destroy: There is but one suprem Law-giver, and that's
God: and this one Law-giver is able to save and to destroy. There
are many Law-givers that are neither able to save nor to destroy;
or if they be able to destroy, they are not able to save. Men in
authority, or worldly Powers, have not power always to act their
authority, but there is one Law-giver that's able to save and to
destroy; he can save those that obey his Lawes, and destroy all
those that transgress them; he is too strong for the strongest sin-
er, there is no making peace with him by opposing or overcom-
ing his strength, but by taking hold of his strength, that is, by sub-
mitting to it, (Isa. 27. 5.)

Secondly Note.

To forgive sin, or to shew mercy to sinners, is an act to which God
declares himself more enclin'd, or better pleased with, than
to destroy sinners.

Every one that sinneth deserves to be destroyed; yet faith the
Lord, I pardon, I will not destroy; I could destroy, and any one
sin committed by any man would justify me against all the world
in his destruction: Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world
become guilty before God: upon that account, (Rom. 3. 19.) yet
God doth not destroy. And that he hath no content in destroying,
he bindes it with an Oath. (Ezek. 33. 11.) As I live faith the
Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, &c. as if he
had said, I am not bent upon your destruction, I had rather be
taken off, and save you, I pardon, I will not destroy.

If any shall say, Hath God no pleasure in destruction? Hath he
not a will to destroy as well as to save?

I answer, God hath pleasure in destroyning, but it is in the de-
struction of those who obstinately resist his Will, who refuse both
his counsell and his Covenant; to such indeed he saith (Prov. 1.
26.) I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear (that
is, the thing you feared) cometh, as desolation, &c. That, the men
in whose calamity God laugheth are such, is evident by the cha-
acter given of them at the 25th verse, Ye have set at nought all
my counsel, and would none of my reproof. As if God had said, you
have
have laughed at my counsel, therefore I will laugh at your calamity. The Lord will declare himself delighted in their destruction who have despised instruction; and he will glorifie himself in the actings of his Justice upon them, who have slighted and put by the tender and entreaties of his mercy. Yet still God declareth himself more pleased in acting and putting forth his saving power, than his destroying power. The Prophet (Hos. 11. 8, 9.) most pathetically represents, as it were, a debate in the breast of God himself between his Justice and his Mercy; How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zo{	extquotesingle}boim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together; (v. 9.) I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim. We see after the debate, the Lord determines for sparing, not for destroying. So then, though he can, and will not only destroy, but laugh at the destruction of obstinate sinners, yet he loves to spare rather than to destroy.

Thirdly, From the connexion of these two, pardoning and sparing mercy, God saith first, I pardon, and then secondly, I will not destroy; who are they whom God will not destroy? they are such as he pardons.

Hence Note.
Pardoned persons shall never be destroyed:

As soon as Nathan had said to David, the Lord hath put away thy sin, the very next word is this, thou shalt not dye, (2 Sam. 12. 13.) if David's sin had not been pardoned, David must have dyed for it. 'Tis a Logical Maxime, When the Cause is taken away, the Effect is taken away; Sin is the cause of destruction, therefore when God takes away sin, which is the cause, destruction the effect must needs be taken away too; pardon destroys sin, therefore how can they that are pardoned be destroyed? Pardon swallows up sin. As the Apostle speaks of life, (2 Cor. 5. 4.) That mortality might be swallowed up of life; Here, mortality swallows up our lives by degrees, but hereafter mortality shall be swallowed up at once of life; Now, as life shall then swallow up mortality, so pardon at present swalloweth up sin; for as in our glorified state there shall never any thing of mortality appear, so in a pardon'd estate, nothing of sin shall appear as to hurt us. Sin pardoned.
pardoned cannot be found, (Jer. 50. 20.) In those days, and in
that time faith the Lord, the iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for,
and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be
found; why not? The Lord answereth, for I will pardon them whom
I reserve: And if their sins shall not be found, surely they shall
not be found guilty, and therefore not destroyed: God may cha-
ften them whom he hath pardoned, but he will not destroy those
whom he hath pardoned; pardoned persons may smart, and smart
greatly for sin, but they shall not dye eternally for it, they shall
not be destroyed for it. David was pardoned, yet God told him,
the sword shall never depart from thy house; and the Lord told
him particularly of a fore destruction upon a part of his house pre-
sently; because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the en-
emies of God to blaspheme, (thou being a Professor, hast opened the
mouths of the wicked against profession) therefore (though thou
shalt not dye, yet) the childe also that is born unto thee shall sure-
ly dye.

There are two things which the pardon of sin takes away. First,
the power or reigne of sin; where-ever sin is pardoned, the
strength of it is subdued, God doth not pardon sin as Princes do;
they may pardon an evil doer, and yet he still remain as evil.
and as ready to do evil as ever; they may pardon a thief, and
yet he continue to be a thief still; but if God pardons a drunkard,
an adulterer, or a thief, he doth not remain a drunkard, or an
adulterer, or a thief still; God takes away the power of that sin.
which he pardonest. Secondly, The pardon of sin takes away the
punishment of sin; it may leave some chastisement, but it wholly.
takes away the punishment. The Popish doctrine faith, the fault
is taken away by pardon, but there is a commutation of the pu-
nishment, eternal punishment is changed into temporal, either
in this life, or that to come; hence their doctrines of Purgatory,
and of Prayer for the dead, &c. all which stufle comes in upon
this account. They cast all men into three sorts, some are Apo-
stiles and Martyrs, men very eminently godly, and they go im-
mediately to heaven; there are another sort, and these are Apo-
stiles from, or persecutors of the faith, notorious sinners, these
go immediately to hell; there are a third or middle sort of ordi-
nary sinners, and they go immediately after death, neither to hea-
ven nor hell, but to Purgatory, where they must bear the punish-
ment
ment of their sins till they can be prayed out: Christ hath only got so much favour for them (say they) to change their eternal punishment into a temporal. The grace of the Gospel knows nothing of this Doctrine; that tells us when sin is pardoned, all is pardoned, both guilt and punishment, both temporal and eternal, nothing remains but only chastisement; how sorely for ever a believer suffers in this life, yet strictly taken, it is but a chastisement, and there remaineth nothing for him to suffer in the life which is to come. And if so, then

Pardon of sin is a precious mercy. 'Tis so, First, Because it proceeds from the precious mercies of God. Secondly, Because it comes through the precious blood of Christ, (Col. 1. 14.) Thirdly, Because it opens a door to all precious mercies; as sin unpardoned withholds all good things from us (Jer. 5. 25.) So sin pardoned opens the door for all mercy to flow in upon us. Christ said to the sick man (Matth. 9. 2.) Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Fourthly, It is a precious mercy, because it stops and keeps off all evils and judgments strictly so called, I forgive, I will not destroy. Our comforts cannot stand before the guilt of sin, and our troubles cannot stand long before the pardon of sin; (Isa. 33. 24.) The highest wrath of God appears in this, when he will not pardon; and it argues the greatest displeasure of man against man, when he prayeth that he may not be pardoned. That was a most dreadful prayer of the Prophet, (Isa. 2. 9.) The mean man is bowed down, and the mighty man humbles himself, therefore forgive them not; here was a prayer that they might not be forgiven; and the ground why he prayed so, seems to be as strange, as the matter of it was dreadful. Is it a sin to be excepted from pardon, to see a mean man bow down, and a mighty man humble himself? The meaning is, they bowed themselves not to God, but to idols; all bowing and humbling ourselves either to worship an idol, or in idol worship, is rebelling against God. We have a like prayer (Jer. 18. 23.) the Prophet having spoken of the plots and devisings of the people against him, turns himself thus to God, Thou knowest all their counsel to slay me, forgive not their iniquity, neither blot their sin from thy sight. Nothing can be worse to any man then this, that his sin may never be pardoned. And here it may be questioned, how the Prophet could make such a prayer, which seems to have the height of all uncha-
uncharitableness in it. I answer, first, The Prophet was led by an extraordinary Spirit to do this. Secondly, We are not to conceive that the Prophet prayed for their eternal condemnation, but that God would call them to a reckoning, and make them feel the evil of their own doings. There is a sin unto death, for the pardon of which we are not to pray, (1 John 5. 16.) yet there is no sin about which we are to pray that it may never be pardoned. The worst prayer that can be made against any man, is, that he may not be pardoned; and there is nothing better to be prayed for than pardon. It shewed the height of Christ's love, when hanging on the Cross, he prayed thus for his enemies, (Luke 23. 34.) 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do; And the Protomartyr Stephen breathed out a like spirit of charity, while he was breathing out his life (in a shower of stones powred upon him from more stony hearts, Acts 7. 60.) with this prayer, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

Thus, I have finished this 31st verse, both according to our own Translation, and that other inflected upon by many of the learned; only from the connexion of this verse with the next, according to the latter reading, (To God who saith I pardon, I will not destroy; it should be said, that which I see not teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.)

Observe.

The very consideration that God is ready to pardon sin, should make us resolved against the committing of sin.

The sin-pardoning mercy of God, is one of the highest and most spiritual arguments by which the soul is kept from sin. There is forgiveness with thee (as saith David, Psal. 130. 4.) that thou mayst be feared; that is, because thou art so merciful as to forgive sinners, therefore they ought to fear thee, in doing what thy will is, and in avoiding whatsoever is contrary to thy will. 'Tis prophesied, that frame of spirit shall dwell upon the people of God in the latter dayes, (Hos. 3. 5.) 'They shall fear the Lord and his goodness; that is, they shall fear to offend the Lord because he is so good, and ready to pardon. It was said by a Heathen (and it may frame many who profess themselves Christians, that a heathen then said so) 'If I did know that men should never know the evil which I amen non facio, I do, and that the gods (so he speaks in their language) would par- cern. Sen. 42.
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 32

That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

Some carry the general sense of these words, as if spoken by God himself to Job, and spoken by an irony, or in scorn, as if he had thus reproven him: If I have afflicted thee beyond thy desert, or have overthrown thy judgment (that Job had (more than once) complained of,) if I have not kept to the true rules of reason and righteousness in chastening thee; if in my dealings with thee I have done amiss, or have not done thee right? Shew me wherein (O Job) and I will afflict thee so no more. I shall not stay upon this, but take the words according to our Translation, as the whole verse intends a further description of a person deeply humbled under, and sensible of the hand, the chastening, the afflicting hand of God; who having said (with respect to all-known sins) in the former verse, I will offend no more, faith here in this verse concerning all unknown sins, That which I see not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

That which I see not.

There is a two-fold sight: First, Corporal, the sight of the bodily eye. Secondly, Intellectual, the sight of the eye of the mind, or of the understanding; when Eliphaz represents the penitent afflicted person speaking thus, What I see not, &c. he intends not a corporal sight but an intellectual. Seeing is here (as often elsewhere in Scripture) put for knowing: the understanding is the eye of the soul. How blinde and dark are those men, who have no understanding in the things of God! (Eph. 4.18.) When Christ had
had said, For judgemenationam I come into the world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blinde; some of the Pharisees said unto him (John 9. 41.) are we blinde also? (have we no eyes?) Jesus said unto them, If ye were blinde, ye should have no sin, but now ye say we see, therefore your sin remaineth; that is, your sin remaineth upon you in the power and guilt of it. In that sentence also Christ useth the word (Math: 13. 14.) Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; ye shall have only such a knowledge of God, and of the things of God, of his word, & of his works, as will be of no other use to you, then to leave you without excuse. Seeing ye shall see but not perceive; ye shall have a fruitless and an unprofitable sight.

That which I see not (or have no understanding of) teach thou me, is the prayer of the humble soule. But what were those things, which he feared or supposed he did not see? Those unseeene things might be of three sorts.

First, Those sins which he did not see; and those in a double notion, either corruptions dwelling in him; or evils acted by him. What corruptions, or what transgressions I see not, acquaint me with, anynt mine eyes that I may see them.

Secondly, Those favours and mercies which he did not see (we have many mercies which are not knowne to us, or of which we take little, yea no notice at all) those good turns, which I have received and have not been thankfull, or have not improved and made suitable returns for them, shew thou me.

Thirdly, Among the things not seen we may number the purposes, aimes, and ends of God, in laying those chastisements upon him. As if he had said, If I have not yet apprehended what thou drivest at in my affliction, shew it me, I beg and heartily desire a discovery of it. And if I have acted unduly with respect to thy aimes in chastising me, I will doe so no more. The acts of God are plaine, but his aymes lie clofe and are not perceived, but by an enlightened, yea and a very attentive eye. That which I see not, &c.

Hence observe; First, The choicest servants of God may be much in the darke about and short in the knowledge of many things which it much concerns them to know.

Though
Though every believer hath an eye, and an eye open to see the things of God, the things which concern his peace, yet the clearest sighted among believers know but in part (1 Cor. 13.9.) We all know, but we do not know all. Those words of the Apostle may have a twofold understanding. First, we know, but a little of any thing, that which we know we have but a part of it in our knowledge; in this life we know nothing thoroughly, nothing to the bottome, no not common principles. David faith (Psal. 119. 96.) I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandement is exceeding broad; There is such a perfection in thy commandement, that I cannot see, nor can any man come to the out-side of it in this world. And as the holiness of God in the Law is exceeding broad, so there is a height, a depth, a length, and a breadth in the love of God revealed in the Gospel, which exceedeth all our knowledge. (Eph. 3.19.) That ye may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, &c. We know but a part of that love of God, the fruits and effects whereof are all our portion. We are not able to comprehend, though we labour to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height of it. Our measure of loving God is to love him out of measure; but 'tis a very small measure of the love of God to us which we can know. Thus we know but little of that we know. Secondly, We know in part, that is, there are many things which we know not at all, we have no knowledge of some things, which may be fully knowne. Though we know many of our sins and corruptions, yet we have sins and corruptions which we know not of (Psal. 19.12.) Who can understand his errors? Who can understand the errors of his understanding? who can understand the errors of his will? who can understand the errors of his affections? who can understand the errors of his actions? who can understand them all? yet they are all understandable. There are many errors in all these, which we know not to be errors, therefore we have need every one of us to pray as David there did, Cleanse thou me from my secret faults. From secret faults in my understanding, from secret faults in my will and affections, in my practice and conversation. The secret faults which he asked pardon for were not those faults which he had committed in secret, or which other men know not of; but those faults which were secrets to himselfe, or which himselfe knew not of. Further, we know not our faults; First, either in reference...
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to the doing of evil, or sins of commission; nor Secondly, in reference to the not doing of good or sins of omission; nor Thirdly, doe we know our faults in reference to the manner of doing that which is good. Though we doe not quite omit a duty, yet we faile many times in the doing of it. We doe little of the good which we ought, and little of the good which we doe is done as it ought. We have secret sins not only of commission in doing that which is evil, and of omission in not doing that which is good, but also in doing good. There are many flaws and errors in our doing of that which is good, which, though we perceive not, yet the pure eyes of God perceive. So then, as we see not all our errors in omitting duties, so we see not all our errors in performing duties; to see them requireth a spiritual sight indeed. Many can see when they omit a duty altogether, and charge themselves with a fault for it, but our faults in performance of duty, in prayer, in hearing none take notice of them, but they who have a spiritual eye, nor do they always take notice of all of them, nor fully of any of them at any time. We are much in the dark about these errors which accompany our holy duties. The iniquities of our holy things are many, and they lie very close. We may quickly and easily fall into them, but we cannot easily discern them.

For, First, though we performe an act of worship, of Church-worship, of instituted worship, right for the substance, yet we may miss and err in severall circumstances, and not come up exactly to the outward performance of it. Secondly, much more may we run into errors and faults in the performance of duty, as to the internal part of it, or that frame of heart with which a duty is to be performed. We seldom, I may safely say, we never come up to that zeal, to that self-abatement, to that faith, to that love and delight which should be in us when we approach to, and appear before God in the duties of his holy worship, whether publick or private. The best of Saints come farre short of knowing all the evil and sayings of their evil and deceitful hearts, while they are engaged about that which is good, how much more are they short in the knowledge of God; and therefore what reason have we to say, as Elihu here directs the penitent soule to say; That which I know not teach thou me.

Secondly, Note.
It is the duty of the most knowing servants of God to confess their ignorance.

When Eliphaz would have Job say, That which I see not teach them, he would have him confess, that there was some good or evil which he did not see. He that desireth God to teach him, what he doth not see, doth therein acknowledge that he doth not see all that he ought. Our understandings are imperfect as well as our wills and affections; and our sins or imperfections wherever they are must be confessed. The deficiency of our knowledge, or the imperfection of our understanding must be confessed as well as the imperfection of our will to do good, and of our doing good. David layeth load upon himself in confessing the faultiness of his understanding, or inability to judge aright of what he saw before him; (Psal.73.22.) So ignorant was I and foolish, even as a beast before thee. And the special point wherein he confessed his ignorance, was about the outward dispensations of God, in suffering wicked men to flourish. He had ignorant apprehensions, and was quite out in that matter; and therefore behooves himself and calls himself a beast, so far was he from seeing the mind and designe of God as became a Saint. Such an acknowledgement Agur made (Pro.30.2.) I am more brutish then any man, I have not the understanding of a man, I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. This worthy man confessed his ignorance; and as the more we know, the more we see our ignorance, so the more we know, the more we confess our ignorance. They that have but little knowledge, are especially defective in this point of knowledge to see their ignorance; and are therefore but little troubled with their ignorance. Many think they know enough; some, possibly, think they know all. They who have least knowledge, are least conscious of their own ignorance. And as there are many sins of ignorance, so ignorance itself is a sin, and therefore to be confessed and bewailed before God.

Thirdly, When Eliphaz brings in the penitent person confessing his ignorance, and begging instruction,

It teacheth us,

Sins of ignorance need pardon.

As our ignorance needs pardon, so doth our sins of ignorance. The law of Moses teacheth this (Levit.4.2.) If a soul shall sin through
through ignorance, &c. he shall bring his sacrifice. He must make
an attonement for his sin of ignorance. And we have further di-
rections about offerings for sins of ignorance, when they are dis-
covered and made knowne to the sinner himselfe. (Lev. 5. 2, 3,
4, 5, 6.) Then ( faith the Law ) he shall be guilty, that is, if when
he knoweth his sin, he do not performe what the Law requireth
in such cases, then he is not only ceremonially but morally guilty,
as a neglecter if not as a despiller of the ordinance and appoin-
tment of God for his cleaning. 

That which I see not

*teach thou me.*

The words are a prayer for divine teaching. The teaching of
God is two-fold; First, Immediate by his Spirit ( John 14. 26. )
The Spirit which is the comforter shall come and teach you all things.
And againe ( 1 John 2. 27. ) The anoynting ( that is, the Spi:it )
which ye have received of him, abideth in you: and ye need not that
any man teach you; that is, ye need not reft in, or pin your faith
upon the teachings of man; as you must not despife, so ye need
not depend upon the instruction of man. Secondly, There is a me-
diate teaching, God teacheth by meanes, instruments, and ordi-
nances. First, by the ministry of his word; Secondly, by the
works of his hands. He teacheth, First, by his works of creation;
Secondly, by his works of providence, they are our masters,tutors
and instructers. Now when this penitent person prayeth, *Teach
thou me; we may understand him of both these teachings. First,
of immediate teaching by the Spirit, who is the anoynting. Se-
condly, of teaching by meanes, by the preaching of the word of
God, and by his providences; in what way soever God is pleased
to teach us, our hearts should stand open to receive instruction.
And what way soever we receive instruction, it is God that teach-
eth us. Though men be the instrumen:s,yet the effect is of him.

Hence Note, First.

*God only is able to teach or shew us the things which we know
not.*

Men alone cannot. Christ said to his Disciples, when he com-
misioned them, ( Matth. 28. 19.) *Go teach all Nations.* And
(Eph. 4. 11.) *When he ascended upon high, he gave some Apo-
stles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and
Teachers;*
Teachers; yet no Teachers can bring home instruction without the teachings of God. The tenour of the new Covenant runs thus, (Isa. 54. 13.) All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. And again (Jer. 31. 34.) They shall teach no more everyone his neighbour, &c. that is, they shall not be left to the teachings of man; or the teaching of God shall be so glorious, that all shall acknowledge it; though there be instruments, yet the flowing forth of the spirit shall be such, that instruments and means shall be little taken notice of. For when he saith, they shall not teach everyone his neighbour, it is not an absolute Negative, but shews that there shall be a more excellent teaching; as when the Apostle faith (2 Cor. 3. 6.) Christ hath made us able Ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; This Negative is not absolute, for the Apostles did teach the Letter, and the Spirit is usually conveyed by the Ministry of the letter, or of the external word; the word is (as it were) the chariot wherein the Spirit rideth, and cometh by the ear to the heart. So that, when Paul saith, We are Ministers not of the letter, &c. his meaning is, we are rather, or we are more the Ministers of the Spirit then of the letter. The inward teaching accompanying our Ministry, carryeth the matter, both for conviction and conversion, both for illumination and consolation, not the outward teaching. (John 6. 45.) Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. And how long foever we go to School to men, how long foever we sit under the Ministry of the ablest Gospel Preachers in the world, we come not to Christ till the Father teacheth; till he join his inward teaching to the outward teaching of the Minister, the light and life of grace is not received. It is God who teacheth effectually, men teach but instrumentally. Thus it was prophesied of the Gospel times (Isa. 2. 3. & Micah 4. 2.) Many Nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, that is, he will accompany the Ministers and messengers of his word with his Spirit, he will empower them from on high, and (so we shall learn his Statutes, and understand his ways. David ascribes even his skill in Military affairs to God's teaching, (Psal. 144. 1.) Blessed be the Lord, my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight. God only teacheth a man powerfully to be a good Souldier. Surely then, it
is God only who teacheth us to be good Christians, to be Believers, to be holy. He hath his seat in heaven, who teacheth hearts on earth.

Secondly, As these words hold out to us the temper of an humble sinner;

Note.

A gracious humble soul is teachable, or is willing to be taught.

As it is the duty of the Ministers of the Gospel to be apt to teach, that's their special gift, or characteristical property; so 'tis the peoples duty and grace to be apt to be taught, to be willing to be led, and instructed; naturally we are unteachable and untractable. As we know nothing of God saveingly by nature, so we are not willing to know; we would sit down in our ignorance, or at most in a form of knowledge. To be willing to learn, is the first, or rather the second step to learning. The first is a sight of our ignorance; and the second, a readiness to be taught, and entertain the means of knowledge.

Thirdly, The words being the form of a Prayer;

Note.

It is our duty to entreat the Lord earnestly that he would teach us what we know not.

It is a great favour and a mercy, that God will teach us, that he will be our master, our Tutor. Now, as we are to ask and pray for every mercy, so for this, that God would vouchsafe to be our Teacher, (Psal. 25. 4, 5.) Show me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths; Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; David spake it twice in prayer, Lead me, and Teach me: Lead me on in the truth which I know, and teach me the truths which I know not. So he prayeth again, (Psal. 119. 26.) Teach me thy Statutes, make me to understand the way of thy precepts. David was convinced that he could not understand the Statutes of God, unless God would be his Teacher; though he could read the Statutes of God, and understand the language of them, yet he did not understand the Spirit of them till he was taught (and taught) of God, and therefore he prayed so earnestly, once and again, for his teaching.

When Philip put that question to the Eunuch (Acts 8. 30.) Understandest thou what thou readest? He said, how can I except some man:
man should guide me? Or, unless I am taught. Though we read
the Statutes of God, and read them every day, yet we shall know
little unless the Lord teach us. Solomon made it his request for
all Israel at the solemn Dedication of the Temple, (1 Kings 8,
37.) Teach them the good way wherein they should walk. God who
is our Commander is also our Counsellor.

Fourthly, From the special matter wherein this penitent per-
son would be taught, which is plain from part of the latter verse,
If I have done iniquity;

Note.
A gracious heart is willing to know and see the worst of him-
sell.

He would have God teach him what iniquity he hath done.
David was often upon that prayer, (Psal. 139. 24.) Search me,
O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in
me. Lord, shew me my sin; as I would not conceal my sin from
thee, so I would not have my sin concealed from myself. A car-
nal man who lives in sin (though possibly he may pray for know-
ledge in some things, and would be a knowing man, yet he) hath
no minder that either God or man should shew him his sin; He
loves not to see the worst of himself, his dark part; he as little
loves to see his sin, as to have it seen. But a godly man never
thinks he seeth his sin enough; how little soever he sees, he thinks
he sees too much, (that's the general bent of a gracious mans heart)
and how much soever he sees his sin, he thinks he sees it too little.
And therefore as he tells God what he knows of his sin, so he
would have God tell him that of his sin which he doth not know.
That which I know not, teach thou me.

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

There are two special parts of repentance. First, Confession
of sin, whether known or unknown. This we have in the former
part of the verse, That which I see not, teach thou me. There is
the confession of sin, even of unknown sin. The second part of
repentance is reformation or amendment, a turning from sin, a
forfaking of that iniquity which we desire God would shew us,
we have this second part of repentance in this latter part of the
verse.
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If I have done iniquity, I will do no more. But why doth he say, If I have? &c. Had he any any doubt whether he had done iniquity or no? every man must confess, down right, that he hath sinnèd, and done iniquity, without ifs or an's. Solomon having made such a supposition in his prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, (1 Kings 8. 46.) If they sin against thee) presently puts it into this position, for there is no man that sinneth not. The Apostle concludes, (1 John 1. 8.) If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. Therefore, this, If I have done iniquity is not to be understood as if this or that man, as if he or any man might be without sin; but when the penitent is brought in, saying, If I have done iniquity; his meaning is, First, What ever iniquity I have done, I am willing to leave it, to abandon it, I will do so no more. Secondly, Thus, If I have done iniquity, that is, if I have done any great iniquity, if I have acted perversenesse, or perversly, as the word signifies, I will do so no more; to do iniquity is more then barely to sin. As if he had said, though I cannot promise that I will sin no more; yet, Lord, if thou dost discover to me any iniquity, any gross sin or perversenesse, I will do that no more, I will engage my self against that sin with all my might; and to the utmost of my power, by grace received, I will keep my self pure from every sin. If I have done iniquity.

Hence Note. First, A godly man hath a gracious suspicion of himself that he hath done evil, yea some great evil, that he hath done amiss, yea greatly amiss, though he be not able to charge himself with this or that particular iniquity.

He knoweth he hath sinnèd & done evil, though he knoweth not every evil he hath done, nor how sinfully he may have sinnèd, he doubts it may be worse with him then he seeth. Possibly he hath done iniquity. Job in reference to his children (chap. 1. 5.) had an holy suspicion that in their feasting they might sin against God; he knew no sin they had run into, nor could charge them with any excess; but he was jealous they had sinnèd; nor did Job speak thus, as if his meaning were, that possibly in their feasting some corruption might work in them, (he knew there is no man in the best duties of his life wholly freed from the workings of sin) but, he had this jealousy, that they might have fallen into some great sin,
2i6 Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of Job. Ver. 32.

sin, and so provoked God greatly against them; therefore he did (as it were) way-lay such guilt, and early sought reconciliation with God. As Job was thus jealous of his children, so a gracious heart, though he cannot charge himselfe with this or that evil, yet he is apt to suspect his owne heart, and feares it may be worse with him; then possibly, it is.

Secondly, When he faith, If I have done iniquity; This hum-ble man, though he doth suppose that he might have done iniquity, yet he doth but suppose it.

Hence note.

A godly man may live free from the doing of any grosse sin.

He doth not put an if upon it whether he had sinned or no, but whether he had done iniquity. Zachariah and Elizabeth were not without sin, but they did no iniquity; for, faith the text (Luke 1. 6.) They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelesse. It cannot be imagined but that the people of Israel sinned, yet (Num. 23. 21.) God saw no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. There may be such a time in the Church when the people of God have no iniquity, no provocation to be seen or found among them. Though a Godly man cannot deny but he hath sinned, yet he can affirme that he hath not indulged himselfe in any sin. If I have done iniquity.

I will doe no more.

The Hebrew is, I will not add. We render, I will doe no more. As if he had sayd; If upon tryall, it be found that I have done iniquity, yet I will not add iniquity to iniquity, I will not goe on, I will not persist, nor proceed in iniquity. I will not take a step more in any way which God shall discover to me to be an evill way. If I am out of the way, I will not goe on in my way.

Hence observe.

First, A godly penitent person is resolute against sin.

His will is set against it; I will doe no more. I theved in open-ing the former verse (It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will offend no more) in what sense a godly man may make such a promise, or say, I will sin no more; here I say, A godly man
man is resolute against sin, especially against great sins. As a carnall man hath but very weake resolves for the doing of good, he hath (as some express it) but a velicity, somewhat like a will to doe that which is good; to a carnall man makes but weake resolves against evil, he hath not a settled will, but a kind of noleity against it. He makes some flourishes of profession against it, but he is not resoldely engaged against it; whereas a godly man is resolute both as to the doing of good, and the not doing of evil. If a godly man might have his will, he would never sin more; And as a Godly man waiteth joyfully for that state of glory wherein he shall sin no more; to a resolution to sin no more, hath, as I may say, somewhat of glory in it. In glory we shall sin no more, and where grace is in truth, that soule would gladly be rid of sin, and sin no more. A godly man is resolved against all unhgodlinesse; and this is a kind of entrance into glory.

Againe, Whereas the penitent man faith, I will doe no more.

Note.
Continuance in any knowne sin (for, faith he, what I know not teach thou me) or in that which is made knowne to us to be sinfull, is inconsistent with true repentance.

Repentance for and continuance in sin, cannot consist in the same subject. This is the voyce of every gracious soule, I would not sin any more, or I would not continue any longer in sin. To sin is common to man, but to continue in sin, is proper to a wicked man. To erre and faile that's humane, but to persevere in error is diabolicall. Sin will continue in us while we continue in this world; but they that are not of the world, doe not, will not continue in sin, how long so ever they are in the world. Sin may be considered three wayes. First, as remaining in us; Secondly, as reserved; Thirdly, as preserved by us. There is sin remaining in the best of Saints on this side heaven (Rom: 7. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.) Sin is reserved only in carnall men, they save their sins, and would be saved, not from but in their sins. Sin is preserved or maintained and defended in the worst of wicked men. Sin is heightned to the utmost, where 'tis not only retained, but maintained and preserved. The Apostle having closed the fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, in the triumph of Gospel grace. That as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace might reign through
righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, begins the
next with a prevention of the abuse of this Grace; What shall
we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God
forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
How can we continue in sin, that are partakers of Gospel grace?
Sin will continue in us, but we cannot continue in it. The question
implyeth a kind of impossibility. We were once dead in sin,
but now we are dead to sin, how then can we live or continue in it? Perseverance is either our best or our worst. To persevere is
best when we persevere in good, and to persevere is worst when
we persevere in evil. It is bad to be or doe evill, but it is worse
to abide in evill. The first best is not to sin, the next best is not
to continue, nor lodge in sin, no not for an houre. Paul sayd in
another case (Gal. 2. 5.) To whom we gave place by subjection,
no not for an houre; We should not give place to sin, no not for a
minute, but resift it to the utmost, and totally displace it, if we
can.

Lastly, From the Hebrew elegancy, which faith, I will not
adde.

Note.

A godly man may commit sin after sin, but he doth not adde
sin to sin.

When he hath committed any one sin, he breaks it off and de-
destroyeth it by repentance. He doth not adde sin to sin, because
the sin formerly committed is destroyed by repentance. His for-
mer sin is taken off the file before he acts a second, who heart-
ily repenteth of the first, and as heartily resolveth not to com-
mitt a second. Such a man doth not run a round of sinning and re-
penting, though he sineth after the hath repented. Daniel gave
that advice to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4. 27.) Break off thy sins
by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor.
If thou repentest indeed, the sin that cometh after will not be ad-
ded to thy former, because that is done away through Grace.
A godly man (according to the former point) would not adde
or commit another act of sin to his former; as it is sayd of Judah
(Gen. 38. 26.) who had committed folly with Tamar, He knew
her againe no more. Though his sin was great, yet doubtfull his
heart was humbled, and he returned not to his former sin. But the
wicked man continues in his wickednesse, yea, he blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to adde drunkenesse to thirst (Deut: 20. 19.) Every new sin is an addition to his former sins, because he always liveth in sin. They who would not have the captives brought into the City, gave this reason (2 Chron: 28. 13.) For whereas we have offended against the Lord already, ye intend to adde more to our sins, &c. O take heed of sinning so, as to joyn sin together. As in Arithmetick, when we adde summe to summe, what an huge summe may we quickly make. Therefore breake off sin by repentance, that if thou sinnest againe, it may not be an adding of sin to sin. That's a dreadful prophesie and threatening (Psal: 69. 27.) Adde iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into thy righteousness. How doth the Lord adde iniquity to iniquity? will he caute any to sin more? or will he doe any iniquity? No; the meaning is (as our margin intimates) the Lord will adde the punishment of their iniquity to their iniquity; or he will give them up to the power of their owne lusts and vile affections, so that they cannot but renew the acts of sin, and adde one iniquity to another. It is a blessed worke when we are much in the additions of grace to grace, and of good workes to good. 'Tis the designe and businesse of a gracious heart to adde grace to grace, that is, the exercise of one grace to another, till every grace be exercised (2 Pet: 1. 5.) Give diligence to adde to your faith vertue, and to vertue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience. Here is a blessed addition. When a good man hath done well once, he adds to doe more, he adds more acts of the same kind, and he adds to doe good acts of any other kinde; He adds patience to godlineffe, and to godlineffe brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; thus he is busied in a blessed way of addition. But the addition of sin to sin, is the bitter fruit of rebellion against God (Isa. 30. 1.) Wo to the rebellious children — that cover, but not with a covering of my Spirit, that they may adde sin to sin. They that make excuses for sin committed, adde sin to sin; yet by these coverings, we may understand not only excuses and pretences, for sin acted, but our owne good acts; for to cover sin with any thing of our owne, is to adde sin to sin. Yet I conceive, the addeing of one kind of sin to another, is the addition there meant. The Israelites sayd.
sayd to Samuel, when they were brought to a fight of their sin (1 Sam: 12. 19.) We have added unto all our sins this evil to ask us a King. They refused the Lords government, and asked a king in the pride of their hearts, and so added sin to sin. Thus is sayd of Herod (Luke 3. 20.) That to all his evil deeds, he added this, that he shut up John in prison. And as there is an adding of several kinds of sin, so of several acts of the same kind of sin, oath to oath, and adultery to adultery, and wrong-dealing to wrong-dealing; this day some oppress their brethren, and the next day they doe the same. O let such remember what additions the Lord will make to them, he will add punishment to punishment, he will add the same kind of punishment several times, he will add sword to sword, and famine to famine, and pestilence to pestilence, and he will add punishments of various kinds. The Prophet reports what various or (if I may so speake) heterogeneous kinds of sin men added and strung up together. (Hof. 4. 2.) By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out and blood toucheth blood. Surely, God will make blood touch blood in a way of punishment, as men make blood touch blood in a way of sin. The adding of sins makes an addition of plagues. When Jehoiakim the King heard the roll read, he threw it into the fire and burnt it (Jer: 36.) but could he burne or make an end of the threatenings? no (v. 32.) And there were added besides unto them many like words. It is sayd (Rev: 22. 18.) If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this booke. To add any thing to the holy word of God, is as sinfull as to take from the word, or act against it. God can add plagues as fast as men addde sins. When sin is added to sin, then guilt is added to guilt, and punishment to punishment. Take heed of this addition, resolve with the penitent soule in the text; If I have done iniquity, I will add no more.
JOB. Chap. 34. Ver. 33, 34, 35.

Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompence it whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose, and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.

Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.

In the Context of these three verses Elihu doth chiefly these two things. First, he appeals to the Conscience of Job (v. 33.) Should it be according to thy mind? ask thyself whether it should be so, yea or no. Secondly, he appeals to the judgement of Job's friends, yea of all wise and understanding men, concerning what Job had spoken, or whether he had not spoken unwisely, in the 33d and 34th verses: Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.

The scope of Elihu in these words is yet further to humble Job, and to provoke him to repentance for his inconsiderate speeches. Yet Elihu doth not call Job to repentance upon the same grounds or terms as his three friends had done. They moved him to repentance upon the Consideration of his former wicked life, as they supposed; but Elihu moves him to repentance upon the Consideration of his imprudent and rash speeches under the afflicting hand of God.

Ver. 33. Should it be according to thy mind?

This verse is delivered in as much variety as any text thoroughout the whole Book; and as a learned writer upon it concludes: If we should stay upon all the various readings, translations, and interpretations of it, we should rather darken then enlighten, rather entangle both hearers and readers, then unfold the text. There are at least six distinct translations of this verse, which I shall pass over with the naming of them, and then proceed to open the words as they stand in our own; which comprehends the summe...
and substance of what is held out in most of them.

First, Some give it thus; Should he reward it according to thy minde, though thou haft despised the one, and chosen the other, yet will not I, therefore speake what thou knowest. As if he had sayd, Why should God reward him, as thou wouldest have him doe it? Though thou haft refused to submit to Gods mercy, and haft called for justice, yet I dare not doe so, If thou know better teach me.

Secondly, Another thus; Should it come from thee, how he should recompence it, when thou haft refused his correction? but thou shalt choose and not I, therefore speake what thou knowest. The sense of which translation may be thus represented; Shouldst thou who haft sinned, and refused to be corrected, teach God how he should correct thee? Thou mayest think so, but I doe not, show me better if thou canst.

Thirdly, Should that come from thee, which he will punish? I speak it, because thou haft refused God's correction, because thou haft chosen that which I would not. Now speake what thou knowest. As if he had sayd; Why shouldst thou speake against God's proceedings, to bring farther trouble upon thee? my desire of easing thee is the cause, why I speak thus; I should never have accused God as thou haft done, if I had been so handled by him. But if thou haft any thing to except against what I say, speake freely.

Fourthly; Did such a speech come from thee? He will recompence it, that thou haft rejected him. But thou choosest this way and not I; now speake what thou knowest. As if Eliph had thus expressed himselfe to Job; I never heard thee speake so humbly; as I have taught thee (v. 31, 32.) Surely God will punish thee, because thou haft spoken proudly against his proceedings with thee. But this is nothing to me, who like not of such courses. If thou canst defend thy selfe, so doe.

Thus Junius connecting this verse with the former, wherein is shewed what a penitent person should say to God, translates and expounds the whole to this sense; Now therefore consider, haft thou spoken in such a manner, surely God will recompence it to thee, if thou refusest to speake so, (thus he deterreth him by the consideration of the event, or of what might follow upon his refual, and then he deterreth him by his owne example) but if thou choosest to doe otherwise, truly I will not. (Thou shalt goe alone for me.) Now then speake what thou thinkest.

Fifthly,
Fifthly, Should therefore God recompense that which man hath done according to thine opinion, saying, because thou dislikest this, it is but equal, that thou shouldst choose another and not I. And what doeth thou know? speaketh man.

Sixthly, Mr. Broughton renders thus; Should that come from above, &c? thee which he will punish; as thou dost loath, as thou likest, where I Pst: would not? Now speak what thou thinkest.

All these renderings may be reduced to this one common sense: O Job, whatsoever thou sufferest, or by what means, lovest thou are fallen into this misery, is it fit that God should be ordered by thy opinion and Judgement? And surely, O Job, I must tell thee plainly, nor dost thou deny it, that thou hast not rested nor sat down quietly in the determination and decree of God concerning thee; But thou wouldest rather be choosing and prescribing to God, how and in what way he should deal with thee, and dispense his providences to thee, than satisfy thyselfe in his appointments and pleasure. Farre be it from me, that I should follow thy example, or tread in thy steps as to this matter; yet if thou hast any thing to reply to what I have urged, say on, bring it forth, let me and all in thy presence, heare and judge of it.

Thus Eliph points Job to his grand error, that he did not readily approve, nor quietly submit to the Judgement of God in his owne case. And so had not spoken reverently enough of God, nor humbly enough of himselfe.

The reason of these various readings and renderings mentioned, is the conciseness of the Hebrew text, which leaves some words to be understood and supplied for the compleating of the sense. And because the most skilfull Interpreters are not perfectly acquainted with the dialect or manner of speech used in those more remote and ancient times, therefore they must needs differ both in their translations and expostions; yet (which may free the reader from all prejudices against the holy Scriptures, either as obscure or dubious) they all center and agree in that which is true in it selfe, as also in the principall scope and drift of Eliph in this discourse with Job.

Having thus given some account of the various translations of this verse, I shall now close with the explication of our owne.
Should it be according to thy mind?  

Thus Elihu bespeaks Job; Should it be?—he doth not say what, but leaves us to the whole matter, should this, or that, or other thing, or anything be according to thy mind? the Hebrew text is but one word, which we translate, according to thy mind, or, as thou wouldest have it? Should it be from thee? that is, should God take counsel or direction from thee? or go to thee as an Oracle to be taught which way to deal with thee, or with any man else; should it be from thee? The matter which Elihu infilts upon, respects the dispensations of God, so his meaning is, should God cut out the works of his providence according to thy order? should God reward, or should God punish? should God set up, or should God pull down? should God bring trouble, or should God cause peace according to thy mind? must he needs ask counsel of thee, before he proceed to any of these resolutions? no!

He will recompence it whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse.

The former part of the verse, is a question or Interrogation, Should it be according to thy mind? He will recompence, &c. That's the answer; and it contains both a negative and an affirmative, he will not do according to thy mind, but he will doe according to his own; He will recompence it.

The verb signifies to pay, or appease, and make quiet, and the reason why the same word signifies paying, or recompensing, and peace, is because where payment is made, peace is obtained, where recompence is given, there quietness is settled; He will recompence, or he will pay, that is, give out and distribute in his providences as he pleaseth.

Whether thou chuse, or whether thou refuse.

There are two speciall acts of the will, chusing and refusing; and these two are Intrinsecall and Essentiall, to the will; as the proper act of the understanding is to apprehend, and then to assent; so upon those representations which the understanding makes to the will, the will doth either refuse or chuse. Further, the word which we here translate to refuse, signifies more then that simple act of the will, it signifies to refuse with a kind of disdain and
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and great disgust; to refuse a thing as altogether unworthy to be received; or to refuse a thing as being much displeased and burdened with it. Eliphaz useth this word (Chap. 5. 17.) Despise thou not the chastening of the Lord; that is, do not refuse it with a dislike, or as a thing that is grievous and nauseous to thee. That which is contrary to our appetite, the stomach refuseth and vomits it up again; such a force there is in this word, he will recompense it, whether and how much soever thou refuse

or whether thou chuse.

He puts that in, to shew that it is neither the refusal of man that stirs God, nor is it the choyce of man that brings God on to his worke, he will proceed purely from himselfe; he will recompence whether thou refusest, or whether thou chuse, and not I.

As if he had sayd, it is God that will doe it, it is God that will bring this upon thee, and not I; that's the sense of our reading: But according to other readings, and not I, refers, to thou; doe thou refuse or chuse whether thou wilt obey the dispensation or no, for my part I will not stand upon those termes with God, but referre my selfe wholly to his dispose.

From the words thus opened (Should it be according to thy mind? &c.)

Observe; First.

Man would have everything go according to his mind.

He would have his mind the measure both of all that he is to doe for God; and of all that God doth to him. We love to doe all things according to our own minds, and we love to have all things done according to our own minds. Man naturally would doe nothing according to Gods mind; nor would he have any thing done to him according to Gods mind, unlefe it accord with his owne too. The Apostle (Rom. 8. 7.) proclaims that Innate Enmity that is in the heart of all men naturally against the mind and will of God; The wildeome of the flesh is Enmity against God: It is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be; that is, while a man remains flesh, or in an unregenerate state, he is altogether at enmity against the Law of God; both against what God appoynts him to do, & against what he appoynts him
him to suffer. Man equally riteh up in his thoughts, and rebell against both. And as this enmity doth remaine whole and unbroken in all men by nature, till they are renewed by grace and borne again; so there are remainders of it, even in those who are renewed by grace; there is somewhat of this opposition against God in every godly man; he would faine have things goe according to his mind; and he hath much of this mind in him; I doe not say, a godly man would doe nothing according to Gods mind, that's the natural man's frame; but a godly man would very faine have God doe things according to his mind, as may appeare, especially in foure things.

First, He would have God reward, or doe good both to himfelfe and others, according to his mind; He would have God lift up those whom he would have lifted up, and preferre those whom he would have preferr'd; he would faine have God beare favours to or beftow favours upon those whom he favours.

Secondly, As to punishment and Judgement, he would have God punifh according to his mind; such a man is proud, he is an oppofitor, he is an oppofier of godlinefle and good men, therefore he would have the hand of God heavy upon him, to caft him down out of hand, or without delay.

Thirdly, He would have God goe according to his mind in chastening and afflicting himfelfe; though he would not be totally uncorrected, yet he would have God correct him only in such a kind, in such a manner and measure as he would chufe; he doth not refufe chastening, but he would be chastened in what himfelfe pleafeth, or in his owne way. He fayth in his heart, if God would correct me in this or that, I could bear it, but I doe not like to be corrected in such a thing, or in such a way; one fayth, if God would smite me in my Eftate I could bear it, but not in my body; Another fayth, if God fhould smite me with fickneffe, I could bear it, but not in my Children; or let the affliction be what God pleafeth, if God would afflict me but thus much, or thus farre, in such a degree, I could submit, but my heart can hardly yeild to this meafeure of affliction. Thus we would have it according to our minds, as to the meafeure, as also for the continuance of our afflictions. We would be corrected for fo long, for fo many dayes, but to have months of vanity, and yeares of trouble, this is not according to our mind.

Fourthly,
Fourthly, He would have God govern (not only himself but) the whole world according to his mind: Man hath much of this in him, he would have God order nations as himselfe and other men like himselfe desire. Some one man would prescribe and direct what God should doe; and how he should doe to all men. Luther writ to Melancthon when he was so exceedingly troubled at the providences of God in the world; Our Brother Philip is to be admonisht, that he would forbear governing the world; we cannot hardly let God alone to rule that world which himselfe alone hath made; Should it be according to thy mind? to this mans mind, or that mans mind? it must not be as it is; if every man might have his mind, he would govern and rule the world in another way then God doth. There is scarce any Good man that is satisfied in the government of particular nations; if he might have his mind, he would cast things into another mould and method then the providence of God hath cast them in at this day. Yea, 'tis seldom, that it either raines or shines according to our mind; The weather which God is pleased to send, whether wet or dry, fayre or soule; rarely pleaseth us.

Secondly, When Elihu saith; Should it be according to thy mind? This question implyeth a strong Negation; certainly, it should not.

Hence note.
'Tis beside the duty and above the line of man to desire that things should be according to his mind, either with himselfe or with others.

There's nothing more against the mind of God, nor against our owne good, then that all things should be according to our mind; we may quickly undoe our selves and dishonour God by having our owne desires. And that it is sinfull, very sinfull to desire to have our owne desires, may appeare, by considering the spring or roote of such desires, I shall shew a three-fold very e-vill roote from whence those desires spring.

First, They spring from pride and an over-weening conceit of our selves; and that upon a double account; First, from pride as to our defects; for if God does such men good, they are apt to think they have deserved more good, then God hath done them; and if God afflict them, they are ready to say, surely they have not...
not deserved so much affliction. We think we have deserved greater kindness then God exhibits; and that we have not deserved so great a crotle as he inflicts. Is not this a great piece of pride?

Again, These desires spring from pride in our own wisdom & understanding, as if we knew how to order matters more equally then God. Is it not a huge piece of pride, of luciferian pride, to thinke that there might be a better measure of things then the mind of God is? doth not such a man make himselfe wiser then God? and more prudent then God? doth not he suppose, that he sees further into things then God? when as alas we cannot see an hour before us, but God hath the prospect of all things, He seeth the end from the beginning, and hath all in his eye from all Eternity. When we thus make our selves wiser then God, is not this a high point of pride? Here's the first evil root of desiring to have things according to our mind, pride, or an opinion that we deserve better, or could order things better.

Secondly, These desires proceed as from pride, so from discontent with the dealings of God, and 'tis pride that fills us with discontent; he that would have things according to his minde, must needs be dissatisfied when they are not.

Thirdly, when they spring not from direct discontent, yet they do from some degree of impatience. There is not such a quietness of spirit or acquiescance as should be in the heart of man, otherwife he would let things be according unto Gods minde, and never be troubled, when they are not according to his own. Now consider what can spring from these three roots, Pride, Discontent, and Impatience, but very evil and bitter fruit; therefore, to desire to have things according to our mind is very sinful, exceeding sinful.

Thirdly, This question, Should it be according to thy minde? implyeth a sharp rebuke and a reproof upon Job, as desiring a thing which was altogether against rule and reason.

Hence Note.

It is most unreasonable and absurd, to desire that things should be ordered as we would have them, and not as God would have them.

Is it not unreasonable in a family that things should be as the children
children would have them, and not as the Father would have them? Or, that things should be done according to the minde of the servants, and not according to the minde of the Matter? Do not the Magistrates and Governours of the world think it an unreasonable thing that Nations should be governed according to the minde of Subjects, and not according to the minde of the Prince, regulated according to the known Laws of the Nation? Who doth not think it an unreasonable thing, that a journey should be disposed according to the minde of the Horse, and not according to the minde of the Rider? Should the horse guide the Rider, or the Rider his horse? Is it not an unreasonable thing that a mans sense should guide his understanding, when his understanding is given on purpose to guide his sense? Is it not an unreasonable thing that passion should order reason, when as reason should be the bridle of our passion? Is it not an unreasonable thing that unlearned ignorant men should teach the knowing, when the learned & knowing are set up to teach the ignorant? and is it not much more absurd and unreasonable for us, to desire that things should be according to our minde, either with ourselves or others, families, or Nations, and not according to the minde of God? Should things be as the best, as the wisest, as the holyest men in the world would have them, and not as God would have them; it were more absurd and unreasonable then that things should go in a family according to the minde of the servants and children, rather then according to the minde of the Matter and Father; yea it were more absurd then any of those fore-mentioned absurdities. Should it be according to thy minde, O Job? how unreasonable a thing were that!

Fourthly, From those words, He will recompence it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse.

Note.

God will not yeild io men, nor be subject to their pleasure.

God will do what he pleaseth, as I may say, in spight of any mans teeth. Things must pass in such a way as God hath appointed, and sees meet to dispose of them; and not as we would have them. He will recompence: God is resolute for the doing of his own will; and men are usually over-resolute for the doing of theirs; and indeed some are as it were wholly changed into will, or rather willfulness;
fulnes, they will do this, and they will do that; they will have this, and they will have that. Men may quickly, but God can never act too highly, too strongly, too confidently upon his own will; the reason is, because his will is an holy will, and the rule of righteousness. Only Consider from the whole.

Man is never displeased with what God doth, till he forgetteth what himself is.

Man forgets that he is a worm, and no man, he forgets that he is a creature, he forgets himself to be dust and ashes, else his spirit would not be wrought up to such a height, to have things go according to his minde, and not according to the minde and will of God.

And seeing God will have every thing go according to his minde and will, know there's no striving nor strugling with God; if man will not bow to the will of God, he shall be broken by the will of God: if he will not submit to it, he must fall by it. There's no avoiding one of these two, for he will recompence. Therefore let us yeild up our selves freely to God, to be ruled by him, and not set him the rule, no nor so much as give him advice; let us receive the Law, and take advice from him. God is our Commander, but we must not be so much as his Councillors. The Apostle speaking of the eternal purposes and decrees of God, saith (Rom. 11. 34.) Who hath been his Councillor? As God had none to counsel him concerning his eternal purposes, so we must not adventure to counsel him as to his daylie providences or dispensations, either toward our selves, or others; the true rule of our life is, to yeild our selves to be ruled by God. He will recompence it, whether we chuse, or whether we refuse.

And not I.

As if he had said, If thou wilt struggle with the will of God, thou mayest, but I will not. God will go his own way, and do as he sees good, say thou what thou canst, or howsoever it please or displease thee. And for mine own part, I dare not entertain or give way to a thought of prescribing to him in any of these things, what he should do; no nor be unsatisfied with, much less censure, what he hath done. Therefore, if thou canst acquit thy self of this crime and accusation which I have laid to thy charge,
as thou didst theirs who spake before, do it, say what thou canst for thy self.

Hence Note.

He that sees another do amiss, ought to take heed of doing the like himself.

Again, As these words, and not I, refer to the word recompence, He will recompence, whether thou choose, or whether thou refuse; the meaning of them may be conceived, as if Elihu had thus spoken Job, If thou dost smart for thy pride, and the height of thy spirit, if God pay thee home for it, do not lay the fault upon me; I have given thee counsel to direct thee better, I desire not thou shouldest come under such a handling, but certainly God will do it. When we have declar'd the minde and will of God, in the severity of his judgements upon sinners, it is good for us to say, God will do it, and not we. The Prophet Jeremiah (chap. 17. 16.) having warned them of an evil day, adds, Nor have I desired the woful day, Lord thou knowest it: Jeremiah had spoken woful things against that people, but (as he) I have not desired that woful day, though I have prophesied of it. So Elihu seems to speak, he will recompence, and not I; though it be not in my minde, yet I assure thee it is the mind of God.

Yet further, Some read these words with the former as an Interrogation or rebuking question made by God himself: What? Should you chuse, and not I? Election or choice is my priviledge, not thine, thou must not think to prescribe to me. I will chaste and afflict, as I think fit, or according to my own will, not according to thine. Thus he brings in God speaking to Job; thou findest thy self much aggrieved, and complainest that thou art afflicted more than is meete; It should seem then, that I must do what thou thinkest fit, not what I think fit my self. Surely thou must give me the rule, how much, how long, and in what manner I must correct both thy self and others. Should you chuse, and not I: How uncomely!

Therefore speak what thou knowest.

Here Elihu gives Job time to reply, as he had done (at the 33d chap. ver. 5.) as if he had said, If thou knowest any thing against what I have spoken, or art able to make any objection against it, speak.
if thou thinkest I have not spoken right, shew me my errour, and spare not.

Hence Note, First;
When we have declar'd what we judge to be the minde of God in any case, we should give others liberty of speaking their minds also.

This is my opinion, speak what thou canst against it; we should speak (2 Cor. i. 24.) Not as having Dominion over the faith of others, but as helpers of their joy; The Ministers of Christ must speak as Servants to, not as Lords of the faith of others. Elihu did not carry it as a Lord over the faith of Job; but left him to make good his own opinion and practise if he could.

Secondly Note.
Knowledge is the fountain of Speech.

We need no other light to speak by then that of reason, the understanding should feed the Tongue; we must not speak at a venture, but keep to Rule and take our ayme. The Apostle Paul tells us of some who make a great noise, but know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm (1 Tim. i. 7.) they speak they understand not what, and vent what they can give no account of; Speak what thou knowest.

Thirdly Note.
We should speak (when called) what we know.

Knowledge is a Talent, and must not be hid in a Napkin; if thou know better then I speak, pray speak, do not hide thy knowledge. As Elihu would have Job speak in his own case, so he inviteth others to speak about his case, as it followeth in the next verse.

Vers. 34. Let men of Understanding tell me, &c.

In this 34th verse Elihu turns his speech to Job's friends again, presuming of, or not questioning their consent to what he had said, being confident that himself was in the right, and that they were wise enough to apprehend it. He was persuaded that all wise men either were, or (upon hearing the matter) would be of his minde, and that therefore what Job had spoken, was very
very defect of wildome, as he concludes in the thirty-fifth verse.

Let men of understanding tell me, &c.

He appeales to Jobs friends, or any other men of understanding: let them (saith he) Consider what I and he have spoken, and give their judgement impartially concerning the whole matter in debate between him and Job. Let men of understanding tell me, &c.

The Hebrew is, men of heart: the heart is the seat of understanding, according to Scripture language, there we read of a wise heart, and of an understanding heart: and it faith of a foolish or indiscreete person, he hath no heart; he is a man without a heart. Ephraim is a silly dove without a heart (Hos. 7. 11.) that is, he doth not understand. Mr Broughton translates; Sad men of heart will speake as I, and the wise person that heares me. As in the former part of the verse Elihu called for speakers; so in the latter he calleth for hearers; Let men of understanding tell me.

And let a wise man hearken to me; or as some render, a wise man will hearken to me.

The word rendred hearken, signifies more then to heare, even to submit, to obey, a wise man will hearken to me; that is, he will assent to, and content with me, he will vote with me, and declare himselfe to be of my mind. In that Elihu appeale to wise and understanding men.

Note, First.

It is not good to stand to our owne Judgements altogether, in dealing with the Consciences of others.

Let wise men, let men of understanding, heare and consider the matter, let them speake their minds; we should not lean to nor rely upon our owne understanding in the things which concerne our selves only, much lesse in thoe, wherein others are concerned more then our selves. Eyes see more then an eye. And though it be an argument of too much weakness to see with other mens eyes; yet it is an argument of much goodness and humility, to call in the helpe of other mens eyes.
Secondly, Note.

The more wise men agree in any matter, the greater is the Conviction.

One man may speak to Conviction, but if many speak the same, it is a very strong Conviction. Many (I confess) may center and agree in a wrong Judgement; yet we ought to have a reverend esteeme of, and not easily differ from that Judgement wherein many wise and understanding men agree. Christ speaking of Church-proceedings and censures, saith (Math. 18. 19.) If two of you (who constitute the least number, much more if a greater number of godly wise men) shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, &c. So full the more wise, holy, and learned men agree in any point, the greater is our conviction, and the stronger our obligation to submit to it. He that doth not heare a single brother, his fault is great; much more if he heare not two or three; most of all when he doth not heare the Church speaking to him, and testifying against him in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Elihu having made a long discourse, appeal's to wise men.

Hence note.

He that believeth he hath spoken truth, is not afraid to have it considered by those who are best able to judge what is true.

Truth feares not any test, or tryall. He that offers pure gold and silver, cares not who toucheth it, or takes the Assay. Wisdom is (sure enough to be) justified of her children. They who understand truth, and love it, can doe nothing against the truth, but for it.

Fourthly, Elihu having discoursed long, is willing to referre it to men, and to let them judge of it.

Hence note.

He that hath spoken truth in his uprightness, hath reason to believe that he shall have the Consent of the upright with him.

There is a sameness of spirit in all wise and godly men for the maine, and for the most part it is so in particulars. If a godly man conscientiously judge such an opinion to be truth, he may be much assured, that other wise and godly men will be of his opinion too. He
He dares say, as Elihu, *Let wise men hearken unto me.*

Fifthly, and lastly, In that Elihu makes his appeal to wise men, to men of heart.

**Note.**

*All men are not fit to give their Judgement in a case.*

All are not Competent Judges, nor prepared to give an opinion; and if they do not much to be regarded; wise men, specially godly wise men, men of a holy understanding, are the men whose judgement and opinion is to be regarded. Elihu having bespoken the thoughts and opinion of wise men, seemes to give his owne in the next words.

**Ver. 35.** Job hath spoken without knowledge; and his words were without wisdome.

When Elihu had offered it to the Consideration of wise and understanding men, whether Job had spoken right about that great point, *Submission to the absolute Sovereignty of God,* he forbare not first, and plainly to declare his owne understanding of it.

*Job hath spoken without knowledge.*

The Hebrew is, *not in knowledge,* or, *not knowingly;* that is, ignorantly, foolishly; a very high charge; Job hath spoken without knowledge; yet we are not to understand it as if Elihu thought Job an Ignorant, or an unknowing man, he could not but know otherwise; but as to this particular case, he reports him as a man that had spoken without knowledge, and declared himselfe both beside his duty, and the rule.

Hence note.

*They who are very wise and knowing in many things, yet may be out in some.*

The best of men are not perfect, either in grace, or knowledge. We may know much, and yet come short in what we ought to know; A man may speak some things very understandingly, and yet speak other things very erroneously; A man may be out sometimes. Job hath spoken without knowledge.
When the Lord comes to decide this great Controversie in the last Chapter of this Book, he tells Job's three friends, that their words had not been right, as the words of Job; and yet here Elihu saith, Job's words were without wisdome, or, not in wisdome. When God said, the words of Job were right; we may understand it, that they were so according to their general tenour, or they were so comparatively to what his friends, Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad had said in his case, or at least his last words (after God had thoroughly convinced and humbled him) were so, though in many things he had faied in speech, or spoken those things which were not right before. Yet here Elihu spake truth, while he sayd, his words were without wisdome in the speciall point he had to doe with him about; and so much Job himselfe acknowledged, I have spoken once, yea twice, but I will speak no more; I will no more set my wisdome against the wisdome of God, nor presume to have things goe according to my mind, let God doe what he will with me hereafter.

Consider, how well this good man tooke the plain-dealing of Elihu; It might be expected that Job would quickly have risen up in passion, especially when he heard himselfe thus urged; But being convinced, with what Elihu spake, he gave him not a word, much lesse an angry word.

Hence note.

A good man where he is faulty, will heare reproofe with patience.

A gracious heart, will soone be angry with himselfe for speaking or doing amisse, but he can take it well to heare himselfe reproved, when he hath indeed either spoken or done amisse. Nor are there many greater and clearer arguments of a gracious heart then this. To heare a reproofe well is a high point of commendation. Grace may be shewed as eminently by our patience when we are rebuked for doing that which is evil, as by our forwardness and zeale in doing that which is good. When Nathan the Prophet applyed the parable home to David after he had not only committed but continued long impenitently in his grievous sins of adultery and murder, telling him to his face, Thou art the
the man (2 Sam: 12.7.) and not only telling him so, but at once upbraiding him with all the former benefits and kindnecsses of God to him, & threatening him with many dreadfull future judgements (v. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.) when (I lay) he was thus sharply dealt with, it might have been feared, that this Great king would have risen up in passion, and roared like a fierce Lyon upon the Prophet; yet we heare nothing from him but words of sorrowfull confession, and humble lumbnation (v. 13.) I have sinned against the Lord. The boldnesse of Paul was great in blaming Peter openly, and Peters meeknesse was as great in bearing that blame (Gal. 2.14.) Nor doe I know whether the patience of Job were greater in bearing the great afflictions that God layd upon him, or in bearing the great reproofs which this man layd upon him. I grant, he complained often of those bitter reproaches which his three friends caft upon him, charging him for a wicked man or a hypocrite, and then he replyed and replyed home: but here Elihu reproved him sharply for his rash speeches and intemperate carriage under his affliction, and he tooke it both meekly and silently. A good man will not storme, nor rage, nor revile, nor threaten, when he is justly reprehended, but lyes downe under it, and takes it quietly, yea thankfully, and goes home and blesteth God that he hath met with a knock; These are very hard words, Thou hast spoken words without wisdome; But Job seemes to confess and patiently beare them: It is best for us not to doe or speak any thing that deserves a reproohe : and 'tis the next best, to receive a reproohe well for what we have either done or spoken ill.
JOB. Chap. 34. Verf. 36, 37.

My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end, because of his answers for wicked men.

For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands amongst us, and multiplyeth his words against God.

In these two verses Elihu windes up his second speech to Job, and in them we have two things considerable; First, his motion made in reference to Job at the beginning of the 36th verse; My desire is (or this is the thing that I move for) that Job may be tried unto the end. Secondly, we have the reason of this motion, which some make three-fold, others four-fold, taking the latter part of the 36th verse for one of the four; My desire is that Job may be tried to the end, why?

First, Because of his answers for wicked men.

Secondly, I desire he may be tried unto the end, why? for he addeth rebellion unto his sin.

Thirdly, I desire he may be tried unto the end? why? he clappeth his hands amongst us, and

Fourthly, I desire he may be tried to the end, why? he multiplyeth his words against God. Others take the latter words of the 36th verse, only as the subject matter about which Elihu desires Job may be tried, that is, concerning his answers for wicked men. And so the 37th verse contains three reasons why he desires he may be brought to that tryall.

Verf. 36. My desire is that Job may be tried.

So we translate, and we put in the margin, O my father, most or many translators put that into the text, O my father, Let Job be voluit cupiti surrexit tried unto the end. The first word of the text hath a two-fold signification; some taking it as an application to God by the name or title father. The reason of this difference is, because the root of that Hebrew word which signifies a father, signifies to desire, to will or wish. Mr Broughton renders, O my father (and he adds, 

Jun:
O my father which art in heaven) Let Job be tried unto victory. As if Elish (faith he) looking up to heaven, by O father, meant what followeth, O father which art in heaven. And he quotes Abraham Peritzol (a learned Rabbin) expounding the words so translated, at larg. 

Father is one of the sweetest and most honourable compellations of God. (Isa: 63. 16.) the whole Church of the Jewes is brought in bespeaking God in that Relation; Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, &c. And God speaking of himselfe, faith (Mal: 1. 6.) A son honoureth his father, if I be a father, where is my honour. It was utiull even among the heathens to add the name father to their Idol gods, thereby to express their reverence, or veneration of them.

O my father.

They who embrace this translation take speciall notice of that pronounme, O my father. He doth not say only or barely, O father, but O my father. Those appropriating possessive pronouns, mine, thine, have a kinde of deliciousnesse in them, and breath aboundance of affection. Luther sayd the sweetnesse of the Gospel lyeth in prononnes; when a believer can say (with believing Thomas) My Lord, and my God. Those things or persons which we love most we call ours; we say of a single speciall friend, he is mine; and to say, such a one is mine, is as much as to say, he is much beloved, much prized or estemeed by me, he, as it were, lies next my heart; property rayseth the price of all good things. We rejoice in God most, when we can call him ours; and so doth God in us, when he takes us for his owne. We have a meeting or union of several possessive pronouns in one verse (Cant: 8. 12.) My vineyard which is mine is before me: My, mine, before me, implying how much Jesus Christ did appropriate the Church unto himselfe, or how much he thought himselfe concerned in the prosperity of the Church. And as the Title Father is sweet and comfortable, so glorious and honourable; God is the father of all, and all fatherhood is derived from God. That of the Apostle (Eph: 3. 15.) which we translate, of whom the whole family, &c. qui abonitamenta alius communicit, &c. Hie ron: in Epift: ad Ephes: Q q q q q

Apud Gentiles pater commune nomen orat Deorum; unde Diespiter, Mer
dispers, Jupiter.
hood is by derivation and communication from him. O my father, let Job be tryed unto the end. We say,

My desire is.

The Hebrew text is as cleare for that; and whether we say, O my father, let Job be tryed, or, my desire is that Job may be tryed to the end, the general sense is the same. We render the word by desire (Chap. 9, 26.) where Job tells us, that his life or the life of man is like the swift ships; we put in the margin, ships of desire (it is this word) that is, like those ships which being most desirable (as being laden with the richest and most precious commodities) make most haste home to their harbour, or proper Port. Thus here, My desire, or the thing that I strongly with is, &c. The Chaldee paraphrase renders, My will is, or I will

That Job may be tryed.

But had not Job been tryed already? was there any need to call him to a farther tryall? had he not been in the furnace a long time? why then doth Elihu so earnestly importune that Job might be brought to tryall?

I answer: The word signifies a two-fold tryall; First, a tryall by way of examination, or argumentation; we try a man when we examine him, and argue with him, when we scan and search out what he hath spoken, or what he hath done. In this sense the word is used (Chap. 12, 11.) and at the 3d verse of this Chapter, the eare tryeth words: that is, the eare examineth the sense and meaning of those things which are spoken; and by the eare, he meanes not only the sensitive faculty taken abstractly, but the sensitive faculty joyned with the intellectuall. A beast hath an eare and can heare, but a beast cannot try or examine that which is spoken and heard; only they that have rationall faculties joyned with the sensitive are able to try words, and matter delivered by them. I desire Job may be tryed to the utmost, that the words and speeches which have past from him, may be fully considered, or considered to the end, that it may, at last, appeare what he hath asserted and maintained.

Sunt qui intel[i]; Secondly, It signifies a tryall by affliction (Zech: 13, 9.) ligunt probari pro exagitari disputationes. One third shall be brought through the fire and tryed. As mettall gold or silver is tryed and refined in the fire, so shall they in the
fire of affliction. Jesus Christ is called a tried stone (Isa: 28. 16.)
and he was so in both these accounts; he was examined and arg-
gued with to the end, and he was afflicted, and grieved to the end, he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs all his
dayes; Behold I lay in Zion a tried stone, a sure Corner-stone;
that which is tried is sure; we may truft that which hath been
tried. We say, try me and trust me; we may understand Elihu
in both, or in either of these fentes. My defire is that Job may be
tried, that what he hath sayd may be further examined, or that his
affliction may be continued, till he be brought to a fight of his
errors and mistakes. I would have him corrected till he submits
to God as a conqueror: and recanteth his rash and inconsiderate
answers. My defire is that Job may be tried

Unto the end.

He doth not say barely, tryd, but, tryed unto the end; that is,
fully and throughly tryed, not by halves, overly and slightly.
If he be indeed just and fercere, the fire of this tryall, how long
foever he continueth in it, will doe him no hurt, it will only purge
and refine him from his remaining droffe; but if he be unbound
and nought, he will evaporate and fame away into vaine com-
plaints and murmurings; Therefore let him be tryed to the end.

Some of the Latines translate, I would have him tryed to death,
which is the end or period of man in this world. The word sig-
nifies semipeternity, as also victor, because that which continueth
ever, must needs be victorious (1 Sam: 15. 29.) The strength
of Israel will not lie; we put in the Margin, The eternall or victor
of Israel (that is, the eternall God, who is victor over all) will que reddunt
not lie. Thus some render here, I defire Job may be tryed unto vi-
guad in Orig-
tory, that is, that God would never give over trying him, till he
hath overcome him and brought down his spirit, for till the man
is too high, too stout, his spirit is still too big, too unbroken; my fempiternum
defire therefore is that God would try him to victory, till he hath
brought him upon his knees, and made him eate his words, or till
he give glory to God by humbling himselfe and confessing his sin;
I would have him fully convinced by argument and throughly
humbled by chastifement, till he at last resigneth up himselfe to
the will of God. The Italian glossie puts it in the forme of a pray-
er; Withdraw not thy visitation from Job, until thou hast brought

Q q q q q 2
him to the duty of a child; Further, this word, unto the end, doth not imply a desire of the everlastingsness of his tryall, but of the profitableness of it. He would not have him alwayes kept upon the rack, or under the rod, but he would have him effectually dealt with, that the matter might issue well with him.

From the words thus opened, note first.

Affliction is a tryall.

It makes us appeare what we are; most have but an appearance till they are tryed; and being tryed, what they are doth really appeare. Afflictions try our graces what they are; and afflictions try our corruptions what they are. Afflictions draw forth the spirit of a man, they turne his inside outward, and set him (as it were) in the open light. Take tryall in the second sence, by way of examination, and it yeilds us the same truth. He that is throughly fitted will appeare in his own likeness. Let a man be fully dealt and argued with, let his speeches and his actions be brought to the rule of the word, what he is, and what they are, will soone be seene. That's the tryall which the Apostle means (1 Thes: 5. 2.) Prove all things; prove what men say and hold, prove their attentions and opinions, and you shall come to a cleare understanding of them. The rule of the word is a straight or right rule, and that which is right will shew you both it self, and that which is crooked, or any way swerving and departing from it.

Secondly. As tryall is taken in the former notion for affliction, My desire is that Job may be tryed unto the end.

Note.

It is lawfull to pray or wish for afflictions upon others in some cases.

We may pray for and with afflictions upon others for their good, or for the glory of God. It is not good to wish evill as evill upon any man, no not upon the worst of men. Job professed against that (Chap: 31. 29, 30.) If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or have suffered my mouth to be filled with the cursing of his soul, then &c. As if he had sayd, If I have prayed or wished that any evil might befall mine enemy as evil, I should have done very ill, and deserved to suffer ill. For that had been an evil wish. Yet, as we our selves ought to chuse affliction rather
rather then sin; so we may pray for affliction upon others, rather then that they should goe on in sin. As in that case of the Churches proceeding to the sentence of excommunication; which is the delivering of a person up to Satan, or a putting him into the very power of the devill for a time (1 Cor. 5.4, 5.) it is the end or designe which makes this lawfull: our busines in the ministry and in all Church-administrations, is to put soules out of the power of Satan, to rescue them out of the hand of the devill, to recover those that are led Captive by him at his will; yet faith the Apostle, Deliver such a one unto Satan, put him into the devills hands, for what end? For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. This makes the prayer or act of the Church lawfull, because the intendment is the destroying of that which ought to be destroyed, or to destroy that in man which will be the destruction of man, his flesh, his lust, his pride, his covetousnesse, his wantonnesse; For the destruction of this flesh deliver him to Satan, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Thus we may pray and with for affliction upon others; but ’tis a prayer which must be managed with a great deale of caution, lest our prayers to God in that kinde, be found ill wishes to men. That which Elihu had in his thoughts, when he desired Job might be tryed to the very end, was, that he might be prevented from going on in the way wherein he was to the end. Yea, I conceive a man may pray for afflictions upon himself, rather then he should goe on in a course of sin, or, when he findes that other wayses and means which God hath used with him, have not been effectuall to subdue his corrupt heart, to mortifie his lusts, and to bring him off from a course of sin, but that (as it is sayd in the next verse) he is in danger of adding rebellion to his sin. A godly man had much rather that God should make him poore, sicke, weake, and nothing in this world, then let his corruptions have dominion over him; He desires rather God should take the world quite out of his hand, then that the world should get into his heart, or be as fuel to feed and enflame his lusts.

Thus Elihu desired that Job might be tryed, because tryalls by Bono ipsim op. affliction are for our purging, refining, and bettering. Love was the roore of this wish, not hatred or ill will. Let Job be tryed to the end. Why? we may take the latter part of the verse for a reason why, as well as for the matter about which he would have him tryed.
Because of his answers for wicked men.

Let him be tryed concerning those words which he hath spoken in common with or after the manner of vaine men. He hath spoken words wherein he seemes to comply with wicked men, to lay as they lay, to content with them, and to be of their opinion; this was charged upon him directly by Elihu at the 8th verse of this Chapter; What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men; that is, though Job in his conversation or carriage of his life hath not, yet in this discourse, he hath strengthened the hands of wicked men, or confirmed them in their opinion, speaking so much of the heavy preffures of God upon him, and defiring so often to come to a hearing, as if he had some wrong done him. We are not to understand these words of Elihu, Because of his answers for wicked men; As if he charged Job to doe so directly, or as if he had formally taken upon him to plead or advocate the cause of wicked men; we are not (I say) to understand him so grossly, nor had it been true to say, that Job opened his mouth, or spake thus for wicked men; but his meaning is, he hath spoken such things as in common apprehension seeme to comply with the opinions of wicked men; or with the speeches which they use when they are (like him) in a troubled condition.

Or againe, Because of his answers for wicked men; that is, that he may acknowledge the answers he hath given, are not such as doe become a godly man, but rather lavour of such a spirit as unbroken proud persons hold forth in the time of their affliction; who are never pleased with, but always complaining at divine dispensations.

Lastly, These words, Because of his answers for wicked men, may, possibly, have this sense; Because he hath spoken such things as may serve the turne of wicked men for answers, or, as if he would instruct them what to answer, when at any time they are under the hand of God. He may be sayd to answer for another man, who any way prompts him how or what to answer. And while a good man speakes amifsle, in any case, he teacheth, yea and encourageth bad men to speake so too. Yet I rather incline to the first interpretation, that Elihu would have Job tryed, because his answers were such as it might be judged he had taken wicked men
men for his patterne in giving them, and not as if in them he had given a patterne to wicked men.

Hence more.

First, A good man may sometimes act the part of a wicked man, or he may speak like wicked men, as if he were one of them.

Though his state be as different from the state of wicked men, as light is from darkness, or as sweet from sour, or white from black, yet as to some actions or speeches, he may beare a resemblance to them. Good men and bad men doe, as I may say, enter-common in many things; a wicked man whose heart is nought, who is yet in an unregenerate estate (for I meane not by a wicked man, him only that is flagitious, a murderer, a whoremonger, a drunkard, but a wicked man is any one that is unregenerate, whose heart is not yet changed; Now I say, a wicked man) may speak and doe many things like a godly man; he may heare the word, and pray, and performe outward duties, which are like and are (take them materially) the same which godly men performe. Thus he enter-commons with godly men; and this is the case of all hypocrites, who make a pretence of religion, when they have no acquaintance with the power of it. And thus through temptation, and in some very burthen-some afflictions a godly man may speak as a wicked man; such hafty rash provoking speeches may passe from him as proceed from the ungodly, only here is the difference, those evill speeches or actions proceed from the state of the one, and only from the temptation of the other.

Secondly; From the phrase or forme of speech, in which the originall expreslieth wicked men; The words are, Men of wickedness, or iniquity; As if it had been sayd, the word of wicked men. This shews us what man naturally is; he is a man of wickedness; nothing but wickedness, altogether wicked. The Lord looking downe from heaven upon all the children of men (in a state of nature) sayd, There is not one that doth good, no not one. Take any wicked man he hath no good in him, no not one good thought in him; he is a man of Iniquity, he is meere wickedness, till he be changed, till his heart be broken by Godly sorrow, till he be united unto Christ by faith, and through the Spirit. I know this expression is used severall times in Scripture, to note those men who are sinners of the first forme, being not only sinners in their
their state, but in the highest degree of activity. Thus Antichrist
is called, The man of sin (2 Thes. 2.) And when the Prophet faith
(Isa. 55. 7.) Let the man of iniquity turne from his evil way;
he means the worst of men. Yet this is a truth, every man in an
unconverted estate is a man of iniquity; he hath no goodness; no-
thing of God in him, he bears only the Image and impress of
the devill upon him. Christ told the Pharisees, who were high in
reputation with the world for good men (John 8. 44.) Ye are
of your father the devill, and the lusts of your father ye will doe.
The natural man is so sinfull, that he is meerly sin. And sometimes
a godly man speaks and doth as if he were so too. Job spake like
men of Iniquity.

Elihu proceedeth more fully to declare both the reason why he
would have Job further tried, and likewise what he meant by his
answers for wicked men.

Ver. 37. For he addeth rebellion (or trespass) to his sin.

Here are two words, sin and rebellion; the first which we ren-
der sin, signifies sin in common; the least transgression of the Law
it is sin; the least vaine thought of the heart, the least idle word
of the tongue is sin; but every sin is not rebellion; that hath ma-
y speciall marks or brands rather upon it. To rebell is to sin with
a high hand, to rebell is to sin with a stiff neck, to rebell is to sin
with obstinacy and resolvedness of will; he addeth rebellion to his
sin. But did Job rebell indeed? I conceive the rebellion which
Elihu chargeth Job with, is not rebellion in a strict but in a quali-
fied and comparative sense; As if he had said, Job sinned before,
but now his sin is heighted, we see him now (in words) rising up
against God, complaining of his justice, or as if he had dealt unjust-
ly with him. What he did in the time of his prosperity, those slips
& falls which he had then, weighed nothing as laid in the ballance
with the intemperate speeches which he hath uttered in the day
of his trouble. He addeth rebellion unto his sin. So we render as
respecting what he was and had done before. Others render it po-
tentially not indicatively; Let Job be tried unto the end, because
of his answers for wicked men, for otherwise he may add rebellion to
his sin; we know not whether his corruptions may carry him if
suffered to goe onne. This is a more favourable reading of the

   Nomine παρά
   intelligitur pec-
   catum ex erro-
   re commissum;
   Nomine vero
   vultus seclus
   propriis rebe-
   lios.
Hence Note.

First, There are sins of several degrees.

Every man sinneth, he that faith he hath no sin, or doth not sin, there is no truth in him (1 John i. 8.) But every man's sin is not rebellion, every man doth not rise up to that height and degree of sinning. If any shall enquire, when is a man's sin rebellion? I answer.

First, That man's sin grows to be rebellion, whose will is much in it. He that will sin rebels. The Apostle Paul saith (Rom. 7. 19.) 'The evil which I would not, that I do.' This is the case of every godly man at his best, he doth those evils which he would not; this is not rebellion, because the will of a godly man is changed and turned off from sin; he can say, the evil which I would not doe, that doe I. Rebellion is the doing of that evil which we would.

Secondly, In rebellion, or in rebellious acts of sin, there is much of the understanding as well as of the will; that is, a man seeth cleerely what he doth is sin, or that the rule is against him; to rebell is to sin against the light. It is said in the 24th Chapter of this book, 'The wicked are of them that rebel against the light: that is, they cannot abide the light; he means it there of the natural light; the adulterer and the thief cannot endure Sun or day-light; it is much more true of mystical light, if he hath any light of knowledge, he resists and rebels against it. Its great rebellion to resist the receiving of light offered, but 'tis greater rebellion to resist light received; sins against knowledge are rebellious sins.

Thirdly, A rebellious sin is a sin against reproofe, admonition and warning; when we have been often told of such a sin, and admonished of such an evil course, and yet we will goe on in it, here is rebellion; such a man hath not only light in his understanding, that what he doth is sinfull, but this light hath been bought.
brought home to him and wrought upon him by reproofs, coun-
sell, and admonition; here is still greater rebellion. Therefore in
the proceeding of the Church, spoken of (Matt: 18.) when an
offending brother hath been reproved and told of his fault, first
in private by a particular brother, then by two or three, then by
the whole Church; if after all these admonitions and reproofoes,
he doth not repent, he is to be cast out as a rebel, and accounted
as a heathen or a publican.

Lastly, As 'tis rebellion when we sin against the reproofoes
of man, so against the providences of God; and those of two
forts.

First, When we sin against the favourable providences of God,
I mean those which are outward; when God bestows many mer-
cies and comforts upon us, when he gives us health and riches in
the world, and fullness of all things, then to sin against him is
rebellion. (Deut: 32. 15.) Jesurun waxed fat and kicked, and
rebelled against the Lord, and lightly regarded the rock of his sal-
vation. When we have received many and great mercies, then to
grow vaine and wanton, and nourish our selves as in the day of
slaughter, this is rebellion against God.

Secondly, When the providences of God have broken us by
this evill or that evill, when we are broken in our estates, broken
in our names, broken in our relations, broken with sickness af-
fter sickness, and yet persist in a sinfull way, this is rebellion,
this is sin in the very height of it. This was the rebellion of
Ahaz (2 Chron: 28. 22.) Who in the time of his distress, tref-
passed yet more against the Lord. And this was the rebellion of
Indah (Isa: 1. 5.) Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will re-
volt more and more. Take heed of this; 'tis too much that we sin
at all, let us not be found adding rebellion to our sin. I may say
these two things concerning the habit or any act of sin.

First, It is a burthen to a Godly man; O wretched man that I
am (sayd Paul) who shall deliver me from this body of death?

Secondly, As it is a Godly mans burthen when he sins, so it is
his care and study not to sin; he would not sin at all; he watcheth
himselfe that he may not sin in the least degree. That was the
Apostle John's desire and care for all the Churches (1 John 2. 1.)
My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not.
I would have you watch over your hearts and wayes so narrowly,
that no sin might slip you; that ye might not have a wrong thought, nor speake an idle word; how much more should we take heed, that we add not rebellion to our sin. There is something of rebellion in every sin, even in the sins of good men; but 'tis sad when they add rebellion to their sin. Samuel gives a dreadfull description of that sin which is rebellion (1 Sam: 15. 23.) Rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft, and stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry. Witch-craft is that sin wherein men have much converse and compliance with the devill; The devill and the witch, or the devill and the Diviner (as our Margin hath it) act as loving companions; they have mutual converse, yea commerce, they trade together. Rebellion is that sin, or we sin rebelliously, when we declare our selves most averse to God. The witch declares himselfe a friend to the devill; the rebellious soule defieth and despiseth God; now those sins that have most compliance with the devill, and most defiance against God, are put together; if a man doth much set himselfe to oppose God, by sinning against light, against reproves, and against providences, whether the gracious or afflicting providences of God (If a man (I say) rebell thus against God) it is like the sin of witch-craft, which is compliance and converse with the devill. Here is an extreame on the one side, and an extreame on the other side, yet both meete, rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft, and stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry. These latter words are exegaticall; stubbornness (that is, when a man is stout and will goe on his way) is as Iniquity and Idolatry. We may consider a great elegancy in those words; Stubbornness is as Idolatry. What is Idolatry? it is worshipping or giving honour to a false god, which is indeed worshipping the devill; all Idolatry is devill-worship; the witch worshippeth the devill intentionally, and so doth the Idolater, though he intend it not (1 Cor: 10. 20.) The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devills and not to God. I doe not say, every error or wayling in worship is devill-worship, but that which is Idolatry indeed, or the setting up of a worship of our owne devising is Idolatry, and devill-worship. Thus stubbornness is as Idolatry, and rebellion is as witch-craft. What is witch-craft? compliance with the devill. What is Idolatry? devill-worship, a falling downe to the devill. Let the wicked consider what they doe when they rebel; and let the
people of God take heed of any sin, or way of sinning, which may be accounted rebellion. To sin with much will against much light, against many reproofs from men, and against the reproving, or against the inviting providences of God, hath rebellion in it; He addeth rebellion to his sin.

Secondly, Taking the words in the mildest sense,

Note.

Sometimes a good man may goe backward, he may be worse and worse, and doe worse and worse.

We should be always growing in grace, that's the condition of believers and their duty, yet under some dispensations they may decline for a time and grow worse and worse, adding that which is like rebellion to their sin.

Thirdly, If we consider these words in connection with the former; Elihu having prayed for further tryall upon Job, as fearing, that else he might adde rebellion to his sin.

Note.

He that is not throughly convinced and chastned, may quickly grow worse and worse.

He may, or he will adde rebellion to his sin. I doe not know where a mans sin will end, if the Lord should let him alone. 'Tis a mercy that any man, especially that God hath a continual inspection over us; if some mens wayes were not tryed and questioned, they might adde rebellion to their sin; who knows where they would stop? it is a mercy to have both words and actions examined by brethren and Churches, how sadly else would many wander, yea it is a mercy to be tryed by affliction. When God keeps us from a foule way by building a wall against us, it is a mercy, else we might adde rebellion to sin. No man knowes the measure of his owne evil heart, or what it would doe; for though believers have a generall promife to be kept by the power of God to salvation; yet how lamentably have good men fallen, though kept from falling away? Elihu aggravates this yet further by the example of Job in the latter and last part of the verse.

He clappeth his hands amongst us, and multiplieth his words against God.
Chap. 34. An Exposition upon the Book of J o b. Ver. 37. 861

He clappeth his hands, or, maketh a noise amongst us, as Mr. Broughton reads it; clapping of the hands in Scripture hath a three-fold significance.

First. It implyeth passion or sorrow. A man under affliction claps or wrings his hands for griefe. Both those gestures are of the same significancy.

Secondly. There is a clapping of the hands with indignation; when we are very angry, then we clap our hands.

Thirdly. There is a clapping of the hands for joy, or in a way of triumph; when a man thinks he has conquered and got the day, he claps his hands, and to doe they who are on his side.

(Ps. 47. 1.) O clap your hands (all ye people) shout unto God with the voice of triumph. I conceive Elihu intends Job clapping his hands in this third sense; he clappeth his hands amongst us, for nos, ut qui or insults over us, as if he had conquered and wonne the Gar-

There is a multiplying of words against God; Solomon saith (Pr. 10. 19.) in the multitude of words there doth not want sin; that is, there is store of sin in the multitude of words. They that will be speaking much, slip much. Job (faith he) multi-

Exploserns el-

pleseth words against God. There is a multiplying of words against God two ways; First, directly; Secondly, by way of reflection or rebound; Elihu could not say, Job had spoken, nor could he pre-

sume he would speak one word, much lesse multiply words against God directly. He knew Job was a godly man, but he af-

ferts he had, or feared he might multiply words against God re-

flexively, that is, speak such words as might cast dishonour upon God, such words as God might take very ill at his hands, and interpret as spoken against himselfe.

Hence note.

They who speake unduly of the waies and proceedings of God with them in this world, speake against God himselfe.
The business of Elihu in all this discourse, was to hold forth the evil frame of Job's heart, signified by the intemperance of his language under the dealings of God. God had afflicted and chastised Job, he had multiplied wounds upon him, and Job in the heat of his spirit and bitterness of his soul, making many complaints about the workings of God with him, is charged with multiplying words against God. We may speak against God before we are aware; yea we may speak many words against God when we think we have not spoke one word against him. While we speak impatiently of the proceedings of God in the world, and murmur at his dispensations to our families or persons, what do we but multiply words against God? we speak much for ourselves to God, yea (I may say) we highly commend ourselves to God when we submit to his doings, and say nothing, but in a silent admiration adore his dealings, and wait for a good issue of them. Aaron proclaimed both his humility and his faith in holding his peace, when the Lord had his two sons Nadab and Abihu, strangely with fire, for offering strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not (Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3.)

But how many are there who proclaim their pride and unbelief, by not being able to hold their peace under the afflicting hand of God, when his hand scarce toucheth them, or when he doth but lay the weight of his little finger upon them, in comparison of that heavy stroke which fell upon Aaron. We are in much danger of sinning, when at any time we speak many words; or (as Elihu speaketh) multiply words, he is a rare man that speaketh many words, and but some amiss. Now, if to multiply words at any time (even when we are most composed) exposeth us to error in our words, how much more when our tongues utter many words in the bitterness and discomposure of our spirits? And as to speak amiss in any matter is to sin against God, so to speak much amiss of our sufferings, or of the severest providences of God towards us, is to speak much, or to multiply words (though not intentionally) yet really and indeed against God. O then forbear this multiplication of words, lest you multiply sins. Speak but little, unless in the praise of God; take heed how you speak of what God is doing to others, or doing to your selves. Let your words be few, and let them be weighed, for God will weigh your words; and you may hear from him in blowes, what he heareth from you.
in words. 'Tis a dangerous thing to be found speaking words against God; yet this may be the case of a good man, whose heart is with God, and whose heart is for God: even while he hath a general bent of heart to lay himself out in speaking and doing for God, he through passion and temptation may be found speaking against God. What we speak discontentedly of the ways or works of God, is a multiplying of words against God himself.

Thus I have given out and finished my thoughts upon the Preface which Elihu made to lead in his discourse with Job, as also upon two stages of his discourse with him. Job sits silent and answers him not a word, which Elihu perceiving takes liberty to urge him further with two distinct discourses more, contained in the three Chapters following; which, if the Lord give life and leave, may be opened and offered to the readers use and acceptance in convenient season.
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### Notes

### ERRATA

**FINIS**
Books lately printed for Thomas Parkhurst, at the Sign of the three Crowns over against the great Conduit at the lower end of Cheap-side.

A Commentary upon the three first Chapters of Genesis, by Mr. John White, in fol.

A learned Commentary, or Exposition upon the first Chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians; by Dr. Richard Sibbs, published for publick good, by Thomas Manton, Folio.

There is come forth Mr. William Fenner his Continuation of Christ's Alarm to drowsie Saints, with a Treatise of effectual Calling: The Killing Power of the Law: The Spiritual Watch: New Birth: A Christian ingrafting into Christ: A Treatise on the Sabbath, which were never before printed, bound in one Volume, Fol. and may be had alone of them that have his other Works, as well as bound with all his former Works, which are newly printed in the same Volume.

The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont: Containing a most exact Geographical Description of the place, and a faithful account of the doctrine, life and perfections of the Ancient Inhabitants. Together with a most naked and punctual relation of the late bloody Massacre, 1655. and a Narrative of all the following transactions to 1658. Justified partly by divers ancient Manuscripts written many hundred years before Calvin or Luther. By Samuel Morland Esq; in fol.

Divine Characters in two parts, acutely distinguishing the more secret and undiscovered differences between the Hypocrite in his best dress of seeming virtues and formal duties, and the true Christian in his real graces and sincere obedience, by Mr. Samuel Crooke, in fol.

The humble Sinner resolved what he should do to be saved; or faith in the Lord Jesus Christ the only way of salvation, by Mr. Obadiah Sedgewick, in 4o.

The Fountain opened, and the water of life flowing forth, for the refreshing of thirsty sinners, by the same Author, in 4.

Anatomy
Books sold by Thomas Parkhurst.

Anatomy of secret sins, presumptuous sins, sins in dominion and uprightness, on Psalm 19. 12, 13. together with a Treatise of the sin against the Holy Ghost, by Obadiah Sedgwick.

The hypocritical Nation described, with an Epistle prefixed, by Mr. Samuel Jacomb, in 4.

A Sermon of the baptizing of Infants, by Mr. Stephen Marshal, in 4.

The unity of the Saints with Christ the Head by the same Author, in 4.

Truth brought to light, and discovered by time, or an Historical Narration of the first fourteen years of King James, in 4.

The Tryall of the Marquess of Argyle, wherein you have his Indictment, and his Answer, together with his last speech and words upon the Scaffold, in 4.

ΟΕΑΝΩΡΠΝΩΣ, or the Great Mysterie of Godliness, opened by way of Antidote against the Great Mystery of Iniquity, now a work in the Romish Church, wherein 1. The Incarnation of the Son of God is fully displayed. 2. Ceremonies in point of Worship proved to be by Christ abrogated. 3. Christian liberty with its 8 Steps and 5 Boundaries; by Thomas Douglass, M. A. in 4.

Moses and Aaron, or the Priviledges and Boundaries given by God both to Magistrates and Ministers.

Mr. Robinsons Christians Armour in large 8o.

A Book of Emblems, with Latin and English verses made upon (Lights) by Robert Farlie, small 8o.

The one thing necessary; By Mr. Thomas Watson, Minister of Stephens Walbrook, 8o.

The Riches of grace displayed, in the offer and tender of salvation to poore sinners, by Obadiah Sedgewick, in 12.

Hidden Manna by Mr. Fenner, in 12.

Picture Louventes, or Pictures drawn forth into Characters, in 12.

A most excellent Treatise containing the way to seek Heavens Glory, to fly Earths Vanity, to feare Hells Horror, with godly Prayers, and the Bell-mans Summons, 12.

The singular Actions of sanctified Christians, in several Sermons, on the 5. of Math. 47.

An Exposition on the whole book of the Canticles, by R. R.

There
There is printed an Exhortation of the Churches of Bohemia, to the Churches of England, wherein is set forth the good of unity, order, discipline, and obedience, in Churches rightly constituted; With an Exhortation premised of the order and Discipline used in the Churches of the Brethren of Bohemia: Dedicated to His Most Excellent Majesty, Charles the llD. in Holland, at His departure for England, if possibly it may be for an accommodation among the Church of Christ; By J. Amos Comenius, the only surviving Bishop of the remains of those Churches.

Grace to the humble, as a preparation to the Sacrament in five Sermons, by Dr. John Preston.

Johnsons Essays expressed in sundry Exquisite Fancies.

Sion in the House of Mourning, because of Sin and Suffering, being an Exposition on the fifth Chapter of the Lamentations, by D. S. Pastor of Upingham, in the County of Rutland.

Groans of the Spirit, or the Trial of the Truth of Prayer.

A Handkercher for Parents Wet-eyes, upon the death of their children or friends.

The Dead Saint speaking to Saints and Sinners living, in several Treatises, viz., On 2 Sam: 24. 10. on Cant. 4. 9. on John 8. 15. on John 1. 50. on Isa. 58. 2. on Exod. 15. 11. Never Published before. By Samuel Bolton, D. D. late Mr. of Christ's College in Cambridge.

Peoples Need of a Living Pastor, at the Funerall of Mr. John Frost, M. A. by Mr. Zach. Croston.

A Treatise against the Toleration of all Religions, By Mr. Thomas Edwards.


A Theatre of Political Flying Insects, Wherein especially the Nature, the Worth, the Work, the Wonder, and the manner of the Right-ordering of the Bee is discovered and described. By Samuel Purchas, M. A, and Pastor at Sutton in Essex.

The second part of Mans wiffull Impenitency, upon Ezek. 18. 32. By Mr. William Fenner, late of Rochford in Essex, With some other Pieces of his, preserved by a special Providence.