

Bibliographical Information

Author: Nicolas Prophet

Title: Englands impenitencie under smiting Englands impenitencie under smiting, causing anger to continue, and the destroying hand of God to be stretched forth still. Set out in a sermon preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at a publike fast, Sept. 25. 1644. By Nicolas Proffet, late rector of Peters in Marlebrough, now Minister of Edminton, and one of the Assembly of Divines. Published by order from that House.

Imprint: London: printed by George Miller for Christopher Meredith at the signe of the Crane in Pauls Church-yard, 1645.

Date: 1645

Physical description : [4], 48 p. ; 4⁰.

Reference: Wing (CD-Rom, 1996), P3647; ESTC Citation R230071

[Due to illegible portions in the original this text requires further editing including supplying illegible text, the insertion of Greek/Hebrew text and the addition of marginalia. An editable file can be supplied upon request for those wishing to make corrections or additions to this text.]

[Transcribed by Barry Waugh]

/**/

Die Mercurii, 25. Septembr. 1644.

ORDERED by the Commons assembled in Parliament, that Colonell *Ven*, Colonell *Long*, and Sir *Robert Harley*, doe from this House give Thanks to Master *Profet*, for the great paines he took in the Sermon he preached this day at the intreaty of the said Commons at *S. Margarets Westminster*, it being the day of Publike Humiliation, and to desire him to print his Sermon. And it is orde ed, That none shall presume to print his Sermon without licence under his hand writing.

H. Elsynghe Cler. Parl. D. Com.

I doe appoint *Christopher Meredith* to print my Sermon,
NICOLAS PROFETT.

/**/

ENGLANDS
IMPENITENCIE
UNDER
SMITING,

Causing anger to continue, and the
destroying hand of God to be stretched
forth still.

Set out in a Sermon preached before
the Honourable House of Commons, at a
Publike Fast, *Sept. 25. 1644.*

By *Nicolas Proffet*, late Rector of
Peters in Marlebrough, now Minister of
Edminton, and one of the Assembly
of Divines.

Published by Order from that House.

Jer.9.12. *Who is the wise man that may understand this? and who is he to whom the
mouth of the Lord hath spoken? That he may declare it, for what the land
perisheth, &c.*

LONDON,
Printed by *George Miller* for *Christopher Meredith* at the Signe
of the Crane in *Pauls Church-yard*. 1645.

/**/

/**/

TO THE HONOURABLE
House of COMMONS
Assembled in Parliament.

*When I understood you had pleased to designe mine unworthy self to this weighty service of preaching at your publike Fast; Although I could not but apprehend it a work far above my fitnessse, yet might I not think of flying from it with Jonah, or making objections against it with Moses, for your power and his providence, who is higher then the highest, meeting together in this appointment, made it both impossible and unlawfull to desert the service.¹ And indeed, these calamitous times that are come upon us doe call upon all men, to shew themselves willing, if they have any hope they may be able to doe any thing for a perishing Kingdome, to use their best endeavours with all alacrity unto that end. That noble resolution of the souldier so much commended, is most worthy imitation, of whom it is reported, That having lost both armes and legs in services, and having nothing but the trunk of his body remaining to him: yet would needs be in the breach. If (saith he) I can doe no other thing, yet perhaps I may keep off a blow, or blunt the edge of some sword drawne to the foyling and wounding of some other; although he had neither hands, nor feet, he wanted not an heart to do what he could, and shewed himself willing, when he was ble to doe little; how meane soever our abilities are, the times will permit none to be silent that are called to speake, nor idle who are called to work. The lion (saith Amos) hath roared, who will not feare?² the Lord hath spoken, who can but prophecie? I did unfeignedly desire to speake a word in season, and thought no subject more */**/* sutable, then what might serve unto that end whereat you aime, which is to divert anger, and prevent utter ruine. I therefore made choice of such a Scripture as did discover the cause of our continued miseris, and so did direct unto the cure of this wounded and languishing Nation, but removing that cause, the great core is impenitence under smitting. The people turn not to him that smiteth them: For upon the one hand there are the divisions of Reuben, causing great and sad thoughts of heart, and on the other, the stupidity and profannesse of the multitude which causeth great droopings of spirit; these things doe sadden the hearts of the Seers, and servants of God, and doe fill many with feare and doubt as well as sorrow and grieffe; seeing how little this last meanes doth prevaile with either party, it is hard to say what sin hath been forsaken of the multitude,³ since God began to smite the Kingdome, as farre as I can discerne some sins are rather much increased then at all abated, as namely, that of drunkenesse, a sin so much the more to be lamented, abhorred, and restrained, as it is more unseemly in it self, more unsutable with the present condition of the Kingdome, and more unsufferable, where reformation should begin: for it is (I doubt) too true which Chrysost. hath briefly noted of this sin is that “nothing is a nearer friend to the divell than it, and that it is the fountaine and mother of all other vices, that by which the Divell drew the Hebrewes of old into idolatry, &c. and that which doth make swine of men, and men worse than swine, the sow doth wallow in the mire, and is nourished with dung, but such spread a more abominable table for themselves, thinking upon impure mixtures and wicked loves, yea, they are as men possessed with the Divell, and whereas they are the object of our pitie, these of our hatred, because they of their owne accord bring fury and madnesse upon themselves,*

¹ Exod.3.17. and 4.10,13.

² Amos 3.8.

³ [illegible margin note]

*neither is there any more filthy thing then a drunken woman. These and such like passages he hath there and elsewhere, with many other of the antient and latter Divines, which I mention, /**/ because we live in such times as have farre more tollerable thoughts of this sinne which is so common among us, and committed openly in the sight of the Sunne, and not thought to be in the number of those vices which might occasion shame. It were to be wished that in asmuch as no instructions nor admonitions will worke on such men, the bluenesse of the wound might be applyed, which is a purging medicine for such like evils: which while they raigne there will be little hope of any thing rending to a through Reformation found in such men.⁴ Now the way to turne away anger, and to stay the destroying hand, is to cause the people to turne to him that smiteth them, this (most noble and renowned Senatours) is that which this wounded and much weakened Kingdome calleth for at the hands of her State Physitians, and being dangerously sicke of her wounds, which seeme mortall, if they be not speedily cured, she cryeth unto you from all quarters of the land, as the man in the Gospell unto Christ in behalfe of his son, which had a dumb spirit, that did oft times cast him into the fire and water to destroy him.⁵ If you can doe any thing have compassion on us, and helpe us, This is a worke worthy your wisest endeavours, if it may be, to become healers of a distressed Kingdome, unto which, if this meane piece might contribute the least mite, the unworthy Author should have his end in choosing this Text, preaching and publishing this Sermon, which is now (although somewhat late) presented to your view, sooner it should have been, but bieng much mistaken in the time of preaching it, by reason of the silence of the clock, I was constrained, when I did perceive I had exceeded much the bounds allotted, to passe over many things, and dis-rank others which caused the more labour to place them right, and to supply some of those I did then omit, and transcribe the whole, about which I have spent all the houres that I could ever since spare out of those publike Attendances, unto which I am tyed. I have not made any materiall addition or alteration, although /**/ here and there something was of necessity to be supplyed. It is now (such as it is) humbly presented unto your patronage and acceptance, whose it was preached and is now published. If any of you shall happily cast an eye upon it now printed, as you were pleased to lend an attentive eare unto it when it was preached (and in stead of blaming me for mistaking my time, to shew your good acceptance of my weake endeavours) I hope it may be of some use, at least to remind you of that which must steere your course in all your endeavours for the Kingdomes safety and Churches good, which is to remove the maine obstruction, by causing (if it be possible) that the people may turne to him that smiteth, which if it may but in some good measure be effected, we shall not need to feare or doubt the audience of our Prayers, and crowning your other endeavours with such successe as shall move not only them that now live and pray, but the generations to come to blesse and praise your God and theirs both with and for you; which is continually begged of God at the throne of his Grace, who is exceeding abundantly able to doe above all we aske or thinke, by*

The unworthiest of his servants and yours,
N. PROFFET.

⁴ Prov.20.30.

⁵ Mark 9.17. and 21.

Errata.

Page 2. line 3. read *their aide*. p. 21. *also* redundant. p. 11. *may seeme*.
p. 122. *Conclusions*. p. 12. 1. 8 r. *terrible approach*. p. 17. 1. 26. r. *one*. p. 20 l. 26 *it*
redundant. p. 22. 1. 31. resolution f. *reflection*. p. 32. 1. 23. r. [GREEK] P. 33. in the
marg. r. *animi ejus varietate*. and l. 12. observe f. *obtaine*. in the marg. r. *time[??]*.
p. 38. 1. 5. r. *fill up*. p. 46. 1. 24. r. some *meanes*. p. 47. 1. 10. [??] *their men*. p. 44. in the marg. r.
qui[??].

A Sermon preached before the Honourable
House of Commons at the publike Fast,
Septemb. 25, 1644.

ISAIAH 9.13.

*For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.
For the people turneth not unto him that smitteth them, neither doe they seeke the Lord
of Hostes.*

THat the scope of this verse may be better perceived, it will be necessary to take a short view of the Chapter, in which this noble, and eloquent Prophet, as St *Hirome* stiles him, of whom he further saith, in the same place, *non tam Propheta quam Evangelista dicendus sit*, he is rather to be called an Evangelist then a Prophet.⁶ Doth notwithstanding here, (as in other places) mingle wine with oyle, Law with Gospell, Comminations with Consolations. For (as *David Psal. 101.*) doth sing, so he doth preach and prophesie mercy and judgement. Yet he beginneth wth comfort & goes on with terror, from *verse 1* unto the 8 he is full of comfort, a son of consolation, but in the rest *Boanerges*, a son of thunder; In that former part of the Chapter he sets himselfe to comfort (according unto some) the good party of the Israelites, both against former, and future menaces of wrath, judgement and ruine, of which they had heard very heavy burthens before, and were now to heare more and heavier hereafter, such as should not only crush, and bruise, but breake, and ruine the state and Kingdome; The Godly hearing this might quake, faint and sinke, if not despaire, if some cordiall were not first given for their comfort and support.

Or (as some others thinke) the Prophet doth endeavour hereby /2/ by to comfort *Iudah*, at this time in a very sad condition, greatly weakened by warre; for *Israel*, that is, the ten tribes had warred agains them, and now obtained in unto them aide, the King of *Assiria*: who was a potent, and mighty Prince; by whose helpe they made no doubt but they should extirpate the royall stock an dwholy subdue *Judah* and bring them into perpetuall subjection. Now against them the Prophet sets himselfe to comfort *Judah*.

The comfort wherewith he doth endeavour to support them, is drawne out of the well of consolation. he giveth them of the water of *Shiloah*, the promises of the Gospel and free grace through Christ. As you may further perceiue by comparing what you here reade with *Math. 4.14.*⁷

Then in the 8th verse, the Prophet beginneth (as divers interpreters have observed) a new sermon sure it is, he doth change his voice, for as there he was promising grace, so here he is menacing wrath.

In this part we may observe, how having to doe with a secure, proud, pertinacious and incredulous people, that made but little account and set very light by the menaces of their Prophets, he doth first set downe the certainty and authority of

⁶ *Hieron.ad Paul. & Eustact. to. 3d p. 26.*

⁷ [??] 8.6.

these comminations, assuring them that they should undoubtedly come to passe and they should surely seele them. *ver.* 8.

And howsoever they out of pride and confidence, did seeme altogether to slight them, using a proverbiall kind of speech which did imply as much *ver.* 10. for by it they intimate, that what they lost in overthrowes and ruines should be recovered, raised and repaired in greater splendor and glory then before. Yet they, even all the people should know, that God who is true of his Word had foretold as much, and should assuredly make it good.

2 As he setteth downe the authority, and certainty, so he sets downe the time, manner and meanes, shewing how punishment and ruine should be brought upon them. *viz.* the Lord would set up the adver saries of *Rezin* against him and joyne his enemies together, and then the *Syrians* before and *Philistines* behinde, and they should devour *Israel* with open mouth *ver.* 11, 12. *i.e.* *Their enemies being intraged should rise up against them on every side, and make a prey of them like wild beasts, rather then reasonable men.* /3/

Now whereas secure and obstinate men are wont to thinke, it will be but a storme at the most, after which they should have a calme, for being over and God pacified they should be safe, and free from further feare and punishment, for they having suffered some stroakes, usually grow more hard and obstinate then before, and promise themselves greater freedome and take greater liberty in sinne. The Prophet therefore lets them know that the Lord hath not shot all his shafts, neither is he pacified, *but his anger doth continue, and his hand is stretched forth still.* In which words he doth represent God unto them in the habite and posture of an angry man, a mighty man that is wrath, who had bin smiting heavy stroakes, and yet by *his countenance and hand stretched forth still* to strike, doth shew himselfe not withstanding the blowes already given to be no lesse angry then before. Neither are they safe (as they verily imagine) but still more and heavier stroakes hang over their heads which they shall by no meanes escape. Now whereas this might seeme strange, that the Lord should be so exceedingly moved against his people, that the cause might be knowne and God justified in his judgement; the words of the Text are added, so as if any make question or desire satisfaction concerning this continuance of his smiting and anger against *Israel*, he may hereby understand there is cause enough.

For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, alhough they have bin grievously smitten, to the end they might returne *and seeke the Lord of Hostes*, yet they are so obstinate and so impenitent and pertinacious, as they will not for all that returne, but doe more provoke the wrath of God against them.

The word translated (for) being *Vau* in *Hebrew*, doth properly signifie (And) but is variously used and (as some Gramarians have observed) in well neere 40 severall significations, and sometimes is causall and doth signify for, or because.

And in this place the most interpreters take it as causall and not copulative, and being so taken, you see the words shew the cause why the Lord would not take off his heavy hand, *nor turne away his wrath from Israel.* Namely because the people were soe stubborne and shamelesse as they would by no meanes be brought to repentance and conversion, and therefore it was most just and equall, that the Lord should not give them over, and as it were /4/ give place and way unto them in their wickednes, but as they went on in sinning, so he should goe on in smiting them still, untill at length they were utterly destroyed.

So that these words are not so much a prediction, as a commination, yea an accusation, lettin gthem know, that it was most just, that the Lord should goe on in punishment, because they did still goe on in sinne, and therefore howsoever there might

be some intermission, yet no dismissal out of *his hand which is stretched out still*. The words are considerable by themselves and in their relation unto what went before. In themselves they containe an heavy inditement against *Israel*, in which this heighnous crime is charged upon them, that they were growne so obstinate, as they could neither be drawne by mercies, nor driven by judgements, *to turne and seeke the Lord of Hostes*, from whome they had turned away by their sinnes, such was their impenitency and obstinacy, their mides and hearts in their Apostacy so alienated from God, as though they had bin smitten with heavy and very grievous stroakes, and their misery such as they could neither avoide nor indure, yet they would not take notice of Gods hand, so as to turne from their sinne, no nor so much as *seeke the Lord of Hostes*, and crave pardon and seeke helpe at his hand. For this last branch seemeth to bee a further aggravation of their obstinacy, intimating that they were so farre from repentance and conversion, as that *they did not so much as seeke unto the Lord of Hostes that smote them*. Now in their relative consideration, they set forth how just is is with God to goe on still to be angry, and still to stretch forth is punishing hand, not ceasing to smite till ruine and utter desolation come upon them.

In the words there are these particulars especially considerable. First who smote *Israel*, noted in the relative (him) and expressed in the last branch of the Text, *the Lord of Hostes*.

Secondly, why and to what end he smote them, both implied in the word *turne*, they were smitten, because they had turned from him, and that they might be brought to turne againe unto him.

Thirdly what use they made of this smiting, what fruite it had among them, and that was as little as might be, for they turned not to him &c. this smiting to them was fruitlesse, and vaine. /5/

Fourthly, how ill it was taken, and what hurt this obstinacy and impenitency of theirs did procure unto them, and that is not onely the reproofe of the Prophet, but the continuance of the anger of God and the stretching forth of his hand still to strike them with more and much heavier stroakes. *For all this &c.* So that these wordes (if they should be largely handled) might furnish our observations with at least these six severall Doctrines as implied or expressed in the word.

First, *That the eternall God is the Lord of Hostes*.

Secondly, *That Israel smitten by their enemies in warre, it is the Lord that smiteth them*.

Thirdly, *The cause of the destroying sword among them was, their departing from the Lord by their sinne*.

Fourthly, *The end of smiting was, that they might returne and seeke the Lord of Hostes*.

Fifthly, *Israel was obstinate and impenitent so as they did refuse to turne and seeke the Lord*.

Sixthly, *This obstinacy and impenitency did greatly provoke the Lord to anger, and was the cause of the continuance of his anger and stretching forth his hand to smite them still*.

But because it will be impossible to speake of more then the one halfe of these Doctrines within the compasse of the time, I shall reduce them unto these three Conclusions, and only touch upon some of the other, as occasion shall serve, in some of the Uses, and because that which is here spoken of *Israel*, doth also belong unto any other people, whose case may be paraleld with theirs, I shall propound and handle these Doctrines, rather in *thesi* then *hypothesi*, thus.

First, That Israel, or any people in covenant smitten with the sword of an enemy, It is the Lord that smiteth them.

Secondly, It is an heinous and grievous provoking sinne, for a people when they are thus smitten, not to turne and seeke the Lord of Hostes.

Thirdly, That Israel or any people continuing thus obstinate and impenitent, is the cause of the continuance of God his anger, and the increase of their punishment.

These are the Doctrines which (as I conceive) will be most suitable and usefull, and therefore of them as time shall give leave and God shall assist. And first I beginne with the first. /6/

*When Israel or any people are smitten by their enemies in warre, it is the Lord that smiteth them.*⁸

When a people is smitten with the sword of a forraigne, or domescick enemy, it is the Lord that smiteth them.

The Doctrine will be of use, especially for way unto the rest. Something must therefore be spoken of it, although we shall be more briefe in this, and more large in the rest. Now this first Doctrine for the sence of it, I suppose it is so cleare to every one of ordinary capacity, as I shall not need to spend time in explication.

And for the ground, it will be no lesse evident unto any that shall observe unto what the Relative (*him*) doth referre. Unto their enemies it cannot be referred, who were mentioned in the former Verse, but unto *Iehovah*, the Lord of Hoasts, as the words following doe declare.

But to clear this point from some other Scriptures, *Ezek 7.9. Ye shall know that I am the Lord that smiteth;* whatsoever the rod or sword may be, the Lord will have it known that he smiteth.

And more particularly and plainly, *Deut.28.25. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies, &c.* and Verse 49. *The Lord shall bring a Nation against thee from farre, from the end of the earth, &c.* if they be smitten, the Lord is he that doth cause it, and he doth bring their enemies how farre soever they come, *Ezek.11 8. Ye have feared the sword, and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord God. Amos 4.10. Your young men have I slaine with the sword, &c. Ezek 14.17. Or if I bring a sword upon that land and say, Sword, Goe through the land, so that I cut off man and beast from it.*

These Scriptures do cleare the point. Yet for better satisfaction unto such as doe not see how God should be said to strike them that are smitten by men, we shall briefly note how, and in what sense & respect the Lord is said to smite. God is pleased to work sometimes with, and sometimes without means, mediately, and immediately; & thus immediately and without means he formed our first Parents, and upheld them being created; and he led his Apostles into all truth. And in things belonging to this life, he sometimes worketh with, and sometimes without, yea above and contrary unto secondary causes and means. Thus he fed his people in the Wildernesse; divided the Sea; drew water out of the Rock. /7/

Sometimes he worketh by means mediately, and useth second causes; yet then he hath an especiall hand in these means: *Acts17. 28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being, &c.* and *Ephes. 1.11. he worketh all things after the Counsell of his owne will.* God is not to be conceived in his working by meanes as men. Kings and Princes governe their Kingdomes by their officers, so as themselves many times neither act with them nor doe know what is done by them. But the Lord hath an eye and hand in the whole government; All creatures, and every second cause is ordered and disposed

⁸ *Doct. I.*

by him: Who is therefore called the Lord of Hostes, not only because all creatures in Heaven and earth are his souldiers and his great army, but allso, because of his speciall cammand, order and government of them all, and particularly of men, in point of warre, which is his sword, and is so ordered by him as he may well be said to smite them that are smitten, In these and the like respects.

First, Because when a sword is drawned upon any people he doth call for it. *Ier.* 25. 29. *For I will call for a sword upon the inhabitants of the earth. Isay.* 13. 4. *He is said to be the Lord of Hostes, who doth muster the hoste of the battell.*

Secondly, he doth send it whithersoever it doth at any time come. *Ezek* 14.17.

Thirdly, he doth appoint who shall be smitten, when, by whom, how farre it shall goe, and how long it shall continue, *Hosea* 11.6. *Ier.*47.6,7.

Fourthly, he giveth strength and victory unto them that smite and prevaile. *Eccl.*9.11. *The battell is not to the strong. Psal.* 33. 17. *An horse is a vaine thing, neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Psal.* 144. 1. *Blessed is the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to warre, and my fingers to fight. Prov* 21. 31. *Victory is of the Lord.*

Fifthly, The Lord doth cause warre to cease, and command the sword to returne and put it selfe into its scabbard, rest and be still. *Ier.* 47 6. *Psal.* 46.9. *He maketh warre to cease, unto the end of the earth &c.*

But some may happily object.⁹ Wee see by experience that men smite with the sword, yea wicked, them that are good, who for their cruelty are not only menaced, but punished by the Lord of Hostes for their barbarous cruelty towards his /8/ people. How then can they be said to be smitten of God?

1 Answer; well enough: for first be they who they will, they are of his great Army, who is the great Generall and Lord of Hostes; They are his souldiers and his sword.¹⁰ *Psal.* 17. 13. *Deliver my soule from the wicked, which is thy sword. And Zeph.* 2. 12. *Ye Ethiopians, ye allso shall be slaine by my sword.*

Sometimes the Lord doth send wicked men to destroy or smite wicked men, and sometimes to correct his owne children for their good, that being tried, they may be made manifest, either to themselves for hope, or to others for imitation. *Rom.*5.3, 4. *Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.*¹¹

Secondly, The Lord doth menace and punish their cruelty towards his people and that justly, Because they doe not smite them in obedience unto God, whose will they inquire not after; but have aimes, and ends of their owne, yet God doth use them to doe his will, and pleasure, even then when they doe least of all obey him. This you have noted *Isa.* 10. 5. *Ashur is the rod of his indignation, or anger: and God doth send him against an hypocriticall Nation, &c. but ver. 7. He meaneth not so, his end is not to punish an hypocriticall Nation, neither doth his heart thinke so: But it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off Nations, not a few.* His aime is not to serve the Lord, but by his tyranny to inlarge his dominions: and to subject as much people as he could, unto himselfe, and so to serve his owne ambition, and avarice, and therefore the will of his God was not his rule, unto which he had no regard: but did abuse his power, and (as *Hierom* doth observe on the place,) went beyond the bounds of Gods anger, and beyond his owne Commission. The like may be noted in *Iehu*, who was sent of God to destroy

⁹ *Object.*

¹⁰ *Answ.*

¹¹ *Aug. contra [??] [??] [??]*

Iezebel, and the false Prophets, and the whole house of *Ahab*.¹² *And he did well in executing that which was right in the sight of God, and is promised a reward for his service.* 2. King 10.30. *Yet the Lord will avenge the blood of Iezreel upon the house of Jehu.* *Hosea*.1.4. And the reason is, because *Iehu* had another aime then God, for hee looked no further then his owne honour, that he might raigne King: But God aimed at the rooting out of Idolatry, by taking away the Patrons of Idols and Authors of it.¹³ Now *Iehu departed not from the Golden Calves that were in Dan and Bethel.* 2 Kings. 10. 29. And the like by ends may be noted in others. /9/

Use 1. If when *Israel* or any people are smitten by the sword of an Enemy, it is the Lord that smiteth them, then it must needs follow, that *Germany* smitten, and miserably wasted, it is the Lord that smote them. *Ireland* smitten and almost consumed, the Lord hath smitten them. *England*, at this time smitten, devided and much weakened, it is the Lord that hath smitten us. This Doctrine doth assure us, as the woman of *Tekoa* doth informe *David*, that the hand of *Ioab* was in all that, so the hand of God is in all this, his hand hath smitten both them and us. The more therefore to blame wee, and the greater our sin, who looke much below the hand of God.¹⁴ It was a just complaint of our Prophet. Chap. 26.11. *Lord when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see:* and in this Chap. (as was noted before) he chargeth this people, that they were so farre from turning to him that smote them, as they tooke no notice of the hand that hurt them. *Israel* lookes lower then heaven, then the hand of God, and lookes on other hands, they could not see his hand that smote them. I feare, *Israel* and *England*, are to like each other in this, as *England* is the worse. I remember what one hath noted of *Israel*, and I pray let us consider whether it be not true also of *England* also at this day. When the *Jewes* indured so many miseries, even from their first plantation in the land unto their finall casting out, they were seldome aware of this point; &c. If the *Philistines*, *Cananites* and other borderers upon them doe spoile their Country, tyrannize over them, and oppresse them with cruell slavery, as they did in the times of the Iudges, they will interpret this to be mothing, but an old grudge of these nations for dispossessing them of their Country, for which they were hated, and all occasions fought to worke revenge. If the Kingdome be devided, that is nothing but *Rehoboams* folly, and ill counsell of ill advised Courtiers. If *Israel* make warre on *Iudah*, or *Iudah* upon *Israel*, that is but policy to keepe downe one another, least one should encroach upon both Kingdomes: If there be civill warre, that is through the factions of potent and ambitious Statesmen. If a forraigner invade them, it is nothing but the pride of ambitious tyrants, that cannot be content with their owne, but seeke after glory and greatnes in the ruine of other Kingdomes. Yea if *Salmanazer*, or *Nebuchadnezzar* carry them away captive out of their Land, /10/ though they may thinke God not well pleased with them, in the generall, yet they would resolve these effects into other causes, more proper as they conceive. It was weaknes in their Kings degenerating from their antient valour, want of good confidences, of good Councillours, of skilfull and trusty Commanders, or hardy Soldiers, they were over-borne by multitude; and these, or some things like these, were the cause of this misfortune. &c. *But [??] God they [??],* they will sacribe [??] unto any thing, then unto the hand of God. But as [??] of the people of his time, in case of good success [??] &c. One doth ascribe it to [??], another unto event, a third unto the advice of their leaders, a [??] unto good counsell &c. [??] *Deo*. Hardly any unto God. How true this is of our times, and whether this be not our

¹² 2 Kings [??]7,8.

¹³ *Annon [??] [??] [??] de corpore dia [??] [??] 10.7.*

¹⁴ Isa. 26. 11.

National sin, I shall leave you to consider and judge, and [??], it is very great, and wee in it like *Israel*, and not much beyond the *Heathen* may much behind some of them, who were wont to [??] much higher then many of our people doe. For to say nothing of him, that having slaine a great Enemy of his Country, and when there was a strife among the Officers, who should give him most honour, did ascribe all to Heaven, and would take nothing to himselfe and others, but only the lending their hands unto the worke, they ascribing victory and successe unto *Fortune*, and *Victoria*, did as they imagined, ascribe them to God. For *Fortune*, as they thought was a divine power, and no lesse indeed then a God. And the like they held of *Victoria* as *Aug.* noted.¹⁵

This sinne is so much the more to be noted and reproved, as it is more sinfull and dangerous; for it is a fault in the first concoction of the use which would be made of the judgements of God not to be recovered in the rest. It is observed by two learned [??] upon the Text, that *Israel* not acknowledging whence these stroakes c[??]me, therefore they did not turne by true repentance unto the Lord, *neither did they seeke him.*¹⁶ And whereas these stroakes were laid on them that they might convert, being neglected they become more obstinate.¹⁷ It is the policy of *Satan*, not unlike to that of *Jeroboam* 1 *Kings* 12. 26,27. *Who learning the people should goe up to Jerusalem, to Sacrifice in the house of God, that their heart would turne againe unto their Lord, /11/ the King of Iudah.* And therefore he doth set up Golden Calves and said unto them, *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem, behold thy Gods O Israel, &c.* Thus the Devill well knowing it might proove dangerous, if men should looke so high as the hand of God, for then they might possibly lay to heart his hand, and inquire into the cause, and fall out with their sinne, and fall off from *Satan*, therefore he indeavours to make them to cast their eyes upon Golden Calves, and doth fasten them on any thing on Earth, that they may not looke up to Heaven, and by this meanes it cometh to passe that God looseth all the glory, and they all the gaine of his mercies and punishment upon them for their amendments.

Secondly, This Doctrine may serve for comfort and support unto Gods people, to remove and mitigate sorrow, especially in the excesse, in saddest times of smiting.¹⁸ And truly, such times call for cordialls, and such a use of this Doctrine. For when the Lord cometh towards his owne in a warlike habite and posture, when he approacheth neer unto them with wrath in his countenance, and a destroying sword, a bloody rod in his hand, the dearest of Saints falling into the hands, and unto the mercy of barbarous and cruell bloody men, seems to exceed in feare, yead and fly in such trembling fist to try some ill conclusion, if they stay not themselves, they may feare the feare of the wicked and say, *A confederacy with them, to whom they say a confederacy.* *Isa.* 8.12. Their feare may drive them to make unlawfull leagues, or to be of the opinion, judgement or practice of the wicked, in working out their way out of danger, and at the least withdraw themselves from God, in whom alone is helpe, and comfort in time of trouble, and danger. As it is noted of *Astianax*, when his owne father came towards him armed (although it was to imbrace him) yet being afraid at the sight of his head-peece, and hairy plume bending towards him: the child doth forthwith hide his face in his nurses bosome, and cry: the poore child tooke his father in that habite, for a foe, rather then a friend. Thus Gods children may mistake, and feare, yea and fly unto the creature for shelter. But now this Doctrine being remembered, *that it is God that smiteth*, and

¹⁵ [?? marginalia obliterated]

¹⁶ [?? marginalia obliterated]

¹⁷ [?? marginalia obliterated]

¹⁸ *Use.*

that the rod, or sword, is in the hand of our Heavenly Father; When *Turke* or Traitor, some *Irish* Rebell, *English* Papist, or Atheist, is the /12/ sword, yet the hand of God doth order, and guide it, and whatsoever their malice, or bloudy cruelty may be, yet it shall doe no more, nor go any further then he shall carry it; they cannot move but as they are guided and ordered by him: this will quiet their spirits, and stay their feares. You know when some Generall or Commander of an Army is reported to be barbarous and cruell, it strikes great feare into the hearts of such as apprehend his terrour approaches on the contrary, if the Generall be reputed a mild and mercifull man, it doth much mitigate the feare of such as are like to fall into his hands. When therefore, we shall consider; that the great Commander of all Armies and Lord of Hosts, is the friend, yea the Father of *Israel*, of his people, and that all the counsels and smittings, yea and very motions of wicked men are at his dispose; it make no matter who, or what they are, the stroakes shall be no more nor heavier, then our Heavenly Father shall appoint. *Psal.* 76. 10. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restraine.* The fiercenesse and cruelty that they exercise against his servants, shall be so ordered, as shall be for the glory of God, and for the good of his people, even then when they prevaile; And the residue of it God will restraine from effecting and attempting further evill; so that whatsoever strength and power they have joyned with their rage, it shall be limited unto what may be for the glory of God, and good of his people, neither shall it breake forth further then is expedient unto these ends, be it never so great.

And as they shall be no greater, so neither shall they beare them longer than is meet and convenient, *Psal.* 125. 3. *For the [??] of the Wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. He at his pleasure maketh Warres to cease.* *Psal.* 46.9.

Finally, this smiting shall not so much wound, destroy and kill; as heale, cure, and save his people: for *Isai.* 27. 7,8,9. God doth not smite his people, as he smiteth those that smote him, &c. But in measure, &c. ver.8. *And by this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged and this is all the fruit, to take away his sinne, &c* which well considered, would prove a sweet cordiall of comfort in these smiting times, and who would thinke much to be smitten by such an hand? I have read, that among the Persians /13/ he that is commanded to be beaten by the King, doth give thanks unto him, accounting it to be an happy thing, *quod Rex sui memor fuerit*, that the King is mindfull of him. Sure I am, they that are smitten of God their Father, have cause to account it a favour; for if the wounds of a friend be faithfull, how much more the strokes of such a Father? they are ever laid on his in faithfulness, and so in mercy, to make them fit to receive his Promises of Grace, and to free them from sinne. And to this end *David* doth desire that the righteous might smite him, and he should take it for a kindness, *Psal.* 141.5. It is reported of *Cyrus* that he knew the names of all that were in his Army; the Lord doth know the names and conditions of all in his; and will see that none shall have more, or heavier strokes laid on them, then they shall be able to beare; for the haire of their heads are numbered, and not one of them doth fall on the ground, but by his providence. I conclude with *Isai.* 54. the beginning of vers 4. and ver.5. *Feare not, for thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of Hosts is his Name.) &c.*

Now in the last place, this Doctrine may serve to elevate our eyes, and raise up our thoughts above, and beyond those visible hands with which we are smitten: Carnall men are wont like the dog to eye and snap at the stone, not looking at the hand, and therefore they howle, repine, murmure, and vex themselves, gnaw their tongues, and

teare their flesh, and breake their hearts under their burdens; and yet for all this they make no use of their smiting.¹⁹

And the people of God themselves (as it must be acknowledged) are too apt to looke too much and dwell too long upon second Causes, they many times as young *Samuel* (when God called) he runneth to *Eli*, so they run to men, and meanes, when they should answer to God calling them unto himselfe, and this on both sides is not onely an hinderance unto them, so as they do not improve the strokes unto their ends, but many times a meanes to make them impatient, and ill advised, at the least: Whereas if they did consider that it is the Lord that smiteth, it would make them dumbe, and not to dare to open their mouths, because he doth it, *Psal.39.9*. Therefore as a remedy of impatientie and many other evils, which may and many times doe follow upon the non-observance of his hand in smiting, let us minde and /14/ remember this doctrine, that when any people is smitten, it is the Lord that smiteth them, and then we shall alwayes joyne these together in our thoughts, as they did in their cry, *Indg. 7.20. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon:* and then we shall the better follow the counsell given *Micah 6. 9. The Lords voyce cryeth unto the citie, and the man of Wisdome shall see thy Name: heare ye the [??] and Who hath appointed it.*

Thus we have done with the first point, which sheweth who it is that smiteth Israel, or any people that are smitten, although by a foreigne enemy in warre.

Now we come unto the second, which declareth what use Israel made of their smiting, and how ill their behaviour under the rod was taken. And here we have three distinct particulars, which we shall for brevities sake joyne in the Doctrine, and distinguish in the lite.

First, the ground and cause of their smiting.

Secondly, the end at which God aimeth in his smiting Israel, that which moved the Lord to smite them, and the use they should have made of his strokes, which are both implied in the word (*turne,*) the contrary whereof is laid to their charge, they did not turne, he smote them for their turning from him, and that they might turne unto him.

Thirdly, the Lord by the Prophet doth charge this upon them as a great & heinous offence, for which this is here charged on them as an heinous crime, as before you heard, that the people did not turn to him that smote them, and brought in as the cause or reason why the anger of God did continue, and his hand was still stretched forth: so then the next Doctrine may be thus propounded.

*That it is an offence very heinous (a crime of an high nature) for Israel, or any people being smitten of God for their sinne, that they might returne and seeke the Lord of Hosts; to continue impenitent and obstinate, so as not to turne to him that smiteth them.*²⁰

Or more briefly thus:

That is is a Wrath provoking sinne for a people being smitten of God with the sword of an enemy for their sinne, to continue obstinate, so as not to returne.

I shall speake something by way of Explication: First, of this /15/ short description of God, stiled *The Lord of Hosts*, unto whom they should have turned.

Secondly, of the duty which they did owe and should have performed, which was to turne and seeke the Lord of Hosts: and then we shall further declare how, and

¹⁹ Use 3.

²⁰ Doct. [??]

why this should be charged on them, or any people as a crime so heinous, or sin so grievous, and then come to the [??]e.

First, the Lord is stiled the Lord of Hosts, and it is an usuall Title or Attribute, which is given and taken by himselfe, as a stile well-fitting his Majestie, and the Lord is so stiled, because that all Creatures are his Army, and he their Generall and great Commander, *Gen.2.1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hoste of them.* By a Metaphor he calleth the Creatures with which the severall parts of the world are adorned an host: for hereby is meant all Creatures in the earth and heavens, which stand as an Army; thus in the highest heavens there are the glorious Angels, who are a part of this Host or Army, *Luke 2.13, 15.*

Secondly, in the visible heavens the starres, and they are sometimes brought forth to fight against the enemies of the Lord of Hosts and his people, *Judg. 5.20.* they fought against *Sisera.*

Thirdly, in the lower heavens, the Fowles of the aire a part of God his Army; and in the water, the Fishes; in the earth, men, beasts and creeping things; for they all are said to be an Army in respect of God, whom they serve, and therefore he is called the Lord of Hosts, *Psal. 119.91. Isai. 45.12. Joel 2.25.*²¹

Now all Creatures being called the Armies of God by way of resemblance, you may briefly note, wherein especially that resemblance doth stand, namely in these, and the like particulars.

First, in respect of their number, for any multitude in Scripture is called an army, if it be orderly; and armies usually consist of great numbers.²²

Secondly, in respect of Order, which is especially observed in Armies; and this maketh the Host of God admirable: and the very word translated Host *Gen.2.1.* doth signifie an army standing in order.

Thirdly, in respect of Obedience. In armies well ordered the souldiers are obedient, and at the beck and command of their Captain, as *Matth.8.9.* and thus locusts, flies, lice, and every creature /16/ are at the command of their Generall.

Fourthly, I shall adde one thing more, and that is in respect of power. Armies are very potent, and some have been formidable and irresistible, and thus the Army of the Lord of Hosts is formidable and irresistible, who with flies, frogs, and such like is able to overcome as potent and proud an enemy as *Pharoah* King of Egypt. In these and the like respects, the Creatures are said to be the Hosts of God; I might (for prevention of mistake) further note, how that there is not a resemblance in everything. For, other armies or hosts are raised for defence; and may (although great) be put unto the wor[??] but it is not so with God, who hath no need of any Creature, nor can be resisted; but I omit that, and this [??] serve for the first particular, how God is stiled the Lord of Hosts.

Secondly, let us in the next place consider what it is to turne unto the Lord of Hosts, or him that smiteth. The word here used is sometimes translated turne, and sometimes returne, as you may see in these places *Isai.6.13.* and *37.7.* and *Chap.31.6. Ier.3.7.&c.*²³ It doth properly note out locall motion of them that passe, or move from place to place, leaving some place or person where, or with whom they were before, thus 1 *Sam. 7. 17. Samuel* his returne was to Ramah, for there was his house, &c. but thus it cannot be taken here, for *Psal.139. 7,8.* it is not possible to goe from the presence of God, if one ascend to Heaven, or make his bed in hell, God is there &c. The phrase

²¹ *Piscat.*

²² *Ill[??]*

²³ [?? Hebrew]

is translated from locall motion of the body, and applyed unto spaiuall motions, in which men by a kind of similitude are said to walke, to depart, or goe from, and to returne againe unto the Lord, and it may be noted in the words of *Austin, Aliud est migrare corpore, aliud corde, &c.*²⁴ It is one thing to move from place to place in body, and another thing to move from place to place in heart; in body he doth move from place to place, that doth change his place, he doth it in heart, *qui cordis mutat affectum: si aliud amas, &c aliud amabas, non ibi es, ubi eras:* he doth move in heart from where he was, that doth change the affection of his heart, and if thou didst love one thing, and dost now love another, thou art not there where thou wast before; by sinning against God, withdrawing our affections from him, and placing them upon the creature, we goe away from God; sinne is contrary unto the nature /17/ of God, and farre from him: and when on the contrary part, we place our affections upon him, and become obedient, we returne to him, from sinne and vice unto vertue and grace; and therefore as he further observeth to this purpose, he that beleeveth doth come, and he that goeth away, *non movetur anima pedibus, sed a[??]ectibus;*²⁵ the soule is not moved with feet, but with affections; and God who is despised in any place, doth depart from their hearts who doe forsake him in their manners and lives not with their feet; he commeth to them who turne to him not with their face but with their faith, and approach unto him in their minds, not with their flesh. In a word, by serious repentance we turne to him; so that to turne to God, is to repent, or convert from Satan and sinne to God, *Act. 3. 19. Repent and be converted:* and *Ezek. 18.30. Repent and turne your selves from your iniquities, &c.*

Thirdly, let us in the last place note what it is to seek the Lord of Hosts, which is the other act or branch of the duty they should have performed: To seek the Lord of Hosts (as is observed by one upon the words) is sometimes to pray, *Psal.34.4. I sought the Lord.* And sometimes to obey, it is put for the observation of the Commandements, *2 Chron. 14.4. Asa* commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to doe the Law and the Commandements. But it will not be amisse to open this Phrase a little further, which doth very often occurre in Scripture. The word is borrowed from common use (as the former) and seeking properly is a solicitous and sedulous action of ones desiring and endeavouring to find some person or thing which they apprehend to be lost, or at least, is out of their hand and possession, thus *Luk. 2.15.* and *4.8.* and *Luk. 2.44.* this being the proper use of the word doth hold some proportion with this duty of seeking applied unto higher objects and divine things, generally it may imply and comprehend repentance and all other acts and exercises, whereby the Lord of Hosts is sought and may be found, and more specially it is called a seeking of his face *1 Chron. 16. 11.*

For God is every where in his Essence and Power, as an Antient hath noted, *Deus manet intra omnia, extra omnia, &c.*²⁶ God abideth within all things, without all things, and he is above and below all things; he is above all things in his power and dominion, and below all things by his sustentation, without all things /18/ by his greatnesse, and within all things by his piercing and subtile nature.

But the face and favour of God is not so extensive as his presence.

To seek the Lord is to use all meanes by which his favour may be obtained, and his grace exercised and manifested to us; and this seeking God is to rest on him, to beleve in him, to obey his will, to worship and serve him, no otherwise then himselfe

²⁴ [?? maginalia illegible]

²⁵ *Aug. in [??] tract.48.p.35 [??]*

²⁶ *Greg.*

hath appointed; and being angry, to endeavour reconciliation, and to implore his helpe, and grace; others say, men seeke the Lord by faith, repentance, an intire and serious endeavour and desire of the heart after reconciliation and grace, with prayers and an endeavour after righteousnesse and beneficence, by putting off the old man and putting on the new.

Now that which is charged upon Israel is, that they did not seeke the Lord of Hosts. It was their duty so to seek the Lord, as hath been set forth; but (as I conceive) the Prophet doth not speake of such a seeking in this place, but of a lesser degree of seeking then turning unto him; for it is a further amplification and aggravation of their sinne, as was before noted; in the resolution of the words they were so farre from turning to God by true repentance and conversion, as they did not so much as acknowledge and crave pardon for their sinne; they did not perceive and take notice of the wrath of God against them for their sinne, and therefore did not cry to him for mercy, as the Lord of Hosts by whom they were smitten, and in whose power it was to wound and heale, to save and destroy them, which is a great aggravation of their sinne, that they did not at all seek to him who was the Lord of Hosts, able to helpe or hurt whom he would. For had he been unable to hurt or helpe, or were he so farre oft as they might seeme to be out of his reach, or that he had not at all to doe with them, it had not bene so necessary that they should have fought him, but he being the Lord of Hosts and he that smote them, and was able utterly to ruine and destroy them; for them not to turne nor so much as seeke unto him, was an offence of a very high nature: It seemes to be such a kind of aggravation of their sinne, as that *Ier.5.21,22.*

Now for the prooffe of this Doctrine, I shall have lesse need to spend time, because the Doctrine is so neere unto the words at /19/ least the sense and scope of the Text; for they are charged with this as an heinous crime, and as the cause of anger and smiting continued, that they did not turne, &c. you may please to observe that *Ier.2.30. In vaine have I smitten your children, they received no correction, &c. And Chap.5.3,4. O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction, they have made their faces harder then a rocke, they have refused to returne. Therefore I said, Surely these are poore, they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgement of their God.* In which places, especially the latter, they are charged with obstinancy, in contemning chastisements and corrections; which contempt of theirs did greatly provoke the Lord to wrath against them, *Isai. [??].5.* there the Prophet doth charge them with obstinancie and impenitencie as an high and heinous offence, that neither mercy nor correction would make them better, and many the like places might be brought to this purpose, I shall only adde that *Amos 4. 8.* and thence to the end of the Chapter, in which they are reprov'd or rather reproach'd and upbraided with this: that notwithstanding they had been visited with all sorts of judgements, and yet they did not for all that return unto him that smote them. See *ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.*

Now if any aske, why this should be an offence so heinous, and such a provocation of wrath not to returne, being under the rod: the reason²⁷ is manifest, and partly intimated in the termes of the Doctrine, and in what was brought for prooffe; such doe remaine impenitent and obstinate, they sinne not of infirmity and weaknesse, but of stubbornnesse and wilfulnesse, and now they refuse to receive correction; they have made their faces harder then a rock, they have refused to returne; *Ier. 5. 3.*²⁸ such men are unfruitfull under meanes, unthankfull for mercy, frustrate Gods endeavour to doe

²⁷ Reason.

²⁸ Jer.5 3.

them good, shew themselves incorrigible, and irrecoverable when mercies nor judgements will doe them no good. In the 6. Chapter and *ver.* 29, 30. the desperate condition of such an obstinate people, is excellently set forth by comparing such sinners unto Oare, God unto a refiner, and his Word a rod unto a furnace, these meanes used to take away the drosse of their sinne, and not prevailing, he with indignation doth now cast them away as drosse that is good for nothing./20/

Thus having cleared the Doctrine, I shall come to the Uses, which might be divers, but that I must hasten unto the last point, which I chiefly intend.²⁹ This Doctrine will in the first place, (by considering the implied cause and ground of the quarrell between God and a people; the cause of smiting, which is falling, or turning from him by sin,) informe us of the most malignant, and pernicious nature of sinne, it is a serpent which usually sheweth an amiable face, but hideth its venomous taile, that men may more boldly venture upon it; but what shewes soever it maketh to the contrary, we shall finde it a fawning enemy, a sweet poyson and a deadly serpent, it may be sweet in the mouth, but it will be bitter in the belly, as *Iob* 20.12. *Though wickednesse bee sweet in the mouth of the sinner, though he hide it under his tongue; though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth: Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aspes within him.* And as the Prophet *Ier.*2.19. *It is an evill thing and a bitter to forsake the Lord.*³⁰ This *Dalilah*, this *Absalom*, so much affected, beloved and delighted, doth provoke God to anger, and draw down punishment upon us; sinne sets Heaven against us, keepeth good things from us, if famine, warre, pestilence, or any other judgement seize on the land, we may thanke sinne for it, which is the only procuring cause of it. God smote Israel for their sinfull forsaking him, and he smote them that they might returne; if this were well considered, we should not so easily entertaine and imbrace this hateful enemy, presenting it selfe unto us in friendly and delightfull shapes; but we look on sinne as a tender mother on the fruit of her wombe smiling upon her, and representing nothing but what is delightfull unto it, whereas looking upon that tender infant through the Prospective of Gods Word, she might see ar[??]bell, a traitor, a serpent full of deadly poyson, and which may prove a *Iudas*, another *Absalom*, if not renewed or restrained by Grace; thus sinne lookt upon through the Word, although in the shape of pleasure, profit, &c. yet it is that which doth cause the Lord to be angry, and in anger to smite us with bloody strokes of the destroying sword.

In the next place, this Doctrine may further informe us of Gods mercy in his heavy and grievous judgements.³¹ *God simteth, that they might returne unto him:* his aime and indeavour is to doe *Israel*, or another people good by smiting them: he would /21/ not come to blowes at all, if words would serve the turne, or any warning be taken; but if words will not, if no warning may serve, then the rod must open the eare, and if it may make us returne, it is howsoever from the wisdom and goodnesse of God, that a sinfull people are smitten, for hereby he applyeth an healing hand unto such *as would perish without such meanes used for their good.* This is that must recover them if they be not incurable, for it is the phisick which his owne wisdom hath found out, and prescribed to us, in recovering such as we have under our hands. *Pro.* 22. 15. *Foolishnesse is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it farre from him.* And therefore, *Pro.*22. 13. *Correction must not be withheld from the child: for if he be beaten with the rod he shall not dye,* and in the next verse, *Thou shalt*

²⁹ [?? note obliterated]

³⁰ [?? note illegible]

³¹ Use 2.

beate him with the rod and shalt deliver his soule from hell. So that to use the rod is to shew love and care for the child's good; *But to spare the rod, is to hate the sonne; And he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.* Pro. 13. 24. God doth exercise his Fatherly goodnesse, even in smiting, that he may cause men to turne to him smiting them. That of *Hab. 1. 12.* Is worthy Observation: *Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine holy one? we shall not die: thou hast ordained them for judgement, and O mighty God thou hast established them for correction.* Where he sheweth, how that although God suffered the enemies of his people to spoyle them, yet he was their God, and kept his Covenant with them; by noting the manner and end of such a smiting: he sheweth that the Lord doth order and dispose them by his providence, and that he had a gracious end in such strokes, not to kill but to correct them, and finally there was a measure in the manner of his smiting his people by their enemies, as the word Judgement doth imply, they had bounds set, which they could not passe.

A third Use³² of this Doctrine may be to informe us concerning the use, and improvement of this smiting, hereby a nation, and so a particular person may see whether they have made a right use of the strokes of warre, or any other judgement; *If they have caused us to turne to him that smiteth us,* and that we have bin brought to learne obedience, (as our Lord did) by the things which he suffered;³³ and that as *David* saith of himselfe *Psal 1 9. 67. Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now have I kept thy /22/ word:* thus if the Land can say, and the inhabitants of it, looking unto the cause of the controversy of God. *Hose. 4. 1,2.* The cause of the controversy with *Israel*, is the want of truth, mercy, and the knowledge of God. And because by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they breake out and blood toucheth blood. There are many other sinnes which move God to be Angry with *Israel*, some of which we noted in the Context, these are for instance, now if a man can say before these warres began, I was a lyer, but now have I cast off lying, and speake the truth; I was a cruell man, but now am full of bowells of mercy, and tender affection, and humanity; I was ignorant and Atheisticall, without the feare of God in my heart, but now have I gotten some knowledge, and feare of God into my soule, and so the rest. I did use profanely to Swear, made no conscience of Lying, and other Sinnes, but now I feare an oath, speake truth, and am tender of the life, and just in the dealing with the state of my neighbour, &c. Surely this man may be said to have profited by this judgement, which is become a correction unto him for his amendment: and the like may be said of a nation. But if it may be said of such a Nation, or person, because they were false, unjust, and ignorant before, God smote the land, and they are such still: they were prophane Swearers before, and are such still: Lyers before, and are Lyers still; and so of the rest. It is sure such a person, or nation hath not made the right and true use of such stroakes, *which should have caused them to turne to him that smiteth them.*

The last Use³⁴ we shall make of this Doctrine is examination & reprehension, *Israel* did not turne to him that smote them. It is a heinous crime laid to their charge, and a very great offence. The use therefore of this Doctrine by way of resolution, would be examination of our selves, namely that every one should consider, and inquire, what doe I? what doe we? and am not I to be charged justly with some such crime, and provoking sin? may it not be laid to my charge, *that I turne not to him that smiteth?* I feare it may too truly be laid to our charge, as it is charged on *Israel*, *That the people turne not to him that smiteth them, neither doe they seake the Lord of Hostes.*

³² Use 3.

³³ Heb.5.8.

³⁴ Use 4.

But as it is said of *Israel*, (elsewhere)³⁵ it may truly be said of *England*, that the pride of *Israel* testifieth to his face, *and they doe not returne unto the Lord /23/ God, nor seeke him for all this*. That is, notwithstanding all warnings, menaces, corrections and severe punishment: they are not bettered, they yield neither to words, nor blowes, but hold on their sinfull course, continue obstinate, although grievously afflicted and oppressed, and that their pride doth testifie to their face, they are evidently convinced of it. In this pride they did flight and contemne all warnings, which is an argument of intolerable pride indeed. They were admonished, reprov'd and warn'd, yet did not regard it. I wish it were not true of us, who have bin for many yeeres together admonished, & warn'd: for as *Ieremiah* speaks of the people of his time. *The Lord hath sent unto you all his Servants the Prophets, rising early, and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your eare to heare.*³⁶ The he sheweth what their message was; *They said, turne you againe now every one from his evill way, and from the evill of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you, and to your fathers for ever and ever, &c.* Then he sheweth what use they made of this admonition, and message, and that is in the seventh Verse, *Yet ye have not hearkened unto me saith the Lord, that ye might provoke me to anger, with the worke of your hands, unto your owne hurt.*³⁷ But of this more in the next point.

Thus much of the second Doctrine, I proceed now nto the third and last, which is this,

*Israel smitten for his sinnes, and not returning and seeking the Lord of Hosts, moveth God to continue his anger, and to stretch forth his smiting hand still.*³⁸

This Doctrine I chiefly intended, as that which may be sutable unto the time, and usefull to us all; the worst is, I feare I shall not have time to speake so fully unto it, I shall therefore doe as a traveller that is likely to be belated, passe over such things as are not of necessity, and post over the next way unto what I principally intend.

The Doctrine may be propounded in *thesi* as well as the former, or we may propose it in *hypothesi*, it will be usefull either way: if you please you may take it thus:

When God is angry with Israel, or any people in Covenant, and smiteth them with the sword of an enemy for their sinnes, if they doe not returne and seeke the Lord or Hosts, God will continue his anger and stretch forth his hand still. /24/

I conceive the Doctrine for the ground to be so cleare, and for meaning so plaine, as I need not waste time (which we shall want,) in Explication or prooffe.

For the ground of it, briefly let this be observed, that whereas in the former verse he had avouched God to be angry still, and still to stretch forth his hand to smite, although they had been grievously smitten before, he sheweth this to be the cause and just ground of the continuance of anger and smiting, namely that they do not turne to him that smiteth, nor seeke, &c. so that this reason in its relation doth hold forth the Doctrine, that *When God is angry with Israel or any people in Covenant, and smiteth them with the sword of an enemy for their sinne, if they returne not, neither seeke the Lord of Hosts, he will continue his anger and stretch forth his destroying hand still.*

And for the sence, only in generall, for I have not time to speak of the termes in particular, when the Lord brings the sword upon a people to cause them to repent and returne unto hm, they continuing impenitent and obstinate, not repenting of their sinne and yielding unto him, the Lord will not cease to be angry, he will not be appeas'd, nor

³⁵ [??] 7. 10.

³⁶ Jer. 25. 4,5.

³⁷ Ver.7.

³⁸ Doct. [??]

cease to punish, but will goe on, and multiply and make his strokes more and heavier then they were before, for so much is implied, when he saith, *His hand is stretched forth still: Parata ad graviores poenas instig[??]*.³⁹ His hand is ready to inflict more heavie and grievous punishments.

Now although I might spare further prooffe of the Doctrine, I shall point you to a place or two, and ha[??]t unto the Use. That obstinacie under punishment and smiting doth cause anger to continue, yea, and punishment to increase is manifest by that, *Levit.26. 17,18. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be [??]ne before your enemies: they that hate you, shall reigne over you, &c. then ver. 18. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then will I punish you seven times more for your sinnes.* Where you see such as are smitten and doe not become obedient, shall feele the hand of God seven times heavier then it was before. In the Prophecy of *Amos* Chapt. 4. throughout the latter part of the Chapter from *ver.6.* you have a cleare prooffe of this point, especially *ver. 12.* where (as some understand that place,) *therefore thus will I doe unto thee, O Israel,* that is, I shall bring the punishments before mentioned, and more heavie and grievous, even ruine and /25/ destruction; because they had been punished with lesser punishments, and would not turne unto the Lord, therefore this would he doe.

But I passe from the prooffe, and come briefly to note the reasons of the Doctrine,⁴⁰ why anger and smiting should be continued and increased: first, it is still continued, because the cause and disease doth still continue; there is the same reason of the continuance of Physicke, and meanes to cure the body, as there was of entering such a course, if the disease doe still continue; and the same reason of continuing corrosives to a sore, as to apply them at first, if proud or dead flesh do still continue; the same reason of correcting a second time as there was of a former correction, if an offender continue to offend, and this is true whether the strokes are for punishment or correction.

Secondly,⁴¹ their sinne is now more sinfull, and therefore deserveth more anger, and calleth for greater punishment. For first, they improve not the meanes used for their good, but abuse the meanes, and take the Name of God in vaine.

Secondly, they adde contumacy to their sinne, and shew themselves to be obstinate, so as their sinne is another sin in the nature of it, although the same in the matter: for now they refuse to receive correction, *and make their faces harder then a rocke, and refuse to returne,*⁴² as was before noted out of the Prophet.

Thirdly, they shew their love unto their sinne, and delight in it to be greater: for in evill workes proceeding from the same habit, the latter are worse then the former, this iteration doth argue delight in offending, which therefore doth deserve greater punishment.⁴³

Fourthly, this continuance in sinne under smiting is a signe of obstinate malice and wickednesse, for such men being thus punished and doe not repent, doe *apertum bellum cum Deo ag[??]e,* wage open warre with God.

Thirdly, I might adde another reason,⁴⁴ drawne from the end of smiting, which is various according to the condition of the person smitten, if the man be wicked, and a vessell of wrath, the Lord doth smite to glorifie his justice, in taking vengeance of his sinne, and so he proportioneth punishment unto the nature of the sinne, as

³⁹ [?? illegible note]

⁴⁰ Reason 1.

⁴¹ Reas. 2.

⁴² Jer. 5. 3.

⁴³ *In operationibus malis ab [??]dem habitu posteriores sunt pejores prioribus.* Tostat.

⁴⁴ Reas. 3.

Psal.58.10,11. God will overcome when he judgeth, Rom. 3.4. If he be a vessell of mercy, and one that the Lord loveth, he will /26/ smite him till he make him smart, if he doe not attend his pleasure, and turne from sinne with lesser strokes, the Lord is forced to make them greater, till he bring down their proud heart, and make them to yeeld, as Psal. 107.11,12. they doe rebell against the words of the Lord and contemne the counsell of the most High, therefore he bringeth down their heart with labour, they fell downe and there is none to helpe. The Lord will breake the pride of thier power, as he threateneth Levit.26.19. if the judgement should be removed while the sinne is not left, it were judgement and wrath, not mercy and grace; and so much for the reasons and fitting the Doctrine for Life, I come now to the Application.

This Doctrine thus cleared, the Uses might be many, and would require much more time then we have for their full pro[??]tion; but we shall contract our selves and apply the point, first, for Instruction; secondly, for Conviction; thirdly, for Humiliation; and finally, for Exhortation and Direction.⁴⁵

And first for Instruction and Information: this Doctrine will serve to informe us what the true and maine cause is that our hopes are delayed, our expectations not answered, endeavours disappointed, designes defeated, and proceedings which might hasten our peace and happy weale-publike so much retarded; you may find many inferiour and lesser causes, and give divers politicke reasons; but the great and chiefe cause is in truth, that in the text, the obstinacie and impenitency of the Nation; this, I say, this is the cause why our expectations are not answered, why our hopes are blasted, our long desired peaces is deferred, and the smiting hand of God stretched out still, his anger continued and not turned away. *The people turne not unto him that smiteth them, neither doe they seeke the Lord of Hosts.* Here it stickes, and this is the obstruction, the true cause of all our misery, the very reason why we obtaine not our long expected mercies; we haped for an happy peace, the paths whereof drop fatnesse, and that crowneth the years with her goodnesse; we promised our selves that the day would have come before this time, in which we might have seen that [??] in the Psalme, *Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousnesse and Peace have kissed each other*⁴⁶: Although it must be confessed that these expectations did bottome themselves upon Prerogative rather then upon an ordinary way of /27/ God his proceeding with a sinful and unthankful people, and yet our Watchmen and Seers thought verily they heard that voyce of Christ sounding in their eares, of which the Church makes report in these words, *My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my faire one, and come away. For lo the winter is past, the raine is over and gone. The flowers appeare on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voyce of the turtle is heard in our land, &c.*⁴⁷ they thought they saw all good things flowing in upon us, or at least comming towards us.

But since that we were put into such hopes, we have had many feares, great and sore troubles have been brought upon the land, and it may complaine as the Church, *Thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death,*⁴⁸ and still may we complaine of the disappointment of our hopes, as they in the Prophet, *We looked for peace, but behold no good came: and for a time of health, but behold trouble.*⁴⁹ And as it followeth, *The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we*

⁴⁵ [?? illegible]

⁴⁶ Psal. 8 [??].

⁴⁷ Cant.2.10,11,12.

⁴⁸ Psal.71.10 and 44.19.

⁴⁹ Jer. 8.15.

*are not saved:*⁵⁰ no although we have failed, and prayed for peace, and earnestly besought the God of peace to grant it, and that our distractions might be composed, that our breaches might be made up, our ruines repaired, Religion settled, that the Lord would be reconciled to the Nation, and Prince and people one unto another, and doe continue to hold up our hands and lift up our hearts to the throne of Grace, for these things summer after summer, and yeare after yeare, these our sutes have not been (as the prayers of Gods people commonly are) as the bow of *Ionathan* which turned not backe, and the sword of *Saul* that returned not empty.⁵¹ We have not seen these our prayers returne as the Dove did into the Arke with an Olive branch of a gracious answer in these things. I grant (which to deny or not to acknowledge unto the glory of God, were sinfull ingratitude,) they have had many gracious answers and grants of such things as we could not have been without, to have preserved us from desolation and ruine. But in the things before named they have not yet been answered. It hath been with us in what we have obtained, as with Israel in the wilderness, in the blackest night we have had a pillar of fire, and in the brightest day a pillar of a cloud: Piety and prosperity, and Religion, and Peace are not yet met to make us happy; now why is it thus? and what is the reason? where is the obstruction? is not /28/ God as able as ever? his hand as long as ever? surely it is, but consider the Doctrine, and it will be as the Oracle in the three yeares famine, yeare by yeare, as it certified *David*, there was cause of that famine; so tis Doctrine will assure us, there is a cause of this continuance of anger and smiting,⁵² and it is as *2 Chron.20.33. as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers:* so that the high places were not taken away, they did not convert and returne, they would not reforme their wayes, as in the Text, *they turne not to him that smiteth them, neither doe they seeke the Lord of Hosts;* it is not because God is not the God that heareth prayers, or that he cannot save, or not afford us mercy; this is not the cause why the hand of mercy is pulled in, and the hand of his wrath is stretched out, but because people are impenitent, and turne not; this, this is the true cause of all our misery, and why we want many a mercy, we make not use of wrath and smiting; and this is that which no doubt hath made the Lord even to repent of the good he intended towards us, as you have it, *Ier. 18.9,10. At what instant I shall speake concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdome to build and to plant it; If it doe evill in my sight, that it obey not my voyce, then will I repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.* Let this then be the first Use, and let it open our eyes to see the true cause of our sorrow, and say with the Church, *Lam 5. The crowne is fallen from our head; woe unto us that we have sinned.*⁵³ For this our heart is faint, for these things our eyes are dim. Israel had sinned, and continued in sinne, and *England* hath sinned and doth continue in sinne under smiting; no marvell, though we pray against warre and punishment, and our miseries still continue, for although God heareth prayers, and is able to helpe, and loveth to be sought and saed unto, yet he seemeth to hold the Prayers of his best Servants unseasonable, till sinne be removed, *Josh.7.10. Get thee up, wherefore lyeest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, &c.*

Secondly,⁵⁴ this Doctrine will serve for ground of Conviction, and to make good and drive home a former Use of the second Doctrine, in which we noted, that upon due examination it would be found that *England* was guilty of that heinous crime charged

⁵⁰ Ver. 20.

⁵¹ 2 Sam. 1.22.

⁵² [??] Sam.21.1.

⁵³ [??] 16, 17.

⁵⁴ Use 2.

on Israel, which was impenitency, and obstinacy under [??]ting, they did not turne, this was an heavy charge and no easie and ordinary chiding of Israel, when it was said of them, that /29/ they were so obstinate as words, rods, nor swords would worke upon them; for what can be spoken or thought more grievous, it is a great offence and sinne if men obey not so soone as they heare a duty propounded, but more grievous if reproofes and chidings will not affect them, but *gravissimum adversus plagas ipsa[??] durescere, vel potius calcitrare*, most grievous to waxe harder when they are smitten, or rather as it were to spurne against them, and by that means further to incense the anger, and increase the indignation of the Judge, as *Calvin* observeth on the Text, now the continuance of the anger of God and stretching forth his hand still, did evince the obstinacy and impenitency of Israel there, and doth in like manner prove any other people in Covenant with him, if having been smitten, the anger of God continue and his smiting hand be stretched forth still, that they turne not but are impenitent; for as God his smiting a people is a prooffe of their sinning, so his continuing to smite is a prooffe of their continuance in or not turning from their sinne; punishment followes sinne as the shadow followes the body, and as the plaister the sore; take away the body and the shadow doth cease; when the sore is healed the plaister is no longer used; so when the sin is left, and the land turned to him that smiteth them, the rod is laid aside, the hand is drawne in, and no longer stretched out to strike: when God continueth the punishment and shewes himself angry still, it proveth Israel, *England*, or any other people smitten for their sinne, that they might returne and seek the Lord of Hosts, not to have returned and sought him: so that here againe *England* and Israel are so like as *England* is the worse; for Israel a people very neere and deare to God, so abused the bounty of God, as he became angry with them and smote them with the sword of an enemy, yea, raised up civill warre among them, *Isai.* 7.9.21. just so it is with *England*, only with this difference, *England* hath had more abundance of Grace in the Gospell, which hath brought forth more abundance of sinne in their abuse of it.

Secondly, Israel being smitten did not turne and seek the Lord; just so is it with *England* at this day being smitten, it doth not returne.

Thirdly, Israel is charged with obstinacy and impenitencie as an heinous crime and provoking sinne, they refused to returne /30/ yea, are so farre from it as they did not seeke the Lord of Hosts, and oh that this might be justly denied of *England*; but it is true (as we noted before) our people seeme to have hardened their faces as a rock, and they refuse to returne, *Ier.* 5. 3. and although God set Watchmen over *England*, saying, *Hearken to the sound of the trumpet: yet they said, We will not hearken.* *Ier.* 6.17.

Fourthly and finally, against Israel thus smitten the Lord did continue his anger, &c. and just thus is it with *England*, the anger of the Lord is not turned, but his hand stretched out still, for of us (as of them) it may be said, the people turne not, &c. Thus *England* is not so like Israel in name, nothing neere, as in state of sinne and misery.

But some may say, for all this it is better with *England* then with Israel; for we doe seekd the Lord of Hosts daily, and humble our soules before him in our monethly fasts, confesse our sinnes, and seek mercy at his hands.⁵⁵

I answer,⁵⁶ I should be glad to be mistaken, but (as *Ieremiah* speakes of himselfe) so may the Ministers of God say of the generality of our people with griefe, we hearkened and heard, *but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickednesse saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse*

⁵⁵ [?? illegible marin note]

⁵⁶ *Answ*

*rusheth into the battell.*⁵⁷ and who but he that is wilfully blind doth not see the sinnes which usually shew themselves openly, as pride, drunkenness, not only in men, but in women also, an odious thing that makes them (as the Son of *Syrach* notes) that they cover not their own staine; Scripture good enough (although *Apocrypha*) for such a purpose; oaths and blasphemies as common and fearefull as ever before our smiting; the like may be said of other sinnes.

Secondly,⁵⁸ but admit it were not so, that our people did not declare their sinne as Sodome, but hide it rather: What shall we say unto the heavy hand of God upon us? and of his anger which is towards us still? If his smiting had its end, he would make an end of smiting; for nationall turning would turne away nationall wrath from the nation: and although sinne be a high wall of separation, yet repentance would breake it downe. *Ier.* 18.9. if the nation did truly repent, the Lord would repent of the evill; if *England* did turne, God would turne his judgements into mercie, but while he goeth on in anger and punishment, it proveth /31/ that we goe on in sinne: when a wife and tender-hearted Chirurgion continueth his corrosives, yea, doth still launce, cauterize, and take off now an arme, and then a legge, you may be sure the child, or patient is yet in an ill case; if you should see a loving father lay on his sonne, and bruise, yea breake the very bones of his owne child, you could not but thinke there is some great fault committed; if that should not alwayes hold, yet this is certain, our heavenly Father hath no passion to transport him, nor doth he afflict willingly, man doth sufer for his sinne: such an effect as punishment on a nation doth infallibly conclude such a cause as sinne: and the Lord doth manifestly reveale his wrath from Heaven against our sinnes, for he hath drawne two swords at once against the nation; and whereas of the two, that of warre is the worst, yea the heaviest of God his sore punishments, Civill warre is of all warres the worst; In which (as the Latine Orator said) *in bellis civilibus omnia sunt misera, sed nihil miserius, quàm ipsa victoria;* for as it is said of *K. Ed.* the second *Tun[??]* *verè victus quando tot vicit milites prudentes.* In these warres although every thing be unhappy, yet nothing more miserable then victory it selfe, because by victory such a body doth overcome it selfe: These heavy judgements bring with them a sad report of wrath, as he that writes of strange Grashaoppers that did depopulate *England*, which had written upon the one wing in black letters *ira*, and upon the other *Dei*: how truly he reports that, I stand not to avouch; but these judgements have *ira Dei*, wrath and wrath of God, as it were written upon their wings, and such wrath as will depopulate and ruine the land, if the wrath be not appeased and these judgements removed; for these divisions are fatall to this Iland, and will be its infallible ruine. *England* being as a great and strong body that will not dye, unlesse it kill it selfe; our Lord himselfe hath said, *A Kingdome divided against it selfe cannot stand:* and as the land was darkened when *Ephraim* was against *Manasseh*, and *Manasseh* against *Ephraim*, *Isai.* 7.9,10. so is our land under this kind of smiting, in which the Lord doth chastise us with Scorpions and not with whips, with destroying swords and not with chastising rods.

Thirdly, but (for further conviction, and neerer Application of this Use) it is granted that we doe keepe days of Humiliation and we seek the Lord, &c. And admit Israel did not so much /32/ although there were (no doubt) among them that did, unto whom (as the most Expositors thinke) the former cordials were sent, howsoever this is not enough to take off this charge; for under such smiting as is now upon us hypocriticall Israel might seek unto the Lord for helpe, as *Psal.* 78.34. where it is said of them, *That when he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned, and enquired*

⁵⁷ *Ier.* 8.6.

⁵⁸ *Isai.* 3[??]

early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock: and the high God their Redeemer.⁵⁹ Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth: and they lied unto him with their tongues.⁶⁰ For their heart was not right with him: neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.⁶¹ There is much deceit in such constrained turning and seeking God. The faithfull Ministers of God, who have occasion to visit many on their sick beds, and when the hand of God is heavie upon them, find by sad experience how men will at such times flatter with their lips, when their heart is not right; they will sigh, groane, and sometime weep abundantly in the confession of their sins, and promise amendment; if God will please to spare them; but hardly one of then (I had almost said of twenty, it may be, an hundreth) that remaineth stedfast in thos resolutions, if they doe recover: For this turning and seeking God was not free, but rather forced by the whip and smart: and as *Chrys.* observed long since, [??] a Greek Sentence].⁶² He that is made good by constraint, by necessity he is never good; (as you shall see) for being loosed from that constraint, he doth returne againe unto his own disposition: and the reason is manifest, his affection is not changed, only his action constrainedly intermitted. But the bulk and body of the people of this land come fare short of this, and seeme rather to come home to Israel, who did not so much as seeke the Lord of Hosts, &c. they observe not these dayes of Humiliation unto this end: at least, this is certain, they turne not to him that smiteth them; and the better to cleare this, I pray note the manner of speaking here, it is said they returned not [?? Hebrew] [??] *ad* (as one observeth on the Text)⁶³ they did not returne unto him. *i.e.* they did not repent, and although they seemed to turne from their trade and wicked way, yet [??] *ad Deum non redierunt*, *i.e.* they did not turne truely, seriously, fully, constantly and closly, or wholly and altogether, they came not fully home, but did, as it were, stand still in the way, and were /33/ but hypocrites feigning repentance, but persevering in their impiety, as they *Psal.* 78.36. and *Isa.* Cap. 29.13. men may bring shadowes of turning, ceremonies of repentance: and thinke with them to flatter away the rod from their backs; and continue still as sinfull as ever. Men may, and oft times doe turne, *yet not to him that smiteth them.* As for instance.

First, Some turne, but do not returne (as *August* hath noted)⁶⁴ a man is said to be turned, who grieveth for the offence, or crime; but he is returned, who doth bewaile the vanity of his mind, he is turned from sin, who will part with it, he is returned, who is wholly and altogether turned: who doth not only, not feare punishment, but doth diligently make hast to observe the goodnesse of God. Men may seeme to turne from all their sinnes, and yet not turne so farre as unto the Lord.

Secondly, Some turne not unto the Lord, nor yet from all their sinnes, they still keepe some Delilah, as *Herod*; they may as *Saul* slay the leane and keepe the fatt, at least, keepe *Agag* alive, some speciall sinne. *Now these turne not to him that smiteth,* for Conversion must be from all sinne.

Thirdly, Some come short of both the former; *for they turne not to him that smiteth,* although it cannot be denied but that such an one doth turne, yet it is either from God, to sinne: or from one sinne unto another. And these in their practise

⁵⁹ Ver.35.

⁶⁰ Ver.36.

⁶¹ Ver.37.

⁶² [??] in Matt. [?]. 17.

⁶³ [?? illegible note in margin]

⁶⁴ *Ver sum qui. dem [??]uto, qui dolet de crimine, conversum, qui dolet de animi vanitate. Vertitur qui jam [??]lt demittere peccatum, convertitur qui jam to [??] & omnino ver[??], qui jam non tantumpenas non timere, sed ad bonam domini contendere [??]inat. De vera & falsa Poenitent.*

contradict what duty calleth for in returning, and truly, (as hath bin observed) wee have many examples of such turnings, our times are turning times, hardly any in which there hath bin more turning then now, for men are like weathercocks, turning about with every winde of Doctrine: some turne Papists, some Arminians, some turne Socinians, some Anabaptists, some Antinomians, some loose Libertines, some Epicures, some Malignants, and some as the dog to his vomit, and sow to the wallowing in the mire. Some who seemed to have left *Egypt* and forsaken *Babilon* (as many did with *Israel*) and to have led the way in a glorious profession, yet have looked back, and with *Demas* imbraced this present world.

Fourthly, You may go farther and find men yet worse, and farther off from turning, for there is a generation of men that in practise and open profession, in conversation and resolution that neither say nor doe, returne not to God, but resolve as they /34/ *Ier.* 44. 15, 16. *they will not doe what the Lord calleth for, but whatsoever thing goeth out of their owne mouth, &c.* they in the very height of rebellion take up armes of hostile opposition against that unto which this smiting doth summon them, and how fearefull the condition of such incorrigible rebels, is, you may heare from many Scriptures, such as *Prov.* 29.1. 1 *Sam.* 2.25.

Fifthly and finally, there is yet an higher degree of aversion from this duty in another ranke of men, who are so farre from returning themselves, as they labour by all meanes of evill counsel, corrupt example and encouragement, to abbet others in their sinfull course, and to with-hold such as they perceived to be bent or inclinable to returne; men so vile as they make it their worke to draw as many as they may from this duty: there are and not a few such masters, parents, neighbours, kindred, acquaintance, and pretended friends among us, I would there were none, or but a very few such of our owne tribe, Ministers guilty of an offence, so heinous in any, and most odious in them; unto such I should commend the consideration of that of the Prophet *Ieremiah*, *I have seen also in the Prophets of Ierusalem an horrible thing, they commit adultery, and walke in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evill doers, that none doth returne from his wickednesse, &c.*⁶⁵ If you shall consider how many there are that will be found faulty, and guilty in the premisses, it will be more then manifest, that whatsoever may be done by a small remnant, the body of our people turne not unto him that smiteth them, nor doe they seeke the Lord of Hosts.

And so much for the Use of Information, and Conviction; in which I have been the more large, to make way unto the practicall Uses of this Doctrine.

The third Use of the Point is Humiliation, unto which we shall adde another of Exhortation, and so conclude.⁶⁶ This Doctrine considered with the former Uses may be just ground of Humiliation and mourning, a duty sutable to the day and agreeable to the times in which we live. The day is a day of mourning and fasting, the times we are cast upon are sinfull, sad, and sorrowfull times, such as may make as mourne with a great and very sore lamentation; and with the Prophet,⁶⁷ to eat ashes like bread, and mingle our drinke with weeping: yea, teares may be our meat /35/ day and night, for Joy seemeth to be cleane withered from the sonnes of men: if the Causes we have to mourne were well observed and considered, they might make us blush and bleed, causing, if it were possible, rivers of teares to trickle downe our eyes.⁶⁸ The Causes are many, I shall present you with some few, yet such as if we have either the grace of

⁶⁵ *Ier.* 23.14.

⁶⁶ *Use* 3.

⁶⁷ *Psal.* 102.

⁶⁸ *Psal.* 42.3. *Joel* 1.12.

Christians, or the nature of men, will move us to mourning: who can thinke upon the desolation of *Germany*, without lamentation? or if we could not see so farre, cast an eye upon *Ireland* neerer hand, and see it wallowing in its own bloud, and bleeding it selfe to death, unlesse helpe come from Heaven to prevent it. What child can see his father smiting and breaking the bones of his brethren, and not weep? But if the desolations of *Germany* and miseries of *Ireland* will not affect us, let us at the least behold our own calamity with teares, *England* is smitten with such a stroke as may move all to mourne over her that beare any true love unto her, she is under one of God his sore judgements mentioned *Ezek. 14.21.*⁶⁹ yes, the very sorest of those sore judgements, the sword in the hand of men, an heavier judgement then in the hand of a destroying angel; and as warre is worse then pestilence, so civill warre the worst warre of all other, in which with every stroke the Kingdome doth hurt and endeavour to destroy it selfe, which is a sad spectacle for strangers to behold; if any of us at any time see a poore man in an Epilepsie or fit of the falling sicknesse, lye beating himselfe against the ground, biting his own tongue, and bestowing all his strength to raise himselfe up, that he might with greater violence cast himselfe down againe, to the wounding and breaking of himselfe, beating the breath out of his body, as it may fall out: Such a man may not onely bruise his flesh, or breake his bones, but destroy himselfe: could we in this case doe lesse then lament this mans condition, although a meer stranger? or if we should see any man so bereaved of sence, or desperately bent by delyrancy, or any other cause, as he should wound, stabbe, and by all meanes endeavour to destroy himselfe, one hand wounding the other, or both of them stabbing him in his own bowels, and at last (if not hindered) in the head, or very heart: who unlesse without all bowels, but must needs be affected much with the condition of such a man; our Kingdome is at this time in the condition of a man in an Epilepsie, and doth beate, bruise, /36/ and by all the strength it hath endeavour to undoe and destroy it selfe; it is so delyrant by the just judgement of God, as it doth studie its owne ruine, one hand wounding the other, and both stabbing it in the bowels, and at the very heart, unlesse the Lord shall graciously prevent it. Now if there be cause of sorrow to see one man, and a stranger in such a condition: with what mourning should we looke on such a flourishing Kingdome in such a condition? who can thinke of so many men loosing their lives, and not knowing what becommeth of their immortall seules (many of them as it is to be feared being unfit to dye) but must needes mourne? Ye this is not all the cause of Humiliation and mourning, if we looke up higher from earth to Heaven, from men to God, we shall see further and greater cause of mourning, and that is, that Heaven lowreth upon us, and the God of Heaven is angry with us, *his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*⁷⁰ yea, by looking into the cause of this continued anger in a God so full of pittie, which is the grievous sinnes of the land, it hath grievously sinned, otherwise he that hath so abounded in goodnesse towards it, had never sent so fore a punishment upon it. God hath shewed his love towards *England* in former time more then towards any Nation, puting it as it were in his bosome, and yet he is now wrath with it, and his hand stretched forth still to strike, as if he meant to destroy it, and all for the transgressions of it, *Doe ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee?*⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ezek. 14.21.

⁷⁰ [??] .14.

⁷¹ Deut.32.6.

Neither are these all the causes we have of Humiliation and mourning; there is this also, That after our provocation of God, and under his displeasure and these destroying strokes, the people turne not to him that smiteth, &c. that which the Prophet here complaineth of, although the Lord have thus smitten us, and doth continue to declare himselfe greatly displeas'd with us; yet we continue in sinne, and provoke him to provide heavier strokes for us; the day of battell and time of affliction is the fornace that sheweth what mettall we are, whether gold or drosse, and being drosse we may feare to be utterly forsaken, *Ier. 6.*

Finally, there is yet another cause, and in some respect greater then the former, and this is a cause why we should mourne, because the Kingdome doth not mourne, we have cause of deepe /37/ Humiliation, for that the Humiliations of the Kingdome are so slight and shallow in the very dayes destined to humiliation and mourning; when we fast, it is rarely seene or heard that we either weep, or sigh, if we mourne, it is with dry eyes, and it is to be feared with hard hearts, and herein our times seeme more hard then any. Israel and this people of the Jewes had many grievous sinnes (as you have heard) in which we are as bad as they; but in this we seeme to be much worse, if you looke throughout the Scripture, and in all ages of that Church, you shall perceive them to be of a softer temper; when the Lord sent an angel to tell them that he would not drive out the inhabitants out of the land, *Iudges 2.3. the people hearing this lift up their voyce and wept:* when the Ministers of God told our people some yeares past of this Judgement we now suffer, some of our people have been ready to laugh, and very many of them heard it as a fable, or that which needed not be feared, or at all regarded. They when they heard of Judgement comming on the land, or being in danger could mourne, as *2 Sam. 15. 23. David* and his men being in danger, the story saith that all the country wept with a loud voyce, and *Iosiah* hearing what was threatned, namely that they should become a desolation, &c. his heart was tender, & he humbled himself before the Lord & wept, *2 Kin. 22.19.* We, when we see these judgements that make way for desolation on others, and our selves, yet we shed no teares. When the plague broke in upon the Congregation, *Numb. 25.6.* it is said the people were weeping, but now both pestilence and sword are on the land, and rage in all quarters of it, yet where be the teares of the Congregation. *Esau* could weepe for the losse of the birth-right, but in our times men mourne not for the losse of birth-right, or blessing, no not for the provocation of wrath and judgement; yea, such among us as can take on for some outward losse or hurt, and weepe at the unkindnesse of a friend, yet shedde no teares in all these miseries. That exhortation of Saint *Iames* is very seasonable, *Be afflicted, and mourne, and weep, let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heavinesse:*⁷² in the fifth Chapt. of that Epistle, he exhorts rich men to weepe and howle for the miseries that shall come upon them;⁷³ miseries are come upon us, and we are come to humble our selves and mourne before the Lord for them, and our sinnes the causes of these calamities. /38/ It is reported of the Jewes, not on their dayes of mourning, but of greatest rejoycing, in their marriage feasts, that they breake a glasse with wine in remembrance of *Ierusalem*, and say, when they throw it downe, thus was *Ierusalem* broken, and then what they spill in wine they fill with teares; if they in the times of their feasting weep in remembrance of *Ierusalem* destroyed so long before, what should we doe, in the dayes of our solemne fasts for *England* now a breaking? and ready to be ruined with smiting? especially seeing we stand here before the Lord to mourn for our sins, and the sins of the land, which are the cause of these our stripes? and truly if they when they heard that God

⁷² James 4.9.

⁷³ Chap. 5.1.

would not drive out the inhabitants of the land, but leave them as thornes in their sides, did lift up their voice and wept, so as the place was thought worthy to be named *Bochim* weepers:⁷⁴ now that God is about to destroy and drive out the inhabitants of the land, should not we so weepe, as the place of our teares may be made a *Bochim*? sure I am, wee may weeps much, cry long and loud before the cry of our prayers should outcry our crying sinnes. And as this duty belongeth to us all in generall, so especially unto such as are over the rest, whether of *Iudah*, or *Levi*, the Rulers and teachers of the people, who at such times as these are, ought to be chiefe in this duty, and are to mourne, not only for their owne sinnes, but (as it were) to beare the iniquity of the kingdome,⁷⁵ which no doubt would be very acceptable in them, and in time give them occasion with *David* to say, *I thanke the o Lord that thou hast heard the voice of my weeping*. And for the Ministers above all others, they seeing how hardly the people are brought either to turne from, or mourne for their sinnes, after these warnings and smitings, have reason to resolve with *Jeremiah*, *If ye will not heare it, my soule shall weepe in secret places for your pride, &c.*⁷⁶ Could they with the same Prophet weep day and night for the sin & slaine of his people (and as the Prophet *Ezekiel* is commanded to sigh bitterly, and unto the breaking of his loynes) it could not be altogether without cause, considering the sinfull, and sad and miserable condition of the kingdomes, and yet alas the people are as farre from mourning *as they are from returning to him that smote them*.⁷⁷ It is true of many among us which *Elihu* observeth, *If they obey not they shall perish by the sword, and they shall dye without knowledge*.⁷⁸ Yet /39/ *the Hypocrites in heart heape up wrath, they cry not when he bindeth them*. Such as doe sometimes make faire shewes, being still inwardly impure and corrupt, do not humble themselves under the correcting hand of God nor repenting of their sinne, do increase and incense the wrath of God more against them, so farre are they from being bettered by affliction, as by their obstinacy they do yet more provoke the anger of God against them. They cry not to God so as they might obtaine pardon, grace and help, but content themselves with some formalities and outward shewes. *Austin* maketh mention of a sort of foolish women, which did use to dresse themselves fine, and went to the *Capitol* and sate there all day long, and thought *Iupiter* was in love with them; (there are many among us that I feare) come hardly so farre as unto the dresse and outward formality of this duty, in the dayes of our humiliation, and yet thinke God is well pleased with their service, who yet keepe themselves close unto their sinnes.

In the last place,⁷⁹ *if the anger of the Lord be not turned away &c. because the people turne not to him that smiteth them*; It will serve for Exhortation and Direction, let this move us (as ever we desire the wrath of an angry God should be appeased, the bloody streakes of the destroying sword should be stayed, and the deadly wounds of a bleeding Kingdome should be cured,) *to turne to him that smiteth us, and set our selves to seeke the Lord of Hostes*. This is the result of all, and the principall use of Text and Doctrine; impenitency under wrath and smiting causeth their continuance, that they may cease, let us cease to sinne and to goe on in sinne; the Phisition that he may recover his patient of a dangerous distemper, doth first find out and then indeavour to remove the cause, which is the direct way (according to the rule of his art) unto the recovery of his patient. Our state is in a sicke and dangerous, and deadly distemper, and this Doctrine

⁷⁴ Judg.2.3,5.

⁷⁵ Joel 1.14. & Chap.2.16, 17.

⁷⁶ Jer. 13. 17.

⁷⁷ Jer. 9. 1.

⁷⁸ Job 36.12,1[??].

⁷⁹ Use.

sheweth the causes; all that with well unto it, that desire to doe anything for the recovery of it, must shew themselves Phisitions of value, by removing the causes, and so procuring the health and happinesse of it. You understand why the anger of God is *not turned away, why his hand is stretched out still*. Oh therefore that we might all remove the cause, to the utmost of our ability, that if it be possible, the effect may cease. This is the way, that /40/ God himselfe doth prescribe in many places.⁸⁰ I will name but one, and it is that Prophet *Zechariah; The Lord hath bin sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say unto them, thus saith the Lord of Hostes, turne ye unto me saith the Lord of Hostes, And I will turne unto you, saith the Lord of Hostes. Be ye not as your fathers, unto whome the former Prophets cryed saying; thus saith, the Lord of Hostes, turne ye now from you evill wayes, and from your evill doings: but they did not heare, nor hearken unto me saith the Lord.*

Now because this is a duty of great importance, and that wherein the aimes of all that are well affected to church & state, must meete, and that whereunto their indeavours should tend, I shall propose a few considerations to presse this Use, generally upon all, and then more particularly recommend it unto some whom it doth more specially concerne. I have not time to inlarge my selfe, and to urge both the branches of the Use, the chiefe is *turning to him that smiteth*, the other is included in it.

There are a multitude of motives which might be brought to presse the duty upon our people, and to move our nation and us all to turne. I name onely these.

First the authority and power of him, unto whom you are exhorted to turne, or of him by whom you are summoned, *and that is the Lord of Hostes*: you are called upon to repent and convert, not by man, but by God: not such a God as you can either shun or resist; *for he is the Lord of Hostes*, stiled the Lord of Hostes in the Text, and in that place of *Zachariah*, which was mentioned before, he is thrice in one verse, called *the Lord of Hostes*: which fearefull title might strike terrour into such as should be found guilty of disobedience in this duty, and still refuse to returne.

Secondly,⁸¹ There is a great deale of equity in this duty, for by sinne we have turned from him, which is the cause of his anger, and all our misery, it is therefore most equall that we returne unto him, as our Prophet doth urge this duty, in these words, *turne ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted, and the equity of this duty, and the iniquity of them that yeeld not unto it, is set forth by the Lord himselfe in Jeremiah, Moreover, thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord, shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turne away, and not returne?*⁸² /41/ intimating how unreasonable and inequitable it is for men to fall by sinne, and when they have so done to refuse to rise and returne by repentance againe unto him from whom they fell.

Thirdly, Another motive is drawne from the *terminus à quo, & ad quem*, from what and unto whom we are to turne, which will further open and urge the former motive. This conversion is in a word, *from darknesse to light, from sinne to grace, from evill to good, from sathan unto God.*⁸³ It is from the way of sinne, which is evill, unto the way of righteousnesse, which is good, from that path which is soule to that which is cleane, from a course which is full of feare, and danger, and lesse unto that which is comfortable, safe, and exceeding advantagious to all that walke in it, as you may see *Pro. 4. 11, 18. and Cap. 3. 17, 22. and [?].3. Psal. 117.1.*

⁸⁰ [??] 2, 3, 4.

⁸¹ Isa. 31. 6.

⁸² Jer. 8. 4.

⁸³ Acts 16. 29.

So that as *Bern.* hath it; *Dico omnes Deum ignorare qui nolunt ad eum converti.* I say all such are ignorant of God, that will not turne unto him; they do not know him to be that chiefe good by whom they may be made happy, and therefore they doe turne aside unto vaine things, that cannot profit.

Fourthly, An other Motive may be the hope we have of turning away the stroakes from the Land, and anger from our selves, and that God will be reconciled unto us; and we turning to him by repentance, he will turne to us in mercy, pardon and grace, that which you have set forth in many places, and that before quoted *Zech.* 1. 3. *Turne ye unto me, saith the Lord of Hostes, and I will turne unto you, saith the Lord of Hostes.* This is sure, that the soule which doth truly turne, shall find God reconciled to him Never did any make use of this counsell and perish, and the Lord will repent him of the evill, *If men will hearken and turne, every man from his evill way, Jer.* 26. 3. *Jonah* 3. ult.

Fifthly, For our further encouragement, the experience we have had of the mercy of God well considered, might be a very strong Motive to this duty. *For as it was said of Israel, that they were a people neere unto him;*⁸⁴ so may it be said of us, that we have bin a people neere unto him, and he hath shewed himselfe nigh to us in all that we call upon him for, *Deut.* 4. 7.

Sixthly, In the last place thee is a Motive drawne from the necessity of our repentance, and conversion unto God. This /42/ Motive lyeth in the Text and Context, *the anger of God is continued, his hand is still stretched forth;* yea, the Lord will strike yet heavier stroakes, and as it followeth in the next verse unto the Text; *Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel, head and taile, branch and rush, in one day.* Seeing they will not returne, he will suddenly destroy them, the mighty and the meane, the honourable and the base, ruine and destruction shall sease upon them, if the people turne not; the anger of God shall not turne away, no his wrath will be further increased, his stroakes will be heavier then they have bin; and that black and bloody cloud which hangeth over our heads, will breake and fall upon us, if we remaine impenitent. In vaine shall we promise our selves peace, and looke for mercy, if we cast off the care of our duty, although we seeke the Lord of Hostes. Fast, Pray and thinke nothing too much, that we hazard and lay out and bestow, if we turne not, it will doe nothing for our security from utter ruine. That which is noted of *Casar*, when one that was up in armes against him, yet sent him a crowne, at the very same time, but *Casar* sent back his Crowne, with this messige; Let him returne first unto his obedience, and then the Crown might be accepted. If we use other meanes, any meanes to obtaine favour with God, and keepe our selves still to our sinnes; and so continue in rebellion, and refuse to doe his commands, had we Crownes to dedicate to his honour, all were but vaine, unlesse we returne first to our obedience. Let us therefore consider the authority of God; who require we should return unto him; the equity of this duty, the good that may be expected in the way of mercy if these will not prevaile with us, yet let the consideration of the anger of the Lord of Hostes: the sword in his hand which is stretched forth to strike with stroakes of death, and ruine. Let this make us to resolve even all of us to return *and seek the Lord of Hostes.* God judgeth the righteous, and is angry with the wicked every day. If he turne not he will whet his sword: he hath bent his bow and make it ready; he hath also prepared for himselfe the Instruments of death, &c. as the Psalmist hath it, *Psal* 7.12,13. So that (as *Austin* observeth) *quia illi no[??]nt converti in melius, Deum convertunt in pejus,* in as much as they will not turne better, they turne God upon that which is worse; for *Levit.* 26. 18. *If you will not yet for all this hearken;*

⁸⁴ *Psal.* 148.14.

/43/ then will I punish you seven times more for your sinnes. To conclude, consider that pathetical passage of the Prophet, *Ezek.33.11. As I live, saith the Lord I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turne from his way, and live: Turne ye, turne ye, for why will ye dye, O house of Israel?*

Now before I leave this branch of the Use, it will be necessary to adde a few things for direction unto this duty, to helpe them that are willing to put it in practise, but ignorant. I shall therefore briefly note unto you, how we must turne to him that smiteth in these foure ensuing particulars.

First, sincerely, not formally and alone in the outward man; which let it make never so great a shew, yet it commeth to nothing, therefore *Ioel 2.12,13.* it must be even unto God with all the heart, &c.⁸⁵

Secondly, entirely, we must turne from sin, not some, but all; not from sin alone, but unto God: and truth must aspire unto Perfection.

Thirdly, we must turne speedily; God calling for a duty he lookes that we should set about it presently; and now that the destroying sword is in his hand, every man may perceive that delays are dangerous: *Archimedes* drew lines so long in the dust till his City was taken, and the souldiers brake in upon him and slew him. Many that have thoughts of repentance and returning to God loose their pretious soules by their sinfull delays.

Fourthly, I may adde to the former in the last place, turning sincerely, entirely, and speedily; we may returne hopefully, not doubting of mercy which is promised in Christ to all that truly turne to God at what time soever it is, see that *Deut. 4.29,30.*⁸⁶

And to help your selves in such a purpose of turning, let a right course be taken: for this end every man must search and try his wayes, and so turne; when a man hath seen how he hath turned from God to sinne, he must the contrary way returne from sinne to God; thus *David* thought on his wayes, and turned his feet unto Gods testimonies; as we goe from God by pride, disobedience, following after things which are seene, and tasting the forbidden fruit, &c. so we must turne to him weeping, obeying, contemning things visible, and bridling the desire of the flesh, &c. which is to returne the contrary way to that in which we /44/ have gone in the course of sin: because we departed with joy, we must return with lamentation.

1. And for further helpe, attendance must be given upon the Word, which (as the Prophet *David* saith) doth convert the soul.⁸⁷

2. A faithful and powerfull Ministry, in which the voice of the Lord may be heard, doth work such as have fallen from God to a willingnesse again to return, as *Ier.3.22. Returne ye backesliding children, and I will heale your backeslidings* (saith the voice of God in his Word) and then they answer, *Behold, we come unto thee, for thou are the Lord our God.*

3. In the third place, another help is, adjoyning our selves unto such as doe returne; and forsaking the company of those that goe still on in their trespasses. *Psal.119.63,79. with ver.115. David* is for their company that feare God; and that he may keep the Commandements of his God, he doth abandon the society of evill doers.

⁸⁵ *Corporli Conversio si sola fuerit, nulla erit.*

⁸⁶ *Lam.3.40. Psal.119.59. A regione nostra superbiendo, [??]diendo, visibilia seq[??] do, cibum vetitum gull ando descessimus: sed [??] eum necesse est Hendo, visibilia contemnendo [??]appetitum carnis refrenando redea[??].*

⁸⁷ [?? margin note illegible]

4. Finally, (if need be) the change of place, which sometimes is of necessity, that a man may be rid of evill company, and that he may be freed from such temptations as will still keep him in some one or other evill way.⁸⁸

5. Lastly, because Conversion and Repentance are the work and gift of God, unto him we must seek by Prayer and Supplication through Christ, that he would please to work that in us which he requireth of us: *Ier.31.18. Ephraim* there doth thus pray to God, *Turne thou me, and I shall be turned, thou art the Lord my God.* Thus let every one under this chastisement, being as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, cry to God, *Turne thou me, and I shall be turned, &c.* and all of us as the Church, *Lam. 5. 21. Turne thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned.*⁸⁹ And when we pray we must put forth our endeavours, and arme our selves against opposition, and improve such meanes as serve unto this end. Some doe commend unto men converting this direction, first, to take off themselves from the action of sin, and then to deal with the appetite and cogitation; howsoever they must look for strong opposition; for vices before Conversion are, as it were, at peace with a man, but being opposed and expelled, they rise up with more strength and violence.

Now in the last place, this Doctrine may be applied for Exhortation /45/ and speciall direction to our Parliament Worthies, upon whom it layeth a double charge, particularly for themselves, and generally for the whole Kingdome. If impenitencie and continuance in sin cause the continuance of anger, and doth pull downe more and heavier strokes upon our Nation, then it must be their endeavour to remove this cause of anger, that the anger may be diverted, and this heavy judgement removed from the Kingdome;⁹⁰ this is the way for them to become repairers of the breach, and restorers of paths to dwell in; for if men will return, anger will cease, and the quarrell would soone be at an end; but if the cause of wrath still continue, we cannot expect that the destroying hand should be drawne in, but that it should be stretched out still. Upon you therefore honourable and beloved this Use falleth with a double weight, the Doctrine requireth for the removing of the strokes with which the land is smitten, and preventing of heavier ready to fall upon it, that you see that none of your owne sinnes under smiting; that your not turning from them, doe not cause then anger of God to continue, and that (being Physitians of the State, such as are in places of power) you endeavour by all possible meanes to cause the people to turne to him that smiteth them; that removing the cause wheresoever you finde it, this miserable effect may cease; turning your selves from whatsoever, as much as in you lyeth, to cause the whole Kingdome to turne from their sinnes also, that anger my be appeased, and smiting stayed and cease.

It is not to be doubted, it hath been your desire and care; and is your endeavour to make others to returne, you have used meanes to that end, and have therefore sent Ministers into many places, where they were wanting, to call upon men to returne; and to remove such as have been idle, unfaithfull, and scandalous; *And yet his anger is not turned away, &c.* the people for all this doe not turn to him that smiteth them. I should humbly present unto your wise considerations, whether something further be not to be done to cause the people to returne. *Solomon, Prov. 29. 19.* telleth you that a servant will not be corrected with words. Men of a servile disposition will not be amended by so easie meanes as bare instructions, be they never so wholesome and good: They will not /46/ answer the expectation of such as shall bestow their paines upon them. And the Holy Ghost, *Iude vers. 22, 23.* sheweth, that men must be variously dealt with according

⁸⁸ [?? lengthy margin note in obliterated italics, very faint]

⁸⁹ [?? lengthy margin note in obliterated italics, very faint]

⁹⁰ Isai.58.12.

to their various disposition. *And of some (saith he) have compassion, making a difference. And others save with feare, pulling them out of the fire.* Compassion is to be used towards some, and severity towards others, that (if it be possible) they may be pulled out of the fire; men must be dealt with for the saving of their soules, as Chirurgions are wont to deale with their Patients for the saving their lives, if lemtives, and more gentle meanes will not serve; corrosives, cauterizings, and the like must be used. God himselfe doth take the rod into his hand, when the Word is contemned; and if lighter strokes will not serve, he hath heavier blowes for those that be impenitent. That the people may be brought to returne, instructions and corrections must be used; Magistrate and Minister, the Word and Sword may be joyned; there are many grievous sinnes among us, which have provoked the wrath of God against the Land; and from which the people should turne, that his anger may be turned away, and his destroying hand taken off from the Nation; many that have been complained off by others, that I have no time nor intention to name, I [??] onely represent some few, which are more common and obvious, and with all more impudent and scandalous, humbly intreating that some course, which seemeth best to your wisdomes, may be used to suppress them, and to cause the people, if it be possible, to turn from them: as,

First, the great neglect of the duty of these daies of Humiliation, which many (expecially in the Countrey) do not only slight and dis-regard, but abuse & profane, spending the day, or a great part of it in Alehouses and Tavernes, or about their worldly employment, as if it were [??] [??] to come or not to come to the publike Assemblies, [??]ek to provoke the Lord of Hosts.

Secondly, the horrible profanation of the glorious, and dreadfull Name of God, by execrations, blasphemies, and bloody oaths, a sinne that doth exceedingly abound, and under which the land doth grievously mourne.

Thirdly, The sottish, and swinish sinne of drunkennesse, by which men and women make themselves like beasts rather then /47 Christians, and yet in these times of smiting it doth so abound, as hardly can men walk the streets, but to their griefe they shall see of both sexes, reele and vomit in a brutish manner without controule.

Fourthly, the hatefull sinne of pride, especially of women, against whom our Prophet⁹¹ hath spent a good part of a Chapter; and elegantly set forth the levitie and vanitie of the women of his time, and withall how this sinne did provoke God, and pull downe such a judgement as this land is under; for he doth threaten warre, and declare that these men should fall by the sword, and their mighty men in the warre, ver. 25. yet some among us, (as if they durst out-dare Heaven it selfe) doe come into the presence of an angry God in the dayes of Humiliation with naked brests and such vaine attire as doe openly discover that lightnesse and wantonnesse which is shamefull and unsufferable.

Fifthly, there are many other sinnes, such as Sabbath-breaking, oppression, &c. of which I thought to have spoke something, if the time would have given leave; but I shall onely name one thing more, which might much further this worke, and that is, that some course may be taken for the purging of the Magistracy, that as scandalous Ministers so ill Justices and scandalous Magistrates may be removed, and those that be zealous and pious put in their places: for there will be little hope (if sinne be set up to correct vice, and they that turne from God themselves, shall stand in the places of those that should cause others to turne) that the worke of Reformaton will ever goe forward, the former or other sinnes be suppressed, and the land purged of them. A faithfull Magistracy, and a painefull Ministry may doe much more together, then either of them can do apart. I beseech you, that some course may be taken, such as to your wisdomes

⁹¹ Isai. 3.16, 17, 18, &c.

may seeme best, to put life into Lawes and Ordinances, that they may not be suffered to sleep, and wicked men to sinne: but that they may be constrained to breake off these sinnes which doe so highly provoke God, and so much hinder our Peace. It is noted of King *Josiah*,⁹² that having made a Covenant to walk before the Lord, and to keep his Commandements, &c. he caused all that were present or were found in Jerusalem and *Benjamine* to stand to it, *i.e.* /48/ (as some read and expound it) he constrained them by Royall Power and Authoritie &c. this is the way to remove the cause of our misery, and to save your selves and the Nation, at least, to discharge your owne duty, to performe a most acceptable service to your God, and therefore in the words of *David* unto *Salomon* (when he had showed his care and preparation for the building the house of the Lord, and the worke that was before him) let me make bold to exhort you to this duty, and sue to God for successe, *Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with you.*⁹³

FINIS.

[woodcut]

⁹² 2 Chro. 34.31[??]

⁹³ 2 Chro. 22.16.